



DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY
National Nuclear Security Administration
Los Alamos Field Office
Los Alamos, New Mexico 87544



MAR 02 2015

Mr. Douglas Sayre
Chair
Northern New Mexico Citizens' Advisory Board
94 Cities of Gold Road
Santa Fe, NM 87506

Dear Mr. Sayre:

References:

1. NNM CAB letter to K. Davis Lebak, OOM, NA-LA, and P. Maggiore, EPO, NA-LA from C. Valdez, NNM CAB, Subject: "Recommendation No. 2014-02, Institution of Measures to Help Ensure WIPP and LANL Transuranic Disposal Operations," dated July 31, 2014 (COR-EPO-8.11.2014-588898)

Thank you for submitting Recommendation No. 2014-02, "Institution of Measures to Help Ensure WIPP and LANL Transuranic Disposal Operations."

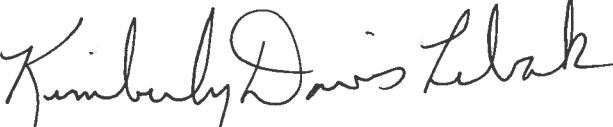
The Los Alamos Field Office (Field Office) acknowledges the Northern New Mexico Citizens' Advisory Board's (NNMCAB) concerns regarding the February 14, 2014 radiological event at the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP). As a result waste receipts and placement at WIPP were suspended. The Department of Energy (DOE) continues its investigation to identify the cause(s) of the recent events surrounding the radiological event at WIPP.

The Department of Energy is continuing its investigation into the radiological event to determine whether DOE and Los Alamos National Security, LLC (LANS) appropriately performed the remediation and repackaging of waste shipped to WIPP. The Department commissioned experts from five other national laboratories to form the Technical Assessment Team (TAT) to support the Department's Accident Investigation Board (AIB), to determine the causes of the radiological event. Findings will be captured in a report produced by the AIB. Additionally, DOE is in the process of preparing, and will approve, implement and disseminate to the public, the WIPP Recovery Plan that describes the initial start-up operations scheduled to begin in approximately 18 months. Once the AIB report is issued, DOE is committed to providing a presentation to the NNM CAB regarding AIB findings and a copy of the DOE WIPP Recovery Plan.

The Department of Energy and LANS have taken actions to ensure protection of human health and the environment by implementing a nitrate salt container isolation plan while pausing legacy TRU waste repackaging and treatment operations. LANS has already started implementing corrective actions but cannot complete these actions until the AIB releases its investigation.

The board's engagement in understanding DOE's process to determine the causes and implementation of an associated corrective action is greatly appreciated. Thank you for the continued focus and drive to ensure the safety and protection of human health and the environment, as the legacy TRU waste program moves forward.

If you have any additional questions or concerns regarding the response to this recommendation, please contact M. Lee Bishop at (505) 606-1804.


Kimberly Davis Lebak
Manager

cc:

Allison Majure

Vice-Chair

Northern New Mexico Citizens' Advisory Board

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Records Center, NA-LA

Official Contract File, NA-LA

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