

## DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

September 4, 2015

**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 September 4, 2015

**Emergency Preparedness (EP):** The site rep observed the annual evaluated EP exercise for H-Canyon (a 64% nitric acid spill) and a training drill for 235-F (fuel truck fire). In both drills, the site rep observed drill control problems – controller ignoring an operator next to the simulated spill, victims not provided enough information to play their role correctly, controllers improperly telling workers to skip most of whole body frisk, etc. During the H-Canyon drill, neither the Fire Department (FD) reconnaissance team nor their controller realized they had walked down the wrong road so the controller gave the team visual information about the leak which was not visible from their actual position. During the 235-F drill, the FD noticed that steam was blowing towards their arrival path so they decided to use a different gate at 235-F. Discussions amongst the FD, the dispatcher, and control room personnel did not clearly identify where the FD planned to arrive. As a result, facility and FD personnel ended up on opposite sides of 235-F. While drill controllers tried to get the incident scene coordinated again, a DOE observer suspended drill play, but did not discuss this with the lead field controller first. Since the drill suspension was not properly communicated or controlled, the incident scene became chaotic with some people playing and others not. As a result, the drill timeline became corrupted and the ability to see if the lessons learned from last week's tabletop would be implemented in the field was lost. Considering that both scenarios had been repeatedly performed with only minor variations and both facilities had recently completed readiness reviews, the conduct and performance of the drills were disappointing.

**Savannah River National Laboratory:** In recent years, DOE has provided funds to address the ventilation gaps that were identified as part of Recommendation 2004-2 (see 11/18/11, 5/23/12, 9/21/12, 8/23/13 reports). DOE has decided to transfer all fiscal year 2016 funds for ventilation upgrades to support comment resolution and implementation of the new safety basis instead.

**Readiness Assessments (RA):** In light of problems with several recent RAs, the DOE Assistant Manager (AM) directed SRNS to not conduct any new RAs until they develop and implement a corrective action plan (CAP) for achieving readiness or obtain concurrence from the DOE AM (see 7/31/15 report). DOE documented this action in a letter dated August 7, 2015, which identified seven areas of weakness in the SRNS process for achieving and determining readiness. This week the SRNS Senior Management Review Board approved the CAP with comment. While the CAP addresses each of the weaknesses identified by DOE, the site rep notes that DOE and SRNS management must both provide positive pressure to ensure the demands of schedule do not drive short cuts or workarounds.

**High-Efficiency Particulate Air (HEPA) Filters:** Last week, tank farms reported that a HEPA filter failed its periodic in-place test (see 8/28/15 report). In the case of the tank farms incident, the cause was determined to be a wingnut that had become loose allowing the HEPA filter to slip out of place. This week a filter in K-Area also failed an in-place test. In this case, SRNS considers the cause to be a failure to ensure the HEPA was properly sealed during installation.