



2002-000684

**The Secretary of Energy**  
Washington, DC 20585

March 18, 2002

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

Dear Mr. Chairman:

This letter is to inform you of the Department's intent to change commitment 5.2.1 in the Implementation Plan for Recommendation 99-1 regarding the safe storage of pits at the Pantex Plant.

The current commitment provides for establishing and sustaining "two double shift repackaging lines for an estimated repackaging rate of 200 pits per month." The Department proposes to change this commitment and the associated deliverable to "sustaining an average repackaging rate of 200 pits a month." The proposed change satisfies the Department's objective of accomplishing an acceleration of the pit-repackaging rate through process improvements and operational efficiencies without two shifts. The contractor has consistently met and often exceeds the goal of repackaging 200 pits a month through performance-based incentives established in its contract. Should we fall below our repackaging objective, we will re-evaluate our approach.

If you have any questions regarding the changed commitment, please contact me or Mr. David E. Beck, Assistant Deputy Administrator for Military Application and Stockpile Operations, at (202) 586-4879.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Spencer Abraham".

Spencer Abraham

