

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

January 12, 2018

MEMORANDUM FOR: S.A. Stokes, Technical Director
FROM: J.W. Plaue and D. Gutowski
SUBJECT: Los Alamos Activity Report for Week Ending January 12, 2018

Federal Oversight. On Wednesday, the NNSA Field Office Manager and Senior Technical Safety Advisor conducted the final qualification walk-through for the senior Facility Representative at the Plutonium Facility. They noted the candidate's exceptional performance. This action brings the total of fully qualified NNSA Facility Representatives up to two.

Plutonium Facility–Work Control. On Monday, Plutonium Facility personnel conducted a post-job review after craft workers heard an unusual whistling noise and identified unexpected breaches in the confinement for an existing glovebox undergoing refurbishment. The breaches were associated with improperly sealed penetrations; however, in this case, radioactive contamination did not migrate from the glovebox. Post-job personnel and facility management determined the need to develop a process to ensure confinement integrity is appropriately maintained and controlled as new gloveboxes and associated components are connected to existing contaminated systems. Management also directed the review of installation activities currently underway for the need to implement compensatory measures while the new confinement integrity process is developed.

Plutonium Facility–Safety Basis. LANL prepared a new Project Execution Plan describing the approach to consolidate legacy safety basis items for the Plutonium Facility into a single DOE-STD-3009-94 compliant Documented Safety Analysis and Technical Safety Requirements. This supersedes a previous plan (see 2/24/2017 weekly) that projected a consolidated safety basis in August 2017. The new plan projects submittal of a consolidated safety basis to the NNSA Field Office in August 2018 with approval in October 2018.

Transuranic Waste Facility (TWF). On Thursday, TWF personnel successfully completed their third receipt of four waste containers from the Plutonium Facility. TWF management had previously requested concurrence to proceed with an eight container receipt in accordance with the second phase of their startup plan; however, NNSA Headquarters denied concurrence based on concerns with oversight and corrective action related documentation.

RANT Shipping Facility. Last month, LANL completed an analysis of alternatives to ensure a long term capability for shipping transuranic waste offsite as the RANT facility remains in cold standby due to seismic concerns (see 12/19/2014 weekly). They analyzed five options including seismic upgrades to RANT, a replacement for RANT, a new covered loading structure, and accepting the risk of using RANT in its current condition. The alternatives analysis concluded that the best overall option was to accept RANT in its current condition. The NNSA Field Office is evaluating this recommendation.

Unremediated Nitrate Salt Waste Treatment. Last week, Area G personnel completed the remaining five drum liner pulls. Personnel at the Waste Characterization, Reduction, and Repackaging Facility completed the sixth out of twenty-seven drums this week.