

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

March 20, 2020

MEMORANDUM FOR: Christopher J. Roscetti, Technical Director
FROM: J.W. Plaue and D. Gutowski, Resident Inspectors
SUBJECT: Los Alamos Activity Report for Week Ending March 20, 2020

COVID-19 Impacts: Triad's emergency operations center remains in monitoring mode with its pandemic advisory team meeting regularly to address the rapidly evolving situation. Overall, Triad is encouraging use of telework as a default if permitted by job function. Currently, about a third of the workforce is teleworking. Operations in the nuclear facilities remain ongoing with social distancing and enhanced disinfection protocols in use. N3B is also promoting telework while normal operations continue at Area G. Both the NNSA and EM Field Offices workforces have transitioned to largely teleworking with some physical presence of Facility Representatives and management. Known impacts of interest include:

- Triad has postponed readiness reviews for the venting and disposition of the Flanged Tritium Waste Containers. However, they continue to complete management self-assessment activities and conduct operational training.
- N3B has postponed its management self-assessment for retrieval of the corrugated metal pipes.
- The Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP) cancelled a planned shipment from the RANT Shipping Facility this week. Triad has payload containers staged and hopes to execute the shipment next week.

Transuranic Waste Facility: On Monday, the NNSA Field Office unconditionally approved Triad's evaluation of the safety of the situation (ESS) regarding the impacts of temporarily blocking waste container vents with a spatula-like tool (see 2/14/2020 report). On a related note, Triad waste management personnel have taken an action to evaluate safety basis controls for consistency across Triad's facilities that generate or store transuranic waste. On Tuesday, Triad submitted a safety basis revision to the NNSA Field Office for approval. The revision is needed to support use of the Mobile In-Situ Object Counting System Large Container Counter (MILCC). The MILCC is used to support non-destructive assay measurements for WIPP certification. Triad intends to relocate the MILCC from an outdoor pad at the Plutonium Facility.

Area G–Safety Basis: On Thursday, N3B and EM Field Office personnel conducted a teleconference to discuss proposed revisions to the safety basis strategy for the safety basis upgrade effort (see 10/18/2019 report). Notably, N3B is considering substantially more new analysis than anticipated, including a new hazards analysis, dispersion modeling, fire modeling, and an accident analysis using DOE-HDBK-1224-2018, *Hazard and Accident Analysis Handbook*. They are also proposing adopting elements of the draft revision of DOE-STD-5506, *Preparation of Safety Basis Documents for Transuranic Waste Facilities*. However, the overall document is still planned to be developed in accordance with DOE-STD-3011-2002, *Guidance for Preparation of Basis of Interim Operation (BIO) Documents*. The resident inspector questioned whether development to DOE-STD-3009-2014, *Preparation of Nonreactor Nuclear Facility Documented Safety Analysis* now, rather than in a subsequent future upgrade, is advantageous given the increased amount of new analysis. N3B expects to submit a finalized strategy for approval in the coming weeks.