

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

May 6, 2016

TO: Steven Stokes, Technical Director
FROM: Dermot Winters, WIPP Cognizant Engineer
SUBJECT: Waste Isolation Pilot Plant Activity Report for April 2016

DNFSB Staff Activity: R. Quirk was onsite performing site-representative-like duties during April 1-2 and 18-22. T. Hunt of the staff was onsite April 19-21 conducting a scoping review of the maintenance program. B. Broderick was onsite April 27-29 observing the Safety Review Committee meeting review of the Safety Evaluation Report (SER) approving Revision 5 of the WIPP Documented Safety Analysis (DSA). Oversight has averaged 2.00 man-weeks per month during FY 2016.

Real-Time Monitoring Specific Administrative Control (SAC). On April 15, members of the Board's staff conducted a teleconference with DOE personnel to discuss the new Real-Time Monitoring SAC to support Revision 5a of the WIPP Documented Safety Analysis (DSA). The SAC is designed to ensure that radiological material made airborne in the event of a repeat radiological event will be promptly detected, allowing timely evacuation of workers from affected areas. The preferred method of monitoring involves continuous air monitors (CAMs) positioned in Panels 6 and 7 configured to remotely alarm in WIPP's Central Monitoring Room. The remote alarming function, required to be completed prior to the contractor beginning readiness review activities, is expected to be enabled by the end of June. The staff will continue to track the installation of the CAMs and the enabling of the remote alarming function

Maintenance Program Review. During April 19-21, a member of the Board's staff assessed the current status of the WIPP maintenance program, as well as corrective actions generated subsequent to prior staff reviews, the 2014 fire and radiological release events and recent federal and contractor maintenance program assessments. The staff member plans a future more comprehensive review of maintenance, operations, and engineering support programs.

Documented Safety Analysis Approval. During April 27-29, a member of the Board's staff observed the DOE Safety Review Committee meeting in Carlsbad, NM, that served as the culmination of DOE's evaluation of major revisions to the WIPP safety basis. The quality and character of DOE's review and approval process for the WIPP DSA and TSR was excellent and led to DOE management issuing an SER on April 29 approving Revision 5a of the DSA and associated TSRs. Staff members will monitor implementation of the new DSA and TSRs to ensure controls are implemented effectively.

Ground Control Report. During April 25-29, a staff member reviewed a report on ground conditions in the WIPP underground performed by the consulting firm, RESPEC. The report emphasizes the seriousness of deteriorating ground conditions and need for increased airflow to allow ground control work to be accelerated. The staff is tracking contractor efforts to remediate ground conditions.