



# Fiscal Year 2024 Performance Report

December 2024

## Introduction

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) began operations in 1975, in accordance with the Energy Reorganization Act of 1974, to regulate the various commercial and institutional uses of nuclear materials. The agency succeeded the Atomic Energy Commission, which previously had responsibility for both developing and regulating nuclear activities. Under its responsibility to protect public health and safety, the NRC has the following main regulatory functions: (1) establish standards and regulations; (2) issue licenses, certificates, and permits; (3) ensure compliance with established standards and regulations; and, (4) conduct research, adjudication, and risk and performance assessments to support regulatory decisions. These functions include regulating nuclear power plants, fuel cycle facilities, and other civilian uses of radioactive materials. Such civilian uses include nuclear medicine programs at hospitals, academic activities at educational institutions, research, and industrial gauges and testing equipment.

Congress created the Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board (DNFSB) in 1988, also as an independent agency within the executive branch, to identify the nature and consequences of potential threats to public health and safety at the U.S. Department of Energy's (DOE) defense nuclear facilities, to elevate such issues to the highest levels of authority, and to inform the public. The DNFSB is the only entity providing independent technical oversight of operations at the nation's defense nuclear facilities. The DNFSB is composed of experts in the field of nuclear safety with demonstrated competence and knowledge relevant to its independent investigative and oversight functions.

The NRC's Office of the Inspector General (OIG) was established as a statutory entity on April 15, 1989, in accordance with the 1988 amendments to the Inspector General Act. Since FY 2014, per the 2014 Consolidated Appropriations Act, the NRC's OIG has exercised the same authorities with respect to the DNFSB. The OIG's mission is to provide independent, objective audit and investigative oversight of NRC and DNFSB operations. In addition, the OIG reviews existing and proposed regulations, legislation, and directives, and provides comments, as appropriate, regarding any significant concern.

The Inspector General keeps NRC and DNFSB leadership, as well as Congress, fully and currently informed about problems, makes recommendations to the agencies for corrective actions, and monitors the NRC's and the DNFSB's progress in implementing such actions. In fulfilling its mission, the OIG assists the NRC and the DNFSB in accomplishing their own missions by ensuring integrity, efficiency, and accountability in the agencies' respective programs.

## ***Program Activities***

The OIG accomplishes its mission by conducting its audit, investigative, and management and operational support programs, as well as legislative and regulatory review activities. To fulfill its audit mission, the OIG conducts evaluations as well as performance, financial, and contract audits. To fulfill its investigative mission, the OIG conducts investigations relating to the integrity of NRC and DNFSB programs and operations. Most OIG investigations focus on allegations of fraud, waste, and abuse, or violations of law or misconduct by NRC and DNFSB employees and contractors.

## ***Organization of this Report***

Sections I and II of this report describe the OIG's strategic goals, strategies, actions, and performance data for the NRC and the DNFSB, respectively, during FY 2024. Section III describes the OIG's human capital strategic goals, strategies, actions, and performance data for FY 2024. Section IV provides information on OIG resources, measurement methodology, cross-cutting efforts, and peer reviews. Section V provides conclusions about the OIG's FY 2024 performance.

## SECTION I.

# The OIG's Strategic Goals, Strategies, Actions, and Performance Data for the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission



### *Strategic Goals, Strategies, Actions*

The [OIG Strategic Plan](#) features three goals, and it guides the activities of the OIG's Audits & Evaluations and Investigations Divisions for FY 2024 through FY 2028. The plan identifies the major challenges and risk areas facing the NRC, and generally aligns with the agency's mission.

#### **OIG Strategic Goals for the NRC**

- *Strengthen the NRC's efforts to protect public health and safety, and the environment.*
- *Strengthen the NRC's efforts to address evolving security threats.*
- *Increase the economy, efficiency, and effectiveness with which the NRC manages and exercises stewardship over its resources.*

The plan presents the OIG's priorities for the covered timeframe and describes its strategic direction to stakeholders, including the NRC Chair and Commissioners, and the U.S. Congress. From this perspective, it presents the OIG's results-based business case, explaining the return on investment. It also strengthens the OIG by providing a shared set of expectations regarding the goals the OIG expects to achieve, and the strategies used to do so. The OIG adjusts the plan as circumstances necessitate, uses it to develop its Annual Plan and performance budget, and holds managers and staff accountable for achieving related goals and outcomes.

The OIG's Strategic Plan also includes supporting strategies and actions that describe planned accomplishments. Through associated annual planning activities, the OIG focuses its audit, evaluation, and investigative resources on assessing the safety, security, and corporate management programs that present major challenges and/or areas of risk for the NRC.

