

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

January 7, 2022

MEMORANDUM FOR: Christopher J. Roscetti, Technical Director
FROM: D. Gutowski, Resident Inspector
SUBJECT: Los Alamos Activity Report for Week Ending January 7, 2022

Area G–Safety Basis: Last month, the Environmental Management Field Office and Headquarters personnel approved N3B’s Justification for Continued Operations (JCO) for the potential inadequacies of the safety analysis (PISA) related to unvented transuranic waste drums movements and horizontal sympathetic deflagrations in unvented drums (see 10/29/2021 report). While there were no conditions of approval or directed changes in the Safety Evaluation Report, the transmittal letter formally noted that the duration of the JCO will not exceed one year rather than being in place until a modern safety basis for Area G is approved and implemented. This is the fifth and final JCO developed to address the 23 PISAs identified against the Area G safety basis in 2020 and early 2021.

Emergency Management: The NNSA Field Office approved Triad’s annual Emergency Readiness Assurance Plan and submitted it to NNSA Headquarters. This year, the plan discusses some of the challenges to emergency management due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the relief granted by DOE to many requirements during the pandemic. Also of note, fiscal year 2021 was the final year in the five-year implementation process of DOE Order 151.1D, *Comprehensive Emergency Management System*, at the site. Once the NNSA Field Office approves a few remaining Emergency Management Planning Assessments which are currently under review, implementation will be complete.

Federal Oversight: The Resident Inspector joined the NNSA Site Manager and other Field Office personnel in a tour of the Weapons Engineering Tritium Facility (WETF). Key topics addressed during the visit included disposition of Flanged Tritium Waste Containers (FTWCs), and the upcoming Plutonium Coupon Studies (see 8/6/2021 report). WETF currently stores two potentially pressurized FTWCs that are slated for venting; one FTWC in this category was vented and unloaded in 2019. The facility also has two FTWCs that are not potentially pressurized but are overloaded and must have their contents split and distributed to additional containers prior to shipment offsite as waste. The four potentially pressurized FTWCs at Area G are planned to be vented there, then transported to WETF in spring of this year. For the Plutonium Coupon Studies, WETF personnel discussed the new safety basis controls and showed the location of the filter in the tubing manifold that is intended to protect WETF tritium systems from inadvertent plutonium contamination.