

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

January 24, 2025

TO: R. T. Davis, Acting Technical Director
FROM: L. Lin and E. P. Richardson, Resident Inspectors
SUBJECT: Savannah River Site Activity Report for Week Ending January 24, 2025

Staff Activity: A member of the Board's staff, D. Montierth, was onsite to provide augmentation to the SRS resident inspectors.

Winter Storm: SRS management closed the site to non-essential personnel on 1/22/2025 due to cold temperatures along with snow and ice accumulation. Site personnel resumed normal operations on 1/23/2025 with no operational impacts reported due to the winter weather.

Savannah River National Laboratory (SRNL): SRNL entered the potential inadequacy in the safety analysis (PISA) process for exceeding their inventory control limit in November 2024 (see 11/15/2024 and 12/13/2024 reports). DOE approved BSRA's response plan on 1/16/2025, which describes activities that are prohibited and that are allowed while the facility restores compliance with their safety basis. It also implements compensatory measures which include conducting fire patrols of building 773-A, prohibitions on hot work and activities involving flammable gas and class 1 flammable liquids and maintaining the Section E shielded cell block A as a credited safety significant structure, system, and component. Additionally, BSRA is required to submit a formal safety analysis to DOE by 2/28/2025 to justify continuing operations in 773-A. The contractor completed an implementation verification review of the response plan which resulted in two pre-start findings, and DOE's review resulted in one additional pre-start finding. All pre-start findings have been adjudicated. SRNL has been characterizing and dispositioning material-at-risk as part of their efforts to restore compliance.

Savannah River Tritium Enterprise (SRTE): SRTE declared that a PISA exists after personnel identified items in the 217-H vault that are not fully evaluated in the hazard analysis during an extent of condition review for a separate flammable gas issue (see 1/17/2025 report).

Saltstone: The Board's staff member attended an issue investigation meeting discussing respirator issuance to a user whose respirator qualifications had expired. The individual performed work in an airborne radioactive area and high contamination area, which required respiratory protection. The investigation identified that on 12/27/2024, 1/13/2025, and 1/14/2025, three separate personnel issued the same individual a respirator. Although the computerized respiratory issuance tracking system identified an issue with the worker's qualifications, preventing the issuance of a respirator in each instance, the issuers ignored the warning and used a manual form to issue the worker a respirator, which is contrary to site procedures. Further, the worker acknowledged that they were aware that their qualifications had expired prior to the 1/13/2025 issuance but did not correct the deficiency or notify management. Additionally, the worker did not meet the facial hair requirements established in SRMC's procedures while wearing a respirator. The worker and issuers stated that they were unsure whether the facial hair requirements applied to the powered air-purifying respirator issued, even though signage supporting this requirement existed at the work site. The use of the manual issuance form is on hold pending further corrective actions.