

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

April 25, 2014

TO: S. A. Stokes, Technical Director
FROM: M. T. Sautman and D. L. Burnfield, Site Representatives
SUBJECT: Savannah River Site Weekly Report for Week Ending April 25, 2014

Salt Waste Processing Facility: The site rep performed a field observation with the DOE facility representative (FR) lasting approximately 90 minutes. Upon attempting to exit the building, the site rep and the FR realized that a URS radiography crew had barricaded the building from the outside, trapping them on the inside of the barricade. The radiography supervisor later stated that they had obtained approval to proceed with radiography while the site rep and FR were still inside the boundaries. He described the method used for clearing the building of people. Parsons, the FR, and the site rep believe the method used was inconsistent with established good practices. Based on subsequent dosimetry results, it does not appear that the personnel were exposed to any actual radiation fields. A review of the incident continues.

HB-Line/Training: SRNS completed their Independent Assessment (IA) of HB-Line, which focused on five functional areas including conduct of operations and training. SRNS conducted this pseudo-Readiness Assessment (RA) in preparation for DOE resuming their RA, which was suspended last August (see 8/30/13 weekly report). Despite the limited scope and the completion of a facility self-assessment earlier this year, SRNS identified thirty-seven pre-start and nine post-start corrective actions. DOE plans to extensively review the closure of these actions prior to commencing their RA in mid-May.

The site rep observed an unsuccessful oral board for a first line manager who was resuming work at HB-Line. A subsequent facility representative review of the written comprehensive exam identified many cases where the grading of the exam was inconsistent with the answer key and nonconservative. As a result, SRNS suspended all written comprehensive exams at HB-Line until they review the quality of the current exams and the grading of past exams to determine the extent of condition. SRNS is also reviewing how well their mock oral boards are preparing candidates for the evaluated oral boards. In light of the two IA findings dealing with first line manager level of knowledge, recent drill performance (see 3/28/14 weekly report) and the above, the site rep continues to be concerned with the training of first line managers at HB-Line.

The site reps observed parts of the training being provided to new SRNS operators, maintenance workers, and first line managers on nuclear science, flange connections, and fluid flow. The site reps passed on observations regarding the accuracy of the training materials and instructor level of knowledge to training management. The site reps also observed a successful certification oral board of a fissile material handler. K-Area personnel conducted the board professionally and the handler successfully passed the oral examination.

Fire Department: SRNS signed a multi-year lease for a new ladder truck (see 1/20/10 Board letter).

Conduct of Engineering: DOE-SR sent SRNS a letter listing several nuclear safety issues and expressing concern with an adverse trend in the conduct of engineering. DOE requested SRNS to identify potential causes for the trend and to develop a corrective action plan and schedule.