

Department of Energy

Washington, DC 20585

November 1, 2002

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

Dear Mr. Chairman:

The purpose of this letter is to respond to the issues raised in the Board's June 26, 2002, correspondence regarding the Old HB-Line ventilation system in the Savannah River Site H-Canyon. Since confirmation of the noted exhaust system problem, the Department of Energy has been working to develop a cost-effective repair that will ensure adequate protection of the workers, public, and the environment under all credible accident scenarios during H-Canyon operations.

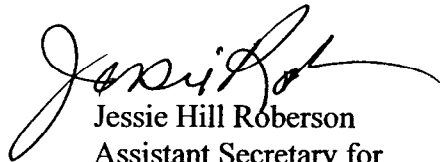
The Department is evaluating a proposed solution that would replace the aging Old HB-Line ventilation exhaust system with new equipment located within the H-Canyon building to eliminate the potential for unfiltered ground-level releases. A schedule for implementing this solution will be available by January 31, 2003. The timetable for implementation will depend on the appropriate acquisition strategy. The Department will keep the Board informed of progress toward resolution of this issue.

The Board's report also documented an issue with the Old HB-Line ventilation supply system. The Board noted that it would be appropriate to install automatic dampers to isolate the Old HB-Line ventilation supply system upon failure of the Old HB-Line exhaust fans at the same time as the upgrades to the exhaust system. This modification is being pursued independently and is slated for installation by December 31, 2003.



If you have any further questions, please contact me at (202) 586-7709 or Mr. Paul Golan at (202) 586-0738.

Sincerely,



Jessie Hill Roberson
Assistant Secretary for
Environmental Management

cc:

M. Whitaker, S-3.1

J. Allison, Acting Manager, SR