

OPENING STATEMENT OF
JOHN T. CONWAY, CHAIRMAN
SEPTEMBER 10, 2003, DOE OVERSIGHT

MY NAME IS JOHN CONWAY. I AM THE CHAIRMAN OF THE DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD, AND I WILL PRESIDE OVER THIS MEETING AND HEARING.

I WOULD LIKE TO INTRODUCE THE MEMBERS OF THE SAFETY BOARD WHO ARE PRESENT HERE TODAY. DR. A.J. EGGENBERGER, WHO IS VICE CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD, IS ON MY IMMEDIATE LEFT, AND TO HIS LEFT IS DR. BRUCE MATTHEWS. TO MY IMMEDIATE RIGHT IS DR. JOHN MANSFIELD. WE FOUR CONSTITUTE THE BOARD.

THE BOARD'S GENERAL COUNSEL, RICHARD AZZARO, AND THE BOARD'S GENERAL MANAGER, KENNETH PUSATERI, ARE TO MY LEFT. THE BOARD'S TECHNICAL DIRECTOR, KENT FORTENBERRY, AND DEPUTY TECHNICAL DIRECTOR, JIM MCCONNELL, ARE ALSO PRESENT AT THE TABLE TO MY RIGHT. MEMBERS OF OUR STAFF CLOSELY INVOLVED WITH REVIEWING THE DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY'S OVERSIGHT OF CONTRACTS AND CONTRACTORS ARE ALSO HERE TO RESPOND TO ANY QUESTIONS THE BOARD MAY HAVE RELEVANT TO THE SUBJECT OF THIS MEETING.

TODAY'S MEETING AND HEARING WERE PUBLICLY NOTICED IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER ON AUGUST 4, 2003. THE MEETING AND HEARING ARE HELD OPEN TO THE PUBLIC IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PROVISIONS OF THE GOVERNMENT IN THE SUNSHINE ACT. TO FURTHER THE PRESIDENT'S INITIATIVES UNDER EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 12,862 AND TO PROVIDE TIMELY AND ACCURATE INFORMATION CONCERNING THE BOARD'S PUBLIC AND WORKER HEALTH AND SAFETY MISSION THROUGHOUT THE DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY'S DEFENSE NUCLEAR COMPLEX, THE

BOARD IS RECORDING THIS PROCEEDING THROUGH A VERBATIM TRANSCRIPT AND VIDEOTAPE. AS A PART OF THE BOARD'S E-GOVERNMENT INITIATIVE, THE MEETING IS ALSO BEING MADE AVAILABLE OVER THE INTERNET THROUGH VIDEO STREAMING. THE TRANSCRIPT, ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS, PUBLIC NOTICE, AND VIDEOTAPE WILL BE AVAILABLE FOR VIEWING IN OUR PUBLIC READING ROOM ON THE SEVENTH FLOOR OF THIS BUILDING. IN ADDITION, AN ARCHIVED COPY OF THE VIDEO STREAMING WILL BE AVAILABLE THROUGH OUR WEB PAGE FOR AT LEAST 60 DAYS.

TODAY'S MEETING IS THE FIRST IN A SERIES DURING WHICH THE BOARD WILL EXAMINE THE DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY'S CURRENT AND PROPOSED MODELS OF SAFETY OVERSIGHT AND MANAGEMENT OF THE CONTRACTS AND CONTRACTORS IT RELIES UPON TO SAFELY ACCOMPLISH THE MISSION ASSIGNED TO DOE UNDER THE ATOMIC ENERGY ACT OF 1954, AS AMENDED. WE WILL FOCUS ON DOE'S PROPOSED NEW INITIATIVES AND WHAT IMPACT, IF ANY, THEY MAY HAVE UPON ASSURING ADEQUATE PROTECTION OF THE HEALTH AND SAFETY OF THE PUBLIC AND WORKERS AT DOE'S DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES.

OUR PURPOSE HERE TODAY, AND THE REMAINDER OF HEARINGS IN THIS SERIES, IS TO BRING TOGETHER INFORMATION GAINED BY THOSE WHO HAVE FIRST HAND MANAGEMENT, INVESTIGATIVE, AND OVERSIGHT EXPERIENCE IN HIGH RISK ENTERPRISES THAT POTENTIALLY POSE HIGH RISKS TO THE PUBLIC HEALTH OR SAFETY, INCLUDING THE WORKERS CHARGED WITH DAY-TO-DAY OPERATIONS. OUR INTENTION IS TO PROVIDE A FORUM WHERE RELEVANT INFORMATION CAN BE PRESENTED AND ASSESSED SO THAT WE MAY UNDERSTAND AND HOPEFULLY GAIN THE MAXIMUM BENEFIT FROM HARD-EARNED EXPERIENCE. WE VIEW THE PRESENTERS THAT WE WILL HEAR FROM AS PARTNERS IN THIS INITIATIVE. IT IS OUR HOPE AND BELIEF THAT THROUGH THIS JOINT EFFORT, WE MAY GAIN A CLEARER VIEW OF THE OPTIMUM

SAFETY MANAGEMENT TOOLS THAT DOE CAN EMPLOY AS IT SAFEGUARDS THE NATION'S TRUST.

