



Department of Energy
Albuquerque Operations Office
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APR 9 - 2001

The Honorable John T. Conway, Chairman
Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board
625 Indiana Avenue, NW, Suite 700
Washington, DC 20004-2901

Dear Mr. Chairman:

Thank you for your January 22, 2001 letter regarding construction projects at Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL). We are also encouraged with our progress in project management, and realize much work and improvement remains for us to consistently deliver projects successfully. We would like to respond to the following issues in your letter; quality requirements for the Fire Protection Yard Main Replacement (FPYMR) project, format and content guides for project management documents, the development of safety design criteria early in design, and the briefing you requested.

We agree with you that the FPYMR project is of extreme importance to safe operations at TA-55 and we are working diligently to resolve all of the remaining issues and take the appropriate actions necessary to complete this project without further delay. As the cognizant Acquisition Executive for this project, I will have to agree the project design, quality programs, and project plan, including the project baseline, are appropriate before the project proceeds into construction. As input to this decision, we have commissioned an Independent Review and that team has written a report of findings and recommendations that will serve as a "road map" for our preparations and readiness to proceed with construction. Although closing the review findings will take additional time, we are convinced it is time well spent in avoiding future problems and issues. In particular, one finding which we will resolve is the clear identification of quality requirements for this project.

On March 1, 2001, we formally requested the Office of Engineering and Construction Management (OECM) DOE/HQ include format and content guides for project management documents as part of the rewrite of DOE Order 413.3, and its associated manual. We expect these additional documents to be included in the reissue of the order and manual later this year.

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To insure the safety design criteria is developed early in the design process, DOE has worked with LANL to require a hazards analysis and the identification of appropriate codes and standards prior to initiating preliminary design. This requirement is specifically identified in the Laboratory Implementation Requirements (LIR) process. Additionally, in our communications with OECM, we have suggested the modifications to DOE Order 413.3 include this requirement.

As a result of our meetings with your staff March 13-15, 2001, we understand your expectations for a briefing on the following two topics:

- (1) The organizational relationships and responsibilities of DOE and LANL and their inter-relationships related to project execution.
- (2) DOE's review of the adequacy of LANL's implementation of the enhanced project requirements of DOE Order 420.1, Facility Safety, as it relates to procurement of safety related components for the FPYMR Project.

We anticipate finalizing our FPYMR project plan, including the resolution of Independent Review findings in May, therefore I plan to provide the requested briefing to you in June. I appreciate your ongoing involvement and support as we continue our efforts to improve project delivery and performance.

Sincerely,



R. E. Glass
Manager

cc:

General Gioconda, DP-1, HQ
General Gill, CR-80, HQ
Stephen Younger, LANL
Richard Burick, LANL
Dave Gurule, LAAO