

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 18, 2015

Staff members D. Andersen and R. Jackson were at Y-12 observing non-destructive evaluations of concrete walls at the Highly Enriched Uranium Materials Facility and reviewing CNS actions to address structural deterioration in Building 9204-2. In addition, Z. McCabe was on site shadowing site rep activities.

Conduct of Operations: In June, the site reps met with Production Support's Action Office Manager to discuss actions underway to revitalize the senior supervisory watch (SSW) program. Earlier this year, the site reps noted a decrease in the number of SSWs performed in Production facilities. The low point occurred in February when only 7 of 11 scheduled SSWs were performed. Since taking over in May, the Action Office Manager has been working to revitalize the program, including qualifying new individuals to perform watches. In June, three new individuals were added to the program, and the most recent SSW Monthly Report notes that nine new Production employees have been assigned to start SSW training qualifications. The increase in availability of personnel and heightened focus from senior CNS management on disciplined operations in Building 9212 (see 8/21/15 report) resulted in 27 SSWs in the month of August, which exceeded the 22 watches scheduled for the month. In addition, the rigor of the SSW observations has shown a marked increase. This increased rigor can be partially attributed to the direction promulgated in an August 27, 2015, standing order that requires watchstanders (and other oversight entities) observing Building 9212 operations to ensure step-by-step compliance with technical procedures by following along in procedures being performed. Examples of recent SSW observations include comments on an operation in Building 9212 that was conducted without the Reference-Use procedure in the area, and a general observation on the need to clarify procedures that have "and/or" modifiers in steps that provide direction. To date, many of the recent improvements have been in Building 9212 due to the enhanced oversight directed in the standing order, but future SSW revitalization actions include ensuring two SSWs per week in the other production facilities.

Radiological Control (RADCON): This week, three carpenters were contaminated on their work shoes while performing work on the roof of Building 9215. The area in question was a posted fixed contamination area and required personnel to inform the responsible RADCON technician prior to entry. The workers contacted the RADCON technician, who determined that no radiological surveys were required upon exit because there were no known changes in work site conditions from the last time the RADCON technician had surveyed the job site approximately one month earlier. That afternoon, one of the carpenters was reassigned to work in a radiological buffer area (RBA) of Building 9204-2E. Upon exiting the RBA, the carpenter set off the personnel contamination monitor alarm. The responding RADCON technician identified a muddy substance on the carpenter's work shoes as the source of contamination. RADCON technicians determined that the contamination came from the previous job on the roof of Building 9215, and that the other two carpenters also had contamination on their work shoes. The site reps observed a fact finding meeting for the event. CNS described the contamination as fixed, but transferable, which allowed for the event to occur. The CNS Y-12 RADCON Manager committed to evaluate current RADCON procedures for potential improvements to RADCON processes for the identification and control of areas with fixed, but potentially transferable contamination.