## **Strategic Goal 1: Safety**

### **Strengthen the NRC's efforts to protect public health and safety, and the environment.**

**Discussion:** The NRC performs critical functions to ensure the safe and secure use of radioactive materials in the United States, and to protect both the public and radiation workers from radiation hazards that could result from the use of radioactive materials. The NRC provides licensing and oversight activities for 94 commercial nuclear power reactors; research, test, and training reactors; radioactive materials used in medicine, academia, and industry; and, nuclear waste.

The NRC is responsible for maintaining an established regulatory framework for the safe and secure use of civilian nuclear reactors, including commercial nuclear power plants as well as research, test, and training reactors. The NRC's regulatory oversight responsibilities regarding reactors include developing policy and rulemaking, licensing and inspecting reactors, licensing reactor operators, enforcing regulations, and overseeing an increasing number of plants that are ceasing operations and undergoing decommissioning. The NRC is also responsible for regulatory oversight of uranium recovery activities; the use of nuclear materials in medical, industrial, and academic applications; and, the storage and disposal of high-level and low-level radioactive waste. In connection with its oversight role, the NRC is authorized to establish regulations governing the issuance of nuclear materials licenses and the possession and use of such materials.

Upon a state's request, the NRC may enter into an agreement to relinquish its authority to the state to regulate certain radioactive materials and limited quantities of special nuclear material. The state, called an Agreement State, must demonstrate that its regulatory program is adequate to protect public health and safety, and is compatible with the NRC's programs. The number of Agreement States is currently 39, but is expected to increase, with 3 states having submitted to the NRC letters of intent to become an Agreement State.

The NRC regulates high-level radioactive waste generated from commercial nuclear power reactors. High-level radioactive waste is either spent reactor fuel when it is accepted for disposal or waste material remaining after spent fuel is reprocessed. Because of its highly radioactive fission products, high-level radioactive waste must be handled and stored with care. Because radioactive waste becomes harmless only through decay (which can take hundreds of thousands of years for high-level waste), the material must be stored and ultimately disposed of in a way that provides adequate public protection for a very long time. Due to the uncertainty surrounding a permanent repository for high-level radioactive waste, the NRC continues to review the issues associated with storing high-level radioactive waste at existing reactor sites, away-from-reactor sites, and at interim storage facilities.

The NRC must address its safety challenges to fulfill its mission of protecting public health and safety and the environment, be prepared to address emerging technical and regulatory issues in a timely manner, and be able to capture and transfer knowledge gained through experience. In an ever-evolving and resource-constrained climate, the agency must implement its programs as effectively and efficiently as possible.

***Strategy 1-1:*** Identify risk areas associated with the NRC's oversight of nuclear facilities, and conduct audits, evaluations, and/or investigations that lead to NRC program and operational improvements.

***Actions: Conduct audits, evaluations, and/or investigations into the NRC's:***

- Licensing and certification activities for operating and new reactors and new technologies;
- Inspection activities;
- Activities for promoting a strong internal/external safety culture;
- Research activities;
- Activities related to oversight of aging, obsolete, and decommissioning nuclear facilities;
- Ability to identify and effectively respond to emerging technical and regulatory issues in a timely manner;
- Actions to integrate operating experience and lessons learned into regulatory activities;
- Oversight of supply chain vulnerabilities including the prevention of counterfeit, fraudulent, and suspect items in the supply chain;
- Efforts to address stakeholder and staff safety concerns, including those expressed as non-concurrences and Differing Professional Opinions (DPOs), related to the NRC's oversight of nuclear facilities; and,
- Responses to internal/external stakeholders' concerns and allegations related to nuclear facilities.

**Strategy 1-2:** Identify risk areas facing the NRC's oversight of nuclear materials, and conduct audits, evaluations, and/or investigations that lead to NRC program and operational improvements.

**Actions: Conduct audits, evaluations, and/or investigations into the NRC's:**

- Implementation of programs for tracking nuclear materials;
- Regulatory activities with Agreement States;
- Licensing and certification activities;
- Inspection activities;
- Activities for promoting a strong internal/external safety culture;
- Research activities;
- Risk management involving oversight of aging, obsolete, and decommissioning sites;
- Ability to identify and effectively respond to emerging technical and regulatory issues in a timely manner;
- Actions to integrate operating experience and lessons learned into regulatory activities; and,
- Efforts to address stakeholder and staff safety concerns, including those expressed as non-concurrences and DPOs, related to nuclear materials.

**Strategy 1-3:** Identify risk areas associated with the NRC's oversight of high-level and low-level waste, and conduct audits, evaluations, and/or investigations that lead to NRC program and operational improvements.

