

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

December 20, 2013

MEMORANDUM FOR: S.A. Stokes, Technical Director
FROM: R.T. Davis, R.K. Verhaagen, and J.W. Plaué
SUBJECT: Los Alamos Report for Week Ending December 20, 2013

Weapons Engineering Tritium Facility (WETF): This week, facility management announced the completion of the inventory of legacy tritium-containing items. This is an important first step in their effort to disposition tritium-containing items (see 10/4/13 weekly). Facility personnel continue to work on required restart activities including procedure finalization and operator training. Facility restart is necessary to disposition many of the tritium-containing items through the Tritium Gas Handling System. LANL has scheduled restart activities, including a management self-assessment, contractor readiness assessment, and a federal readiness assessment for early calendar year 2014.

Following a series of self-identified issues with work control, the WETF Facility Operations Director called for a safety pause on Wednesday morning. The issues were related to procedural compliance by both facility and non-facility contractor personnel. In one instance, a wall penetration was being performed without a prior ground penetrating radar scan as required by the work package. In another instance, workers completed steps of a preventive maintenance instruction without using a specified tool.

This week, the field office also provided direction to LANL regarding pressure safety issues that were identified during a safety system oversight review (see 4/26/13 weekly). The direction letter noted that many LANL approved variances for WETF safety significant systems may not be compliant with pressure safety requirements of ASME B31.3, *Process Piping*. As a result, LANL is directed to submit to the field office a list of variances that cannot be otherwise closed and will require DOE approval for either an equivalency or exemption from applicable codes requirements.

Contract Management: This week, the field office sent LANL direction regarding contractual implementation of DOE Order 420.1C, *Facility Safety*. DOE issued this version of the Order on December 4, 2012. LANL's original implementation plan included actions extending to September 2019. The field office requested a revised implementation plan by June 2, 2014, to include acceleration of the schedule, inclusion of the order revision into the code of record for new projects beginning this fiscal year, and revision of the Engineering Standards Manual for structural work and hazardous processes this fiscal year, among several other actions.

Federal Oversight: Last week, the field office transmitted to LANL the results of a vital safety system assessment for credited vehicle barriers at the WCRR Repackaging Facility, the RANT Shipping Facility, and Area G. The field office identified that vehicle barriers were not present for a ~25' length at RANT and at one pit location at Area G, contrary to the approved safety bases. They noted that these issues were discovered in early September 2013 and that LANL has yet to critique or enter the new information process. The field office also noted several safety basis issues, including concerns with the flow-down of requirements, non-specific or missing performance criteria, and inadequate surveillance requirements. The field office requested LANL's issue tracking system numbers associated with these issues within 15 days.