

## DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

April 12, 2002

**MEMORANDUM FOR:** J. Kent Fortenberry, Technical Director  
**FROM:** C. H. Keilers, Jr.  
**SUBJECT:** Los Alamos Report for Week Ending April 12, 2002

Coones and Jordan were on site this week observing activities related to Recommendation 2000-2.

**Recommendation 2000-2:** The 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> DOE-LANL Phase II assessments began this week, focused on the Radiochemistry Laboratory (TA-48) fire suppression and the Plutonium Facility (TA-55) fire alarm systems (this is a correction to the 3/29/02 report). These are really being conducted as one review, will last two weeks, and will include some site-wide program elements (e.g., wildfire). The site-wide maintenance assessment started on April 1<sup>st</sup>. The site-wide fire alarm system review is scheduled to begin in mid-June. The TA-48 confinement ventilation review was suppose to be conducted this month, but appears to be on hold.

The staff believes that the reviews this week got off to a slow start. These two assessments rely heavily on the generic criteria and review approaches (CRAD) document generated last year for Phase II assessments and appear to lack assessment-specific plans, contributing to the slow start. All three assessments that are underway may also have been affected by last-minute changes in team leadership. Currently, the two remaining Phase II assessments have no assigned team leads, a problem DOE is working to correct. Early results from the fire protection reviews indicate a need for configuration management improvements in TA-48 and for a consistent tracking system for fire-protection related deficiencies in both facilities. The staff also believes that LANL requirements need to be more specific for flame-resistant protective clothing for welders.

**DOE Independent Oversight Review:** The DOE Office of Independent Oversight and Performance Assurance (DOE-OA) returned to LANL this week to validate their report (site rep weekly 3/29/02). DOE-OA described LANL as vastly improved in Integrated Safety Management (ISM), compared to what was seen several years ago in the last similar review; however, opportunities for improvement exist. The DOE Site Office and LANL are preparing a corrective action plan to address findings.

**Authorization Basis (AB):** This week, DOE issued the Safety Evaluation Report (SER) for the Weapons Engineering Tritium Facility (WETF) upgraded AB, submitted in January. The staff intends to review the SER next week. The next step for LANL is to develop a Technical Safety Requirement (TSR) implementation plan and submit it to DOE for approval. Based on the DOE SER comments, it appears that LANL perhaps could have more thoroughly validated the proposed TSRs from an operations standpoint (e.g., operations walk-down of draft procedures in the facility with the proposed TSRs). If so, further refinement in the TSRs may be needed.

Also this week, DOE approved a Basis for Interim Operation (BIO) to permit moving and storing an irradiated target assembly in the Los Alamos Neutron Science Center (LANSCE). It will be stored at an inactive target station, considered to be Hazard Category 3 (HC-3). Total inventory is about one-fifth the HC-3 limit, and is mostly due to other sources already present (i.e., irradiated depleted uranium shielding). The target assembly is robust and consists of the inconel-jacketed tungsten target surrounded by beryllium and lead reflectors. It weighs nearly 8 tons and will be shielded by a lead and steel cask. It will be stored as a backup for the new target assembly to be installed.