

## DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

September 2, 2016

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

**DNFSB Staff Activity:** D. Winters was onsite assessing readiness progress, Aug. 1-3. T. Hunt, S. Seprish and B. Sharpless were onsite conducting a Phase II Maintenance review, Aug. 15-18. B. Broderick and D. Brown were in Carlsbad reviewing National TRU Program Oxidizer-Sorbent testing, Aug. 16-17. During Aug. 23-25, M. Forsbacka and A. Martin observed the Permanent Ventilation System 30% design review at the Carlsbad Field Office while D. Winters and A. Hutain observed the Bison 2 Emergency Preparedness exercise onsite. B. Weathers observed the Aug. 24 TRU Corporate Board meeting in Fernald, OH. D. Minnema, D. Burnfield, J. Meszaros, D. Bulen and R. Quirk were onsite Aug. 29-Sept. 1 for a review of the WIPP Radiological Control program. The staff has averaged 4.0 man-weeks per month of onsite oversight during FY 2016.

**Permanent Ventilation System (PVS) Design.** The DOE Project Peer Review (PPR) team for the 30% design of the PVS appeared appropriately focused on the safety topics relevant to the long-term safe operation of WIPP. The team provided concrete and actionable recommendations that, if implemented, will ensure adequate integration of safety in PVS design. The staff will continue to track the integration of safety into PVS design as the process continues.

**National TRU Program (NTP) Enhancements.** The staff tracked NTP progress towards implementing enhancements by observing the TRU Corporate Board meeting in Fernald, OH and by reviewing Oxidizer-Sorbent testing in Carlsbad, NM. The staff did not identify significant issues with the planning or execution of the oxidizer-sorbent testing. However, since NTP plans for implementing the results of testing are not yet well defined, the staff will continue to monitor NTP progress in developing and implementing a *Basis of Knowledge* for managing TRU waste containing oxidizing chemicals.

**Maintenance.** The Phase II review continued staff efforts to evaluate the adequacy of the WIPP maintenance program as it prepares to support restart of waste operations. Observations made included: (1) contractor (NWP) management reviews of equipment logbooks in the underground not being consistently performed and (2) an NWP lack of a consistent process for verifying that operators possess the latest revision of an underground vehicle's preoperational check procedures which indicated operators may be using outdated procedures. The staff is reviewing additional documentation on the maintenance program.

**Radiological Controls.** Radiological Control practices observed during the Bison 2 Emergency Response exercise appeared weak. As noted above, the staff was reviewing the NWP radiological controls program during the week of August 29-September 2.