**Actions: Conduct audits, evaluations, and/or investigations into the NRC's:**

- Regulatory activities involving any interim and/or permanent high-level radioactive waste repositories;
- Licensing and certification activities;
- Inspection activities;
- Activities for promoting a strong internal/external safety culture;
- Research activities;

- Ability to identify and effectively respond to emerging technical and regulatory issues in a timely manner;
- Actions to integrate operating experience and lessons learned into regulatory activities;
- Efforts to address stakeholder and staff safety concerns, including those expressed as non-concurrences and DPOs, related to high-level and low-level waste; and,
- Internal/external stakeholders' concerns and allegations related to high-level and low-level waste.

**Strategy 1-4:** Identify risk areas facing the NRC's oversight of nuclear materials used for medical purposes that lead to NRC program and operational improvements.

**Actions: Conduct audits, evaluations, and/or investigations into the NRC's:**

- Ability to timely identify and effectively respond to emerging technical and regulatory issues and rulemaking;
- Implementation of programs for tracking nuclear materials for medical purposes;
- Regulatory activities with Agreement States;
- Licensing and certification activities;
- Inspection activities;
- Activities for promoting a strong internal and external safety culture;
- Research activities;
- Actions to integrate operating experience and lessons learned into regulatory activities; and,
- Efforts to address stakeholder and staff safety concerns, including those expressed as non-concurrences and DPOs, related to nuclear materials used for medical purposes.



## **Strategic Goal 2: Security**

### **Strengthen the NRC's efforts to address evolving security threats.**

**Discussion:** The NRC must ensure that nuclear power and materials licensees take adequate measures to protect their facilities against radiological sabotage. The NRC faces the challenge of adapting to dynamic threats while maintaining a stable security oversight regime commensurate with the agency's role as a fair and impartial regulator. The NRC has well-established inspection programs for evaluating the physical, cyber, and personnel security activities of nuclear power and materials licensees.

The NRC must respond to a cyber threat environment in which adversaries' tactics and capabilities rapidly evolve. Cybersecurity also entails oversight challenges related to the mix of digital and analog systems at NRC licensees' facilities. For example, digital equipment upgrades could impact licensee operations and security.

The NRC plays a critical role in overseeing and supporting the emergency preparedness and incident response capabilities of its licensees. This oversight includes the integration of licensee plans with government agency strategies for addressing events such as natural disasters and terrorist threats.

The NRC supports U.S. international interests in the safe and secure use of nuclear materials, the safe and secure use of nuclear technologies, and nuclear non-proliferation. The NRC's actions include improving controls on the import and export of nuclear materials and equipment and exercising its international oversight commitments.

**Strategy 2-1:** Identify risks involved in securing nuclear operating, new, and decommissioning nuclear reactors, fuel cycle facilities, and materials, and conduct audits, evaluations, and/or investigations that lead to NRC program and operational improvements.

#### ***Actions: Conduct audits, evaluations, and/or investigations into the NRC's:***

- Security oversight of nuclear reactors, decommissioning reactors, fuel cycle facilities, nuclear materials, and waste facilities;
- Responses to an evolving threat environment;
- Coordination with other agencies;
- Efforts to develop and implement a comprehensive cybersecurity program for nuclear power plants and fuel cycle facilities;
- Oversight of licensee security responsibilities;

- Oversight on issues related to radiological sabotage and theft or diversion of materials; and,
- Efforts to address external stakeholders and staff concerns and allegations related to the securing of nuclear reactors, fuel cycle facilities, and materials, including those expressed as non-concurrence, DPOs, and petitions for enforcement action filed under 10 Code of Federal Regulations (C.F.R.) Section 2.206.

**Strategy 2-2:** Identify risks in emergency preparedness and incident response, and conduct audits, evaluations, and/or investigations that lead to NRC program and operational improvements.

**Actions: Conduct audits, evaluations, and/or investigations into the NRC's:**

- Management of emergency preparedness guidelines, regulations, and programs;
- Management of coordination with federal, state, and local governments;
- Responses to emergencies and nuclear incidents; and,
- Efforts to address stakeholder and staff security concerns, including those expressed as non-concurrences and DPOs, related to emergency preparedness and incident response.

**Strategy 2-3:** Identify risks in international security activities and conduct audits, evaluations, and/or investigations that lead to program and operational improvements.

**Actions: Conduct audits, evaluations, and/or investigations into the NRC's:**

- International activities, such as those related to material control and accounting, incident response, nonproliferation, and the import and export of nuclear materials; and,
- Efforts to address stakeholder and staff security concerns, including those expressed as non-concurrences and DPOs, related to international security activities.

### **Strategic Goal 3: Corporate Support**

**Increase the economy, efficiency, and effectiveness with which the NRC manages and exercises stewardship over its resources.**

**Discussion:** The NRC faces significant challenges in efficiently and effectively managing its corporate resources within its budget. The NRC must continue to provide infrastructure and support to accomplish its regulatory mission while responding to increased budgetary scrutiny, evolving legal requirements, changing industry and market conditions, and the continuously developing security threat environment.

