

## DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

July 1, 2004

**TO:** J. Kent Fortenberry, Technical Director  
**FROM:** Don Nichols, Acting Oak Ridge Site Representative  
**SUBJ:** Activity Report for Week Ending July 2, 2004

The site representative, Don Owen, was on vacation this week. Staff member Don Nichols is acting as site representative.

A. Operational Safety Requirement (OSR) Violations. This week, two OSR violations were declared because of missed surveillance activities in buildings 9204-2E and 9204-4. The first of these occurred when a surveillance of the Portable Criticality Accident Alarm System (PCAAS) in Bldg. 9204-2E in June noted that the May surveillance had not been completed. Plant Shift Superintendent (PSS) personnel normally check PCAAS at the same time as they check the fixed CAAS in each facility. Hearing about the critique of the incident in Bldg. 9204-2E, personnel in Bldg. 9204-4 contacted the PSS the following day and asked if their PCAAS had been checked according to the surveillance requirements and learned that they had not, leading to the declaration of the second OSR violation. In addition to weaknesses in the surveillance system, the failure of the critique of the first incident to have immediately led to a check for similar problems at other facilities reflects a weakness in the critique process that should be corrected. The investigation of these incidents is ongoing.

B. Building 9212 Enriched Uranium Operations Restart. Following previously unsuccessful attempts to restart the denitrator (see site rep. reports of March 26<sup>th</sup> and June 10<sup>th</sup>), another attempt at first use operation of the denitrator was made this week. As the procedure was executed, the bed temperature rose more quickly than had been expected. The procedure was stopped to investigate why the temperature rose so quickly, and to make procedure modifications to ensure a controlled heat-up of the bed. Another attempt will be made on July 2<sup>nd</sup>.

C. Building 9206 Deactivation. A hazardous, non-routine operation planned for this summer is clean-out of the Skull Oxide Calciner (see weekly dated February 20, 2004). The BWXT readiness assessment for this process was to begin this week, but has been delayed. The readiness assessment is now expected to begin next week.

D. Conduct of Operations. As reported on March 12<sup>th</sup> and June 18<sup>th</sup>, a BWXT action in the Y-12 Conduct of Operations improvement initiative is instituting a "Conduct of Operations Representatives" program in nuclear facilities. These individuals will report to Quality Assurance division management (independent from Manufacturing Division management) and are intended to provide independent oversight of operations and personnel mentoring in nuclear facilities. Six of these representatives have now been trained and were deployed to their facilities this week.