

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

July 11, 2025

TO: Technical Director
FROM: Oak Ridge Resident Inspectors
SUBJECT: Oak Ridge Activity Report for Week Ending July 11, 2025

YFO Oversight: YFO issued the second-period Triannual Issues Management Meeting report adding three new Emerging Items of Interest (EII), closing one Management Concern (MC) and two EIIs. YFO closed the longstanding MC titled “Disciplined Operations.” Originally opened in 2020, YFO was looking to see a shift in the culture at CNS toward becoming an effective learning organization (see 3/7/2025 report). YFO noted that CNS has established the management systems necessary to achieve a self-sustaining trajectory of disciplined operations performance improvement. Although YFO is closing this MC, they acknowledge that gaps still exist in CNS’s ability to follow through with adequate corrective actions that will prevent recurrence of issues. As such, and in line with a resident inspector (RI) review of closure evidence from the contractor assurance system last fall, YFO opened a new EII titled “Untimely and Ineffective Corrective Actions.” YFO is currently performing a follow-up assessment on the contractor assurance system following an assessment performed in late 2024 that revealed several unfavorable results (see 12/6/2024 report).

YFO also opened an EII titled “CNS Maintenance Performance Measures” based on a recent Nuclear Maintenance Management Program (NMMP) assessment. As a result of the NMMP assessment, YFO found that CNS senior leadership did not implement effective performance measures for either maintenance performance metrics or nuclear maintenance contractor assurance (see 1/10/2025 report).

YFO continues to evaluate the EII titled “Facility Operations Management Performance.” Another spinoff of the disciplined operations issue, CNS is continually improving its training for Facility Operations Management (FOM) personnel. CNS instituted a three-phase conduct of operations training with specific FOM in-person continuing training. CNS also instituted an oral board management advisor, which has shown significant benefits in standardizing that portion of the qualification process. CNS completed a causal analysis identifying, in part, turnover and training as a direct cause of the performance degradation.

Transuranic Waste Processing Center (TWPC): Members from DOE HQ and OREM commenced the Federal Readiness Assessment (FRA) for oxide processing operations at TWPC. The FRA team issued an implementation plan prior to the start of the FRA that defines the breadth of the review, prerequisites, review schedule, FRA team composition, and the criteria and review approach documents. The FRA team is evaluating the control strategy and requirements for processing oxide waste containers. United Cleanup Oak Ridge, LLC (UCOR) is currently allowed to receive and store oxide materials in the safety basis; however, the processing of oxide waste is presently prohibited via a condition of approval from a previous revision of the safety basis. UCOR is currently implementing this restriction via a standing order. The FRA team watched several demonstrations and conducted numerous interviews. An RI will continue to provide independent oversight until the FRA concludes at the end of the following week.