

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

May 1, 2020

TO: Christopher J. Roscetti, Technical Director
FROM: B. Caleca and P. Fox, Hanford Resident Inspectors
SUBJECT: Hanford Activity Report for the Week Ending May 1, 2020

Hanford Site: Hanford site DOE and contractor management continue to follow federal and state guidance to reduce the transmission of the novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19) (see 4/24/2020 report). The Richland Operations/Office of River Protection (RL/ORP) manager has extended the current essential mission critical operations posture through next week. Allowed activities also include planning that enables the eventual resumption of work.

DOE approved work resumption/remobilization plans for the Tank Farm operations contractor and Waste Treatment Plant contractor. The plans describe the approach that each contractor will use to resume their work once DOE determines that return to work conditions have been met and then lifts the ongoing partial stop work order allowing non-essential mission work to resume. The approval indicated an expectation that the contractors use a gradual and disciplined approach in returning to work, and coordinate with other site contractors to ensure safe and timely return of the workforce in support of mission activities. The approval also directed them to carefully implement the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) COVID-19 recommendations to ensure the safety and protection of the workforce, as well as apply consideration of limitations in obtaining personal protective equipment and consumables. Resumption plans for the central plateau remediation and site support services contractors are still under review.

In December, DOE awarded the Central Plateau Cleanup Contract (CPCC) to Central Plateau Cleanup Company LLC (see 12/13/2019 report); the CPCC contract is similar in scope to work now being performed under the Plateau Remediation Contract. Another bidder subsequently protested the award. This week, the U. S. Government Accountability Office denied that protest clearing the path for DOE to move to the new contract. DOE will determine the appropriate time for the transition to the new contract after evaluating transition requirements and activities in light of the conditions that exist due to the current COVID-19 pandemic response.

Tank Farms: The contractor's Plant Review Committee met to consider an amendment to the Tank Farms safety basis that modifies technical safety requirements for freeze protection, temperature monitoring of double-shell tank waste, and calibration and calibration checks of tank farm safety significant instrumentation. The change also increases the frequency for monitoring flammable gas concentration in the headspace of single-shell tank A-104. The committee recommended approval of the changes.

Central Waste Complex (CWC): A Resident Inspector observed work coordination and planning meetings for the Solid Waste Operations Complex facilities, daily surveillances at Trenches 31 and 34, and the receipt of processed waste from PermaFix Northwest. The resident inspector notes that social distancing in was generally good, with some breaches of six foot spacing observed only in brief instances during surveying of the waste shipment. However, he did not observe any individual onsite wearing the provided cloth face covers which, while not a requirement, would be appropriate in scenarios where social distancing could not be maintained.