

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

June 10, 2005

MEMORANDUM FOR: J. Kent Fortenberry, Technical Director
FROM: J. S. Contardi/M.T. Sautman, SRS Site Representatives
SUBJECT: SRS Report for Week Ending June 10, 2005

Operations Oversight: This week the Site Reps conducted several facility walk downs. Relevant observations are discussed below.

- Building 777-10A—During a facility walk down, the Site Rep identified a potential carbon monoxide hazard from the use of a diesel engine within the facility. The contractor was responsive to the observation and committed to have industrial hygiene personnel evaluate the carbon monoxide hazard within the facility. Building 777-10A is a former physics laboratory which is currently undergoing decontamination and decommissioning.
- Building 247-F (a former fuel fabrication facility)—The Site Rep observed an open doorway across which was a yellow and magenta rope and a posting noting it was the boundary of a contamination area (CA) and airborne radioactivity area (ARA). The Site Rep, however, could feel air flowing from the more contaminated CA/ARA to the Radiological Buffer Area. This issue will be discussed with facility radiation protection and ventilation personnel next week.
- TRU Pad 15—While observing the contractor readiness determination for the restart of real-time-radiography, the Site Rep identified a sealed source which was not properly stored. Dose rates from the source would require storage of the source within a radiation area Per 10 CFR 835, but no barricades or postings were present. The contractor held a critique and determined the posting was removed during housekeeping activities and was not replaced.

H-Area Conduct of Operations: As a result of several potentially significant events, contractor management held a two day safety stand down for HB-Line and H-Canyon. Poor procedural compliance and less than adequate communications contributed to the events summarized below.

- Within H-Canyon, the 6.1D dissolver was charged without proper authorization or before nuclear criticality safety checks were completed. Despite the identification of the procedural compliance discrepancy the evolution was not immediately stopped.
- During an abnormal restart of mixers in H-Canyon, the neutron monitors tripped the system. Two additional attempts also resulted in the actuation of the interlocks due to high neutron counts. Contractor personnel erroneously believed the high neutron counts were due to electronic noise from the mixer motors.
- Inadequate communications in HB-Line resulted in the lack of oxalic acid addition prior to precipitation. As a result no material was collected on the filters and the entire batch was collected in the filtrate vessel.