



Department of Energy
National Nuclear Security Administration
Washington, DC 20585

August 25, 2008

The Honorable A. J. Eggenberger
Chairman
Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board
625 Indiana Avenue, N.W., Suite 700
Washington, D.C. 20004-2901

Dear Mr. Chairman:

The purpose of this letter is to advise you that we will require a 30-day extension to respond to your letter of July 8, 2008, concerning the long-term fidelity of the weapon trainer units at the Pantex Plant. The additional time is needed to ensure any actions that may be contemplated by the National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) are coordinated among all entities within the nuclear weapons complex that support the design, development, manufacture, and maintenance of weapon trainer units.

The staff issue report enclosed with your letter indicated that the training and qualification at Pantex met the requirements of DOE Order 5480.2A, classroom training and numbers of drills conducted were adequate, and that issues associated with the training and qualification program at Pantex are identified and resolved. These observations suggest a well-developed training and qualification program at Pantex. NNSA will provide you with the requested information concerning the long-term fidelity of the weapons trainer units at Pantex by October 6, 2008.

Any questions concerning this extension request may be directed to me at 202-586/2179 or Gerald Talbot, Assistant Deputy Administrator for Nuclear Safety and Operations, at 202-586/2181.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "R. Smolen", written over a white background.

Robert L. Smolen
Deputy Administrator
for Defense Programs

cc: T. D'Agostino, NA-1
W. Ostendorff, NA-2
M. Whitaker, HS-1 .1

