

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

July 19, 2013

TO: S. A. Stokes, Acting Technical Director
FROM: D. L. Burnfield, Site Representative
SUBJECT: Savannah River Site Weekly Report for Week Ending July 19, 2013

Mark Sautman was on leave this week. Staff members Jeremiah MacSleyne and Michael Dunlevy were on site this week. They observed a multi-facility drill conducted in F-Area and conducted facility observations of Building 235-F and the Tritium Extraction Facility.

Building 235-F: During a facility observation of Building 235-F, a fixed continuous air monitor (CAM), also a called a high volume air monitor, alarm activated. SRNS personnel told the staff that this monitor was out of service, although the alarm panel was not posted as out of service. SRNS personnel stated the likely cause was load testing of the 235-F diesel generator. The facility has portable CAMs, which have replaced the fixed CAMs, but it is not clear in either the approved surveillance and maintenance Basis for Interim Operations or in the abnormal operating procedure that these monitors have been disconnected. The diesel generator failed its periodic load test. SRNS personnel are preparing the work packages to repair the diesel generator, which will remain out of service through the weekend.

F-Area Drill: SRNS and SRR conducted a multi-facility F-Area drill. The stated purpose of the drill was to ensure that the personnel in facilities surrounding Building 235-F could take the necessary actions to take shelter in the event of a release of ^{238}Pu . In this regard, the drill was successful for SRNS; however, a number of opportunities for improvement were noted. Communication problems between the control room, the fire department, and radiological protection personnel resulted in a failure of the on scene resources to coordinate their activities. Partially because of this failure, adequate radiological protection data were never obtained, and fire department personnel were required to remain on the scene in protective gear longer than was necessary.

Several years ago, some communications links between F/H Laboratory control room and the F-Tank Farm were partially severed. This action plus the lack of good communication practices between the Tank Farms control room (now located in H-Tank Farm) and F-Tank Farm emergency responders led to a failure to initiate the correct actions in F-Tank Farm.

For SRR, the drill cannot be considered a complete success. WSI never secured the F-Tank Farm access road and controllers observed personnel exiting from buildings long before the all clear was given.

Tank Farms: In order to complete chemical cleaning of Tank 12, SRR initiated a transfer from Tank 12 to Tank 51. They transferred about 75,000 gallons before halting the procedure and entering Limiting Conditions of Operation (LCO) 3.8.15 because the Tank 12 purge exhaust flow was low. SRR replaced the HEPA filters and are inspecting the system for potential flow restrictions. They have installed temporary ventilation in case it is required.