

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

December 2, 2016

TO: S. A. Stokes, Technical Director
FROM: M. T. Sautman and Z. C. McCabe, Site Representatives
SUBJECT: Savannah River Site Weekly Report for Week Ending December 2, 2016

K-Area: Construction personnel began repairing the fallen cement asbestos wall panels of the Assembly area in K-Area (see May 27, 2016 report). Because of the potential to damage equipment, this work required the Assembly Area to be in Maintenance Mode, but this requirement was not included in the prerequisite section of the construction work package. On the first day of the repairs, the facility was in the correct mode and the work was allowed to proceed. However, the facility needed to switch to Operations Mode for other reasons on the second day. The shift operations manager (SOM) informed the construction personnel of the mode change, which prohibited them from resuming the construction work. This led to the SOM noting that the work package prerequisites should have included a step ensuring the facility was in the proper mode, and subsequently called a time out.

235-F: The site representative observed the pre-job briefing, task performance, and post-job review for the installation of Cell 6 gloves and other associated work. This evolution went much smoother than the last time these tasks were attempted (see October 28, 2016 report). Workers will start removing items from the cell next week.

Emergency Preparedness: DOE requested that the security contractor conduct a Limited Scope Performance Test to determine how long it would take law enforcement to establish road blocks on Highway 125 in the event of a radiological release at K-Area. This question arose during a staff review of the assumed location of the maximally exposed offsite individual.

Tank Farms: A subcontractor demonstrated the use of a remote controlled robot equipped with a plasma cutter. SRR hopes to use this to remove the lagging and insulation from the 3H Evaporator Pot.

The site representative observed an oral board for a control room manager. The conduct and grading of the exam was rigorous.

Transfer of waste from Tank 15 to Tank 13 is on hold until SRR can determine the cause of some problems with the Tank 13 submersible mixer pumps. SRR engineers are also monitoring the Isopar® concentration in the Modular Caustic Side Solvent Extraction Unit strip effluent since concentrations have been more erratic and closer to the limit since processing resumed.

Fire Protection: The increased management attention by DOE, SRNS, and SRR on fire impairments since the Board's March 2012 letter has resulted in dramatic reductions in the number and age of fire impairments. For example, comparing March 5, 2012 to November 28, 2016 the total number of impairments has fallen from 106 to 35, the number of unplanned impairments has fallen from 83 to 19, and the number of impairments more than 180 days old has fallen from 25 to 2.