

**[DNFSB LETTERHEAD]**

April 24, 1997

The Honorable Victor H. Reis  
Assistant Secretary for Defense Programs  
Department of Energy  
1000 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20585-0104

Dear Dr. Reis:

The Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board (Board) appreciated the briefing it received on April 17, 1997, from Deputy Assistant Secretary Edwin G. Ives and representatives of the weapons laboratories regarding radiography procedures at Pantex.

Based on assurances that the Department of Energy (DOE) will not reduce or remove the current operational controls on radiography operations imposed by existing procedures, and that any future changes in radiography procedures will be reviewed by appropriate personnel from the weapons laboratories, the Board agrees that there is an adequate level of safety assurance for radiography operations at Pantex, and there is no reason these operations should not proceed. DOE has met its commitment to brief the Board prior to proceeding with such operations.

The Board would like to be kept informed of the results of further experiments and analysis regarding the phenomena associated with radiography as such studies are completed. The Board's site representatives at Pantex and its staff in Washington, D.C., will continue to follow radiography operations, particularly procedural change control and reviews. If you have any questions, please give me a call.

Sincerely,

***John T. Conway***  
Chairman

c: Mark B. Whitaker, Jr.