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SRR Saltstone Operators Receive Real-Time Emergency Training in New Control Room Simulator

AIKEN, S.C. (June 3, 2013) – Control room operators at the Savannah River Site (SRS) Saltstone facilities are experiencing firsthand how to deal with an emergency without actually being in one, thanks to recent implementation of a new control room training simulator.

The Saltstone simulator, located in the 766-H Administrative and Training Center at SRS, is being used to imitate the normal Saltstone control room activities. It serves as a training resource for normal operations and for emergency scenarios.

For example, during an emergency drill in the actual control room, indications were provided with the aid of ‘drill props’ that were attached to equipment or displayed to the operators manually without the operators’ actual experience of operating the controls.

According to Susie Anderson, Savannah River Remediation (SRR) Saltstone Simulator Instructor, the simulator mimics the real thing, but provides real-time control operation and response.

“During a drill in the simulator control room, operators are assigned watch stations just as in the actual control room, but respond to indicated events by actually operating the controls,” Anderson said. “The simulator model displays indications identical to those that would be received during an actual event.”

Dave Olson, SRR President and Project Manager, explains the first series of 25 evaluated emergency drills are completing with operator feedback being very positive to the training simulator.

“Operators are saying they feel a much greater sense of urgency to respond correctly in order to protect the public, workers and the equipment,” Olson said. “Feedback indicates that the experience is much closer to being in an actual event.”

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SRS is owned by the U.S. Department of Energy. The SRS Liquid Waste contract is managed by SRR, a team of companies led by URS Corp. with partners Bechtel National, CH2M Hill and Babcock & Wilcox. Critical subcontractors for the contract are AREVA, Energy Solutions and URS Professional Solutions.

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