

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

May 22, 2009

TO: T. J. Dwyer, Technical Director
FROM: M. P. Duncan and M. T. Sautman, Site Representatives
SUBJECT: Savannah River Site Weekly Report for Week Ending May 22, 2009

Tank Farms: While transferring 2F Evaporator overheads to the Effluent Treatment Facility, the underground transfer pipe began to leak. A construction worker noticed water coming out of the ground and notified the shift manager. The evaporator was shut down and a Remain Indoors was issued until workers could barricade the area, complete surveys, and contain the spill. Maximum contamination levels measured were 30,000 dpm β - γ fixed and 8000 dpm β - γ transferable.

In preparation for sludge batch 6, workers began adding caustic to Tank 51 as part of low temperature aluminum dissolution. The aluminum-laden supernatant liquid will be transferred to Tank 8 later this summer. Although Tank 8 has no history of leaks, the contractor agreed to inspect the annulus after this transfer is complete because the height of the waste will be higher than it has been since 1981. (2/1/08 report)

American Reinvestment and Recovery Act (ARRA): Relatively near term projects include 1) soil removal and retrieval of transuranic waste containers from Pad 1 at the Solid Waste Management Facility and 2) the grouting of the disassembly basin at R Reactor. The plutonium content of some of the high activity waste drums that will be retrieved during the last phase may warrant the installation of a new glovebox, possibly in HB-Line. Safety analysts have also started revalidating the old 235-F Consolidated Hazards Analysis in preparation of the development of a Deactivation and Decommissioning Basis for Interim Operations.

In order to address weaknesses identified by the recent Integrated Safety Management System Verification Review and in anticipation of ARRA work, SRNS is revising their subcontract procedures and training. The hazards review process will better address subcontractor introduced hazards. A new training plan was developed for Subcontract Technical Representatives and a guide was developed for those overseeing staff augmentation hires. Furthermore, every ARRA worker will receive a training packet and attend a training course as part of new employee orientation to familiarize them with site safety practices and the SRS safety culture.

Procedures: SRNS has developed a draft charter for the Site Policy and Procedure Council (SPPC) that includes quorum requirements. At a recently observed SPPC meeting, a quorum was verified and there was a noticeable improvement in the participation by affected organizations. Furthermore, an upcoming revision to the Management of Site-Level Policies and Procedures procedure describes the process for procedure cancellations. (4/3/09 report)

K Area: SRNS declared readiness to receive and store unirradiated Fast Flux Test Facility fuel on an interim basis in a newly built storage location.

F Area: In 2009, three reportable events resulted in safety-related diesel generators being declared inoperable in F Area. A Diesel Generator Electrical Task Team reviewed 42 diesel generator occurrences at SRS since 2000. The team issued several recommendations for preventive maintenance, design changes, and other actions to improve the reliability of the diesel generators and associated equipment.