

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

November 16, 2018

MEMORANDUM FOR: Christopher J. Roscetti, Technical Director
FROM: J.W. Plaue and D. Gutowski, Resident Inspectors
SUBJECT: Los Alamos Activity Report for Week Ending November 16, 2018

DNFSB Staff Activity: D. J. Cleaves was at the laboratory this week to gain familiarization of the pit manufacturing flowsheet and evaluate lessons learned for execution at the Savannah River Site.

Plutonium Facility–Readiness: On Wednesday, the contractor readiness assessment (CRA) team out-briefed their findings for their review of Uranium Electrolytic Decontamination operations. The CRA team noted one pre-start finding, two post-start findings, three recommendations that did not rise to the level of a finding, three deficiencies that were outside the CRA scope, and four noteworthy practices. The pre-start finding was that the worker hazard assessment and abatement required by 10 CFR 851, *Worker Safety and Health Program*, was less than adequate. One post-start finding was the lack of objective evidence that glovebox components were evaluated per NFPA 70, *National Electrical Code* to address the hydrogen gas created by the process. The other pre-start was that LANL personnel had not fully satisfied the requirements of their internal readiness preparation processes. They expect to issue their final report early next month. Of note, the CRA team applauded the operational excellence displayed by the work crew. NNSA anticipates conducting their readiness review in January 2019.

Plutonium Facility–Work Control: On Tuesday, Triad management issued a standing order to implement a Weapons Integrated Production Schedule. The order realigns area controllers' functions and management reporting, as well as adjusts several aspects of the work scheduling and release process with the intent of maximizing the effectiveness of the plan-of-the-day.

Plutonium Facility–Glovebox Safety: On Wednesday, glovebox safety personnel walked down the location of last week's glovebox glove breach. They identified a burr on a reach tool that plausibly contributed to the breach.

Area G–Safety Systems: On Tuesday, N3B management began issuing a daily shift order implementing a temporary modification that permits limited vehicle traffic into Area G while the safety class vehicle barriers are inoperable (see 11/2/2018 report). The shift order designates a required vehicle route that avoids high-risk locations containing transuranic waste by transiting across a low-level waste burial pit. Vehicle access remains restricted outside of the specified route. N3B completed the design to return the vehicle barriers to service and is developing a work package, including worker training for vital safety systems, to implement the design.

This vehicle allowance was intended to facilitate mobile loading operations to execute a planned shipment of transuranic waste from Area G to the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP). However, mobile loading did not take place this week due to cold temperatures. N3B will attempt to mobile load another shipment after the Thanksgiving holiday.

RANT Shipping Facility: On Wednesday, Triad management provided the NNSA Field Office with an update to the previous schedule for restart of the RANT Shipping Facility (see 11/2/2018 report). The new schedule shows contractor and federal readiness reviews in February 2019 with start-up authorization anticipated by the end of that month. Operation of RANT is essential to reliably make use of shipping opportunities to WIPP thereby reducing risk across the laboratory.