

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

March 18, 2011

TO: T. J. Dwyer, Technical Director
FROM: M. T. Sautman and D. L. Burnfield, Site Representatives
SUBJECT: Savannah River Site Weekly Report for Week Ending March 18, 2011

Emergency Preparedness: The site rep reiterated concerns with the limited and/or conflicting guidance in facility emergency procedures for dealing with a seismic event plus fire at the tritium facilities as well as the need to perform integrated, seismic emergency drills. This week, SRNS and NNSA outlined a plan for addressing several of these concerns. During the next two months, SRNS will revise their tritium emergency procedures to provide additional guidance on how emergency coordinators should respond to a seismic event. They will then conduct seminar training with their operations and emergency preparedness staffs on the expected response. Meanwhile, SRNS is also developing an integrated, tritium facilities drill scenario and hopes to start conducting coached drills in late May. SRNS would then conduct a series of integrated seismic drills (with varying scopes) during the summer and fall. SRNS and SRR are also talking about the possibility of conducting integrated drills involving tritium, H-Canyon, and/or H-Tank Farms in the future. (See 5/14/10, 6/18/10, and 2/25/11 reports).

F-Canyon: SRNS Readiness Assessment findings with pre-start actions dealt with the level of knowledge (e.g., safety basis requirements, radiological hazards, nuclear criticality fundamentals) of waste remediation worker and shift operations managers (SOM), the need to revise procedures and other documents, and minimum staffing. The site rep observed the remedial training class, but questioned whether its technical content and depth addressed the original findings. Facility management subsequently modified the class material, conducted roundtables, and personally interviewed several workers – those that did not meet expectations were disqualified. When the SRNS training manager conducted follow-on interviews to evaluate the effectiveness of the training, remediation workers and a SOM still exhibited several weaknesses. Facility and DOE management decided to start the DOE Readiness Assessment on Monday because they believe the workers possess sufficient knowledge to perform waste remediation activities. That being said, SRNS plans to conduct 1) additional SOM training to improve the SOMs' understanding of their responsibilities and the application of Technical Safety Requirements and 2) perform task-level training in the field with the workers to improve the workers' understanding of the bases for the safety controls. This training would continue throughout the duration of the project.

F-Tank Farm: SRR previously revised the Limiting Condition for Operation (LCO) 3.8.4 *Waste Storage Tank Level* to insert a new Condition B regarding inoperable control room alarms. They then moved the old Condition B to Condition C. This action, combined with SRR personnel failing to concentrate fully on the LCO, resulted in confusion among the staff upon entering the LCO. Personnel on the off-going shift believed they were entering condition B, while the SOM from the next shift correctly took the necessary actions to enter Condition C. While this SOM took the correct actions, the administrative change in the identification of the conditions could have led to a more serious situation. SRR personnel are exploring why the identification of the LCO conditions were changed in this manner.