

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

January 31, 2014

TO: S. A. Stokes, Technical Director
FROM: D. Gutowski and R. Quirk, Hanford Site Representatives
SUBJECT: Hanford Activity Report for the Week Ending January 31, 2014

Board staff members J. Abrefah and P. Meyer were onsite to discuss the deep sludge testing program that supports tank waste retrieval and storage.

Plutonium Finishing Plant (PFP). A worker declared a stop work after managers did not direct workers to leave a corridor posted as a contamination area (CA) that was potentially exposed to air flow from rooms posted as High Contamination Area (HCA)/Airborne Radiation Area (ARA)/Beryllium Controlled Area (BCA). No spread of additional contamination from the HCA/ARA/BCA rooms to the CA corridor was detected. A work team subsequently restored the correct airflow by replacing the filter papers on the ventilation inlets in the HCA/ARA/BCA rooms. The delay in directing workers to exit may have been due to confusion over the area conditions coupled with incomplete communications between the workers and the shift office. Workers, planners, and a field work supervisor were aware that the work that created these HCA/ARA/BCA rooms last Friday could result in plugging room exhaust filter papers, but did not ensure that the work package included appropriate controls, such as replacing the filter papers.

The site rep observed two work planning meetings where personnel actively participated in the development of D&D work packages. Both meetings were well attended by the work crews, supervisors, managers, subject matter experts.

Waste Sampling and Characterization Facility (WSCF). A sample sent from the Effluent Treatment Facility (ETF) to WSCF exceeded the waste acceptance criteria (WAC) for alpha concentration and was returned to ETF. Personnel at ETF do not ensure that the WSCF WAC for alpha is met before sending samples. Management at WSCF recognized that there are weaknesses with their procedures for receiving, accepting, and returning samples to the provider when the WAC is exceeded and therefore called for a critique.

Waste Treatment Plant (WTP). In late 2012, the contractor did a survey of the commercial grade dedication process used by their emergency turbine generator vendor. This week, the Office of River Protection transmitted the results of their surveillance of the contractor's 2012 efforts. There were several findings including a priority level 2 finding noting that the contractor's survey team did not detect that the turbine vendor did not impose nor enforce requirements on its subtier suppliers to identify potential suspect counterfeit items.

Tank Farms. The site rep observed the contractor's training on human performance improvement for engineers. This training is a part of the corrective actions for noted deficiencies in the technical rigor of engineering documents (see Activity Report 3/9/2012).

242-A Evaporator. The contractor implemented the new safety basis (see Activity Report 10/25/2013).

618-10 Burial Ground. The contractor processed the debris drum that ignited two weeks ago without incident.