

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

September 23, 2016

MEMORANDUM FOR: S.A. Stokes, Technical Director
FROM: R.K. Verhaagen and J.W. Plaue
SUBJECT: Los Alamos Report for Week Ending September 23, 2016

DNFSB Staff Activity: On Wednesday, P.J. Migliorini, J.A. Pasko, and T.J. Dwyer, conducted a teleconference with EM, NNSA, and LANL personnel to discuss issues identified by the Board's staff during a review of the safety basis documents discussed below to support treatment of the inappropriately remediated nitrate salt (RNS) waste being stored in Area G.

RNS–Safety Basis: This week, personnel from EM and NNSA headquarters, EM and NNSA Field Offices, and LANL safety basis met for four full days to finalize necessary safety basis changes for final treatment of the RNS waste currently store in Area G. The safety basis review team worked on changes to documents including the Documented Safety Analysis and Technical Safety Requirements for Area G and the Waste Characterization, Reduction and Repackaging Facility (WCRRF), as well as a temporary safety basis modification for the LANL Transportation Safety Document. LANL personnel require these safety basis changes to allow de-nesting, refrigerating, and loading RNS waste drums onto a transportation vehicle for shipment to WCRRF, and to perform final treatment. Next week, senior management from EM and NNSA headquarters will be on site to review these documents with a goal of concurring on a Safety Evaluation Report and recommending approval to the NNSA Cognizant Secretarial Officer for Safety.

Federal Oversight: On Tuesday, the NNSA Field Office Manager transmitted an Improvement Action Plan for the Organizational Health Assessment conducted in June 2016 (see 9/2/2016 weekly) to field office personnel for their information. In the correspondence transmitting the plan, the manager emphasized the goals of inclusion and transparency, in particular as they apply to developing safety basis documents. The manager has also started providing weekly notes to the field office staff in an effort to improve communications and to highlight a few thoughts for consideration and discussion. The manager indicated that the first several notes will focus on safety culture and will highlight attributes from DOE's guide on Integrated Safety Management emphasizing Leadership, Employee/Worker Engagement, and Organizational Learning.

Plutonium Facility–Restart Activities: On Thursday, The NNSA Field Office Manager approved the pyrochemical process operations Federal Readiness Assessment Corrective Action Plan and the associated pre-start objective evidence file, and authorized restart of pyrochemical operations.

Plutonium Facility–Infrastructure: On Tuesday, facility operators entered a Technical Safety Requirement Limiting Condition for Operation when a diesel firewater pump shut down on overspeed during performance of a weekly Surveillance Requirement. Facility personnel have 14 days from the time of failure to return the diesel to service before they are required to place the facility into Mode 2–Standby. This is the same diesel firewater pump that operators recently repaired and returned to service after experiencing a series of mechanical issues including previous problems with the diesel overspeed (see 8/26/2016 weekly).