

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

August 23, 2019

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 23, 2019

DNFSB Activity: DNFSB Chairman Hamilton visited the laboratory on Tuesday and Wednesday. He met with leadership from both field offices and contractors, received briefings on planned nuclear material inputs and outputs from the Plutonium Facility, the exit strategy for the Chemistry and Metallurgy Research (CMR) building, and the project to disposition the Flanged Tritium Waste Containers. He also walked down the Radiological Laboratory Utility Office Building, Plutonium Facility, Area G, and the Transuranic Waste Facility.

On Friday, one of the resident inspectors briefed the New Mexico Legislature's Radioactive and Hazardous Waste Committee on the status of DNFSB oversight at LANL and the impacts of DOE Order 140.1.

Plutonium Facility–Criticality Safety: Last week, waste management personnel successfully overpacked a transuranic waste container into a standard waste box. This container had been infractioned for an overmass condition and has been covered through a recovery plan that was approved in April 2016.

Safety Basis: On Wednesday, the NNSA Field Office unconditionally approved the evaluation of the safety of the situation (ESS) for depleted uranium shield issue at CMR (see 6/14/2019 report). On Tuesday, the NNSA Field Office unconditionally approved the ESS for the issue concerning the counter unmanned aircraft system issue at TWF (see 6/28/2019 report). Also on Tuesday, the NNSA Field Office approved a revision to the RANT Shipping Facility documented safety analysis closing a condition of approval related to acetylene and electric forklifts (see 11/2/2018 report). The safety basis revision elevated administrative controls related to acetylene and forklift use to new specific administrative controls. The approval included one new condition of approval requesting the analysis of hazards of acetylene cylinders be broadened to include internal cylinder explosions. As the control for acetylene prohibits its presence when waste containers are in the facility, a more thorough analysis is not expected to change any controls.

Area G–Readiness: Last month, a ten member contractor team completed a readiness assessment for resumption of limited operations in the sort, segregate, and size reduction (SSSR) enclosure in Building 412 as a prerequisite to a federal readiness assessment. The specific operations being assessed for resumption are denesting of drums from standard waste boxes and waste container liner repacking of compromised containers. These activities have not been performed in Building 412 since May 2014. The review team found four pre-start and four post-start findings. Of note, two of the pre-start findings addressed configuration management, specifically for the critical lift plan and the drawings and electrical configuration of the SSSR enclosure.