

## DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

December 18, 2020

**MEMORANDUM FOR:** Christopher J. Roscetti, Technical Director  
**FROM:** J.W. Plaue and D. Gutowski, Resident Inspectors  
**SUBJECT:** Los Alamos Activity Report for Week Ending December 18, 2020

**Plutonium Facility–Safety Basis:** Last Friday, Triad safety basis management transmitted to the NNSA Field Office a revision to the evaluation of the safety of the situation (ESS) associated with the trailer loaded with combustibles parked in proximity to transuranic waste containers (see 10/16/2020 report). The field office had requested analysis for common combustibles and any additional controls that may be required for common combustibles. The revised ESS continues to assert that the consequences from a pool fuel fire bound those of any credible common combustible fire and therefore no additional credited controls are necessary. The ESS does commit to explicitly adding the outdoor pad to the scope of the key element of the fire protection program. DOE-STD-3009-2014 articulates the need to analyze hazards that have their own unique control set even if the consequences are bounded by other similar hazards. In this case, the controls from a fire involving common combustibles are clearly different from those used for a fuel pool fire. The ESS is informational and does not require field office approval.

**Management–Abnormal Event Notifications:** On Tuesday, Plutonium Facility personnel conducted a fact-finding for a glovebox window that incurred damage during operations on November 2. The work team had taken appropriate actions during the event and fact-finding participants identified corrective actions to help prevent recurrence. This event did not receive a formal abnormal event notification. Triad’s institutional command media for performance improvement from abnormal events no longer includes criteria for minor incidents warranting internal abnormal event notifications. We continue to believe that appropriate use of this system aids tracking, trending, and supports overall organizational learning (see 9/6/2019 report).

**Plutonium Facility–Readiness:** On Thursday, Triad convened their Joint Evaluation Team to evaluate the proposed readiness plan for a new cabinet radiography unit. They concluded that the new equipment is substantially similar to previous operations and is therefore an expansion of existing capability not requiring a formal readiness review. Triad will perform a management self-assessment prior to startup.

**Transuranic Liquid Waste Treatment Facility Project:** On Wednesday, Triad submitted to the NNSA Field Office for approval a revision to the safety design strategy and preliminary documented safety analysis. This submittal is intended to resolve comments from NNSA’s earlier rejection of a safety design strategy (see 7/24/2020 report). The safety analysis is based on the 90% design revision and will be revalidated with the final design submittal.

**Management:** Triad issued their Laboratory Agenda for fiscal year 2021. This document establishes the laboratory’s priorities in alignment with NNSA policy. Goals for this year are similar to last year’s with pit production being a top nuclear security priority. Improving waste management, nuclear criticality safety, and nuclear safety are among the mission operations priorities.