

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

September 30, 2022

MEMORANDUM FOR: Christopher J. Roscetti, Technical Director
FROM: A. Boussouf and D. Gutowski, Resident Inspectors
SUBJECT: Los Alamos Activity Report for Week Ending September 30, 2022

Transuranic Waste Facility (TWF): Last Thursday, as part of an extent of condition review of work release from a previous event, TWF personnel identified another violation of the facility's Technical Safety Requirements related to work allowed during different facility modes (see 8/26/2022 report). Flammable gas analysis had been performed in a building in cold standby mode. The Technical Safety Requirements only allow that activity to be performed at a location in warm standby or operations mode. Facility management is evaluating whether flammable gas analysis can be separated from flammable gas sampling and be an authorized activity for cold standby.

Weapons Engineering Tritium Facility (WETF): On Tuesday, WETF management declared a violation of the facility's Technical Safety Requirements. They identified that in-service inspections for two safety-class tritium containment vessels were not performed within the required five-year periodicity. Facility personnel identified these vessels as due for inspection during a recent walkdown, but the incorrect due dates were placed on facility status boards. Facility personnel completed the inspections soon after the discrepancy was discovered. The results were satisfactory. Facility management is planning to adjust their procedure for status board updates to help prevent recurrence of a similar event.

Plutonium Facility–Fire Protection: On Wednesday, the resident inspector accompanied facility personnel on a management observation verification walkdown focused on chemical inventory control including storage in flammable cabinets. During the walkdown, the resident inspector noted that a suspended leak diaper, installed due to a prior spill (see 7/23/2021 report), was in excess of obstruction limits defined by the National Fire Protection Association. This diaper could impede the discharge pattern of several sprinklers in the basement. Facility management is evaluating how to fix this non-compliance. The members of the walkdown also opened flammable liquid storage cabinets in the basement to observe internal conditions and storage practices.

Radioactive Liquid Waste Treatment Facility (RLWTF): A seven member contractor team commenced a readiness assessment to support resumption of transuranic waste drumming operations activities at RLWTF. These activities have not been performed since 2014 (see 1/21/2022 report) when the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant was shut down after an accident. The process needs to resume to support stabilization of the transuranic fraction of liquid waste coming from the Plutonium Facility.

Area G: The Environmental Management Field Office authorized startup of glovebag operations in Dome 231 following their review of N3B's revised procedures (see 7/1/2022). Actual performance of this activity is not starting immediately as personnel are focusing on drill and drain activities.