

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

April 8, 2005

MEMORANDUM FOR: J. Kent Fortenberry, Technical Director
FROM: T. D. Burns Jr. and C. H. Keilers, Jr.
SUBJECT: Los Alamos Report for Week Ending April 8, 2005

Keilers was off-site this week.

Management: The LANL Corrective Action Review Board (CARB) met for the first time last week. The CARB is intended to oversee and guide corrective action management processes for both local and institutional issues identified during the resumption reviews. It will report to the LANL Director, consist of several LANL senior managers and non-voting NNSA reps, and function similarly to the largely successful LANL Resumption Review Board (RRB). With sustained management commitment, the CARB could become the key mechanism for ensuring that laboratory corrective actions are consistent, complete, sustainable, and effective (site rep weekly 12/31/04).

Chemistry and Metallurgy Research Building (CMR): This week, NNSA rejected the safety basis upgrade (BIO and TSRs) for CMR submitted by LANL in September 2004. More than 75 significant comments were provided to LANL for resolution and NNSA believes that the time required to adequately address these comments will be extensive. Given the age of the current CMR safety basis documents (circa 1998), NNSA is uncomfortable with relying on these for an extended period of time while the final safety basis upgrade is revised.

Consistent with the approach taken recently at TA-55 (site rep weekly, 4/1/2005), NNSA has directed LANL to develop a set of interim TSRs to support operations until the final safety basis upgrade is completed. In developing the interim TSRs, LANL has been directed to draw upon the best available information, including all unreviewed safety questions and hazard analyses produced for CMR since 1999. Additionally, no controls from the current safety basis are to be eliminated or downgraded. The due date for submission of the interim TSRs is August 31, 2005.

HEPA Filter Program: LANL has initiated a high level review of the laboratory's processes for ensuring the quality of HEPA filters used in safety-related applications. The review is assessing protocols for procurement, storage, installation, testing, and disposal. There is currently no institutional program for managing safety-related HEPA filters, and preliminary results indicate that the formality of the disparate divisional programs is weak, especially regarding storage of filters prior to installation. LANL expects to complete the review and issue a final report before the end of the month.

Critical Experiments Facility (TA-18): Early move activities continue with NNSA approving work on a monthly basis. Overall operational performance has improved since Nuclear Materials Technology Division took custody of the facility (site rep weekly, 2/18/05). This week, an operations center has been established to improve facility work control and more formally track execution of safety basis requirements. Efforts to clarify the implementation status of the currently approved safety basis and identify the control set necessary to support early-move and anticipated programmatic activities are on-going (site rep weekly, 3/4/2005).