

## DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

August 3, 2018

**MEMORANDUM FOR:** Christopher J. Roscetti, Technical Director

**FROM:** J.W. Plaue and D. Gutowski, Resident Inspectors

**SUBJECT:** Los Alamos Activity Report for Week Ending August 3, 2018

**Plutonium Facility–Emergency Management:** Workers in the heat source plutonium wing opened a slip lid container holding process residues in a glovebox. They observed what appeared to be fine dust or smoke rising from the opened container. They closed it and pulled the fire alarm. The fire department responded and all facility personnel performed a controlled egress. The fire department responders performed thermal imaging and found no evidence of a fire. The facility has been restored to normal operations with the exception of this room pending further investigation.

**Plutonium Facility–Seismic Safety:** NNSA Field Office and LANL personnel briefed the NNSA Associate Administrator for Safety, Infrastructure, and Operations on seismic studies for PF-4 (see 7/7/2017 report). They provided their recommended approach and options for procurement of resources to perform nonlinear dynamic analysis. They also provided an update on the recently started column capital testing effort (see 7/20/2018 report).

**Plutonium Facility–Infrastructure:** A vacuum pump that supports solution transfers within PF-4 is undergoing repairs. One activity impacted by this loss of capability is an effort to replace valves on a series of tanks that are storing liquids destined for an upcoming limited scope cementation campaign (see 2/2/2018 report). The valve replacement activity is on hold awaiting the ability to transfer liquids between tanks using the vacuum pump.

**Area G–Readiness:** N3B personnel held their first Joint Evaluation Team meeting to determine what level of readiness review to use for resumption of Mobile Loading Unit operations to resume shipments of transuranic waste from Area G to the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP). They concluded that a formal contractor or DOE readiness assessment was not required and a Management Self Assessment would be adequate. The basis for this decision was that the activity is an expansion of existing capability as the majority of the scope will be performed or directed by the WIPP Mobile Loading Team. Startup is expected prior to full development of N3B's new safety management programs so they will continue to use the existing programs adopted from the previous contractor. Last year, LANL started Mobile Loading Operations at TA-55, which included a safety basis addendum, with a federal readiness assessment (see 7/21/2017 report).

**Area G–Safety Systems:** A worker accidentally backed a small utility vehicle into one of the safety-class concrete vehicle barriers that reduce risk to waste stored in certain areas from vehicle impacts and pool fires. The worker immediately reported the incident and engineering personnel evaluated the integrity of the barrier through an in service inspection. There was no damage to the barrier.

Workers performing daily rounds discovered low pressure readings on the nitrogen supply for the fire suppression system in Building 412. Maintenance personnel found that valves on the nitrogen bottles were in the incorrect position. They corrected the position and are checking for possible system leaks. The Building 412 fire suppression system does not have a credited function in the safety basis and remains operable.