

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

October 4, 2013

MEMORANDUM FOR: S.A. Stokes, Acting Technical Director
FROM: R.T. Davis and R.K. Verhaagen
SUBJECT: Los Alamos Report for Week Ending October 4, 2013

Staff member J. Pasko was onsite this week to observe the Federal Operational Readiness Review of the Confinement Vessel Disposition Project in the Chemistry and Metallurgy Research Building.

Fire Protection: On September 27, 2013, Los Alamos County approved a new 10 year cooperative agreement with NNSA to provide fire department and other services to LANL. The cooperative agreement continues to ensure that the Los Alamos Fire Department (LAFD) is trained and prepared to provide fire and emergency response to LANL facilities. The new agreement also includes establishment of a LAFD Hazmat Team along with response expectations.

Area G – Safety Basis: As directed by the field office, Area G personnel implemented the approved Basis for Interim Operation (BIO) and associated Technical Safety Requirements (TSR) on September 30, 2013 (see 8/2/13 weekly). Following implementation of the BIO and TSRs, Area G management methodically reviewed and approved release of individual Area G operations. All activities have been restarted and operations to continue the removal of 3706 m³ of above ground, non-cemented transuranic waste have resumed. Area G personnel also reported that the 3706 campaign goals for FY13 have been met.

Weapons Engineering Tritium Facility (WETF): The Deputy Associate Director for Weapon Engineering and Experiments transmitted a letter to the field office updating the status of the tritium-containing materials disposition effort (see 8/2/13 weekly). The letter identifies that an integrated project team has been assembled to develop a project plan to evaluate legacy assets to determine items that have programmatic utility and items that can be processed and dispositioned as waste. The letter also identifies activities intended to be completed in calendar year 2014 to include: 1) complete item inventory and define solution packages; 2) develop processing and disposition paths; 3) execute “simple” solution package disposition; 4) establish processes and procure material necessary for bulk gas storage and shipment of non-essential bulk gas; and 5) identify materials, supplies, processes, and safety basis changes necessary to support out-year legacy-item processing and disposal. This effort is necessary to disposition more than 750 tritium containing items that have accumulated in WETF over the years.

Plutonium Facility – Safety Basis: LANL recently submitted a revision of the 2011 Technical Area-55 (TA-55) Documented Safety Analysis and TSRs to the field office for approval. The safety basis revision addresses preparation and assay of transuranic waste outside of the Plutonium Facility but inside the TA-55 protected area. LANL recently completed installation of a high efficiency neutron counter (HENC) on the safe secure transport pad, which is now referred to as the HENC pad, in support of this activity. The major changes in the proposed safety basis revision include: 1) increased material at risk (MAR) limits for the waste pad; 2) a new MAR limit for the HENC pad; 3) classifying pipe overpack containers as safety class; 4) classifying safes on the HENC pad as safety significant; and 5) a new specific administrative control to exclude refueling around the HENC pad. The change is also intended to resolve a Potential Inadequacy of the Safety Analysis identified in March 2012 associated with refueling activities (see 3/16/12 weekly).