



NRC NEWS

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NRC ISSUES ORDER MODIFYING CONSTRUCTION AUTHORIZATION FOR MIXED OXIDE FACILITY

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission has issued a Confirmatory Order to the mixed oxide facility under construction at the Department of Energy's Savannah River site near Aiken, S.C. as part of a settlement agreement in a case involving a contract senior engineer allowing a junior engineer to sign his signature to documents in violation of facility construction procedures and NRC requirements.

The order requires Shaw AREVA MOX Services, the company building the facility, to adhere to changes in its NRC construction authorization based on an agreement reached during alternative dispute resolution sessions with the agency in October.

Shaw AREVA requested the alternative dispute resolution process to resolve differences with the NRC concerning the apparent violations and to discuss corrective actions. The confirmatory order documents the company's commitments to the NRC reached as part of the NRC's ADR process, which can be selected in place of traditional NRC enforcement. Often, the ADR process is more effective than traditional enforcement action. The ADR process uses a mediator to help the NRC and the company or organization find the best way to address the causes of the violations. The ADR process strives to make sure that effective long-term solutions for correcting violations are identified and agreed upon; that the commitment to improvement is made; and that the individual or organization meets the commitments made to the NRC in a way that ensures the agency's safety rules and regulations are implemented.

As part of the settlement agreement, Shaw AREVA agreed to a number of corrective actions and enhancements, including reviews of similar documents, revised procedures, increased training, and periodic quality assurance assessments and safety conscious work environment surveys. Some of the actions agreed to by Shaw AREVA have been completed and others must be completed by the end of next year.

In consideration of the commitments made by Shaw AREVA, the NRC will not propose a civil penalty, issue a Notice of Violation or take other enforcement action on the matter. The NRC will, however, evaluate adherence to the commitments during future inspections.

Copies of the letter and the Confirmatory Order will be available in the electronic reading room on the NRC website at www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/adams.html or by contacting the Office of Public Affairs in Region II with the contact information on this release.

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