Addressing limitations on agency budgetary and financial resources and the resulting impact on human capital, information management, and internal financial oversight will require a continuing, well-considered, adaptive process throughout the next strategic planning period. The NRC must continue to use its financial resources effectively and manage other factors that are budget dependent. Such factors include knowledge preservation and transfer, efficient adaptation to changing industry conditions, and the need for continued improvement in information technology capabilities. Further, the NRC must protect its infrastructure and take the necessary steps to ensure that its staff, facilities, information, and information technology assets are adequately protected against internal and external threats. The NRC faces the challenge of balancing transparency with information security.

The OIG will continue to target corporate support risk areas for audits, evaluations, and investigations to fulfill its statutory responsibility to evaluate agency financial management. The OIG will also work with the NRC to identify and improve areas of weakness, particularly in areas susceptible to budgetary pressures.

**Strategy: 3-1:** Identify areas of corporate management risk within the NRC and conduct audits, evaluations, and/or investigations that lead to NRC program improvements.

**Actions: Conduct audits, evaluations, and/or investigations into the NRC's:**

- Management of human capital, to include training and development programs, knowledge management, and recruiting and retention activities;
- Financial management practices, to include development and collection of fees and budget processes;
- Responses to complaints or incidents related to a chilled work environment;
- Presentation of its financial statements;

- Development, implementation, and life cycle management of information technology tools and systems;
- Responses to internal/external stakeholders' concerns and allegations related to human capital, procurement, financial management, and information technology;
- Management of administrative functions, such as training, procurement, property, and facilities;
- Management of changes caused by internal and external factors;
- Efforts to foster an environment in which corporate management issues can be raised without fear of retaliation;
- Efforts to address stakeholder and staff corporate management concerns, including those expressed as non-concurrences and DPOs, related to human capital, procurement, and information technology; and,
- Readiness for and, as applicable, responses to any future pandemics or other long-term disruptions.

**Strategy 3-2:** Identify infrastructure risks, such as physical, personnel, and cybersecurity risks, and conduct audits, evaluations, and/or investigations that lead to NRC program and operational improvements.

**Actions: Conduct audits, evaluations, and/or investigations into the NRC's:**

- Management of threats to its facilities, personnel, and information systems;
- Implementation of physical, personnel, and cybersecurity controls and procedures;
- Management of controls involving transparency and information security;
- Efforts to address stakeholder and staff security concerns, including those expressed as non-concurrences and DPOs, related to the maintenance of a secure infrastructure and the balance of transparency and information security;
- Efforts to address internal/external stakeholders' concerns and allegations related to the maintenance of a secure infrastructure and the balance of transparency and information security; and,
- Participation in federal task forces and working groups to assess or mitigate risk to NRC corporate program operations.

## OIG Performance Data for the NRC

The following tables include the OIG's strategic goals, measures, and targets for the NRC based on the OIG Strategic Plan. The tables also provide actual performance data for FY 2021 – FY 2024.

<b>OIG Strategic Goal 1: Strengthen the NRC's Efforts to Protect Public Health and Safety, and the Environment</b>				
	2021	2022	2023	2024
<b>Measure 1. Percentage of OIG audit products and activities that cause the agency to take corrective action to improve agency safety programs; ratify adherence to agency policies, procedures, or requirements; or, identify real dollar savings or reduced regulatory burden (i.e., high impact).</b>				
<b>Target</b>	85%	85%	85%	85%
<b>Actual</b>	100%	100%	100%	100%
<b>Measure 2. Percentage of audit recommendations agreed to by the agency.</b>				
<b>Target</b>	92%	92%	92%	92%
<b>Actual</b>	100%	100%	100%	100%
<b>Measure 3. Percentage of final agency actions taken within 2 years of audit recommendations.</b>				
<b>Target</b>	70%	70%	70%	70%
<b>Actual</b>	67% <sup>1</sup>	83%	100%	72%
<b>Measure 4. Percentage of OIG investigative products and activities that identify opportunities for improvements to agency safety programs; ratify adherence to policies/procedures; or, confirm or disprove allegations of wrongdoing (e.g., high impact).</b>				
<b>Target</b>	85%	85%	85%	85%
<b>Actual</b>	100%	100%	100%	100%
<b>Measure 5. Percentage of agency actions taken in response to investigative reports.</b>				
<b>Target</b>	90%	90%	90%	90%
<b>Actual</b>	100%	100%	100%	100%
<b>Measure 6. Percentage of active cases completed in less than 18 months.</b>				
<b>Target</b>	90%	90%	90%	90%
<b>Actual</b>	57% <sup>2</sup>	67% <sup>3</sup>	100%	75% <sup>4</sup>
<b>Measure 7. Percentage of closed investigations referred to DOJ or other relevant authorities.</b>				
<b>Target</b>	20%	20%	20%	20%
<b>Actual</b>	N/A*	100%	N/A*	N/A*
<b>Measure 8. Percentage of closed investigations resulting in indictments, convictions, civil suits or settlements, judgments, administrative actions, monetary results, or IG clearance letters.</b>				
<b>Target</b>	60%	60%	60%	60%
<b>Actual</b>	100%	100%	100%	100%

<sup>1</sup>Several audit reports included recommendations that required more than two years for the agency to finalize action. These recommendations are now closed.

