

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

July 2, 2021

MEMORANDUM FOR: Christopher J. Roscetti, Technical Director
FROM: D. Gutowski, Resident Inspector
SUBJECT: Los Alamos Activity Report for Week Ending July 2, 2021

DNFSB Staff Activity: Staff members J. Jarvis, P. Migliorini, J. Plaue, and S. Seprish were on site this week for a review of Critical Decision 1 (Approve Alternative Selection and Cost Range) of the Los Alamos Plutonium Pit Production Project (LAP4). Staff member R. Kazban supported the review remotely. The onsite team also walked down the Plutonium Facility and Technical Area 21 and held discussions with N3B and Environmental Management Field Office personnel regarding the current state of Area G operations within safety basis constraints.

Plutonium Facility–Infrastructure: The resident inspector and headquarters staff members walked down the Plutonium Facility to better understand the current pit production flowsheet and infrastructure improvements related to LAP4. The team noted the challenge of maintaining current production work while construction efforts to add and upgrade equipment is in progress. While the construction work occurs primarily on the backshift, scaffolding and other equipment increases congestion in the process rooms.

Chemistry and Metallurgy Research Building (CMR)–Radiological Protection: On June 16th, a radiological control technician surveying out of a high contamination area/airborne radioactivity area in the Wing 5 basement discovered contamination on their personal protective equipment (PPE). Further surveys identified skin contamination on the back of the ankle and personal clothing contamination at the pant cuffs. The individual was successfully decontaminated. The PPE requirements for this area included shoe covers that do not overlap with coveralls and are not required to be taped. That is a standard practice at the laboratory. As a corrective action, Triad personnel are planning to supply personnel at CMR with PPE used at the Plutonium Facility including anti-contamination socks and bands to secure pant legs. The area where the individual was working is subject to leaks from an industrial waste line and is the most contaminated area in the facility. Repairs to leaking flanges and decontamination of the room are planned for later in the summer.

Legacy Facilities: The resident inspector and headquarters staff members walked through Technical Area 21 with N3B and Environmental Management Field Office personnel and discussed the plans to perform additional characterization for TA-21-257 and the underground industrial waste lines (see 4/9/2021 report). In May, N3B submitted to the field office for approval a Justification for Continued Operations to allow these characterization activities.

Safety Basis: On Tuesday, Triad submitted to the NNSA Field Office for approval a revision to their proposed protocol and input parameters for dispersion analysis (see 2/26/2021 report). The revision is intended to address technical comments from the Field Office provided on the previous February submittal. Upon approval by the Field Office, this will be a key input to the upgrade of the Plutonium Facility safety basis to DOE-STD-3009-2014.