

## DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

March 10, 2023

**TO:** Christopher J. Roscetti, Technical Director  
**FROM:** A. Boussouf and D. Gutowski, Resident Inspectors  
**SUBJECT:** Los Alamos Activity Report for the Week Ending March 10, 2023

**Staff Activity:** W. Dumayas and R. Jackson were onsite as part of their review of the seismic testing of the fire suppression system (FSS) at the Plutonium Facility. The team met with facility management and engineering personnel to discuss test results and plans for future testing in Reno, Nevada, to characterize the performance of FSS cast iron fittings under simulated seismic loads (see 12/2/2022 report). The DNFSB headquarters staffers did two entries into the Plutonium Facility. First, a familiarization tour led by the resident inspectors that also included three NNSA fire protection personnel from the field office and the Chief of Defense Nuclear Safety's assessment team. The second entry was supported by Triad engineering personnel to walk down key aspects of the FSS including the pumphouses, risers, and piping with seismic support upgrades.

**Plutonium Facility–Legacy Items:** Last week, workers attempted to address a safe in a laboratory room with ongoing decontamination and decommissioning activities. Facility personnel were unable to identify the origin or organization responsible for the safe. Based on available information, they believed the safe was used for document storage only and executed the plan to drill open the safe to verify the nature of any contents. Upon opening the safe, workers discovered seven shielded material handling containers of questionable provenance, two of which were open and empty, and five closed. Additional personnel were called in to help determine the origin of these containers, including radiological control technicians, who surveyed them and did not detect any radioactivity beyond background from the shielded containers. Later, due to the uncertainty of the contents of the containers, facility personnel declared a potential process deviation and restricted access to the room. The fact-finding meeting for this event, held on Monday, was the first under the new process for Weapons Production facilities (see 3/3/2023 report).

**Area G:** N3B personnel resumed retrieval of corrugated metal pipes (CMP), which have not taken place since the heat stress incident last September (see 9/16/2022 report). A previous attempt to resume retrieval resulted in a stop work to address concerns from the Environmental Management field office, which have since been resolved (see 2/3, 2/10/2023). Last Wednesday, the team excavated one CMP from the burial pit. This Wednesday, they transported it to a staging pad where the CMPs will remain until size reduction activities are authorized. The work crew performed a post job review to evaluate potential improvements and plan to continue excavations next week.

**Onsite Transportation:** On Wednesday, the NNSA Field Office concurred with Triad's plan to update the Transportation Safety Document by June 2023 and implement compensatory measures until the update is complete and any new controls are implemented (see 2/3/2023 report).

**Federal Oversight:** A team led by NNSA's Chief of Defense Nuclear Safety was onsite this week as part of their 2023 review of the NNSA Los Alamos Field Office.