

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

February 5, 2021

TO: Christopher J. Roscetti, Technical Director
FROM: B. Caleca and P. Fox, Hanford Resident Inspectors
SUBJECT: Hanford Activity Report for the Week Ending February 5, 2021

Tank Farms: A DOE Senior Review Board met to complete their evaluation of a change to the Tank Farm Documented Safety Analysis (see 1/29/2021 report). They closed open questions related to Tank Side Cesium Removal system flammable and explosive controls and voted to recommend approval of the change to the safety basis approval authority.

The resident inspectors observed a field drill that used significant simulations driven by COVID control considerations. For example, boundaries were discussed but not established, support teams were not fully staffed, first responder support was limited, and actions such as habitability checks were discussed but not performed. During the hotwash, the drill team determined that the extent of simulation did not support an adequate evaluation of an individual who was participating for qualification. Their determination was appropriate. The resident inspectors note that the continuing need to implement COVID controls has a significant impact on drills and exercises across all site contractors and is having a substantial adverse effect on individual and team proficiency, and the ability to evaluate individuals for proficiency.

Waste Treatment Plant (WTP): The WTP Executive Safety Review Board (ESRB) is performing a review of all WTP programs to support startup of Low Activity Waste Facility. The reviews are ahead of an upcoming phase II integrated safety management system assessment. A resident inspector monitored their review of the maintenance and work control programs. He noted that the project performs an extensive review of program requirements, documents, training, and staffing prior to ESRB review. These assessments support meaningful discussion during the ESRB meeting and, in most cases, the ESRB is effectively identifying and assigning actions to resolve problems that are identified during the preliminary reviews and during the ESRB deliberations. However, after a review of the assessment reports and, based on comments made during the ESRB meeting, there is evidence that ongoing preparations would benefit from additional field observations and assessments to confirm that the programs are adequately implemented. It is also apparent that some ESRB members and program briefers are aware of this gap. It is not clear that assigned actions will address this potential weakness.

Liquid Effluent Retention Facility (LERF): The Tank Farm Operations Contractor Joint Review Group (JRG) met to evaluate work instructions for the radiological survey that will be used while preparing to replace the LERF basin 44 cover (see 1/29/2021 report). During the JRG, a senior manager who was not a JRG voting member appropriately identified the need to include additional controls to support effective compliance with an open justification for continued operations (see 1/22/2021 report). Based on follow-up discussions, the resident inspector determined that the controls were left out of the work instructions because the planners and nuclear safety reviewers felt that the controls, which focus on preventing fires that could release contamination, were not needed because the work team did not intend to use vehicles to support their work. However, there were no controls in the work instructions presented to the JRG that protected the assumption that vehicles or other fueled equipment would not be used.