

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

July 22, 2016

MEMORANDUM FOR: S.A. Stokes, Technical Director
FROM: R.K. Verhaagen and J.W. Plaue
SUBJECT: Los Alamos Report for Week Ending July 22, 2016

DNFSB Staff Activity: M.W. Dunlevy was on site to support Site Representative activities including observation of the commencement of the Contractor Readiness Assessment for Plutonium Pyrochemical Operations, meetings with senior NNSA Field Office management, and a walkdown of the Plutonium Facility and associated technical area. On Friday, C.T. Beaty, T.L. Hunt, and A.M. Hutain conducted a teleconference with LANL and NNSA Field Office personnel to summarize their observations made during an onsite review of the LANL emergency management program (see 4/15/16 weekly).

Area G–Inappropriately Remediated Nitrate Salts (RNS): On Wednesday, LANL management presented to the NNSA Field Office the safety basis review team’s final decision for the planned safety basis approach to support RNS treatment. The safety basis review team has determined that the alternate approach to pursue defending certain RNS accidents as beyond extremely unlikely that was proposed during last week’s in process review would be abandoned (see 7/15/16 weekly). Instead, the team will continue with the original plan to develop the necessary safety basis attachments with integrated Technical Safety Requirements documents that will include application of the DOE-STD-3009 and DOE-STD-1104 process for *Existing Facilities with Mitigated Offsite Consequence Estimates over the Evaluation Guideline* (see 6/17/16 weekly). The safety basis review team expects to meet again next week to finalize the details of the Area G safety basis changes and to start focusing on the details necessary to support a revision to the Waste Characterization, Reduction, and Repackaging Facility safety basis to complete treatment of the RNS into an acceptable form for disposal.

Weapons Engineering Tritium Facility (WETF)–Safety Basis: Last Friday, the Implementation Verification Review team for the most recently approved revision of the WETF Documented Safety Analysis and Technical Safety Requirements presented the results of their review to WETF management (see 7/15/16 weekly). The team identified one finding with a new Surveillance Requirement to conduct a visual inspection of the wet pipe sprinkler system. The surveillance requires the distance between the bottom of sprinkler heads and stored equipment or material to be greater than 18 inches. The review team identified instances where this requirement was not met. The team concluded that once this finding is adequately addressed WETF personnel have demonstrated implementation of the safety basis change.

Plutonium Facility–Restart Activities: On Wednesday, Plutonium Facility personnel commenced the Contractor Readiness Assessment for Plutonium Pyrochemical Operations. This week, review team members performed document reviews, observed metal chlorination and chlorine gas delivery system calibration activities, and conducted interviews with facility personnel performing and supporting this activity. The review team is scheduled to continue with similar activities throughout next week and expect to have the review and a draft of the final report completed by next Friday. Plutonium Pyrochemical Operations are the final planned activities of the Plutonium Facility resumption project following the LANL Director’s decision to pause operations in June 2013.