

**[DNFSB LETTERHEAD]**

November 8, 1996

The Honorable Hazel R. O'Leary  
Secretary of Energy  
1000 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, DC 20585-1000

Dear Secretary O'Leary:

The Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board (Board) wishes to respond to your letter of October 22, 1996, requesting that the Board consider closure of Recommendation 91-6 (Radiation protection for Workers and the General Public at Department of Energy (DOE) Defense Nuclear Facilities).

The Board and its staff have conducted a detailed review of outstanding issues under this Recommendation and DOE's progress in implementing the Recommendation. The Board recognizes DOE's work toward closure of the commitments under Recommendation 91-6 and that much has been accomplished in establishing an adequate radiation protection program.

The Board acknowledges that DOE has satisfied the intent of Recommendation 91-6 but also notes that operational improvements remain to be accomplished at some sites. The Board further understands that a few remaining deliverables related to training and qualification for radiation protection personnel will be provided in the Recommendation 93-3 quarterly status reports. Based on the aforementioned review and the deliverables to be tracked under Recommendation 93-3, the Board has determined that the major purposes of Recommendation 91-6 have been met; therefore, Recommendation 91-6 is closed.

The Board agrees that DOE has strengthened its policies, training, oversight, and organizational infrastructure for enhancing its radiation protection program. However, if DOE is to meet its goal of excellence in radiological performance, then vigilance and strong technical leadership at all levels of management will be required. The Board continues to encourage DOE to increase the technical competence of its radiation protection personnel. The Board will continue to monitor the effectiveness of the radiation protection program as an integral part of DOE's safety management program. Additionally, the Board looks forward to receiving the Office of Oversight's assessment report to address the infrastructure and management of radiological control programs.

Sincerely,

*John T. Conway*  
Chairman

c:  
The Honorable Tara J. O'Toole  
Mr. Joseph E. Fitzgerald, Jr.  
Mr. Mark B. Whitaker, Jr.