<sup>2</sup>Four out of seven cases were closed within 18 months. The other three cases took longer due to case complexity and the ongoing nature of the issues.

<sup>3</sup>Six out of nine cases were closed within 18 months. The other three cases took longer due to case complexity and the ongoing nature of the issues.

<sup>4</sup>While the OIG cumulatively met the goal of 90%, we were under the goal for Safety due to highly complex technical matters requiring that the scope of the review expand beyond the original reported concerns.

\*The not applicable symbol (N/A) indicates that investigative items were not measurable because there were no investigations applicable to these measures.

## OIG Strategic Goal 2: Strengthen the NRC's Efforts to Address Evolving Security Threats

	2021	2022	2023	2024
<b>Measure 1. Percentage of OIG audit products and activities that cause the agency to take corrective action to improve agency security programs; ratify adherence to agency policies, procedures, or requirements; or, identify real dollar savings or reduced regulatory burden (i.e., high impact).</b>				
Target	85%	85%	85%	85%
Actual	100%	100%	100%	100%
<b>Measure 2. Percentage of audit recommendations agreed to by the agency.</b>				
Target	92%	92%	92%	92%
Actual	100%	100%	100%	100%
<b>Measure 3. Percentage of final agency actions taken within 2 years of audit recommendations.</b>				
Target	70%	70%	70%	70%
Actual	86%	60% <sup>1</sup>	50% <sup>2</sup>	100%
<b>Measure 4. Percentage of OIG investigative products and activities that identify opportunities for improvements to agency security programs; ratify adherence to policies/procedures; or, confirm or disprove allegations of wrongdoing (e.g., high impact).</b>				
Target	85%	85%	85%	85%
Actual	100%	100%	100%	100%
<b>Measure 5. Percentage of agency actions taken in response to investigative reports.</b>				
Target	90%	90%	90%	90%
Actual	N/A*	100	N/A*	100%
<b>Measure 6. Percentage of active cases completed in less than 18 months.</b>				
Target	90%	90%	90%	90%
Actual	100%	100%	100%	100%
<b>Measure 7. Percentage of closed investigations referred to the DOJ or other relevant authorities.</b>				
Target	20%	20%	20%	20%
Actual	N/A*	N/A*	N/A*	N/A*
<b>Measure 8. Percentage of closed investigations resulting in indictments, convictions, civil suits or settlements, judgments, administrative actions, monetary results or IG clearance letters.</b>				
Target	60%	60%	60%	60%
Actual	N/A*	N/A*	100%	100%

<sup>1</sup>Several audit reports included recommendations that required more than two years for the agency to finalize the action. The agency is working to finalize actions so these recommendations can be closed.

<sup>2</sup>The NRC completed actions that enabled the OIG to close seven security-related recommendations during FY 2023 from three audits. Four of the OIG's recommendations were from two reports older than two years. Both audits are now closed.

\*The not applicable symbol (N/A) indicates that investigative items were not measurable because there were no investigations applicable to these measures.

### OIG Strategic Goal 3: Increase the Economy, Efficiency, and Effectiveness with which the NRC Manages and Exercises Stewardship over its Resources

	2021	2022	2023	2024
<b>Measure 1. Percentage of OIG audit products and activities that cause the agency to take corrective action to improve agency corporate management programs; ratify adherence to agency policies, procedures, or requirements; or, identify real dollar savings or reduced regulatory burden (i.e., high impact).</b>				
Target	85%	85%	85%	85%
Actual	100%	100%	100%	100%
<b>Measure 2. Percentage of audit recommendations agreed to by the agency.</b>				
Target	92%	92%	92%	92%
Actual	100%	100%	100%	100%
<b>Measure 3. Percentage of final agency actions taken within 2 years of audit recommendations.</b>				
Target	70%	70%	70%	70%
Actual	80%	92%	57% <sup>1</sup>	53% <sup>2</sup>
<b>Measure 4. Percentage of OIG investigative products and activities that identify opportunities for improvements to agency corporate management programs; ratify adherence to policies/procedures; or, confirm or disprove allegations of wrongdoing (e.g., high impact).</b>				
Target	85%	85%	85%	85%
Actual	100%	100%	100%	88%
<b>Measure 5. Percentage of agency actions taken in response to investigative reports.</b>				
Target	90%	90%	90%	90%
Actual	100%	100%	100%	100%
<b>Measure 6. Percentage of active cases completed in less than 18 months.</b>				
Target	90%	90%	90%	90%
Actual	67% <sup>3</sup>	100%	100%	91%
<b>Measure 7. Percentage of closed investigations referred to the DOJ or other relevant authorities.</b>				
Target	20%	20%	20%	20%
Actual	50%	100%	100%	95%
<b>Measure 8. Percentage of closed investigations resulting in indictments, convictions, civil suits or settlements, judgments, administrative actions, monetary results, or IG clearance letters.</b>				
Target	60%	60%	60%	60%
Actual	89%	80%	100%	86%

