

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

January 12, 2007

MEMORANDUM FOR: J. K. Fortenberry, Technical Director
FROM: M. J. Merritt, DNFSB Site Representative
SUBJECT: Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory (LLNL)
Report for Week Ending January 12, 2007

DNFSB Staff Site Activity: Staff member A. Matteucci was at LLNL this week providing site representative augmentation.

Independent Oversight Inspection: This week an inspection team from the Department of Energy Office of Environment, Safety, and Health Evaluations, HS-64 (formerly OA-40), visited LLNL in preparation for an upcoming inspection. Two important areas of review by the inspection team are the corrective actions taken by LLNL and the Livermore Site Office (LSO) to address safety issues identified in the previous inspection in 2004 (see weekly report dated January 14, 2005) and the functionality of essential safety systems. The review of essential safety systems will focus on the glovebox ventilation system and fire suppression system in the Plutonium Facility. The review of these systems is intended to evaluate the effectiveness of LLNL programs and processes for configuration management, surveillance, testing, maintenance, operations, and feedback and improvement of the systems.

Readiness Assessment for Legacy Item Disposition: LLNL has scheduled commencement of the readiness assessment (RA) to disposition a legacy item referred to as Object-77 for the week of January 22, 2007. The LLNL and LSO RA teams are currently finalizing the review plans and team composition.

LSO Senior Nuclear Safety Advisor: The NNSA posting to fill a Senior Nuclear Safety Advisor vacancy at LSO closed on November 15, 2006. The position was originally posted in May, and re-posted in July and October. LSO is assembling a review panel and planning to conduct interviews by the end of January 2007.

Continuous Air Monitors (CAMs): In an October 16, 2006 occurrence report (NA-LSO-LLNL-LLNL-2006-0052), LLNL identified that two permanent CAMs had been removed from the locations specified by the documented safety analysis (DSA) and determined a positive unreviewed safety question existed (see weekly report dated December 15, 2006). In particular, two permanent CAMs had been removed from the area which created an inconsistency with the DSA which specified the locations for the permanent CAMs. In a December 1, 2006, letter to LSO, LLNL proposed a revision to the DSA that allowed the use of portable CAMs positioned closer to the contamination hazard in the worker's breathing zone. Subsequently, the Site Representative observed a measurement operation where the portable CAM was not located closer to the hazard than the specified location for the permanent CAM (see weekly report dated December 22, 2006). The September 2006 revision of the technical basis document for air monitoring states that the rationale for placement of air sampling equipment is maintained in the facility specific technical basis document (FSTBD). Presently, the FSTBDs for each facility are in development. LSO is processing documentation to accept LLNL's proposed resolution and plans to observe the next operation requiring a portable CAM.