

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

TO: Steven Stokes, Technical Director
FROM: William Linzau and Rory Rauch, Site Representatives
SUBJECT: Oak Ridge Activity Report for Week Ending September 4, 2015

Board Members Jessie Roberson and Sean Sullivan visited Y-12 this week to observe work activities with the site reps. Work activities observed included Building 9215 machining operations, Building 9212 casting and solvent extraction operations, and Building 9204-2E weapon component dismantlement operations. The site reps observed adequate conduct of operations performance during these activities, but noted instances of poor housekeeping in certain areas. Last week, NPO, having observed similar issues on a recurring basis, sent a letter to the contractor indicating that the general cosmetic condition of many Y-12 facilities must be significantly improved. NPO requested that CNS provide a plan to address the subject concerns within 30 days of receipt of the letter.

Building 9215: CNS management held a critique this week to evaluate the event in which Y-12 Fire Protection Operations (FPO) personnel were sprayed by viscous material during manual venting of a pressurized drum (see 8/28/15 report). During the critique, an NPO representative identified a discrepancy between the type of work authorized by the Plant Shift Superintendent (PSS) and the actual field response. During the event, the initial response team requested authorization from the Plant Shift Superintendent (PSS) to vent the drums using the emergency work process. This process typically applies to non-emergency response personnel (e.g., crafts workers and supervisors) in situations when immediate work is required to prevent a fatality or serious injury. However, the actions taken in the field during this event were more consistent with an emergency response: the FPO established an incident command, who obtained PSS authorization for FPO personnel to manually vent the drums. These actions appeared to be consistent with the Y-12 bulging container response procedure; nonetheless, CNS management committed to evaluate the interface between the emergency work process and the procedures used during this event. Additional corrective actions include understanding why the drum vents did not work as expected and evaluating the need for additional remote drum puncture devices.

Work Planning and Control: CNS Y-12's Maintenance Management and Integration (MMI) department is instituting changes to the process for planning preventive maintenance (PM) jobs. Since PM job steps, requirements, and hazards typically remain the same for each job, MMI personnel are seeking to reduce the number of hours required to plan PM jobs through the reuse of work control documentation. In order to ensure that changing field conditions do not affect the identification of hazards and controls for a given evolution, the process changes include a set of "workability verification" questions that workers must answer prior to performing work. The Maintenance Execution department piloted these changes in Building 9204-2E during the second and third quarters of fiscal year 2015. The pilot demonstrated a reduction in the number of hours required to plan PM jobs. These changes were recently applied to Building 9212.

Last week, during a PM job on the hydrogen fluoride (HF) supply equipment for Building 9212's Oxide Conversion Facility, crafts personnel demonstrated a good questioning attitude by seeking clarification on one of the workability verification questions, which asks "Will bystanders be exposed to job hazards?" Specifically, crafts personnel sought clarification regarding who would be considered a "bystander," given past issues with minor HF leaks at the job site. Maintenance Execution management and Environment, Safety, and Health personnel have since clarified the term bystander and reaffirmed the hazard controls for the job. MMI personnel are considering an update to the workability verification questions to minimize future confusion.