

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

August 5, 2011

MEMORANDUM FOR: Timothy Dwyer, Technical Director
FROM: Jonathan Plaue, DNFSB Site Representative
SUBJECT: LLNL Activity Report for Week Ending August 5, 2011

External Visits: This week, a team from the Government Accountability Office was at the laboratory conducting a review of the Department of Energy's *2010 Safety and Security Reform Plan*. The team also met with the contractor and toured the Superblock facilities to understand LLNL's perspective on accomplishing the National Nuclear Security Administration's plutonium missions following completion of the security deinventory.

Livermore Site Office (LSO): Roughly a year ago, LSO embarked on an effort to reorganize the management structure of the office. This week, new personnel officially assumed the positions of Assistant Manager for Defense Programs (AMDP) and Assistant Manager for Environment Safety & Health (AMES&H). These positions are important to the safety of operations in the nuclear facilities. The responsibilities of AMDP include Superblock operations, startup and restart, safety basis, criticality safety, and nuclear material packaging. The responsibilities of AMES&H include fire protection engineering, radiation protection, industrial hygiene, and industrial safety. Personnel selections remain for the lead safety basis analyst.

Plutonium Facility: In a letter dated July 29, 2011, LSO approved the contractor's request for a 10-day deviation to an approved limiting condition of operation (LCO). The LCO specifies that a minimum volume of water must be in the facility's safety class fire water tank during operations with radioactive material. This fire water tank provides water to the safety class deluge system that supports the safety class final HEPA filtration stage. The contractor requested the deviation in order to fulfill a National Fire Protection Association requirement for a five year inspection. The inspection necessitates emptying the tank and the deviation allows the contractor to continue programmatic work while the tank is inoperable. Water supply to the fire suppression system will continue through the laboratory domestic water supply. As a compensatory measure, facility staff will confirm daily that no work is planned on the domestic supply that may impact service to facility. In the event the water supply is impacted, the facility will enter the LCO action statements. Of note, the contractor previously requested this same deviation in 2006, but failed to incorporate this regular need into the technical safety requirements during the safety basis annual update process.

Tritium Facility: On Wednesday, maintenance staff installed the missing pressure gauge on the riser serving the fire suppression system (see weekly report dated July 29, 2011). Other improvements to the facility are underway. Facility crafts are completing installation of a new increment fire barrier door. This is a credited door and improper latching was observed with the previous version. In addition, the installation of shelving units and the removal of antiquated records has started in Room 170. Room 170 is currently used as a storage area and is connected to, but not considered part of, the radioactive materials area. The facility has experienced issues with the accumulation of combustibles in this room and these efforts should help maintain order and limit future accumulation.