

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

August 12, 2022

MEMORANDUM FOR: Christopher J. Roscetti, Technical Director
FROM: A. Boussouf and D. Gutowski, Resident Inspectors
SUBJECT: Los Alamos Activity Report for Week Ending August 12, 2022

DNFSB Staff Activity: F. Harshman, one of the Board's resident inspectors at Y-12, was onsite this week to benchmark oversight approaches for nuclear facilities. Among other activities, the guest resident inspector visited the Plutonium Facility, Sigma, and the Chemistry and Metallurgy Research Building.

Plutonium Facility–Glovebox Safety: This week, facility personnel held three fact-finding meetings to evaluate three events where workers discovered glove breaches. The first event involved a Plutonium Facility worker performing a non-approved glovebox leak evaluation method. The method involved adding a second glove around the suspect glove. Though this method confirmed the presence of two separate glove leaks, one glove fixed to another is not an approved configuration and combustible loading limits within the boxes were exceeded. Facility personnel are evaluating standardizing the leak detection method used and formalizing a procedure to implement a similar detection approach to the unauthorized one used.

For the second and third events, glovebox workers detected contamination on their personal protective equipment during monitoring immediately after exiting their gloves. In all three instances, there was no detectable skin contamination or contamination spread, the impacted gloves were replaced, and the rooms were returned to normal operations.

Plutonium Facility–Safety Basis: Last Friday, the NNSA field office formally concurred with Triad's latest revision to the project execution plan for upgrading the Plutonium Facility's safety basis to meet DOE-STD-3009-2014, *Preparation of Nonreactor Nuclear Facility Documented Safety Analysis* (see 7/22/2022 report). The approval letter requested monthly status reports discussing potential schedule risks and tracking project milestones.

Flanged Tritium Waste Containers (FTWC): On Monday, Triad personnel who are trained to perform the venting activity of FTWCs stored at Area G visited the storage location with N3B personnel. One purpose of the visit was to refamiliarize the Triad personnel with emergency response actions and assembly area locations at Area G. Another was to plan equipment siting locations to remain compliant with the new controls in the Area G safety basis.

Nuclear Environmental Sites: The Environmental Management Field Office unconditionally approved the annual update to the safety basis for nuclear environmental sites. One significant change in this update was to adjust the periodicity of in-service inspections to every thirty days. The inspections visually look for degradation of the sites. Previously, there were two inspections: one annually and one after significant events. Determining what constituted a significant event caused compliance challenges (see 8/21/2020 report).