

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

December 24, 2021

TO: Christopher J. Roscetti, Technical Director
FROM: L. Lin, Z. C. McCabe, E. P. Richardson, Resident Inspectors
SUBJECT: Savannah River Site Activity Report for Week Ending December 24, 2021

Salt Waste Processing Facility (SWPF): While adjudicating a Non-Conformance Report (NCR) concern related to expiration dates, the SWPF watch team determined that a limiting condition of operation (LCO) entry was required. On 12/20/2021, the shift operations manager (SOM) and shift technical engineer (STE) failed to read the entirety of a note and incorrectly determined that two of the required actions were not applicable and logged them as such. During the fact-finding meeting, the SOM and STE also discussed that no action was necessary for one of the conditions since they expected to be in the LCO for a short period of time and the prohibited operation could not be performed because the associated equipment was out of service. Due to three other recent TSR violations (see 11/19/21, 11/26/21 and 12/10/21 reports), SWPF had instituted Senior Supervisory Watch (SSW) oversight as part of a Management Control Plan. However, this was an unplanned LCO entry and thus not specified to be covered by SSW at the start of the shift. The manager tasked with SSW was present in the SOM/STE office at the time they discussed entering the LCO. However, the manager left when the SOM and STE were discussing applicable required actions. SWPF management placed the facility in an operational pause until 24/7 SSW can be implemented. Until then limited activities will be permitted by the facility manager. Per discussions during the fact-finding meeting, numerous conditional statements, and applicability notes in the LCO contributed to the watchstander confusion.

The resident inspectors observed the pre-job brief and portion of the evolution to remove and replace the basket filter in the hot cells that is being used to support the recovery plan (see 12/3/21 and 11/19/21 reports). The manager performing SSW was also observing the pre-job brief and evolution. The resident inspectors noted several issues and provided these observations to Parsons management. The topics included improper use of the pre-job brief checklist, failing to discuss the day's planned scope of work during the pre-job, inadequate use of three-way communications, failing to stop when a procedure step could not be performed as written, and a general lack of formality throughout the evolution.

Savannah River National Laboratory (SRNL): SRNL personnel held a fact finding related to the sealed vials containing liquid shipped in a TRU drum to SWMF in January 2021 (See 12/17/21 report). Based on the vials vertical location in the TRU drum, SRNL has tentatively determined which waste cuts generated them, but are still investigating to confirm. Since there is no immediate safety concern, the TRU drum in question will remain sealed at Solid Waste Management Facility (SWMF) until the path forward to return the drum to SRNL is approved and any other potential drums have been evaluated. There are 20 additional drums in two batches shipped from SRNL that also require going through Real-Time-Radiography (RTR) to inspect for sealed vials (standard process). This process will be completed over the next few months based on SWMF priorities and shipment schedules. Any additional drums identified as containing sealed vials will be returned to SRNL where they will be opened and properly dispositioned.