

Fact Sheet

NNSA issues Preliminary Notice of Violation to Los Alamos National Security, LLC, for Radiation Protection Violations

On April 15, 2011, the National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) issued a Preliminary Notice of Violation (PNOV) to Los Alamos National Security, LLC (LANS), for violations of Department of Energy's (DOE) occupational radiation protection regulations. LANS is the operating contractor of NNSA's Los Alamos National Laboratory, a multidisciplinary research facility located in Los Alamos, New Mexico.

The PNOV cites four violations of DOE regulations governing occupational radiation protection of individuals from ionizing radiation while conducting DOE activities. The violations are associated with the unanticipated extremity exposures that occurred at Technical Area (TA)-48 and TA-53 on July 24, 2009 at the Los Alamos National Laboratory. NNSA considers the extremity exposure event and the associated violations to be of high safety significance. Personnel at TA-48 and TA-53 did not recognize the extremely high beta radiation dose rate associated with the arsenic-74 (As-74) source during their review and planning activities. As a result, the engineering and administrative controls applied to the As-74 sample decontamination, transport, and ion chamber loading operations were not adequate to ensure that employee occupational exposure limits would not be exceeded, and LANS did not establish effective written authorizations or radiological work permits to monitor or reduce the dose rate or limit worker extremity exposure. In each case, the regulatory limit of 50 rem to the extremities was not exceeded.

NNSA cited LANS for failures to comply with Title 10 C.F.R. Part 835, *Occupational Radiation Protection*. Accordingly, NNSA is issuing a PNOV with three Severity Level II violations and one Severity Level III violation with a proposed total civil penalty of \$82,500.

The Price-Anderson Amendments Act of 1988 authorizes the Energy Department to undertake regulatory actions against contractors for violations of its nuclear safety requirements. DOE's Enforcement Program encourages contractors to identify and correct nuclear safety deficiencies at an early stage, before they contribute to or result in more serious events.

Additional details on this and other enforcement actions are available on the Internet at www.hss.doe.gov/enforce.