

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

May 1, 2020

TO: Christopher J. Roscetti, Technical Director
FROM: Daniel B. Bullen, Ph.D., P.E., Cognizant Engineer
SUBJECT: Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory (LLNL) Report for April 2020

LLNL Operating Status in Response to COVID-19: During April, LLNL remained predominantly in Minimum Safe Operations status due to the COVID-19 pandemic. In early April, a number of LLNL scientists and engineers returned to the site to support weapons program work. In mid-April, LLNL began the process of re-starting experiments at the National Ignition Facility (NIF). LLNL required COVID-19 training for NIF employees and support personnel. The COVID-19 modifications at NIF included placement of plexiglass shields between all operator stations, social distancing requirements, and the use of facemasks when social distancing is not possible.

Authorization to Restart Transuranic Package Transporter Model II (TRUPACT-II) Loading Operations: On March 27, 2020, the Livermore Field Office (LFO) authorized the re-start of TRUPACT II loading activities on the LLNL site. The LFO assessment noted that “the pre-start finding resulting from the Contractor Readiness Assessment has been resolved and is closed.” LFO provided their readiness assessment report, *Results of the Federal Readiness Assessment of the Restart of Transuranic Package Transporter Model II Loading Operations at the Waste Storage Facilities*, which included five observations. LFO required these observations to be managed in accordance with the Lawrence Livermore National Security (LLNS) procedures for managing issues and observations.

LFO Approval of the Safety Basis Amendment to Use the Electron-Beam Welder in Building 334 Engineering Test Bay: On April 9, 2020, LFO approved a request by LLNS to use the Electron-Beam Welder in the Building 334 Engineering Test Bay for welding solid depleted uranium items. LFO approved the request with no conditions and provided a Safety Evaluation Report documenting LFO’s review and basis for approval of the B334 Documented Safety Analyses (DSA) page changes.

2019 Annual Unreviewed Safety Question Determination (USQD) Summaries: On April 10, 2020, LLNS provided their annual summary of Unreviewed Safety Question Determinations (USQD) for Building 239, Building 331, Building 332, Building 334, the Waste Storage Facilities, and the Super Block, as required by 10 CFR 830. LLNS noted that DSA changes resulting from these activities will be incorporated into the appropriate annual update(s) for the respective DSAs.

Fiscal Year 2020 Third Quarter Startup Notification Report (SNR): LLNS submitted the third quarter fiscal year 2020 SNR to LFO for approval on April 23, 2020. LLNS noted that the only significant change in the SNR relates to the Hazard Category 2 Recovery Glovebox Line (RGB) readiness schedule, which has been delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic and associated shift to Minimum Safe Operations. The remaining RGB tasks, coupled with diminished/delayed capabilities while some support staff are telecommuting, resulted in an updated schedule with the Contractor Readiness Assessment commencing in November 2020 and the Federal Readiness Assessment commencing in January 2021.