

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

September 10, 2021

MEMORANDUM FOR: Christopher J. Roscetti, Technical Director
FROM: D. Gutowski, Resident Inspector
SUBJECT: Los Alamos Activity Report for Week Ending September 10, 2021

DNFSB Staff Activity: On Wednesday, DNFSB staff members held a call with Triad and NNSA Field Office Personnel to discuss the staff's observations from their review of the combustible trailer formerly parked adjacent to an outside transuranic waste storage pad at the Plutonium Facility (see 2/12/2021 report). While the trailer was moved away from the location adjacent to waste drums by facility personnel, the staff believes its ordinary combustible hazard is not treated appropriately in the safety basis which focuses on combustible liquids.

Federal Oversight: On Wednesday, the Environmental Management Field Office issued its corrective action plan to address the findings and management concerns from the EM Chief of Nuclear Safety's review of nuclear safety functions at the Field Office (see 7/17/2020 report). Key corrective actions developed from a causal analysis of the issues include: completing development of a compliant nuclear safety basis review and approval procedure; and training and mentoring nuclear safety staff on the expectations and discipline required in the review and approval of safety basis submittals.

Plutonium Facility–Safety Basis: Last Thursday, Triad submitted to the NNSA Field Office for approval an Evaluation of the Safety of the Situation (ESS) for a recent spill in the Plutonium Facility (see 8/6/2021 report). The proposed operational restrictions stem from those already in place from Triad's recovery memo for this event (see 8/20/2021 report). They will remain in place until a Justification for Continued Operations changes them or a permanent engineered solution is developed.

Plutonium Facility–Radiological Safety: Last Tuesday, a worker discovered contamination on their hand when using a hand and foot monitor upon exiting a laboratory room. Radiological control personnel responded and were able to successfully decontaminate the individual. Facility personnel are evaluating the best approach to personal protective equipment usage for the activity involved.

Chemistry and Metallurgy Research Building (CMR): On Tuesday, the NNSA Field Office unconditionally approved the ESS for wildfire impacts on waste containers stored in the CMR yard (see 6/25/2021 report). The ESS acknowledges the previously unanalyzed hazard and describes existing controls that address it including the design of certain containers, the material-at-risk management specific administrative control for the yard, and the material-at-risk inventory control.

Also on Tuesday, Triad submitted to the NNSA Field Office for approval a safety basis addendum addressing the planned outdoor ventilation skid to support Wing 3 (see 5/7/2021 report). The changes identify new events that can impact the system due to its outdoor location and adjust the existing material-at-risk inventory control to address the externally mounted filter.