

## DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

November 18, 2022

**TO:** Christopher J. Roscetti, Technical Director  
**FROM:** A. Z. Kline, L. Lin, Z. C. McCabe, and E. P. Richardson, Resident Inspectors  
**SUBJECT:** Savannah River Site Activity Report for Week Ending November 18, 2022

**Defense Waste Processing Facility (DWPF):** Operations conducted an issue investigation at DWPF when it was determined an operator did not add water to the Decontamination Frit Slurry Feed Tank (DFSFT), when required. An operator discovered a low tank level condition in the DFSFT and the agitator making an abnormal noise, indicating that water had not been added to the DFSFT. Per the standard operating procedure to makeup the DFSFT, the field operator is required to contact the Control Room Operator (CRO) to open the water control valve until the desired tank level is reached. However, the field operator never contacted the CRO to add the water even though the procedure step was signed off as completed by the operator. The issue investigation discussed a multitude of human performance and conduct of operations issues including the lack of procedure compliance, lack of pre-job briefing, and lack of a questioning attitude. However, the issue investigation failed to address the process by which operators on the next shift added water to the correct the low level condition, considering that this was completed without a procedure or logbook entry by the Shift Operations Manager (SOM). These events occurred shortly after DWPF facility management held a refocus briefing on conduct of operations and human performance improvement tools. A qualified fact-finding director (FFD) led the issue investigation, during which they assumed the CRO and SOM on duty took the appropriate response actions and spoke for them instead of letting the operators explain their own thought process and actions. Once questioned by the resident inspector, it became apparent that the FFD's assumptions were incorrect. DWPF personnel are continuing the investigation and developing additional corrective actions.

**Event Investigations:** DOE-SR formally transmitted an assessment to SRNS regarding event investigations that identified several DOE Order 422.1 non-compliances associated with the site procedure not requiring or defining the training, qualification, and independence of investigators. DOE-SR is in the process of developing similar assessments for BSRA and SRMC to address these issues. These issues echo several concerns expressed by the resident inspectors on event investigations previously (see 9/9/22 and 9/23/22 reports).

**Savannah River National Laboratory (SRNL):** The RIs observed an emergency preparedness drill involving the spread of contamination from a ruptured drum following a severe weather event. This scenario has been performed multiple times this year with varying levels of success. This instance was completed satisfactorily with improvements noted in coaching opportunities being taken and self-criticism by the facility and the Emergency Response Training and Evaluation Group in the drill debrief afterwards.