

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

June 7, 2013

MEMORANDUM FOR: Steven Stokes, Acting Technical Director
FROM: Jonathan Plaue, DNFSB Site Representative
SUBJECT: LLNL Activity Report for Week Ending June 7, 2013

Management: Laboratory management announced that 449 individuals applied for the Self Select Voluntary Separation Program. Approved individuals were notified this past Monday and have one week to withdraw from the program before departing the lab by June 13, 2013. The resulting three-day transition period will create substantial challenges for turnover of responsibilities and transfer of knowledge. Management reports that approximately 23 individuals were approved with responsibilities in the nuclear facilities including system engineers, safety basis analysts, senior fissile material handlers, and various subject matter experts.

To cope with the change, the Deputy Laboratory Director directed all programs to enter a one-month period of deliberate operations beginning on June 13. Nuclear facility management intends deliberate operations to include participation of facility management during plan of the day meetings, increased management walk-arounds, and elevated scrutiny of scheduling and attention to the conduct of high-risk activities. The details behind these actions are in development.

Safety Basis: This week, a three-person team from National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) Headquarters conducted an onsite review of safety basis processes for the field office and laboratory contractor. NNSA committed to perform this review in response to the Board's letter dated August 30, 2012. The team toured the Plutonium and Tritium Facilities and conducted numerous interviews. During their out-brief, the team provided the field office with an initial set of about 30 observations; however, the team plans additional review of calculations and other documentation obtained while on site. Their report is expected in late June.

Plutonium Facility: Facility personnel continue to resolve the Potential Inadequacies to the Safety Analysis concerning the credited boundaries and engineering capabilities of certain components in the loft (see weekly report dated May 10, 2013). This week, engineers performed tests of the ventilation system intended to examine performance with a simulated failure of affected components. Specifically, engineers estimated the surface area of safety class ducting that could be compromised during a postulated room fire. Engineers then opened inspection ports of similar and larger surface areas while monitoring required performance characteristics of the ventilation system. The contractor is documenting the results of these tests in formal engineering notes in support of the evaluation of safety of the situation expected by June 12, 2013.