

## DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

July 25, 2014

**MEMORANDUM FOR:** S.A. Stokes, Technical Director  
**FROM:** R.K. Verhaagen and J.W. Plaue  
**SUBJECT:** Los Alamos Report for Week Ending July 25, 2014

**Area G–Nitrate Salt Wastes:** On Monday and Tuesday, members of the DOE Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP) Technical Assistance Team and the Accident Investigation Board conducted a workshop to review the hypotheses and research efforts that LANL personnel have completed regarding the radiological release event at WIPP.

**Criticality Safety:** Last Friday, LANL transmitted to the field office their revised plan for the *Nuclear Criticality Safety Upgrades Project* (see 4/25/14 weekly). The project plan contains several hundred actions and indicates completion in October 2016.

**RANT Shipping Facility–Safety Basis:** Last week, the field office conditionally approved the 2013 Documented Safety Analysis (DSA) and Technical Safety Requirements (TSR). The conditions include within 45 days: (1) removing all references of the TRUPACT III capability; (2) designating vehicle barriers between the facility and adjacent parking lot as defense-in-depth; (3) designating vehicle barriers protecting the container storage area as safety significant features; (4) correcting inconsistencies for the fire suppression system and water supply system throughout the DSA/TSR; (5) ensuring consistency throughout chapter 4 of the DSA with respect to safety system functions, and functional requirements, and performance criteria; and (6) revising chapter 7 to reflect new organizational names. The field office further directed implementation of the DSA/TSR within 90 days. Implementation of this DSA/TSR will move RANT from its status as a limited life facility to recognition of its status as the enduring transuranic waste shipping facility for the laboratory.

**Continuous Improvement:** Last week, the field office requested that LANL formally submit a sustainment plan for safety culture by August 27, 2014. The plan is to include a list of tools, their descriptions, and the plan and schedule to implement the tools. In addition, the field office invited a LANL participant to attend a NNSA-HQ sponsored safety culture workshop to be held in early August at the Nevada Field Office.

**Plutonium Facility–Criticality Safety/Conduct of Operations:** Last week, facility personnel identified material stored in a glovebox that did not comply with newly posted criticality safety limits. In this case, plutonium metal turnings in excess of 500 grams were being stored in non-watertight containers contrary to the posting derived from the controls specified in the Justification for Continued Operations (see 7/4/14 weekly). During an Annual Operational Review two weeks prior, with different criticality limits posted, it was noted that the contents of the glovebox did not comply with the limits established in the Justification for Continued Operations and that action would have to be taken to package the material prior to posting the new limits. During a critique of the event, operations personnel reported that subsequent to the AOR they incorrectly concluded that an informal analysis performed by a criticality safety analyst to show the condition in the glovebox was currently safe was sufficient to allow them to violate the posting. As a result, the glovebox was posted with the new controls in a known infringed condition.