

## DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

TO: Timothy Dwyer, Technical Director  
FROM: Rory Rauch, Site Representative  
SUBJECT: Oak Ridge Activity Report for Week Ending November 16, 2012

**Extent-of-Condition Review:** This week, B&W responded to NPO's September 27, 2012, memo requesting that B&W expand the scope of the extent-of-condition review to additional areas (see 10/5/12 report). These areas included:

- the frequency with which engineering and technical staff observe the operations for which they have assigned responsibilities;
- the state of expectations and performance for pausing operations when unexpected conditions arise;
- the rigor with which management encourages reporting errors and discrepancies and provides feedback to the worker regarding how these reports were addressed

The expanded extent-of-condition review utilized written surveys, interviews, and observations of work practices to evaluate the aforementioned areas for the Building 9212 secondary extraction process and the Building 9204-2E radiography and environmental room processes. The evaluation team found, in general, that workers in all three process areas were comfortable with the engagement level of the engineering and support organizations. Almost without exception, workers felt they used a conservative decision making approach to identify and raise issues to management. The primary exception to these conclusions was in the Building 9204-2E environmental room, where workers felt procedures could be improved and management was focused more on production output than addressing worker concerns. In response to these concerns, B&W plans to continue procedure improvement efforts, ensuring that workers are heavily involved in all phases of the improvement process. B&W is also evaluating ways to improve communication between workers and management, particularly in areas of problem resolution and management response to safety or operational concerns.

**NPO Monthly Issues Management Meeting (MIMM):** As described in the new NPO procedure titled *NPO Oversight Process*, NPO's oversight responsibilities associated with higher hazard or mission critical activities go beyond ensuring the contractor has properly adopted what is minimally required for compliance with requirements. These responsibilities also include ensuring the contractor's implementation of requirements is effective for the purpose of achieving mission success safely and securely. The procedure further states that judging the effectiveness of the contractor's implementation is a subjective activity, requiring employees to determine which issues should be reported to management, and requiring managers to use their knowledge, expertise, and experience to determine whether the reported information represents an issue that should be addressed. The MIMM is one of the key means of facilitating this subjective assessment of contractor performance in the new NPO oversight process. It provides a forum for NPO assistant managers and the senior scientific technical advisors to collaborate and challenge one another on significant or broad-scoped issues in contractor performance.

NPO recently issued its first MIMM report to B&W Y-12 and B&W Pantex. The MIMM identifies four new NPO management concerns that pertain to B&W Y-12. The most significant concerns involve inadequate engagement on the part of cognizant technical authorities for certain projects, such as the production microwave furnace (see 11/9/12 and 10/26/12 reports), and a lack of work control integration (see 11/9/12, 10/19/12, 10/12/12, and 10/5/12 reports). NPO plans to track these issues to closure.