Lab announces security changes

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LOS ALAMOS, New Mexico, February 23, 2012—Los Alamos National Laboratory is implementing several changes to its security procedures as the result of a recent security assessment conducted jointly by the Department of Defense and Department of Energy.

The joint team provided the Laboratory a set of security enhancement recommendations for consideration, and one important recommendation was to expand random inspections of all vehicles transiting the Laboratory, to include West and East Jemez Roads and roadways leading to the main Laboratory administrative area, Technical Area 3. Accordingly, the Laboratory will implement random vehicle inspections next month.

“Vehicles on Lab property have been subject to inspection for many years,” said Michael Lansing, associate director for safeguards and security. “We are appropriately expanding the areas for those random inspections. Drivers who use those Lab roadways will see a visibly increased presence of the Protective Force — our uniformed

security officers — conducting vehicle inspections, which will include bomb-sniffing dogs."

Everyone, including members of the public, who enters the Laboratory through the East and West Jemez Road Vehicle Access Portals and the East Jemez Road vehicle inspection area (at the corner of East Jemez and NM Highway-4) are subject to these inspections and asked to cooperate with the Protective Force if selected for a vehicle inspection.

Drivers may refuse to submit to a vehicle inspection, and if so, will be denied access to lab property and rerouted around the Laboratory via West Road or NM-4.

Laboratory employees headed to work are reminded that certain prohibited articles are not allowed on Laboratory property, even in personal vehicles. Those items include nongovernment-owned firearms, alcoholic beverages, other dangerous weapons and explosives, and illegal substances. Employees in possession of prohibited articles may be required to return home to remove those items from their vehicle before being allowed to return to work. Any suspected illegal activity will be reported to the Los Alamos Police Department.

"The external vulnerability assessment is the primary reason for these security changes. The Laboratory is working hard to balance our security requirements while minimizing impacts on local businesses and tourists," said Lansing. "The inspections will only take a few minutes, so the inconvenience will be minimal.

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