

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

September 15, 2023

TO: Timothy J. Dwyer, Acting Technical Director
FROM: A. Boussouf and D. Gutowski, Resident Inspectors
SUBJECT: Los Alamos Activity Report for the Week Ending September 15, 2023

Staff Activity: M. Bradisse was on site this week providing resident inspector augmentation. Support activities included plutonium facility walkdowns, meetings with Environmental Management Field Office and N3B personnel, and attendance at fact findings.

Chemistry and Metallurgy Research Building (CMR): This week, facility personnel held a fact-finding meeting to discuss an individual who had entered radiological controlled areas in CMR without a dosimeter. The individual, a recently hired radiological control technician (RCT), finished the RCT training pipeline and was assigned to CMR starting on August 21. However, upon completion of training, the individual never received a dosimeter. Despite this, the individual proceeded to perform daily surveillances and other routine work on several occasions under an integrated work document, always in the company of other RCTs. On September 7, during preparation for a new work activity involving a radiological work permit, the individual self-identified that they had never received a dosimeter. Facility personnel have concluded that the individual likely did not receive any dose above background levels, based on the type of work conducted and the doses historically assigned to the other RCTs during such activities. The primary proposed corrective action was to task the radiation protection organization with reviewing the dosimetry assignment process and ensuring that newly qualified RCTs receive their dosimeters prior to starting work at their first assigned facility. Additionally, CMR facility personnel proposed reviewing onboarding processes to help ensure this situation does not occur in the future. Personnel at the meeting also discussed, but did not conclude, whether this event would be reportable per DOE O 232.2A, *Occurrence Reporting and Processing of Operations Information*.

N3B–Training: N3B personnel are continuing their efforts to resolve the training issues identified last month (see 8/18/2023 and 9/1/2023 reports). The organization has qualified sufficient personnel to perform surveillances to fulfill technical safety requirements and conduct corrugated metal pipe size reduction activities. To do this, N3B management reconstituted training records by cross referencing requirements from DOE O 426.2, *Personnel Selection, Training, Qualification, and Certification Requirements for DOE Nuclear Facilities*, with known existing qualifications for each individual performing this work, and then conducted remedial training as necessary. The stop work remains in place for other work activities. N3B management personnel have stated that the next priority activity needing qualified workers is glovebag operations, given near-term deadlines stemming from readiness activities nearly a year ago (see 9/20/2022 report).

When N3B took over its scope from the previous contractor in 2018, it retained relevant training and qualification programs. In 2020, N3B committed to instituting its own requalification program; however, this action was not satisfactorily completed, and key requirements from DOE O 426.2 were never properly implemented. N3B personnel are performing a causal analysis to determine how this occurred.