

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

October 15, 2021

MEMORANDUM FOR: Christopher J. Roscetti, Technical Director
FROM: D. Gutowski, Resident Inspector
SUBJECT: Los Alamos Activity Report for Week Ending October 15, 2021

Area G: On Monday, a four member team commenced an Implementation Verification Review for four recently approved Justifications for Continued Operations (JCO) that apply to a variety of topics including potentially energetic drums, sealed sources, mobile crane and forklift operations, and fire events (see 9/3/2021 report). Implementing this set of JCOs adds 44 new specific administrative controls. This week the team conducted numerous personnel interviews, observed field conditions, and assessed performance of new surveillances. The review is expected to be completed next week.

On Wednesday, N3B personnel performed a full mockup demonstration of transuranic waste activities in the Building 412 contamination enclosure. Drum liner and repackaging activities have not been performed in Building 412 for almost a year due to safety basis issues. This mockup activity was intended to demonstrate continued proficiency in performing this activity, similar to the mobile loading demonstration in August (see 8/27/2021 report).

Flanged Tritium Waste Containers (FTWCs): Last Friday, Triad entered their new information process to determine the safety basis implications of additional decay time from the date assumed in a supporting pressure calculation. Given the decay rate of tritium, the new calculated pressure may be higher and impact standoff distances or other controls to protect workers from FTWC over pressurization or deflagration. This affects three Triad safety basis documents for venting FTWCs at Area G, transporting FTWCs from Area G to the Weapons Engineering Tritium Facility (WETF), and storing FTWCs at WETF. The N3B-owned safety basis annual update that addresses FTWC venting at Area G has not been approved and implemented yet. N3B personnel determined that their current controls on storage are not impacted, and are awaiting the results of Triad's evaluation to see what changes may need to be incorporated in the recently submitted annual update.

Radioactive Laboratory Utility Office Building (RLUOB): Last Thursday, Triad transmitted to the NNSA Field Office their major modification determination for equipment installation in RLUOB supporting its transition to a hazard category 3 nuclear facility. They concluded that the installations do not constitute a major modification. The determination notes that the equipment being installed is for processes that are already described in the hazard category 3 safety basis and will not introduce new hazards.

Chemistry and Metallurgy Research Building (CMR)–Infrastructure: On Tuesday, the NNSA Field Office unconditionally approved the safety basis addendum for the planned outdoor ventilation skid that will replace the capabilities of a failed fan within the currently inactive Wing 3 (see 9/10/2021 report). Facility personnel have started developing work documents to perform the installation.