

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

March 2, 2007

MEMORANDUM FOR: J. Kent Fortenberry, Technical Director
FROM: J. S. Contardi/M.T. Sautman, SRS Site Representatives
SUBJECT: SRS Report for Week Ending March 2, 2007

Staff Activities: The Board's staff reviewed fire protection at the Salt Waste Processing Facility, the Savannah River Site Fire Department, and observed a training drill at H-Canyon. Additional training is needed to improve the coordination and communication among the Incident Scene Coordinator, Incident Commander, the facility control room, and the Operations Support Center.

Defense Waste Processing Facility: Radiation Control personnel entered the Crane Maintenance Area before Operations staff installed an administrative lockout on the shield door. The Site Rep questioned whether it was appropriate to perform jumper surveys solely with a Radiation Work Permit (RWP) because a RWP is not a work procedure. The limitations of this practice were evident because the prerequisite to install a lockout was not documented anywhere nor was it clearly understood who was responsible for ensuring this lockout had been installed prior to entry.

HB-Line: A glovebox low vacuum alarm activated when both end caps of a sample rabbit were handled simultaneously due to poor technique and communications. As part of the investigation of this incident, it was identified that when this system was installed in 2004, a methodical review to identify and implement training, procedures, preventive maintenance, etc. was not performed. There was not a procedure in place for introducing samples into this laboratory line and reportedly there are other rabbit/breech lock systems that also are not covered by procedures.

Specific Administrative Controls (SAC): Based on comments provided by the Board's staff, the contractor initiated a review of SAC derivation and implementation. The first portion of the review focused on the Defense Waste Processing Facility. Observations from the review found that 9 events only credit safety management programs without an associated SAC.

Saltstone: Following confirmation from the State that permit modifications were in effect, DOE directed the contractor to commence Saltstone operations utilizing salt waste processed through the deliquification, dissolution, and adjustment (DDA) process. While attempting to transfer the DDA material from Tank 49 to Tank 50, the pump failed to start. The contractor developed a path forward to flush the pump and associated piping but the pump still would not start. A planned Tank 23 to Tank 50 transfer Friday may allow a short Saltstone grout run this weekend. In addition, the contractor is planning to replace the Tank 49 pump in the next few days.

Contractor Activities: This week Washington Group International announced that the President of WSRC would be leaving his current position. His successor will be current Executive Vice President for Management and Operations (M&O), Leo Sain. The changes will be effective April 1, 2007. DOE also recently announced that a contract extension for the M&O contractor, WSRC, has been signed which began January 2007 and will run through June 30, 2008.