

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

January 7, 2005

MEMORANDUM FOR: J. Kent Fortenberry, Technical Director
FROM: J. S. Contardi, SRS Site Representative
SUBJECT: SRS Report for Week Ending January 7, 2005

Work Planning Initiative: In response to a October 4, 2004, Department of Energy letter and a December 13, 2004, Board letter, a Westinghouse Savannah River Company (WSRC) work planning team is revising the work planning process. The automated hazard analysis process has been redesigned to provide a more useful end product for planners and operators. A new feature in the hazard identification process will emphasize the hierarchy of controls with particular attention placed on eliminating the hazard. In addition, the new hazard analysis process will provide planners with a better format to help resolve potentially conflicting work controls, and a controls disposition report will be generated to document the expectation of each prescribed control. To reduce the size of work packages, a Safe Work Permit (SWP) has been introduced that specifically identifies the hazards and intended controls for individual sub-tasks. The SWP will provide a description of the work and will be the primary mechanism through which the operators perform work safely.

The conceptual plan for implementing the new work control process would require more responsibility by the Facility Manager (FM). Each FM would be responsible for understanding the inherent risk for planned work. Work deemed high risk by the FM would require an additional risk assessment. An analysis of the previous work planning process identified less than adequate implementation as a significant deficiency. To help facilitate implementation of the new process, an initial pilot project will be conducted for select facilities. The pilot project is expected to begin in late March 2005.

Defense Waste Processing Facility Recycle: Due to the current space shortage in the tank farms, concentrated Defense Waste Processing Facility (DWPF) recycle will be stored in Tank 24. Recently, only unconcentrated DWPF recycle waste has been stored in Tank 24. Utilization of Tank 24 is necessary to support the low-curie salt initiative. Tank 24 is a Type IV style tank that does not have any known cracks and has recently stored waste up to the 345 inch level. The concentrated waste has a radioactivity concentration less than 1 curie per gallon and is within the assumptions of the current Safety Basis. Prior to receipt of concentrated waste in Tank 24, the current contents will be transferred to the 2H evaporator system in early February 2005.

FB-Line Operations: An engineering evaluation of recent weld failures has determined that incompatible lids and containers may be responsible for the lack of full weld penetration (Site Rep Weekly 12/10/04). Following a succession of test cans, a suitable lid/container combination was identified. Radiological operations have resumed and the first lot of product containers have passed the required quality control measures. In addition to selecting suitable lid/container combinations, site engineers have increased the weld head amperage. Increased amperage will help ensure full weld penetration but could also increase porosity in the weld. The three previous lots that did not pass the destructive visual exam are still be evaluated. At least one lot, 25 containers, is expected to require repackaging.