

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

May 8, 2020

TO: Christopher J. Roscetti, Technical Director
FROM: B. Caleca and P. Fox, Hanford Resident Inspectors
SUBJECT: Hanford Activity Report for the Week Ending May 8, 2020

DNFSB Staff Activity: Members of the staff held a teleconference with DOE representatives from the DOE Office of Science and the DOE Pacific Northwest Site Office to discuss COVID-19 response actions and related lessons learned.

Hanford Site: Hanford site DOE and contractor management continue to follow federal and state guidance to reduce the transmission of the novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19) (see 5/1/2020 report). The Richland Operations/Office of River Protection (RL/ORP) manager has extended the current essential mission critical operations posture through the week of May 11.

DOE approved work resumption/remobilization plans for the Central Plateau Remediation and Mission Support contractors. The plans describe the approach that each contractor will use to resume their work once DOE determines that return to work conditions have been met and then lifts the ongoing partial stop work orders. Similar to the approvals for the Waste Treatment Plant and Tank Farms operations contractor resumption/remobilization plans (see 5/1/2020 report), the approval indicated an expectation that the contractors use a gradual and disciplined approach in returning to work, and coordinate with other site contractors to ensure safe and timely return of the workforce in support of mission activities. The approval also directed them to carefully implement the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention COVID-19 recommendations to ensure the safety and protection of the workforce, as well as taking into consideration any limitations in obtaining personal protective equipment and consumables.

Tank Farms: The contractor's Corrective Action Review Board (CARB) met to review an Apparent Cause Analysis that was performed to evaluate a recent negative trend in fire protection system maintenance performance backlog. The causal analysis team determined that there is a lack of clarity in roles, responsibilities, authorities and accountabilities between the Tank Farm Operations Contractor and the Mission Support Contractor, who performs much of the fire protection maintenance work, and that the resulting ambiguity in procedures and requirements results in oversight performance issues. Additionally, the team noted that the associated Tank Farm Operations Contract and Mission Support Contract lack clarity regarding technical authority decisions concerning obsolescence and deferments. The CARB approved the report, with comment, and the report is being forwarded for Executive Safety Review Board consideration.

Stabilization and Abatement: DOE hosted a virtual public meeting to receive comments related to their plan to stabilize the 216-Z-2 and 216-Z-9 cribs, and the 241-Z-361 settling tank with grout. DOE has determined that these aging underground structures are at risk for failure and that stabilization is necessary to protect the environment, workers, and the public. DOE intends to perform the stabilization prior to the winter since snow and water accumulation that can occur during that season can increase the risk of collapse. Approximately 70 individuals participated in the online event.