<sup>1</sup>The NRC completed actions that enabled the OIG to close ten corporate support-related recommendations during FY 2023 from five audits. Five of the recommendations were from two reports older than 2 years.

<sup>2</sup> All recommendations will be closed in the next FY 2025 Federal Information Security Modernization Act (FISMA) audit.

<sup>3</sup>Due to the complexity of issues and competing priorities, several investigations required additional time to close.

## SECTION II.

# The OIG's Strategic Goals, Strategies, Actions, and Performance Data for the Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board



### *Strategic Goals, Strategies, Actions*

The [OIG Strategic Plan](#) features three goals that guide the activities of the OIG's Audits & Evaluations and Investigations Divisions for FY 2024 through FY 2028. The OIG's audit and investigative responsibilities correspond to DNFSB programs, functions, and activities that support the agency's mission.

#### **OIG Strategic Goals for the DNFSB**

- *Strengthen the DNFSB's efforts to oversee the safe operation of the DOE's defense nuclear facilities.*
- *Strengthen the DNFSB's efforts to address evolving security threats.*
- *Increase the economy, efficiency, and effectiveness with which the DNFSB manages and exercises stewardship over its resources.*

This Strategic Plan presents the OIG's priorities for the covered timeframe and describes the OIG's strategic direction to stakeholders, including the DNFSB Chair and Board Members, and the U.S. Congress. The plan also strengthens the OIG by providing a shared set of expectations regarding the goals the OIG expects to achieve and the strategies it will use to do so. The OIG adjusts the plan as circumstances necessitate, uses it to develop its Annual Plan and performance budget, and holds managers and staff accountable for achieving the related goals and outcomes.

The OIG's Strategic Plan also includes supporting strategies and actions that describe planned accomplishments. Through associated annual planning activities, the OIG focuses its audit, evaluation, and investigative resources on assessing the DNFSB's safety, security, and corporate management programs as they relate to the major challenges and risk areas facing the DNFSB.



## **Strategic Goal 1: Safety**

**Strengthen the DNFSB's efforts to oversee the safe operation of the DOE's defense nuclear facilities.**

**Strategy:** Identify risk areas associated with the DNFSB's oversight of the DOE's defense nuclear facilities and conduct audits, evaluations, and/or investigations that lead to improved DNFSB performance and communications.

**Actions: Conduct audits, evaluations, and/or investigations into the DNFSB's:**

- Work plan development process;
- Process for reviewing designs for construction and modifications;
- Process for reviewing decommissioning progress;
- Process for balancing the assessment for emergent issues versus planned work;
- Process for maintaining staff's technical skill sets;
- Conduct of self-assessment, including assessments of mission effectiveness and communication with DOE, and process improvements;
- Automated work and issue tracking capabilities;
- Responses to internal/external stakeholders' concerns and allegations related to the DNFSB's oversight of the DOE's defense nuclear facilities;
- Development of effective and efficient procedures for safety oversight and activities; and,
- Improvement of safety oversight programs through its identification of best practices from other federal agencies.

## **Strategic Goal 2: Security**

**Strengthen the DNFSB's efforts to address evolving security threats.**

**Strategy 2-1:** Identify risks in maintaining a secure infrastructure (i.e., facility, personnel, and cybersecurity risks) and conduct audits, evaluations, and/or investigations that lead to improvements in DNFSB programs and operations.

***Actions: Conduct audits, evaluations, and/or investigations into the DNFSB's:***

- Management of threats to its facility, personnel, and information systems;
- Implementation of facility, personnel, and cybersecurity controls and procedures;
- Ability to respond to any internal or external cyber breach of its infrastructure;
- Physical and personnel security, including insider threat mitigation and the ability to respond to attempts at economic espionage; and,
- Responses to internal/external stakeholders' concerns and allegations related to the security of the DNFSB's infrastructure.

***Strategy 2-2:*** Identify risks in balancing transparency and information security requirements, and conduct audits, evaluations, and/or investigations that lead to improvement in DNFSB programs and operations.

