

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

September 2, 2016

TO: Steven A. Stokes, Technical Director
FROM: Austin R. Powers, Cognizant Engineer
SUBJECT: Nevada National Security Site (NNSS) Report for August 2016

DNFSB Staff Activity: N. George and A. Powers were on site August 22nd-25th for the second week of the Nuclear Criticality Safety Program hands-on training course at the National Criticality Experiments Research Center.

NNSS Contractor Status: During the month of August, the National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) announced that Nevada Site Science Support and Technologies Corporation was awarded the contract for management of NNSS. However, NNSA has since rescinded its contract award and has stated that National Security Technologies, LLC (NSTec), will continue to operate NNSS until a new contract is awarded.

Device Assembly Facility (DAF) Readiness Assessments: During the month of August, NSTec began conducting checklist readiness assessments for two buildings within the DAF. The readiness assessments are being conducted to return the buildings back to an operable status in order to bring new operations into each building. NSTec plans to have one of the buildings take over an operation that currently occurs in a different building inside of the DAF, while the other building is prepared for a new operation being introduced to the DAF. It should be noted that NSTec has planned for separate contractor and federal readiness assessments specific to the new operation being introduced to the DAF building. The scope of the checklist readiness assessments was to ensure that line management has established safety management programs, a program is in place to confirm the condition and operability of the vital safety systems, and an effective feedback and improvement process has been established (i.e., contractor assurance system). The readiness assessments included interviews, preoperational checks for the buildings, and walk downs of the buildings and equipment designated for the buildings (e.g., crane, ventilation system).

The Nevada Field Office (NFO) expects the readiness assessments to be completed and a final report for each building to be submitted during the month of September. The NNSS cognizant engineer plans to follow the progress of the assessments and review the final reports once they are submitted. If the readiness assessment team identifies any pre- or post-start findings, the NNSS cognizant engineer will track the status of the finding(s) and associated corrective action plan(s).

Joint Actinide Shock Physics Experimental Research (JASPER) Facility: During the month of August, the JASPER facility conducted Surrogate Shot 143 successfully, which returned 100% data. The experiment was executed in a safe manner with no safety issues to report.

Also during the month of August, NFO participated in a meeting with NSTec and Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory to discuss the upcoming annual update for the JASPER documented safety analysis (DSA) and safety basis strategy. The NNSS cognizant engineer plans to follow the progress of the update and any changes made to the DSA.