

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

June 2, 2023

TO: Katherine R. Herrera, Acting Technical Director
FROM: A. Boussouf and D. Gutowski, Resident Inspectors
SUBJECT: Los Alamos Activity Report for the Week Ending June 2, 2023

Emergency Management: On Wednesday, the resident inspectors attended the annual wildland fire and forest management meeting with NNSA Field Office, Environmental Management Field Office, Triad, Los Alamos Fire Department, National Park Service, and U.S. Forest Service personnel. Due to higher than average moisture, the current wildland fire danger rating for the laboratory is low. The meeting concluded with a tour of a recently mitigated area showing current fuel reduction strategies, and a display of available wildland firefighting equipment, including a masticator, a brush truck, and a new lightweight water tender more capable of navigating fire access roads.

Plutonium Facility–Infrastructure: Triad submitted an update to the Safety Design Strategy for the Los Alamos Plutonium Pit Production Project (LAP4) to the NNSA field offices for approval. The document was revised to clarify the project’s approach to meeting glovebox line seismic performance criteria. This approach allows the release of glovebox enclosure installation packages without performing seismic cluster analyses across interconnected gloveboxes and instead completing them at a later date (see 5/19/2023 report).

The Plutonium Facility returned to normal operations mode following a three-week outage (see 5/26/2023 report). Personnel completed planned activities associated with three system upgrades to improve reliability: cutover to the new safety-significant facility control system; upgrades to the south fire riser, which is part of a safety-class system; and controller upgrades for the crosstown trolley, a non-safety system that is critical for efficiently moving materials within the facility. The facility control system and trolley work was completed without significant issues during the planned outage timeframe. The fire riser upgrade was a more challenging effort and took longer than expected, extending the outage. One key problem was successfully installing anchorages for fire water piping. There was also a lockout/tagout issue during fire riser work. Facility management held a hotwash this week to develop lessons learned to improve planning for and performance of future outages.

Plutonium Facility–Glovebox Safety: Weapons Production management is reinvigorating and expanding the glovebox and sharps program following recent glovebox glove events (see 4/21/2023 report). Their intent is to drive to zero preventable glove breaches by October 2023. In order to meet that goal, the new program owners have plans to increase staffing, expand forensic capabilities, and improve integration with conduct of operations mentors and causal analysts.

Onsite Transportation: Triad submitted to the NNSA Field Office for approval an update to the Transportation Safety Document and associated Technical Safety Requirements. The updated documents incorporate NNSA’s suggested compensatory measures within several new specific administrative controls as well as modifications of existing ones (see 3/10/2023 report).