

Principal Media Contact: Caroline Reppert
Savannah River Nuclear Solutions, LLC
803-952-8367
caroline.reppert@srs.gov

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

SRNS Gets “FIT,” Saves Over \$31M

AIKEN, S.C. (Dec. 1, 2016) – In fiscal year (FY) 2016, Savannah River Nuclear Solutions (SRNS) netted over \$31.6 million in productivity and efficiency cost savings as a result of the SRNS Focused Improvement Transformation (FIT), a company-wide Lean management system that applies process improvement concepts to eliminate non-value-added work.

“For the past two years, we’ve focused on Lean, not as merely a set of tools, a new fad for business processes or a ‘one-size-fits all’ solution. It’s been about people making their work life better and more efficient, changing the culture one day at a time,” said P.K. Hightower, Manager, SRNS Continuous Improvement.

An increase in employee involvement has been key to this highly successful year, with nearly 30 percent of the SRNS workforce actively engaged in Continuous Improvement activities. Over the past year, SRNS employees completed 24 “Rapid Improvement Events”—deep dives into how a process currently works, how it should work and how it could look in the future—on several areas. A few examples of these events over the past year include chemical management and storage, the Quality Assurance corrective action process, employee training documentation, the SRS Public Tours program and month-end financial closing.

One example of a FIT initiative from FY16 has resulted in a new and improved process for calibrating M&TE (Measurement and Test Equipment) pipettes for F/H Laboratories, which analyzes soil, water, gases, decommissioning debris, waste and process control samples to support the Savannah River Site’s missions as well as other Department of Energy sites across the nation.



Scientist Marion Cofer from Savannah River National Laboratory's Analytical Labs uses an M&TE (Measurement and Test Equipment) pipette at F/H Laboratories at the Savannah River Site. In June 2016, a Rapid Improvement Event under “FIT” (Focused Improvement Transformation) resulted in a new and improved process for this kind of pipette, resulting in a cost savings of over \$396,000. Overall in fiscal year 2016, Savannah River Nuclear Solutions saved over \$31 million as a result of FIT.

News from Savannah River Nuclear Solutions

SAVANNAH RIVER SITE • AIKEN • SC 29808

To help ensure the most cost-effective methods for using M&TE pipettes, a tool used to transfer or measure out small quantities of liquid, employees from Analytical Laboratories mapped out the process for obtaining pipettes during a Rapid Improvement Event (RIE).

During the weeklong session in June 2016, a multifunctional team was able to develop a standard work process for how pipettes should be retrieved, the proper way to troubleshoot potential issues and how to properly retire a pipette after use. They discovered the pipette vendor could calibrate the pipettes for \$44 per pipette, so they could be ready for use as soon as they were received on Site.

The RIE is projected to save the company over \$396,000, which includes the cost difference between \$188 and \$44 for each calibration and the hours saved from the significant decrease in turnaround time. Additionally, the RIE will result in the elimination of an annual \$344 recalibration cost for every pipette in the laboratory.

“I’ve got a lot of energy for the FIT program,” said Stuart MacVean, SRNS President and CEO. “Fiscal year 2016 was a big year. We completed several Rapid Improvement Events, and it’s really amazing what employees have accomplished to streamline different processes in a highly-regulated environment, ultimately saving significant taxpayer dollars.”

In 2015, SRNS hired Simpler Consulting, a proven leader in Lean transformation, to help develop Lean experts within the company. Simpler continues to help implement FIT to improve employee satisfaction, reduce costs, increase productive capacity, improve quality and timeliness of product delivery and increase value to SRNS customers.

To date, the FIT initiative has included 10 Value Stream Analyses, which are in-depth looks at all the activities (both value-added and non-value-added) required to deliver a specific product or service to a customer. The 10 Value Stream areas include Supply Chain Management, Information Technology, Project Management, Integrated Priority List Development, L Basin Spent Fuel, Environmental Management Operations, Security Incident Response, Subcontractor Safety, New Employee Hiring Process and Engineering Training Program.

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.

Visit us on the web at www.savannahrivernuclearsolutions.com

SRNS-2016-510