

U.S. DEPARTMENT *of* ENERGY

Office of Environmental Management

Overview of the Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board

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About the DNFSB

The DNFSB was authorized by Congressional modifications to the Atomic Energy Act (AEA) (1954) in September 1988 through the 1989 National Defense Authorization Act, in response to growing concerns about the level of health and safety protection that DOE was providing the public and workers at defense nuclear facilities.



DNFSB Overview

Per the AEA, “The mission of the Board shall be to provide independent analysis, advice, and recommendations to the Secretary of Energy to inform the Secretary, in the role of the Secretary as operator and regulator of the defense nuclear facilities of the Department of Energy, in providing adequate protection of public health and safety at such defense nuclear facilities, including with respect to the health and safety of employees and contractors at such facilities.”



DNFSB Overview Continued...

As stated in the AEA, the Board is authorized to perform oversight of defense nuclear facilities, which are defined in the statute as:

- 1) A production facility or utilization facility (as defined in 42 U.S.C. §2014 [§ 11 of the Atomic Energy Act]) that is under the control or jurisdiction of the Secretary of Energy and that is operated for national security purposes, but **does not include**:
 - a. Any facility or activity covered by Executive Order No. 12344, dated February 1, 1982 [50 U.S.C. § 2511 note], pertaining to the Naval nuclear propulsion program;
 - b. Any facility or activity involved with the transportation of nuclear explosives or nuclear material;
 - c. Any facility that does not conduct atomic energy defense activities; or
 - d. Any facility owned by the United States Enrichment Corporation (now Centrus).
- 2) A nuclear waste storage facility under the control or jurisdiction of the Secretary of Energy, but not a facility developed pursuant to the Nuclear Waste Policy Act of 1982 and licensed by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission. (42 U.S.C. § 2286g, "*Department of Energy defense nuclear facility*" defined)

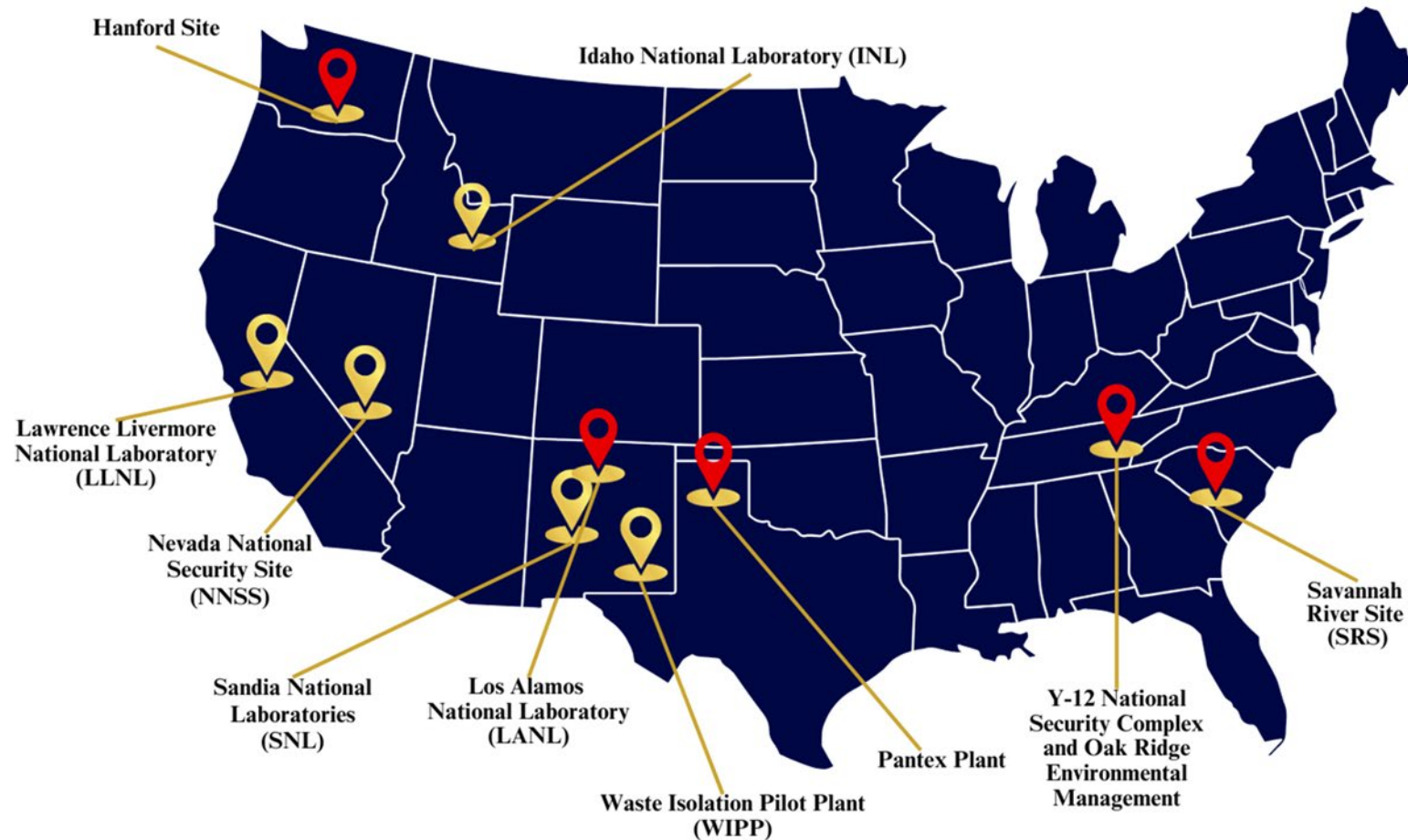



DNFSB Overview Continued...

- The Board uses various tools to communicate and document their work with DOE to include:
 - Recommendations
 - Reporting Requirements
 - Advise Letters and Reports, and
 - Routine Staff-to-Staff discussions.
- DOE formally tracks and responds to DNFSB requests and typically provides the DNFSB with over 3,000 documents annually,



DOE Sites with Defense Nuclear Facilities



 DNF SB on-site resident inspectors at **five** DOE sites



Key Focus Areas

- Resident Inspectors: Act as the Board’s “eyes and ears” at DOE defense nuclear facilities, observing high-hazard work.
- Safety Allegations Program: The DNFSB handles safety concerns raised by the public, DOE employees, and contractors.
- Technical Focus: Areas of focus include analyze procedures for handling radioactive waste, nuclear weapons disassembly, seismic threats, emergency preparedness, and aging infrastructure.



Ongoing Nuclear Safety Priorities

- Recommendation 2020-1—Nuclear Safety Requirements. While the Secretary accepted it in 2021, the Board continues to focus on aging infrastructure management
- Recommendation 2023-1—Onsite Transportation Safety
- Recommendation 2019-2—Safety of the Savannah River Site Tritium Facilities
- Safety-in-Design for DOE Projects
- Safe Disposition of Liquid and Solid Nuclear Waste





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