

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

July 15, 2005

MEMORANDUM FOR: J. K. Fortenberry, Technical Director
FROM: Michael J. Merritt, DNFSB Site Representative
SUBJECT: Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory
Report for Week Ending July 15, 2005

Plutonium Facility Resumption Status: LLNL is nearing completion of its Management Self-Assessment (MSA) for resumption of “reduced activity” in the Plutonium Facility. The MSA is being conducted in accordance with an MSA plan that was issued on June 2, 2005. All of the Technical Safety Requirements (TSR) management programs have been reviewed and reports have been generated. The MSA summary report is expected to be issued on July 20, 2005. At this time, a total of 163 findings have been identified. Preliminary evaluation of the MSA findings indicates 32 pre-start findings and 131 post-start findings.

Pre-start issues requiring significant management attention include those relating to the fire protection program, formality of operations, procedure updates, and training. Closure of the findings in these areas within the existing schedule constraints will be challenging. For example, to address formality of operations issues, a conduct of operations manual was recently generated. However, facility personnel have not yet been trained on the manual and the training material is currently being developed. Closure of the MSA findings is likely to include corrective actions, corrective action plans, and compensatory measures. Each issue is being tracked to closure using a corrective action database. The justification for closure of each the findings will also be documented in formal closure packages.

Facility management is anticipating closure of the pre-start findings in late- July which would support a declaration of readiness by early August. Following this declaration, concurrent readiness assessments will be performed by LLNL and the Livermore Site Office (LSO). The independent readiness assessment teams for LLNL and LSO have been identified and the team leaders are anticipating the conduct of the readiness assessments to begin the week of August 8, 2005 and last approximately two weeks.

Plutonium Facility Occurrence: On July 8, 2005, Plutonium Facility operators declared a failed surveillance after performance of a semi-annual functional check of the criticality alarm system uninterruptible power supply (ORPS report OAK-LLNL-LLNL-2005-0053). The surveillance procedure requires that each of the backup batteries maintain a minimum voltage value during a timed test. One of the batteries failed to maintain the minimum voltage and the operators discontinued the test and reported the surveillance results. The battery was replaced and the surveillance was completed satisfactorily on July 11, 2004.

Public Interaction: On July 13, 2005, the site representative met with the executive director of Tri-Valley CARES (Communities Against a Radioactive Environment). Tri-Valley CARES requested the meeting to discuss LLNL’s progress in addressing the Board’s concerns relating to the Plutonium Facility’s safety analysis, recent issues regarding configuration management of vital safety systems, and the resumption process for the Plutonium Facility.