

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

August 1, 2025

TO: Technical Director
FROM: Los Alamos Site Resident Inspectors
SUBJECT: Los Alamos Activity Report for the Week Ending August 1, 2025

DNFSB Activity: The acting DNFSB Chairman and a Board Member were onsite this week along with several senior executives and staff members. The group visited the Plutonium Facility, Weapons Engineering Tritium Facility, Area G, and the Strategic Computing Complex. Major topics of discussion with federal and contractor personnel included safe transitioning of Plutonium Facility operations to a production mission, safety basis changes at Area G, federal oversight, and the use of artificial intelligence for national security. The Board members and DNFSB team also held an interaction with public stakeholders in Santa Fe on Monday evening.

Plutonium Facility–Configuration Management: Last week, workers performing a facility modification to remove plant air system piping removed additional piping beyond the intended scope of the design change. This resulted in an unplanned loss of control air to a process vacuum system and impacted a nearby plutonium recovery process. Facility management evaluated the event and developed initial compensatory actions needed to continue work. The management team discussed several potential issues, including design change drawings that were difficult to read and misleading, and the fact that plant engineering did not independently verify the removal scope as part of the field marking process. The field marking process identifies the piping to be removed by physically marking the piping with tags prior to removal; in this case, additional pipes were tagged for removal that were outside the approved scope of change. Facility management is performing a causal analysis to determine corrective actions. Additionally, facility personnel are implementing compensatory measures, including requiring an independent review of piping marked for removal and additional engineering and operations review of the active change scope and drawings.

Plutonium Facility–Glovebox Safety: Bioassay results for an individual who received a puncture wound inside a glovebox at the Plutonium Facility indicated a small uptake, which was well below the threshold for a formal NNSA-led accident investigation board. (see 7/4/2025 report). Triad is continuing its internal investigation to learn from this event, identify a root cause, and develop corrective actions.

Plutonium Facility–Continuous Improvement: Last Friday, a resident inspector observed a classroom refresher for craft workers who perform hazardous work inside the Plutonium Facility. The course included a review of radiological postings and the usage of powered air-purifying respirators. The attending workers performed a practice evolution with respirators and personal protective equipment in a simulated radiological area with a detectable contamination simulant.