AS WE PROCEED IN THESE HEARINGS WE BELIEVE IT IMPORTANT TO OUR SUCCESS IN THIS INITIATIVE THAT WE STATE – AND THAT ALL THOSE ATTENDING TO THIS UNDERTAKING UNDERSTAND – WE ARE NOT HERE TO CRITICIZE OR JUDGE PAST INCIDENTS, THE CONDITIONS THAT BROUGHT THEM ABOUT, OR THE MANNER IN WHICH THEY ULTIMATELY WERE DISPOSITIONED. SIMPLY STATED, WE MEET TO LEARN FROM THE PAST SO THAT WE DO NOT REPEAT ERRORS: THAT INSTEAD, WE MAY DISCERN IF PAST EXPERIENCES MIGHT OFFER A BLUEPRINT TO A RESPONSIBLE PATH FORWARD. OUR SUCCESS OR FAILURE WILL DEPEND UPON FULL AND FRANK DISCUSSION. THE SUBJECT MATTER WE NOW DISCUSS REQUIRES THIS, AND THE NATIONAL INTEREST AND THE PUBLIC TRUST COMPEL IT. SO IT IS IN THIS SPIRIT THAT I WELCOME TODAY'S PRESENTERS, MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC, MEMBERS OF THE PRESS IN OUR AUDIENCE, AND THOSE VIEWING OUR PROCEEDING ELECTRONICALLY.

IN TODAY'S MEETING, WE WILL RECEIVE TESTIMONY FROM EXPERIENCED REPRESENTATIVES OF THE NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION AND THE OFFICE OF NAVAL REACTORS AS TO THEIR SAFETY OVERSIGHT MODELS.

IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE BOARD'S PRACTICE, AND AS STATED IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER NOTICE, WE WILL WELCOME COMMENTS FROM INTERESTED MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AT THE CONCLUSION OF TESTIMONY. A LIST OF THOSE SPEAKERS WHO HAVE CONTACTED THE BOARD IS POSTED AT THE ENTRANCE TO THE MEETING ROOM. WE HAVE LISTED THE PEOPLE IN THE ORDER IN WHICH THEY CONTACTED US, OR IF POSSIBLE, WHEN THEY WISHED TO SPEAK. I WILL CALL THE SPEAKERS IN THIS ORDER. THERE IS ALSO A TABLE AT THE ENTRANCE TO THIS ROOM WITH A SIGN-UP SHEET FOR

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC WHO WISH TO MAKE A PRESENTATION BUT DID NOT HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY TO NOTIFY US AHEAD OF TIME. THEY WILL FOLLOW THOSE WHO HAVE ALREADY REGISTERED WITH US IN THE ORDER IN WHICH THEY HAVE SIGNED UP.

IN ORDER TO GIVE EVERYONE WISHING TO SPEAK AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY, WE ASK PRESENTERS TO LIMIT THEIR ORIGINAL STATEMENTS TO FIVE MINUTES. THE CHAIR WILL GIVE CONSIDERATION TO ADDITIONAL COMMENTS SHOULD TIME PERMIT. PRESENTATIONS SHOULD BE LIMITED TO COMMENTS, TECHNICAL INFORMATION, OR DATA CONCERNING THE SUBJECTS OF THIS MEETING. THE BOARD MEMBERS MAY QUESTION ANYONE MAKING PRESENTATIONS TO THE EXTENT DEEMED APPROPRIATE.

THE RECORD OF THIS PROCEEDING WILL REMAIN OPEN UNTIL OCTOBER 10, 2003. I WOULD LIKE TO REITERATE THAT THE BOARD RESERVES ITS RIGHT TO FURTHER SCHEDULE AND OTHERWISE REGULATE THE COURSE OF THIS MEETING, TO RECESS, RECONVENE, POSTPONE, OR ADJOURN THIS MEETING, AND EXERCISE ITS AUTHORITY UNDER THE ATOMIC ENERGY ACT OF 1954, AS AMENDED.

THIS CONCLUDES MY OPENING REMARKS.