

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

January 4, 2013

MEMORANDUM FOR: T. J. Dwyer, Technical Director
FROM: R.T. Davis and R.K. Verhaagen
SUBJECT: Los Alamos Report for Week Ending January 4, 2013

Plutonium Facility – Seismic Safety: The site office recently provided comments to LANL on the safety basis addendum associated with inadequate structural performance identified in October 2012 (see 11/23/12 weekly). The safety basis review team that is evaluating the addendum includes subject matter experts from LASO, the NNSA Albuquerque Complex, and DOE-Headquarters. The review team provided 20 comments on the addendum that require correction or resolution. The site office memo directs LANL to resubmit the addendum along with a completed comment resolution document by January 18, 2013.

Area G – Safety Basis: LANL has submitted a revised safety basis strategy for Technical Area-54, Area G Basis for Interim Operations (BIO) and Technical Safety Requirements (TSR) to the site office for review and approval. In March 2012, the site office approved a BIO and associated TSRs to replace the current safety basis that was approved in 2003. However, due to a focus of resources on accelerating material at risk (MAR) reduction efforts through the 3706 Campaign, BIO implementation has been delayed to the second half of 2013. This new safety basis strategy proposes to revise the currently approved BIO and associated TSRs to account for the significant reduction in above-ground material at risk as a result of 3706 Campaign waste removal efforts. In addition, the revised BIO and TSRs will address issues identified in the Board letter dated November 19, 2012, that identified deficiencies in the BIO. LANL recently submitted its response to the Board's letter to the site office for review.

LANL expects to submit the revised BIO and TSRs to the site office for approval in April, 2013. This submittal date will facilitate implementation of the BIO and TSRs by September 30, 2013. In order to reduce risk while operations continue as the implementation of the BIO is delayed, LANL is proposing several actions including: relocating MAR to locations more distant from the site boundary; removing several high MAR containers in addition to those of the 3706 Campaign; and paving roads within Area G to eliminate the need for the large gasoline powered water truck currently used for dust suppression.

Los Alamos Neutron Science Center (LANSCE): In December, LANL completed initial corrective actions to support resumption of operations in the Lujan Center, ER-2 flight paths. The Lujan Center flight paths in ER-1 and ER-2 have been shut down since a release of contamination occurred in August 2012. In September 2012, NNSA's Accident Investigation Board (AIB) identified 14 Judgments of Need (see 11/2/12 weekly). The initial corrective actions to support restart of operations in ER-2 address issues identified by the AIB. Operations in ER-1 (the location of the most significant contamination) are not expected to restart until the next beam cycle (July 2013).

The site office has also increased their operational awareness of LANSCE activities during the decontamination and recovery phase including a walk-down of the sample management procedures and processes by the Assistant Manager for Field Operations. ER-2 flight path operations are expected to restart this month and continue through the end of this beam cycle (February 2013). LANL plans to implement additional permanent corrective actions at the Lujan Center and other LANSCE facilities prior to the start of the next beam cycle.