

John T. Conway, Chairman
A.J. Eggenberger, Vice Chairman
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DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

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December 8, 2003

The Honorable Linton Brooks
Administrator
National Nuclear Security Administration
U.S. Department of Energy
1000 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20585-0701

Dear Ambassador Brooks:

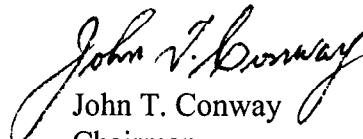
The Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board (Board) received a letter dated October 31, 2003, from the Deputy Administrator for Defense Program, indicating that the National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) has finished developing its *Safety Management Functions, Responsibilities, and Authorities [FRA] Manual* to reflect the strictures of Department of Energy (DOE) Manual 411.1B, *Safety Management Functions, Responsibilities, and Authorities Manual*, as well as the results of NNSA's re-engineering effort. The Board also understands that you have separately tasked NNSA's site office managers with developing site office FRA manuals by February 4, 2004, to complement the manual of NNSA headquarters.

As you are aware, many Orders, directives, standards, supplemental directives, and site office procedures have been issued to help ensure the safe operation of NNSA's defense nuclear facilities. Although some of these documents have been or are being revised, many others have not yet been modified to reflect current roles and responsibilities within NNSA. In some cases, particularly those involving the supplemental directives issued by the now-defunct Albuquerque Operations Office, these documents may no longer have a clear owner within the NNSA organization. Further, deviations from the processes prescribed by these directives are now becoming more frequent within NNSA. For example, neither the parent DOE Orders and standards, the Albuquerque supplemental directives, nor the Pantex Site Office procedures correctly define the Nuclear Explosive Safety (NES) Study process currently used to ensure the safety of NES operations at the Pantex Plant.

Therefore, pursuant to 42 U.S.C. § 2286b(d), the Board requests that when you forward the NNSA site office FRA manuals to the Board, you include a plan and associated schedule for revising, as necessary, safety-related Orders, standards, supplemental directives, and site office procedures to reflect the roles and responsibilities outlined in the latest NNSA headquarters and site office manuals.

The Board will conduct detailed reviews of any proposed revisions to directives of interest to the Board as they are made available during the normal directives development process, and will provide comments using the existing protocol.

Sincerely,


John T. Conway
Chairman

c: The Honorable Everet H. Beckner
Mr. Mark B. Whitaker, Jr.