***Actions: Conduct audits, evaluations, and/or investigations into the DNFSB's:***

- Management of controls involving transparency and information security;
- Responses to information security violations; and,
- Treatment of internal/external stakeholders' concerns and allegations related to the balance of transparency and information security.

**Strategic Goal 3: Corporate Support**

**Increase the economy, efficiency, and effectiveness with which the DNFSB manages and exercises stewardship over its resources.**

***Strategy:*** Identify areas of corporate support risk within the DNFSB and conduct audits, evaluations, and/or investigations that lead to improvement in DNFSB programs and operations.

***Actions: Conduct audits, evaluations, and/or investigations into the DNFSB's:***

- Management of human capital, including training and development programs, knowledge management, and recruiting and retention activities;
- Management of administrative functions and financial activities, including those related to Congressional requirements;

- Development, implementation, and life cycle management of information technology tools and systems;
- Management of change through implementation of best practices, including training, project management, knowledge management, and process improvement;
- Responses to complaints or incidents related to a chilled work environment;
- Implementation of processes to encourage an environment in which technical or non-technical issues can be raised without fear of retaliation; and,
- Treatment of internal/external stakeholders' concerns and allegations related to human capital, procurement, financial management, and information technology.

### ***OIG Performance Data for the DNFSB***

<b>Performance Measures for the DNFSB OIG Program</b>				
	2021	2022	2023	2024
<b>Measure 1. Percentage of OIG audit products and activities that cause the agency to take corrective action to improve agency safety, security, or corporate management programs; ratify adherence to agency policies, procedures, or requirements; or identify real dollar savings or reduced regulatory burden (i.e., high impact).</b>				
<b>Target</b>	85%	85%	85%	85%
<b>Actual</b>	100%	100%	100%	100%
<b>Measure 2. Percentage of audit recommendations agreed to by the agency.</b>				
<b>Target</b>	50%	50%	50%	50%
<b>Actual</b>	100%	89%	100%	100%
<b>Measure 3. Percentage of final Board actions taken within 2 years of audit recommendations.</b>				
<b>Target</b>	50%	50%	50%	50%
<b>Actual</b>	75%	79%	78%	100%
<b>Measure 4. Percentage of OIG investigative products and activities that identify opportunities for improvements to agency safety, security, or corporate management programs; ratify adherence to policies/procedures; or, confirm or disprove allegations of wrongdoing (e.g., high impact).</b>				
<b>Target</b>	85%	85%	85%	85%
<b>Actual</b>	100%	100%	100%	100%
<b>Measure 5. Percentage of Board actions taken in response to investigative reports.</b>				
<b>Target</b>	90%	90%	90%	90%
<b>Actual</b>	100%	100%	100%	100%
<b>Measure 6. Percentage of active cases completed in less than 18 months.</b>				
<b>Target</b>	85%	85%	85%	85%
<b>Actual</b>	100%	100%	100%	100%

### SECTION III.

## The OIG's Human Capital Goal, Strategies, Actions, and Performance Data

### *Human Capital Goal, Strategies, Actions*

The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) rules in Title 5 of the C.F.R. Part 250, *Personnel Management in Agencies*, seek to align agency human capital management practices with broader agency strategic planning activities. These rules also seek to better align human capital activities with each agency's mission and strategic goals. The OPM envisioned that these rules would enable agency leadership to better leverage the workforce to achieve results.

#### **OIG Strategic Human Capital Goal**

*Maintain support for a workforce that is skilled, collaborative, and engaged in high-impact audit, investigative, and other activities for the Office of the Inspector General.*

Based on the requirements in 5 C.F.R. Part 250, and recognizing the potential benefits of a strategic human capital goal, the OIG developed a goal, strategies, and actions that focus specifically on maintaining and supporting excellence in the OIG's workforce. Unlike the OIG's other strategic goals, the human capital goal is not specific to the NRC or the DNFSB, but rather applies to the entire OIG staff regardless of job function or agency focus.

**Strategy 1:** Provide continual learning and professional development opportunities.

**Action:** *Require all staff to prepare an individual training and development plan to be reviewed and approved by their supervisors that describes skills needed, and the corresponding training and developmental activities identified, to meet an employee's career goals and support work assignments.*

**Strategy 2:** Increase collaboration and knowledge sharing across the OIG.

**Action:** *Seek opportunities for audits and investigations staff to support each other in ongoing work.*

**Strategy 3:** Ensure prioritization of critical work activities and appropriate alignment with available resources.

**Action:** *Assign resources to maximize timely completion of high-impact activities.*

**Strategy 4:** Support staff efforts to optimize work-life balance.

**Action:** *Integrate work activities with opportunities for flexible work schedules and telework, where appropriate.*

### **Performance Data for the OIG Human Capital Goal**

The following table presents the OIG’s strategic measures for its human capital goal. The OIG began measuring these items in FY 2020.

