

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

July 27, 2007

MEMORANDUM FOR: J. Kent Fortenberry, Technical Director
FROM: J. S. Contardi/M.T. Sautman, SRS Site Representatives
SUBJECT: SRS Report for Week Ending July 27, 2007

H Canyon/HB-Line: The contractor has developed a Management Control Plan for the resumption of operations after a ~1 week stand down. For the next month, the facilities will operate in a “deliberate operations” mode under continuous senior supervisory watch (SSW) to enforce proper conduct of operation expectations. SSW will not be terminated until each shift is observed three times and each unit operation observed twice.

Tank Farms: A transfer line was vented and drained after a tank 37 to 32 transfer was shut down. When the transfer resumed, an operator noticed that the tank level in tank 30 was rising. The transfer path was not properly returned to the original alignment due to an error in the procedure.

The Site Rep met with site work planning and tank farms staff to discuss their plans to address weaknesses in maintenance instructions. (Site Rep weekly 7/13/07) Topics included the revised maintenance work planner qualification card, an upcoming technical writing course for work planners, and the development of a template for maintenance work instructions.

The Site Rep observed workers use a remote grabber and cutting tool to cut a cooling coil that was preventing the installation of a pump through the riser.

Work Planning: While an operator was repackaging a liquid radioactive sample, the sample bottle slipped from his hands and broke on the floor. The evolution took place in a small shack with wooden floors. The liquid eventually seeped through the floor to the outside of the shack. The activity did not have an associated hazard analysis and thus proper controls were not implemented. The radiological response was also less than adequate.

DOE-STD-3013 Surveillance Program: As previously discussed (Site Rep weekly 7/20/07), the contractor encountered problems cutting and de-nesting a 3013 container in the K-Area Interim Surveillance glovebox. This week, the Site Rep observed the cut cans while being processed at the Savannah River National Laboratory. A cursory inspection of the cans revealed 1) significant denting to the bottom of the inner can and 2) that the initial outer can cut also continued into the inner can.

Modular Caustic-Side Solvent Extraction Unit: During two recent startup activities, excess organic carryover was observed. The contractor suspended operations and conducted an internal inspection of the contactors. The inspection revealed an emulsion in one of the contactors and preliminary analysis indicates that a loss of diluent has occurred.

Solid Waste Management Facility: The Site Rep observed an emergency preparedness drill involving a dropped transuranic waste box. While the response to the injured worker was good, there was little attempt to quantify the spread of contamination and mitigation planning was limited.