

## DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

June 22, 2007

**MEMORANDUM FOR:** J. Kent Fortenberry, Technical Director  
**FROM:** J. S. Contardi/M.T. Sautman, SRS Site Representatives  
**SUBJECT:** SRS Report for Week Ending June 22, 2007

M. Sautman was off-site this week.

**DNFSB Activity:** B. Sharpless was on-site for Site Rep augmentation. The Site Rep attended a Citizens Advisory Board meeting concerning the Salt Waste Processing Facility.

**Emergency Preparedness:** This week, the contractor conducted the annual Site drill in H-Canyon. The drill included an explosion within the canyon that resulted in a release of contamination and the injury of an operator on the second level. Similar to the practice drill, an emergency responder also became a casualty due to a heart attack. The contractor's evaluation of the drill should be available next week.

**Transuranic (TRU) Waste Operations:** The Site Rep observed TRU drum repackaging operations in the Modular Repackaging System. The operators exhibited adequate conduct of operations and properly utilized tools to reduce the likelihood of a glove puncture. The Site Rep raised a concern with the high radiological work permit (RWP) suspension guidelines, 1,500 mrem/hr at 30 cm. The drum processed during the evolution had a whole body dose rate of approximately 15 mrem/hr. The observed radiological controls did not appear to be commensurate with the suspension guideline. Facility management have since revised the operating procedures to better define the radiological control action steps. Additional operations, culvert mining and vent and purge, were also observed.

Facility personnel recently discovered that some waste disposed of as low-level waste (LLW) in the early 2000's actually contained TRU waste. The waste was originally managed as TRU waste, but based on engineering evaluations the waste was reclassified as LLW. However, the engineering evaluation failed to account for all of the waste that was disposed. Based on a new evaluation, the waste should not have been reclassified. In one instance, the quantity of waste exceeds the Technical Safety Requirements for the disposal unit.

**Plutonium Operations:** This week, the first destructive examination of a DOE-std-3013 container was completed at the K-Area Interim Surveillance facility. Samples from the activity will be sent to the Savannah River National Laboratory for further evaluation and analysis. Two non-destructive examinations have also been completed.

**Technology Exchange:** The Site Rep attended a meeting relating to the testing of the Modular Caustic-Side Solvent Extraction Unit and the Salt Waste Processing Facility (SWPF). Attendees also discussed the proposed waste acceptance criteria for waste processed through SWPF which will ultimately be processed through the Defense Waste Processing Facility and the Saltstone Production Facility.