



Department of Energy

Washington, DC 20585

October 10, 2003

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,

As a result at our meeting of September 22, 2003, as well as your concern that the Safety Officer at Rocky Flats communicated that commitments made to the Defense Nuclear Facility Safety Board will not be met, I have engaged the RFFO Manager and have the following understandings:

- The Rocky Flats Field Office (RFFO) Facility Representatives have independently conducted walkdowns of every accessible glovebox on-site to verify that no unacceptable amounts of combustibles remain and have documented their conclusions. All identified unacceptable combustibles have been removed from those gloveboxes.
- On August 27, 2003, RFFO directed a TSR-level combustible inspection for non-operational gloveboxes in the B371 Documented Safety Analysis, which was implemented on September 4, 2003.
- Beginning in December 2003, the RFFO will independently assess the effectiveness of the combustible inspection program on a three-month interval until all gloveboxes have been removed at the Site.
- The RFFO has reviewed the cerium nitrate decontamination procedure; its comments have been incorporated and compliance has been verified. In addition, the contractor is currently incorporating comments received from Board staff during their recent visit.
- The RFFO has reviewed the process used for recovery following the glovebox 8 fire. The glovebox debris has been adequately neutralized and is safe for shipping and final disposition.

RFFO issued its Review Report on the Building 371 Fire on June 23, 2003, and will ensure that lessons learned from this occurrence, particularly with regard to combustible controls and usage of Standard Work Packages, will be applied to all future glovebox removal work.

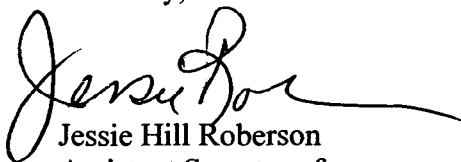


The status of craft work at the site is:

- Kaiser-Hill suspended craft work on September 11, 2003, following a series of events that indicated a need for reinforcement of work planning and execution expectations.
- Since the suspension, all active craft work packages have been reviewed by the appropriate Project Managers, modified where necessary, and subsequently released for work.
- Not all monthly work planning assessments across projects had been performed by RFFO as committed to the June 17, 2002 letter. I have directed the RFFO Manager to conduct and complete the assessments as committed. Quarterly and semi-annual RFFO work planning assessments were, and will continue to be, performed.

The Department remains committed to meeting our commitments. If you have any questions, please call me at (202) 586-7709 or Mr. Paul Golan, Chief Operating Officer, at (202) 586-0738.

Sincerely,



Jessie Hill Roberson
Assistant Secretary for
Environmental Management

cc:

Mark Whitaker, DR-1
Eugene C. Schmitt, RF