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For Immediate Release

Machining Training Center achieves operational milestone

AIKEN, S.C., (August 1, 2024) – Pit Production Operations and Programs at the Savannah River Site (SRS) recently achieved a significant milestone in the Machining Training Center (MTC), a facility that will be a key component to teach critical skills and develop competency in various machining tool operations for SRS training. These critical skills will be used in a variety of facilities onsite, including National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) missions.

Jason Burkhardt, Director, SRS Plutonium Modernization Program for the NNSA, visited the MTC recently for a tour and observation. During this time, an Operations Machining Specialist demonstrated making multiple full cuts on a training object using a piece of equipment known as a High Precision Lathe, marking the first-ever “training cuts” using this equipment in the MTC. Another Operations Machining Specialist demonstrated a successful functionality test, operating the High Precision Lathe at full speed to ensure no issues were present following routine maintenance.

“The Machining Training Center is a valuable training facility that is a key component for NNSA to continue developing their production competency to support high priority NNSA missions,” said Burkhardt. “The SRS Pit Production Operations and Programs have made great strides in the last year to bring this training facility online, and NNSA is excited to reap the benefits of this strategic investment.”

Developed to provide a means of building personnel competency in the operation and maintenance of high precision machining equipment, the MTC will be a critical component of training future personnel at SRS. Once proficiency is established, employees will transfer to other areas of the Site for further job-specific training and development. The training experience initiated at the MTC is expected to help reduce the time required to achieve operator proficiency by developing skills in a dedicated training setting versus an operational environment.



“Performing the first training cuts in the MTC is a significant milestone for the Pit Production Operations and Programs organization, Savannah River Nuclear Solutions [SRNS], and our nation,” said Erika Baeza-Wisdom, Deputy Vice President Pit Production Operations and Programs. “This milestone marks the first tangible accomplishment on the pit program’s path to developing the machining skills our future operators will need. This also demonstrates SRNS’ commitment to meet national security needs with the same excellence in production for which SRS is known.”

An Operations Specialist practices techniques for operating a multi-axis mill at the newly constructed Machining Training Center.

Established by Congress in 2000, NNSA is a semi-autonomous agency within the U.S. Department of Energy responsible for enhancing national security through the military application of nuclear science. NNSA maintains and enhances the safety, security, and effectiveness of the U.S. nuclear weapons stockpile; works to reduce the global danger from weapons of mass destruction; provides the U.S. Navy with safe and militarily effective nuclear propulsion; and responds to nuclear and radiological emergencies in the U.S. and abroad.

Savannah River Nuclear Solutions, a Fluor and HII partnership company, is responsible for the management and operations of the Department of Energy's Savannah River Site, located near Aiken, South Carolina.

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