

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

July 15, 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 July 15, 2011

Solid Waste Management Facility: When transferring a steel container of waste (>32,000 lbs) into a waste trench, SRNS personnel dropped the container. The container landed on the terraced wall of the trench and slid, resting in a precarious position partially on the mud terrace, partially on top of one container and against the corner of another container. The container holds decommissioning concrete and steel rubble from Knolls Atomic Power Laboratory (KAPL). While it does not appear that any of the containers are breached, the contractor is working diligently to ascertain the damage before the expected rainstorms arrive.

Strands of synthetic (nylon-like) handling gear remained on the hook that SRNS used to lift the container. It appears that the primary cause was that riggers incorrectly ran this handling gear across a sharp edge of the hook. The SRNS has placed a hold on their use of cranes until they can review the SRNS expectations with rigging personnel.

H-Canyon/HB-Line: The site rep observed the SRNS Readiness Assessment (RA) for miscellaneous highly-enriched uranium metals and the implementation of Revision 2 of the H-Canyon Documented Safety Analysis. For the most part, performance of the dry runs in HB-Line went smoother than last week's demonstration run; however, an operator failed to notice a discrepancy between the number written on a can and the number on their paperwork. SRNS is also rethinking the use of dry run procedures versus the actual procedures that they will use to perform the activity.

L-Area: The site rep observed the Phase II SRNS RA for transferring used fuel from L-Area to H-area. This RA completed the preparations for this transfer (which is not currently planned to occur) but also provided valuable experience for several authorization basis changes. This RA also allowed SRNS to use of the new 85-ton crane to move the 70-ton cask and the Battelle Energy Alliance Research Reactor (BRR) cask into and out of the used fuel basin. Both the dry runs and the conduct of the RA went fairly smoothly. The two problems that occurred this week involved incorrect placement of the trailer holding the BRR cask and a minor industrial safety issue. The RA will wrap up next week with a handful of findings requiring resolution prior to starting operations.

K-Area: SRNS completed their investigation into the fall that occurred last week in the Purification Area Vault (PAV). In this fall, a supervisor was seriously injured when removing dry wall while on a scaffold-type device. SRNS could not arrive at a conclusive cause for the fall for the following reasons: there did not appear to be anyone who actually observed the fall initiation and the worker who sustained the injury was not yet able to contribute to the deliberations. DOE also began their formal investigation this week.

Liquid Waste Operations: In light of declining budgets, SRR, in conjunction with DOE, has launched a major cost savings initiative to identify ways to perform work more efficiently. The site rep observed a brainstorming session. The site reps intend to follow this effort since some of the initiatives may involve engineering or nuclear safety processes.