

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

July 12, 2013

MEMORANDUM FOR: S.A. Stokes, Acting Technical Director
FROM: R.T. Davis and R.K. Verhaagen
SUBJECT: Los Alamos Report for Week Ending July 12, 2013

Criticality Safety: The Laboratory Director's pause of fissile material operations in the Plutonium Facility remains in effect. A senior management team, with the active involvement of the Laboratory Director, continues to work on developing a resumption plan. Plutonium Facility personnel continue their process walk-downs to revise and validate procedures and criticality safety-related controls. These walk-downs have identified additional process deviations and criticality safety infractions. For example:

- A Criticality Safety Limit Approval (CSLA) specified a certain type of container could be stored in a specified location. The procedure used to move the containers had been updated to identify an additional type of container for use, but did not receive a review by Criticality Safety Analysts (CSA). As a result containers that had not been approved on the CSLA or evaluated in the associated Criticality Safety Evaluation Documentation (CSED) were being stored in this location.
- Multiple safe drawers have been discovered with dimensions that are not in compliance with the engineered features specified on the CSLA. This is primarily due to the ambiguous term "nominally" being used by the CSLA and CSED to identify dimensions.
- Five solution tanks were found to have different actual volumes than that specified on the CSLA. Again, this was complicated by the use of the term "nominally" by the CSLA and CSED to identify volumes.

This week, LANL submitted a report on the time-utilization of qualified CSAs to the field office for review. The report identifies that the qualified CSAs spent over 85% of their time during the past eight weeks providing floor support for fissile material operations and assisting with the extent of condition review ongoing in the Plutonium Facility. The report states that due to the time being spent assisting with efforts in the Plutonium Facility little progress is being made on performing Criticality Safety Evaluations needed to support other activities.

Fire Restrictions: The Laboratory and surrounding areas have received a significant amount of rainfall over the past week. As such, all fire restrictions (see 6/28/13 weekly) have been lifted.

Safety Basis: LANL recently submitted a revision to the Unreviewed Safety Question (USQ) institutional procedure. In addition to resolving previous field office comments, the revision clarifies the USQ integration with the LANL New Information process. Notably, the procedure now requires LANL to determine whether a Potential Inadequacy of the Safety Analysis exists within nine working days of entering the New Information process.

Radioactive Liquid Waste Treatment Facility (RLWTF): RLWTF management identified that a required quarterly surveillance (due 7/6/13) associated with facility HEPA filters was not completed as required by the safety basis. The surveillance was successfully completed on Monday with no additional issues identified. RLWTF personnel are developing corrective actions to improve surveillance tracking.