

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

May 31, 2013

TO: S. A. Stokes, Acting Technical Director
FROM: M. T. Sautman and D. L. Burnfield, Site Representatives
SUBJECT: Savannah River Site Weekly Report for Week Ending May 31, 2013

H-Canyon: Due to recent events, SRNS will perform full-time supervisory watches for two weeks, require first line managers (FLM) to be present for all component manipulations, and require systems engineers to review all Technical Safety Requirement (TSR) surveillance test database (STD) records.

- H-Canyon declared a TSR violation after an engineer realized that the calibration date used to satisfy a surveillance requirement (SR) for a safety-significant instrument air pressure transmitter was actually for a general service one with a similar component number. (This discovery occurred after the allowed grace period). The instrument calibration database reflected the correct calibration date. However, a maintenance worker, the shift technical engineer (STE), and a shift operations manager (SOM) approved the STD record with the calibration form for the wrong instrument attached despite the form listing the instrument as general service and having blank spaces for the SR and limiting condition for operation numbers.
- H-Canyon is investigating how a process air blowdown valve was left open for 58 hours. The leaking 140-160 psig air formed a 3' deep hole outside. In addition, while restoring the process air system following a lockout, operators mistakenly left the cross-tie valves open. This allowed process air to flow into the plant air system when the process air system was returned to service. Finally, an operator inadvertently opened a valve associated with the 325# steam supply rather than the expected condensate drain valve, causing pressurized steam to be released.

Building 235-F: Shortly after initiating a load test of the diesel generator, the generator shut down due to high temperature (cause still under investigation) and 235-F switched back to normal power. Meanwhile, a field operator decided to hit the start button for a supply fan reportedly to confirm that it was operating and then quickly shut it down once he noticed the fan starting. (This fan was actually off—engineers are investigating operator observations that the power indicator for this fan stays illuminated after the fan is turned off and the blades are still spinning). This caused the tunnel vacuum pressure to change enough to activate an interlock that swapped the exhaust fans.

Budget: The site reps continue to review several topics to determine if tighter budgets are having negative impacts on operations or safety programs.

- The number of emergency drills conducted to year-to-date by SRNS and SRR are roughly 20% fewer than those conducted during the same period last year. Some of the missed drills are expected to be conducted later this year now that furloughs are over. For example, DOE delayed the May annual site exercise and now hopes to do it in September. The contractors state that they have not reduced training for emergency responders nor have they reduced the amount of supplies kept in case of an emergency.
- A site rep review of dozens of operator, STE, and SOM qualification card revisions from across SRS did not find any evidence that required training was being reduced.
- A review of radiation protection staffing found that SRR was essentially the same as they were in 2009. Some of the SRNS staffing swings are directly related to stimulus funding. However, the site reps are looking into the impacts of H-Canyon losing 45% of their inspectors and K-Area losing 2/3 of their FLMs and 48% of their inspectors since 2008.
- A site rep inspected construction areas within H-Tank Farms. While several small deficiencies (such as unattended tools and consumables) were noted, housekeeping in general has improved since the last field observation.