

SUBJECT: Office of Independent Oversight's Office of Environment, Safety and Health Evaluations Activity Report for the Walkthrough of the Savannah River Site Salt Waste Processing Facility Construction Site, May 4-5, 2010

The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE), Office of Independent Oversight, within the Office of Health, Safety and Security (HSS), conducted a visit to the Savannah River Site (SRS) on May 4-5, 2010. The visit focused on the Salt Waste Processing Facility (SWPF) Construction Site, which is managed by Parsons with DOE line management program direction and oversight from the DOE Savannah River Operations Office.

When completed, the SWPF will be a new category 2 nuclear facility at J-Area on SRS that will remove radioactive cesium, strontium, and actinides contaminants in the high-curie salt solutions from the F- and H- Area Tank Farms at SRS. The high curie cesium, strontium, and actinides will be sent for vitrification at the Defense Nuclear Waste Processing Facility. The decontaminated salt solution left over after the removal of the highly radioactive contaminants will be sent to the Saltstone Disposal Facility for disposal in grout vaults on site.

The HSS Site Lead for SRS travelled to Aiken, South Carolina, to attend the Parsons Construction Site Safety Training Course on May 4 at the Parsons Technology Center. After completing the training, the Site Lead visited the offsite R&D facility that models the SWPF process and performs testing using simulants (non-radiological) to collect data that was utilized to reduce design risk associated with the project. The Parsons training was detailed, disciplined, and clearly communicated construction safety expectations to trainees.

On May 5 the Site Lead toured the SWPF Construction Site with the DOE Chief Engineer and the DOE Facility Representative (also a senior civil/structural engineer). Three cranes were on-site and construction craft were working on multiple levels throughout the facility. Most work involved swinging and placing vertical wall sections and forming for vertical walls. On-site communication and control of lifts was good. Housekeeping was excellent, and the construction site was very clean and well organized.

The Site Lead was provided the SWPF Functional Specification to enhance knowledge and understanding of the facility. The Project Office Staff was very supportive and indicated that it looks forward to a mutually beneficial relationship with HSS.