



Department of Energy
Washington, DC 20585

NOV 18 2005

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The Honorable A. J. Eggenberger
Chairman
Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board
625 Indiana Avenue, NW, Suite 700
Washington, D.C. 20004

Dear Mr. Chairman:

This letter provides the status of the two Environmental Management (EM) commitments that are currently past due for the Implementation Plan for Recommendation 2001-1, "High-Level Waste Management at the Savannah River Site" (SRS). These two commitments are the disposition of Low-Curie Salt to the Saltstone Facility and the start of the Actinide Removal Process. Both are related to disposition of tank waste at Savannah River.


The schedules to meet these SRS commitments have been impacted by the legal challenge to the Department of Energy's (DOE) authority to determine what waste requires permanent isolation in a geologic repository and by the implementation of Section 3116 of the 2005 National Defense Authorization Act. Therefore, the revised 2001-1 Implementation Plan (IP) cannot be finalized and submitted to the Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board (DNFSB) until (1) the Secretarial issuance of the Waste Determination which is pending the completion of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission consultation mandated by Section 3116, and (2) the subsequent issuance of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) analysis and decision by Assistant Secretary Rispoli, that is pending Secretary Bodman's determination. Additionally, the issuance of permit modifications by the State of South Carolina for the disposal of saltstone and changes to the facility operating process are also needed prior to the start of salt processing.

As with any change to an IP for a DNFSB recommendation, this revision will be finalized and provided to the DNFSB by Secretary Bodman. To assure that the revision is solid technically and issued in a timely manner, the results of the NRC consultation and the NEPA analysis are being incorporated in a working draft of the IP as both mature. The revised IP should be transmitted to you after Secretary Bodman approves a final Waste Determination.



If you have any questions, please call me at (202) 586-0738 or Mr. Dae Chung, Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary for Integrated Safety Management and Operations Oversight, at (202) 586-5151.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Inés R. Triay".

Dr. Inés R. Triay
Chief Operating Officer for
Environmental Management

cc: M. Whitaker, DR-1
J. Allison, SRS