<b>Performance Measures for the OIG Human Capital Goal</b>				
	2021	2022	2023	2024
<b>Measure 1. Percentage of OIG employees with approved Individual Training/ Development.</b>				
<b>Target</b>	90%	90%	90%	90%
<b>Actual</b>	100%	100%	100%	100%
<b>Measure 2. Percentage of audits, evaluations, and investigations that involve collaboration between the two divisions.</b>				
<b>Target</b>	25%	25%	25%	25%
<b>Actual</b>	45%	100%	100%	100%
<b>Measure 3. Percentage of OIG employee FEVS responses that reflect a positive work-life balance.<sup>1</sup></b>				
<b>Target</b>	70%	70%	70%	70%
<b>Actual</b>	76%	75%	71%	81.7%

<sup>1</sup>For this measure, the OIG seeks to assess primarily work-life balance matters within the OIG’s control. The OIG identified four FEVS 2024 questions as indicators of overall OIG specific work-life satisfaction: #5 My workload is reasonable, #34 Employees in my work unit support my need to balance my work and personal responsibilities, #49 My supervisor supports my need to balance work and other life issues, and #63 Senior leaders demonstrate support for Work-Life programs. To derive a score for the OIG’s human capital measure related to work-life balance, the percentages of positive responses to each of these questions were totaled and divided by four, providing an indicator of OIG respondents’ work-life balance satisfaction.

## SECTION IV.

# Resources, Methodology, Cross-Cutting Functions and Peer Reviews

## Resources

The following table depicts the relationship between the NRC Inspector General program, the associated FY 2024 budget resources, and the OIG's strategic and general goals.

Program Links to Strategic Goals	OIG Strategic Goals for the NRC		
	Safety (\$M)	Security (\$M)	Corporate Support (\$M)
<b>FY 2024 Programs (\$14.2 M; 58 FTE)</b>			
Audits and Evaluations (\$9.5 M; 37 FTE)	\$1.9 18.5 FTE	\$1.9 6.5 FTE	\$5.7 12.0 FTE
Investigations (\$4.7 M; 21 FTE)	\$1.6 8.0 FTE	\$0.5 3.5 FTE	\$2.6 9.5 FTE

The following table shows the breakdown of audit and investigative resources at the DNFSB. The OIG does not align performance at the DNFSB to the OIG's strategic goals due to the small size of the agency, but the OIG examines completion of overall goals.

Breakdown of Audit Evaluation and Investigative Resources at the DNFSB (\$1.5 M; 5 FTE)		
Audits and Evaluations	\$1.3 M	4.0 FTE
Investigations	\$0.2 M	1.0 FTE

## ***Verification and Validation of Measured Values and Performance***

The OIG uses an automated management information system to capture program performance data for the Audits & Evaluations and Investigations Programs. The integrity of the system was thoroughly tested and validated prior to implementation. Reports generated by the system provide both detailed information and summary data. All system data are deemed reliable.

## ***Cross-Cutting Functions with Other Government Agencies***

The NRC OIG has cross-cutting functions with other law enforcement agencies. For example, the OIG provides investigative case referrals to the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ). It also coordinates investigative activities with U.S. Attorneys' offices, other components of DOJ, and other agencies, as required.

## ***Peer Reviews***

The NRC OIG audit program was peer reviewed by the OIG for the U.S. National Science Foundation. The review was conducted in accordance with Government Auditing Standards and Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency requirements (CIGIE). In a report dated August 28, 2024, the NRC OIG received an external peer review rating of *pass*. This is the highest rating possible based on the available options of *pass*, *pass with deficiencies*, or *fail*. The review team issued a Letter of Comment, dated August 28, 2024, that sets forth the peer review results and includes a recommendation to strengthen the NRC OIG's policies and procedures.

The OIG investigative program was peer reviewed by the Peace Corps OIG. The peer review final report, dated June 2, 2024, reflected that the OIG is in full compliance with the quality standards established by CIGIE and the Attorney General Guidelines for OIGs with Statutory Law Enforcement Authority. These safeguards and procedures provide reasonable assurance that the OIG's investigative staff is conforming with professional standards in the planning, execution, and reporting of investigations.

## SECTION V.

# Conclusion

The OIG met 93.5 percent of its audit, investigative, and human capital measures for FY 2024 by achieving or exceeding 29 of 31 measurable items (2 investigative items were not measurable because there were no investigations applicable to these measures during FY 2024). One audit-related measure was not met because the associated audit recommendations, by their nature, took longer than 2 years to complete. One investigation-related measure was not met due to highly complex technical matters in which the scope of the review expanded beyond the original reported concerns. The OIG continuously reviews its strategic plan to ensure that its goals and work strategies add value to the NRC and the DNFSB in carrying out their important safety and security missions.