

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

January 25, 2013

MEMORANDUM FOR: T. J. Dwyer, Technical Director
FROM: R.T. Davis and R.K. Verhaagen
SUBJECT: Los Alamos Report for Week Ending January 25, 2013

Federal Oversight: Earlier this month, the DOE Office of Health, Safety and Security's (HSS) Office of Enforcement and Oversight released a report on LANL's corrective action effectiveness. The HSS review team in conjunction with a site office assessment team evaluated LANL's corrective actions to address safety system oversight and other assessment findings. The HSS report agreed with the site office conclusion that the LANL process did not ensure effective implementation of corrective actions. The report also notes that previous HSS issues had not been adequately resolved. The HSS forwarding memo states that the "weaknesses call into question the current state of key aspects of the contractor's assurance system...."

Transuranic Waste Operations: LANL recently removed their sole supplier for transuranic waste drums from the approved vendors list based on failure to meet all applicable sections of the nuclear quality assurance standard NQA-1. In October 2012, a Joint Supplier Evaluation Program audit of the vendor was completed and findings were communicated that included failure to meet sections 200 through 900 of NQA-1. The vendor response in November indicated that action would not be taken on implementation of these sections, which resulted in the supplier being removed from the approved vendor list earlier this month. LANL has not noted any significant receipt inspection or performance problems with drums received from this vendor.

This week, LANL entered the site's new information process to evaluate potential safety basis impacts for nuclear facilities that use transuranic waste drums. A recently received inventory of drums is being held until a commercial grade dedication process can be developed and applied to verify that the drums meet applicable safety basis performance requirements. LANL is also evaluating options including continued use of the commercial grade dedication process as an avenue to procure drums from this sole source vendor.

Area G High Energy – Real Time Radiography (HE-RTR): This week, LANL performed decontamination activities at the HE-RTR facility to address the release of Europium-152 from a source that occurred last week (see 1/18/13 weekly). On Thursday, the decontamination was sufficient to release the facility to operations. Area G personnel also located a solid source (versus the liquid source that was released last week) to test the area radiation monitors. LANL is developing a lessons learned document to capture the work planning and control issues associated with this event. In addition, a senior team from the Associate Director of Nuclear and Hazard Operations continues to investigate this event and the corrective actions.

Transuranic Waste Facility (TWF) Project: Based on direction from the site office, LANL is performing engineering studies to evaluate the safety basis strategy for the TWF Project Fire Suppression System, Lightning Protection System and metal containers. The Preliminary Documented Safety Analysis will be revised based on the engineering studies and comments from the site office (currently scheduled to be submitted in March). Last week, LANL submitted a revised aircraft crash frequency analysis based on feedback from the site office. The project had previously been scheduled for Critical Decision-2 evaluation by the Energy Systems Acquisition Advisory Board in December 2012 but this decision has been delayed by NNSA-Headquarters.