

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

TO: Timothy Dwyer, Technical Director
FROM: Rory Rauch, Site Representative
SUBJECT: Oak Ridge Activity Report for Week Ending September 14, 2012

Contractor Assurance System (CAS)/ Work Planning: Several weeks ago, the B&W General Manager commissioned an internal review of the effectiveness of the B&W CAS. The report identified several implementation weaknesses, such as management assessments being skewed too far towards paperwork compliance (vice firsthand observation of actual work performance), extent-of-condition assessments failing to go beyond the initially affected organization, and performance metrics not being used to drive improvements. One weakness for which the B&W General Manager directed immediate corrective action involved the feedback and improvement working group (FIWG). The purpose of the FIWG is to identify broad-based positive or negative trends in B&W performance and elevate these trends to B&W senior management. However, the CAS review team determined that the FIWG has not consistently achieved its purpose in recent years. This determination was based on the observation that the FIWG process, which required quarterly analysis and reporting of performance trends, did not always allow for the timely identification and elevation of negative performance trends to senior management. Further, the FIWG had no direct communication with the B&W General Manager. In response to this concern, the B&W General Manager is requiring the FIWG to analyze all available sources of performance trends and report any issues of concern directly to him and his senior leadership team, as necessary.

Work planning was one area recently flagged by the FIWG as having a negative performance trend. Nuclear Safety Operations and maintenance personnel have observed an increase in the number of inadequate work packages for various maintenance and production activities in recent weeks. These inadequacies included improperly scoped or incomplete job hazards analyses (see uranyl nitrate spray event in 8/24/12 report), broadly scoped radiological work permits (see 8/24/12 report), and the failure to resolve conflicts between the personal protective equipment requirements dictated by industrial hygiene and radiological control personnel (see 8/31/12 report). The B&W General Manager has assigned resolution of these issues to the managers of the affected organizations (maintenance; environment, safety and health; and production).

Fire Protection: Last week, a section of piping for the potable water system ruptured spontaneously, dispensing approximately 500,000 gallons of water to the ground floor of a support building for Building 9212 and surrounding areas. Utilities personnel isolated the leak approximately one hour after it was first observed. The potable water system provides the water supply for the fire suppression systems in Y-12 nuclear facilities. Utilities, fire department, and production personnel are analyzing opportunities to improve the overall response to this situation to ensure that any future leaks in the potable water system are isolated as quickly as possible. B&W has not yet determined the cause of the leak. Depending on the cause, fire protection and safety basis personnel may reassess the safety basis to determine whether a leak of this magnitude affects the assumptions supporting fire protection-related analyses and controls.

Dismantlement Operations: B&W commenced W69 dismantlement operations this week. The site rep observed initial operations. Production personnel performed operations using a generic dismantlement procedure that covers several programs. In response to the Board's August 25, 2011, letter on conduct of operations and procedure inadequacies, B&W generated a procedure improvement plan. The plan led to some improvements in the generic dismantlement procedure, but also led to the development (and execution) of some weapon program-specific dismantlement procedures. B&W has drafted a W69 dismantlement procedure. The procedure owner plans to validate this procedure by observing initial dismantlement operations.