

## DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

October 30, 2009

**TO:** T. J. Dwyer, Technical Director  
**FROM:** D. L. Burnfield and M. T. Sautman, Site Representatives  
**SUBJECT:** Savannah River Site Weekly Report for Week Ending October 30, 2009

**F-Canyon:** The Site Rep observed mock-ups and interviews for the contractor's Transuranic (TRU) Waste Drum Remediation Activity Pre-Start Review. Likely findings will address the management control plan and level of knowledge of workers and first line managers (FLM). Much of the team has only been at SRS a few months and the managers have limited experience as SRS FLMs. In preparation for the next phase, safety analysts are developing a traffic control program and related Specific Administrative Controls to address F-Canyon management and Site Rep feedback (see 10/16/09 report).

The Site Reps attended a meeting where the recovery actions for the A-Line acid spill were reviewed by a senior SRNS manager. (See 8/28 and 10/2/09 reports). After a Site Rep, the SRNS manager, and DOE provided several significant comments on the work package, it was decided that a follow-up review and walk down of a significantly revised work package would be conducted next week.

**H-Canyon:** A high differential pressure process interlock was triggered because a basic solvent wash was not acidified prior to being transferred to an evaporator. When the carbonate solution was heated, carbon dioxide started off-gassing. A weak shift turnover and the lack of explicit procedure direction on how to prepare for this non-routine transfer helped cause this event.

The Site Reps did a walkdown with plant personnel to understand how large steel boxes of TRU waste will be repackaged and size reduced. Videos of smoke and fire suppression tests were also reviewed. During the walkdown, the Site Reps also noted that the truck well and cell cover airlocks were clearly identified and that radiological postings were more prominent and explicit. These were corrective actions from a recent event where a person entered unauthorized areas (see 9/11/09 report).

**Safety:** The Site Rep observed an interactive two-hour Hazard Recognition Workshop being provided to SRNS workers that relied heavily on real work scenes. SRR is also increasing its focus on construction safety after three recent events. In the most serious event, a crane dropped a bundle of wood being lowered into a Saltstone vault some of which struck a worker.

**Saltstone:** An investigation of last week's event determined that while the screw feeder was commanded to stop when setback was initiated, dry feed continued to flow from the weigh hopper for 31 seconds. As a result, the 15 second flush of the mixer after setback is initiated is being extended.

**Defense Waste Processing Facility:** Clean frit and water was dumped into a diked area this week because of a valve that was inadvertently left open during a September maintenance activity. The prior opening of the valve was not reported to management, was not included in the lockout-tag out, and was not planned to be opened prior to the start of the maintenance activity. When the maintenance evolution was shut down because of poor planning, the crew did not walk down the entire system to ensure it was properly aligned before returning it to service.

**Tritium:** The Site Rep reviewed alarm management at H-Area New Manufacturing, which has received between 4800 and 18,000 alarms/warnings a month over the last year. Many of these are directly related to planned outages/temporary reconfigurations. The facility manager actively tracks their most frequent alarms and both shift managers and systems engineers are working to fix problematic ones. Until the distributed control system is upgraded, the ability to use alarm management protocol is limited.