

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

September 25, 2015

MEMORANDUM FOR: S.A. Stokes, Technical Director

FROM: R.K. Verhaagen and J.W. Plau

SUBJECT: Los Alamos Report for Week Ending September 25, 2015

DNFSB Staff Activity: On Monday, D.K. Andersen, M.R. Bradisse, P.J. Foster, E.M. Gibson, R.L. Jackson, and M.T. Wright held a teleconference with Transuranic Waste Facility project personnel to discuss design codes and standards for the waste storage buildings.

Federal Oversight: One year ago, the Secretary of Energy requested a plan to transition responsibility for legacy environmental cleanup work at LANL from NNSA to the Office of Environmental Management. Recently, a number of significant milestones for that plan occurred. Last week, NNSA and EM approved a formal memorandum of understanding governing the relationship between the two field offices. Under this arrangement, the NNSA Field Office will maintain safety basis approval and startup authority until the EM Field Office can achieve appropriate staffing. However, EM will have participation and concurrence on all applicable safety basis approvals. On Monday, the permanent manager of the new EM Field Office, Douglas Hintze, reported for duty. On Wednesday, EM and the LANL contractor signed a cost-plus-award-fee contract for EM work scope to cover a bridging period until such time that EM can procure a new contractor. Notably, the bridge contract includes a milestone to complete treatment of the inappropriately remediated nitrate salt wastes by September 29, 2017.

The NNSA Field Office recently improved staffing levels with the return of the Deputy Manager, and arrival of a new Deputy Assistant Manager for Operations, two new Facility Representatives, and a Safety Basis Analyst. Additionally, permanent selections recently started in their roles as the Assistant Manager for National Security Missions and the Assistant Manager for Safeguards and Security.

Plutonium Facility–Restart Activities: This week, three Plutonium Facility resumption milestones were achieved, including:

- The contractor readiness assessment team completed their review of Pit Flowsheet operations and concluded that upon satisfactory resolution of identified pre-start findings LANL has adequately demonstrated operations can safely proceed in this area. Five preliminary findings provided at the team's outbrief were focused on areas of operations, quality assurance, and worker safety.
- The NNSA Field Office Manager approved LANL's corrective action plan for the Isotope Fuels Impact Tester (IFIT) federal readiness assessment and authorized the startup of IFIT operations.
- The NNSA Field Office Manager approved LANL's corrective action plan for the Balance of Machining (BOM) federal readiness assessment and authorized the startup of BOM operations.

Performance Management: On Wednesday, the Laboratory Director and the NNSA Field Office Manager signed LANL's Fiscal Year 2016 Strategic Performance Evaluation and Management Plan (PEMP). The PEMP is the mechanism that establishes performance evaluation criteria upon which the laboratory contractor's earned award fee is determined. The PEMP identifies performance category goals to be evaluated that include: Manage the Nuclear Weapons Mission; Reduce Nuclear Security Threats; DOE and Strategic Partnership Project Mission Objectives; Science, Technology, and Engineering; Operations and Infrastructure; and Leadership.