

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

April 15, 2005

MEMORANDUM FOR: J. Kent Fortenberry, Technical Director
FROM: J. S. Contardi, SRS Site Representative
SUBJECT: SRS Report for Week Ending April 15, 2005

SRS Facility Representative Council: On Wednesday, the Site Representative briefed the SRS Facility Representative (FR) Council. The briefing focused on the roles and responsibilities of the Board's Site Representatives as well as current issues and concerns.

National Academy of Sciences: This week the Site Representative attended a meeting held by the National Academy of Sciences Committee on the Management of Certain Radioactive Waste Streams Stored in Tanks at Three Department of Energy Sites. Representatives from SRS, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC), and the State of South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control presented information related to implementation of Section 3116 of the 2005 National Defense Authorization Act.

Canyon Solvent Disposition: As a result of the F-Canyon shutdown, approximately 60,000 gallons of radiologically contaminated spent solvent were removed from the facility. Thus far, approximately 12,000 gallons have been dispositioned at the Toxic Substances Control Act incinerator in Tennessee. Waste Control Specialists (WCS) in Texas has stabilized an additional 10,000 gallons and will also disposition the remaining solvent, potentially by the end of the year. Three more shipments totaling 10,000 gallons are planned this week. However, the remaining solvent shipments may be hampered due to anticipated waste shipments from the Rocky Flats Environmental Technology Site to WCS. Following stabilization at WCS, the waste will be packaged in B-25s and dispositioned at the Nevada Test Site.

In addition to the 60,000 gallons of solvent generated from the F-Canyon shutdown, approximately 25,000 gallons of legacy solvent is still being stored on site. The legacy solvent contains heavy metals and radiological contamination which makes the solvent a mixed waste. DOE-SR is currently evaluating a disposition path for the legacy solvent.

H-Area Radiological Operations: Three notable radiological events occurred in H-Canyon and HB-Line this week. During the course of work in the crane maintenance area, the measured air activity exceeded the radiological work permit suspension guidelines and may have exceeded the prescribed respiratory protection factor. Inadequate monitoring failed to identify the changing radiological conditions. Radiological control technicians did not monitor the job specific air sample until completion of the job.

A work package generated for routine corrective maintenance was not appropriate for the prescribed scope of work. The inadequate work package, poor communications, and inattention to postings lead to work on a system in which the radiological hazards and controls had not been properly analyzed.

During a walk down of HB-Line, a DOE FR discovered a worker in an airborne radioactivity area without respiratory protection.