

# News from the Savannah River Site

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## SRS “Active Shooter” Exercise Yields Important Lessons Learned

AIKEN, S.C. – July 31, 2017 – Savannah River Site (SRS) employees conducted an emergency response exercise in July that focused on an active shooter scenario, yielding important lessons learned in what was one of the first of its kind across the Department of Energy (DOE) complex.

More than 500 people participated as emergency first responders, controllers and evaluators in the July 12 exercise, which was the culmination of nearly two years of planning and training led by the DOE Savannah River Operations Office and site contractor Savannah River Nuclear Solutions (SRNS).

“As difficult as it is to imagine such a scenario taking place, it’s important that SRS is prepared for events like this,” said Savannah River Operations Office Manager Jack Craig. “The exercise was an important one, and I’m proud of how everyone performed. I’m certain our emergency response and security capabilities have taken a step forward, and I look forward to incorporating the lessons learned.”

The scenario presented to the site’s responders involved a disgruntled employee and her spouse entering the Badge Office to take revenge. Mannequins were used to show the 13 people killed in the scenario, while 15 SRS volunteers acted as wounded employees.

After the first mock assailant was neutralized by site protective forces contractor Centerra, the recently formed Rescue Task Force teams, consisting of SRS Fire



*Centerra-SRS Protective Forces respond to reports of an active shooter in the SRS emergency exercise.*

Department and Centerra personnel, entered the building to provide immediate medical attention to the victims. Responders transported critically injured victims to local hospitals while site medical staff treated those with less serious injuries.

The newly formed Behavioral Response Team, staffed by trained personnel from SRNS Workforce Services, responded to the emergency to provide psychological first aid to those employees that witnessed the attack.

SRS executives also held a mock news conference to demonstrate how they would answer media questions in a real event. The site then developed a comprehensive plan to return the SRS to normal operations, including the criminal investigation and the need to continue badge office operations in an alternate location.

“One of the major goals of this was to ensure the right level of coordination with all the entities involved—and that includes all the off-site units like the FBI, ambulance support and local hospitals,” said Greg Hightower, who is head of drills and exercises within the SRNS Emergency Operations Group. “We’ve learned a lot in terms of communication and command and control.”

James Hutton, the Office of Environmental Management’s Deputy Assistant Secretary for Safety, Security and Quality Assurance, attended the exercise and applauded SRS for making it a priority.



*Members of the SRS Rescue Task Force team provide medical attention to victims in the mock event.*

“This exercise was well worth the effort because the effectiveness of our response to events like this is measured in lives saved,” Hutton said. “There will be lots to learn that we can incorporate in training and preparedness across the (DOE) complex going forward.”

*Savannah River Nuclear Solutions is a Fluor-led company whose members are Fluor Federal Services, Newport News Nuclear and Honeywell, responsible for the management and operations of the Department of Energy’s Savannah River Site, including the Savannah River National Laboratory, located near Aiken, South Carolina.*

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