

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

November 1, 2019

TO: Christopher J. Roscetti, Technical Director
FROM: M. T. Sautman and Z. C. McCabe Resident Inspectors
SUBJECT: Savannah River Site Activity Report for Week Ending November 1, 2019

Staff Activity: The Board's Technical Director, C. Roscetti, was at SRS this week. The Technical Director and Resident Inspectors (RIs) visited K-Area, the Tritium Extraction Facility, H-Canyon, Building 235-F, and the Savannah River National Laboratory (SRNL) and observed an emergency preparedness exercise at the Salt Waste Processing Facility (SWPF).

K-Area: Prior to determining a two-point lockout (L/O), an operator identified one of the breakers was incorrectly locked out and called a time out. They intended to lockout Breakers 7 and 9, but actually locked out Breakers 7 and 8. The electrical panel had three breakers (7, 9 and 11) labeled as breakers (e.g., "Breaker 7"), and the rest were just labeled with the breaker number. The panel schedule listed both circuit and breaker numbers side-by-side which are not always numbered the same (e.g., Breaker 7 is on Circuit 7, but Breaker 9 is on Circuit 8). The L/O order only included the circuit numbers. Neither the operator that installed the L/O nor the operator who verified the L/O installation recognized that the breaker number on the panel did not correspond to the circuit numbers listed in the L/O order. As a result, the operators erroneously installed the L/O and verified it as correct on Breaker 8 (on Circuit 10) instead of Breaker 9 (on Circuit 8). K-Area personnel identified several shortcomings and contributing factors that led to this issue. Most notably, the first line manager was aware that there was a change and some "issue" with this L/O, but rather than following up before releasing work, the manager told the operators to follow the procedure verbatim and stop if there were any issues.

SRNL: Dating back to April 2018, multiple reviewers and work groups identified that management field observations (MFO), although sufficient in quantity, lack an appropriate quality level. As part of an improvement initiative, SRNL has begun a new MFO training regimen. The session the RI attended focused on the mechanics and process of documenting an MFO in the database rather than how to perform a quality MFO.

SWPF: Parsons had the Management Self-Assessment (MSA) – 3 team perform a review to follow-up the status of the Operational Readiness Review pre-requisites and the pre-start findings since their initial July review. The MSA-3 team validated that an additional 24 pre-requisites and pre-start findings were closed. The team concluded that 15 pre-requisites and 7 pre-start findings were not ready to be closed. Parsons anticipates starting their ORR on November 11.

Defense Waste Processing Facility: As part of a plastic suit job in a highly contaminated sump pit, workers doff their protective clothing and pass through two airlocks. Slightly elevated airborne radioactivity was detected on the filter paper for an air sampler in the outer airlock. Since workers in this airlock are not wearing respiratory protection, seven workers received whole body counts and chest counts (all negative) and submitted bioassay samples. The cause for airborne activity reaching this airlock is inconclusive, but contamination in the sump may have dried out and become airborne.