

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

July 15, 2022

MEMORANDUM FOR: Christopher J. Roscetti, Technical Director
FROM: A. Boussouf and D. Gutowski, Resident Inspectors
SUBJECT: Los Alamos Activity Report for Week Ending July 15, 2022

DNFSB Activity: DNFSB Vice Chair T. Summers was onsite this week accompanied by staff members A. Hutain, and M. Sautman. The Vice Chair visited the Plutonium Facility, Area G, Technical Area 21, the Chemistry and Metallurgy Research Building, The Dual Axis Radiographic Hydrodynamic Test Facility, the Waste Characterization Reduction and Repackaging Facility, the RANT Shipping Facility, the Weapons Engineering Tritium Facility, and the Emergency Operations Center. He also observed the annual emergency exercise and met with senior management from Triad, N3B, and both field offices. On Wednesday evening, he spoke offsite with local stakeholder groups to discuss their concerns with site operations.

Emergency Management: On Wednesday, Triad conducted the annual full-participation evaluated emergency management exercise. The scenario was a criticality accident in the Plutonium Facility with two workers near the event needing transport to the hospital and two workers in an adjacent room with lesser medical needs. Triad and NNSA personnel are evaluating the exercise performance.

Plutonium Facility–Infrastructure: Triad personnel upgraded the site public address system (SPAS) at the Plutonium Facility due to approaching obsolescence. The SPAS provides credited emergency paging capability and sounds emergency evacuation and fire alarms. It has a safety-significant function supporting the audible alarm for the criticality alarm system. During the final portions of the upgrade, the Plutonium Facility was in standby mode which restricts operations with material at risk. Switchover to the new system was completed this week, and the facility returned to normal operations mode.

Plutonium Facility–Accident Investigation: On Friday, Triad transmitted to the NNSA Field Office for approval their corrective action plan from the Incident Review of the January contamination event at the Plutonium Facility (see 6/3/2022 report). The plan states that responsible personnel and due dates for the corrective actions will be defined by August 2022. Key actions include re-evaluating the 2011 extent of condition on glovebox penetrations, revising command media and training to ensure better understanding of who is the owner of a glovebox, and improved training on the different types of ventilation used for gloveboxes.

Radioactive Laboratory Utility Office Building (RLUOB)/PF-400: Triad personnel transmitted to the NNSA Field Office for approval the corrective action plan and causal analysis from the federal operational readiness review supporting the transition of RLUOB to a hazard category 3 nuclear facility to be known as PF-400.