

## DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

September 11, 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 September 11, 2020

**Transuranic Waste Management:** Triad personnel continue to make progress shipping containers of newly generated transuranic waste to the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP). For this fiscal year, they have completed 35 shipments with about 1100 containers. This progress has helped alleviate accumulation concerns within the Plutonium Facility and its outdoor storage pads. Triad plans to continue shipping two loads per week as the certified container inventory and DOE shipment allotments permit. Triad will use the RANT Shipping Facility, which has no weather limitations.

Since the resumption of operations at RANT, N3B has had more WIPP certified containers ready for shipment than Triad (currently about 200 more), but DOE has allotted them fewer shipments that also remain dependent on favorable weather conditions for mobile loading. N3B has no additional shipments assigned for this month and has completed just 5 shipments with about 50 containers for the fiscal year. N3B and Triad personnel continue to develop the processes needed to support loading legacy waste containers at RANT; however, the progress has been slow and there is no target date for achieving this capability. We note that this week's wintery conditions underscore the need for this shared indoor loading capability to reduce legacy waste inventories at Area G. In particular, the winter months often result in additional shipment allotments to LANL due to cancellations at Idaho National Laboratory.

**Radiological Laboratory Utility Office Building:** Last Thursday, Triad transmitted to the NNSA Field Office for approval a revised safety basis for the upgrade of RLUOB to a hazard category 3 nuclear facility to be known as PF-400. The submittal includes changes intended to address the field office comments on the previous submittal (see 8/7/2020 report). On Thursday, Triad received NNSA Headquarters approval on its five year exemption request related to the deficient or missing fire barriers in the currently occupied building. Among the conditions of approval, Triad is to conduct semi-annual building evacuation exercises and annually reassess the compensatory measures. The NNSA Field Office also requested that Triad consider the suggestions from the DOE Office of Nuclear Safety, including documenting the deficiencies in the safety basis for PF-400.

**Area G–Safety Basis:** On Wednesday, the EM Field Office rejected two of N3B's evaluation of the safety of the situation (ESS) submittals. One was the ESS for the fuel pool fire depth issue, which was originally identified on July 1, 2020 (see 7/17/2020 report). One reason for rejection was the lack of detail supporting the evaluation of the operational restrictions for all accident scenarios. The other rejected ESS was for the temporary unvented drum condition created during flammable gas sampling, which was originally identified on January 30, 2020 (see 1/31/2020 report). Reasons for rejection included the need to protect the duration of the unvented condition and the length of time taken to submit the ESS.