

## DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

August 20, 2021

**MEMORANDUM FOR:** Christopher J. Roscetti, Technical Director  
**FROM:** D. Gutowski, Resident Inspector  
**SUBJECT:** Los Alamos Activity Report for Week Ending August 20, 2021

**Plutonium Facility–Readiness:** Last week continuing into this week, an independent contractor team performed a readiness assessment for the Isotope Fuels Impact Tester (IFIT) in the Plutonium Facility. The system has not been used since the end of 2019 so it is going through the formal review process prior to restarting hot operations. The cold impact test using a fuel clad containing no nuclear material was also observed by members of the federal team, which will complete their readiness review following closeout of actions from the contractor readiness team. At their outbrief, the contractor team identified four pre-start and one post-start finding and concluded that the IFIT process could be restarted safely upon resolution of the prestart findings. They also provided a positive observation on the cleanliness and housekeeping of the IFIT room.

**Weapons Engineering Tritium Facility (WETF):** Last week, WETF personnel completed all required surveillances and started using new digital tritium monitors to support real time tritium monitoring as part of the safety-significant Tritium Monitoring System. The installation and testing of these new monitors was a multi-year upgrade project to increase system reliability.

On Wednesday, the NNSA Field Office concurred with Triad’s conclusion that the upcoming plutonium coupon study at WETF does not constitute a major modification to the facility (see 8/6/2021 report).

**Area G:** Last Thursday, N3B personnel declared a violation of the technical safety requirements (TSR) after they discovered that they had not completely performed two quarterly surveillances in the TSR that verify waste storage area dimensions and separation distances. The engineering drawing supporting the surveillance procedure had an error in its designation for Dome 375 so the field verification of conditions in that area could not be verified against requirements. A similar error occurred last month involving thermal separation distances (see 7/23/2021 report). Facility management authorized an extension of the completion time for the surveillance requirements while the drawings and procedures are corrected. N3B personnel are also performing a walkdown of all drawings used to support TSR surveillances.

**Site Infrastructure:** On Monday, there was a power outage to portions of the laboratory due to a utility pole fire and a circuit breaker relay opening. The only nuclear facility impacted was the RANT Shipping Facility, which lost power for approximately two hours.

**Federal Oversight:** On Monday, Mr. Michael Mikolanis became the new manager of the Environmental Management Field Office.