

**The Secretary of Energy**

Washington, DC 20585

February 2, 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:

The Department of Energy fully accepts Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board Recommendation 93-6, Maintaining Access to Nuclear Weapons Expertise.

The Department shares your concern of ensuring capability to safely conduct nuclear weapons testing operations at the Nevada Test Site and to safely dismantle nuclear weapons at the Pantex Site. To meet this challenge, the Department must identify and maintain access to the critical skills of nuclear weapons scientists, engineers, and technicians. Where access to skills in the future is uncertain, the Department must find ways to capture knowledge, so safe dismantlement procedures can be developed and utilized and safe testing operations can be conducted.

The forthcoming Implementation Plan for Recommendation 93-6 will capitalize on activities that have already been initiated and provide a structured approach for ensuring the continued safe conduct of operations at Pantex and the Nevada Test Site.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Hazel R. O'Leary".

Hazel R. O'Leary