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DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

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98-0003151



October 8, 1998

The Honorable Bill Richardson
Secretary of Energy
Department of Energy
1000 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20585-1000

Dear Secretary Richardson:

The Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board (Board) received the Department of Energy's (DOE) technical update to Recommendation 94-1, *Improved Schedule for Remediation in the Defense Nuclear Facility Complex*, on September 2, 1998. This document is the best indication to date that DOE is making progress on developing the revised Implementation Plan requested by the Board in December 1997. The technical update provides information regarding the present status of DOE activities necessary to stabilize nuclear materials covered in DOE's Implementation Plan for the recommendation. As you know, the Board is concerned about the rate of progress in stabilizing the remaining materials. The Implementation Plan revision being prepared by DOE will be reviewed carefully by the Board to ensure that the path forward is aggressive in completing the remaining stabilization activities.

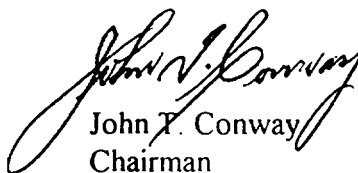
The Board notes that progress on development of the revision to the Implementation Plan which is mentioned in your recent letter continues to be slow and needs to be accelerated to the extent possible.

Since the purpose of the recommendation was to identify unstable materials requiring expedited stabilization, the Board considers accomplishment of Recommendation 94-1 stabilization activities to be an integral part of DOE's near-term mission. To be meaningful and responsive to the Board's concerns, the Implementation Plan must provide:

- Pathways for stabilizing the remaining Recommendation 94-1 materials,
- Aggressive schedules for the stabilization activities,
- Evaluation of the risk associated with significant delays beyond the existing commitments, and
- Identification of compensatory measures to be taken to mitigate the increased risk.

The Board is highly desirable of receiving this revision as soon as possible. The Board is pleased to note your strong support for this material stabilization and risk reduction program, as evidenced by your memorandum of October 2, 1998, to all involved DOE secretarial officers and field managers. If you have comments or questions on this matter, please feel free to call me.

Sincerely,



John T. Conway
Chairman

c: Mr. James Owendoff
Mr. Mark B. Whitaker, Jr.