



The Secretary of Energy

Washington, DC 20585

June 29, 1994

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

Dear Mr. Conway:

This is in response to your May 6, 1994, letter for information regarding the reorganization of the Department of Energy and its implications for the management of defense nuclear facilities.

The reorganization of June 10, 1993 recognized the need for a more effective deployment of scarce Federal staff to meet the changing mission needs of the Department. A basic premise in developing that reorganization was recognition of my personal responsibility for the safety of our workers and the public, a responsibility that cannot be delegated either to my staff or to any external organization.

The principal objectives of the reorganization are:

Make clearer assignments of responsibilities;

Establish a more streamlined and mission oriented Headquarters;

Have internal oversight, management, and central staff functions report directly to the Office of the Secretary;

Assign to Headquarters the primary responsibility for program and policy development, planning, guidance, and oversight; and

Assign clear responsibility for daily operations to field elements which will participate in the formulation of program plans and development of departmental policy.

These objectives are not only good management practices, but they are also absolutely essential for the safe operations of our facilities.

I am enclosing for your information the recently revised "Manual of Functions, Assignments, and Responsibilities for Nuclear Safety." This manual presents all nuclear safety-related functions, assignment, and responsibilities found in current Department of Energy Orders and other official documents. The manual is being reviewed for incorporation into the Department's

Directive System. My staff is fully committed to the safe operation of our facilities and to the implementation of the safety functions described in this manual.

We are cognizant of the Board's statutory obligation to provide the Congress with recommendations for continuation, termination or modification of the Board's functions and programs, including an appraisal of the need or desirability of external regulation of Department of Energy functions that are now self-regulating under the Atomic Energy Act.

As you know, the Department is undertaking an analysis of many of these same issues. As Under Secretary Curtis testified before Congressman Miller in March, we plan to constitute a Federal Advisory Committee that would report to me and to the White House on these matters. In support of this effort, we will need to develop an analytic basis for responding to many of the questions you raise in your letter.

As we undertake this task, we will make every effort to accommodate the information and timing needs of the Board, and welcome the Board's counsel. It would be useful to discuss how the Board's interests and requirements might best be coordinated with the Department's commitments and activities. To this end, I have asked Dr. Neal Goldenberg of the Office of Environment, Safety and Health to work with the Under Secretary, other Departmental officers, and with your staff. Dr. Goldenberg will be contacting Mr. Anderson shortly.

Sincerely,


Hazel R. O'Leary

Enclosure