

[DOE LETTERHEAD]

July 20, 1992

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:

Your letter of May 28, 1992, forwarded the Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board (DNFSB) Recommendation 92-2 regarding the Department of Energy's (DOE) Facility Representative programs at defense nuclear facilities.

As you have noted, several DOE field offices have begun to develop site specific guidance on the selection, training and responsibilities of DOE Facility Representatives. When I approved the revised occurrence reporting order and the new direction for conduct of operations, I envisioned a Department-wide program that would help protect public health and safety at DOE's facilities. Your recommendation reinforces the need for the Department to continue to emphasize the need for well qualified facility representatives at its defense nuclear facilities. Due to the differences in facilities within the Department, however, some variance in Facility Representative requirements may prove to be appropriate. Additionally, some existing Facility Representative programs may prove to be currently in a state acceptable to the Department.

I accept the Board's recommendation. We will conduct an analysis of the existing DOE Facility Representative programs at defense nuclear facilities and use the results to either establish a more structured and formal Facility Representative program at these facilities, or to improve, if needed, those already performing well. I have tasked the Assistant Secretary for Nuclear Energy to develop an implementation plan for this recommendation by October 15, 1992.

Sincerely,

James D. Watkins
Admiral, U.S. Navy (Retired)