

## DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

May 26, 2006

**MEMORANDUM FOR:** J. Kent Fortenberry, Technical Director  
**FROM:** C. H. Keilers, Jr.  
**SUBJECT:** Los Alamos Report for Week Ending May 26, 2006

Anderson was here this week augmenting site rep coverage.

**Criticality Safety:** LANL determined this week that a nuclear facility was staging liquid plutonium residues for shipment at a location with posting that prohibited storage of hydrogenous fissile material. The event serves to re-emphasize the importance of LANL following up on its commitments in the recent criticality safety improvement plan (site rep weekly 3/31/06).

**Contract Transition:** This week, LANS briefed their Board of Governors and NNSA on their readiness to run LANL starting June 1<sup>st</sup>. While having concerns, LANS asserts that they are ready; their transition plan is complete; key personnel are in place; and they have working relationships in place between their management team, the work force, the community, and the customer.

**Authorization Basis (AB):** Most of the pre-existing conditions that LANS has identified involve operations, and several of those involve AB issues, such as the state-of-compliance with the Nuclear Safety Management rule (10 CFR 830). Particular concerns are the LANSCE safety basis, which is a piecemeal set of documents that expire in August, and the TA-55 safety basis and interim technical safety requirements; the last are not fully implemented and expire in July (site rep weekly 4/21/06).

LANS considered that the lack of configuration control of the list of AB documents, as evidenced by inaccurate and expired authorization agreements, constituted a pre-start condition for transition (site rep weekly 3/10/06). After several iterations, LANL submitted and NNSA approved last week updated authorization agreements for the Hazard Category 2 nuclear facilities.

**Integrated Safety Management:** On May 16<sup>th</sup>, LANL submitted to NNSA an integrated corrective action plan (ICAP) for the two recent Type B investigations and the DOE-SP review (ref: site rep weeklies 2/3/06, 1/27/06, 1/13/06, 11/4/05, 10/4/05). Key elements of the ICAP involve integrated work management (IWM); behavior based safety; oversight and assessment processes; radiological protection; safety basis; conduct of engineering; vital safety systems; and configuration management. The ICAP was developed by teams consisting of line managers and institutional subject matter experts, increasing the likelihood that the actions would be both achievable operationally and effective at addressing root causes. Both the current and the incoming LANL Directors have endorsed the plan. Schedules and resources for most actions are unspecified and left to LANS to establish.

**Federal Management:** NNSA's response is not evident to Type B and DOE-SP findings involving federal management, several of which have nuclear safety implications. Also, one Type B observation was that the NNSA Site Office has been ineffective at managing both federal and contractor corrective actions from prior Type B incidents, such as the August 2003 Pu-238 release with uptakes; some of those actions remain incomplete. As an example, the site rep observes that DOE, NNSA, and LANL still seem to lack clear assignment of funding and oversight responsibilities and effective cradle-to-grave management processes for Pu-238 operations (JON 12). NNSA appears challenged to identify and implement federal corrective actions, as well as oversee contractor corrective actions to closure.