

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

March 17, 2023

TO: Christopher J. Roscetti, Technical Director
FROM: A.Z. Kline, L. Lin, Z.C. McCabe, and E.P. Richardson, Resident Inspectors
SUBJECT: Savannah River Site Activity Report for Week Ending March 17, 2023

SRMC Oral Boards: A resident inspector (RI) observed a shift operations manager final oral board. The board conducted the questioning in an appropriate manner and extensively probed the candidate's level of knowledge. However, when the board graded the candidate's performance at the conclusion of the questioning, the conduct was less than adequate. Each board member began grading the subject areas independently (in compliance with the procedure) but the board subsequently began a group discussion on how they were going to grade the candidate overall. The board is required to conduct grading independently to prevent bias that would potentially change another panel members grade. During deliberations to reach consensus on the grading, the board started to factor in items such as what would be a possible remediation, how the candidate performed against previous candidates, and other factors outside the grading criteria. The board spent a significant amount of time during the deliberations reviewing whether the candidates answer constituted an automatic failure and reviewing the division procedure on whether an automatic failure resulted in an overall failure of the board or a failure of the subject area. A DOE facility representative provided valuable feedback to the board on the conduct, including identifying the training representative for the board providing an opinion on the candidate's response to a question, even though they were not a voting member. Although there were issues during the grading process, the overall outcome of the boards grading of the candidate was satisfactory.

An RI observed similar grading issues during a shift technical engineer final oral board in a different SRMC facility. Following completion of questioning, the panel members did not assign a grade to each section or overall performance prior to collectively discussing each question. They also discussed potential outcomes (i.e., failure of one section and automatic failure criteria) prior to assigning the candidate a grade in one subject area.

Accelerated Basin Deinventory (ABD): H-Canyon and H-Tank Farms personnel successfully completed the 8 transfers scheduled for the first processing window. No issues occurred during the transfers and senior leadership is planning to conduct a lessons learned meeting to incorporate best practices prior to the next processing window.

Control of System Status: The RIs conducted a focused review of system alignment checklists and temporary modifications at the Savannah River Tritium Enterprise, Defense Waste Processing Facility, and H-Canyon over the last month. All three facilities have adequate programs in place to maintain proper status control of their designated systems. The RIs identified a few minor deficiencies including the electronic database not aligning completely with paper records for system alignment checklists, systems that had over ten partial system alignment checklists without consolidation, and incorrect dates listed for temporary modification expiration. In all three facilities, the personnel responsible for the programs under review were very knowledgeable and showed great ownership of their programs.