



Department of Energy

Washington, DC 20585

July 3, 2000

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DNF SAFETY BOARD

The Honorable John T. Conway
Chairman
Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board
625 Indiana Avenue, NW.
Suite 700
Washington, D.C. 20004-2901

Dear Mr. Chairman:

This is an interim response to your letter of May 2, 2000, in which you transmitted the Staff Issue Report "Review of Fire Hazard Analysis for W76 Disassembly and Inspection" and expressed concern the fire response of certain Canned SubAssemblies (CSAs).

Disruption of operations by the Los Alamos fire and other recent events delayed our efforts to address these issues. We have identified the thermal sensitivity of CSAs as a potential inadequacy in the safety analysis, and implemented additional controls for affected ongoing operations (currently only the W78). We are evaluating the feasibility of additional measures, based on our understanding of the current risks. We will not initiate or resume operations on other affected systems until appropriate measures are determined.

The Amarillo Area Office Manager will provide a summary of the near-term compensatory actions by July 7, 2000. We will provide a briefing of the status and planned actions in response to the CSA issue, and a report regarding the issues of the staff report by July 30, 2000.

I appreciate the Board's understanding regarding the delays in provided the requested information and look forward to the satisfactory resolution of the subject concerns. Please pass any questions you may have to Mr. David E. Beck, my Assistant Deputy Administrator, at 202-586-4879, or Mr. Jeff Underwood of his staff, at 301-903-8303.

Sincerely,

THOMAS F. GIOCONDA
Brigadier General, USAF
Acting Deputy Administrator
for Defense Programs

cc:

M. Whitaker, S-3.1

