

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

TO: Steven Stokes, Technical Director
FROM: William Linzau and Rory Rauch, Site Representatives
SUBJECT: Oak Ridge Activity Report for Week Ending August 15, 2014

NPO Oversight: This week, the NPO Manager issued a letter to the CNS Chief Executive Officer expressing concern that a series of recent events indicate a cultural undercurrent of complacency with regard to disciplined operations at Y-12. The letter lists a series of security and safety events such as the recent small fire and casting anomalies in Building 9212 (see 6/20/14 and 8/1/14 reports). The letter recognizes that many of the cited events took place prior to contract transition, but states that it is NPO and CNS's collective responsibility to safely and securely execute mission deliverables at both Y-12 and Pantex while meeting customer expectations. Of note, the letter directs CNS to take a broader look at the underlying systemic causes for the cited events. This would go beyond an evaluation of typical statistics (e.g., occurrence reporting metrics) to include the potential impact of contract transition, budget reductions, and cost savings initiatives on contractor performance. The letter requests within 60 days an evaluation of the reasons for this series of abnormal events and CNS's path forward in addressing systemic problems.

Uranium Program Manager (UPM): The newly appointed UPM (see 7/18/14 report), recently issued a series of letters of direction to various stakeholders in Y-12's enriched uranium infrastructure modernization efforts. The letters contain several noteworthy actions, including:

- The NPO Manager and the Y-12 staff are to make Area 5 de-inventory (a project that will primarily reduce the material-at-risk in Building 9212) and the projects to complete the design and installation of an electrorefiner and calciner the highest priorities in support of the phased shutdown of Building 9212 enriched uranium operations. Y-12 is challenged to complete the latter projects within three years of CD-0 approval while accelerating MAR reduction efforts (to include actions such as decreasing process inventories to a "just-in-time" minimum).
- The NPO Manager is to work with the UPM to develop, refine, and prioritize other projects necessary to continue to reduce the mission and safety risks associated with uranium programs. These projects would include recommended upgrades from the Facility Risk Reviews for Buildings 9212, 9204-2E, and 9215.
- The UPM will work in coordination with various program offices to help identify additional resources for the key enriched uranium modernization initiatives.
- The establishment of a Uranium Mission Working Group, which will provide matrix support for a cohesive, results-oriented uranium program.
- The establishment of various technical exchanges between Y-12, the NNSA national laboratories, the United Kingdom's Atomic Weapons Establishment, and UPO. A technical exchange on electrorefining is to meet as soon as practical.

Emergency Management (EM): CNS completed the after action report that documents the results from the site's annual emergency response exercise conducted in June (see 6/20/14 report). The exercise evaluators identified one finding: that the Plant Shift Superintendent (PSS) did not direct the affected plant population to take protective actions in response to a simulated release of hazardous materials. To address this weakness, the report recommended re-training PSS personnel and using drills to test their ability to accurately categorize an event and issue the appropriate protective actions. This week, the site reps observed the first of these drills. An EM specialist plans to run 20 different drill scenarios (four separate drills for each of the five PSS work shifts) during the next several months.