

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 21, 2015

Conduct of Operations/Work Planning and Control (WP&C): In May, the CNS Y-12 Site Manager recognized a potential negative trend in conduct of operations and WP&C performance and tasked personnel from the CNS Mission Assurance organization with analyzing a set of events that occurred during the previous two months (see site rep weekly reports from 3/13/15 – 4/24/15). CNS Mission Assurance personnel completed the assessment last month and recently briefed NPO and the site reps on the results. The assembled team evaluated a total of 17 events looking for common causes and underlying organizational issues. The team's analysis revealed indications of an "organizational drift" that appeared after contract transition due to the fast pace and magnitude of change, unclear roles and responsibilities, and an uneven flow of information throughout the organization. The team concluded that this organizational drift was removing the focus from work and reducing the workforce's sense of formality and ownership. The team found that an adequate number of layers of protection, or barriers, existed for most of these events, but the events ultimately occurred due to human performance errors that bypassed these barriers.

Subsequent to the completion of this analysis, the site reps met with CNS senior management to discuss the recommendations from this review team and actions the site is evaluating, taking, or planning to take, to address broader disciplined operations concerns. These actions include:

- scheduling daily senior supervisory watches and assigning personnel from Production's Action Office to provide enhanced oversight in Building 9212's Material Access Area;
- providing the observations from enhanced oversight activities to Production management daily;
- assigning a Senior Operations Manager to assist Building 9212 managers and supervisors with conduct of operations mentoring;
- having the Mission Assurance organization conduct a systems review of specific processes;
- accelerating the use of performance management teams to stimulate work crew self-evaluations and performance improvements;
- implementing a two-week rolling stand down process that allows individual work groups to review work practices and procedures, conduct housekeeping, and other training to improve disciplined operations;
- and initiating a "Site Academy" in which select individuals will receive a month of training that is intended to provide them the tools to become the standard-bearers for disciplined operations for their work groups.

This week, the site reps observed an Action Office representative conducting enhanced oversight activities in Building 9212. The Action Office representative provided a thorough evaluation of conduct of operations performance during Primary Extraction and fissile material receipt, weighing, and assaying operations. During startup for Primary Extraction operations, an alert operator noted a leak in the system. The operators and Shift Manager demonstrated good conduct of operations in clearly communicating the condition of the system and the actions required to achieve a safe and secure configuration. Both parties also properly annotated the logbook and procedure with all required information.