

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

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July 9, 2003

The Honorable Everet H. Beckner
Deputy Administrator for Defense Programs
National Nuclear Security Administration
U.S. Department of Energy
1000 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20585-0104

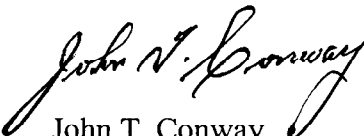
Dear Dr. Beckner:

The Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board (Board) received your letter and enclosed report of June 5, 2003, addressing issues raised by the Board with regard to the training program operated by BWXT Pantex and the oversight of that program by the National Nuclear Security Administration's (NNSA) Pantex Site Office. The proposed corrective actions appear to address the Board's concerns at the Pantex Plant. The Board will continue to follow closely the implementation of these corrective actions.

The Board's primary concern with NNSA's oversight of the training program at the Pantex Plant was the failure during the past 3 years to conduct a comprehensive evaluation of training and qualification programs as required in Department of Energy (DOE) Order 5480.20A, *Personnel Selection, Qualification, and Training Requirements for DOE Nuclear Facilities*. Based on the information provided in your letter, as well as informal discussions at other sites, it appears that this failure may also exist at other sites, and for reasons similar to those noted at the Pantex Plant. However, the corrective actions proposed in your letter regarding NNSA oversight address only the Pantex Site Office.

Consequently, pursuant to 42 U.S.C. § 2286b(d), the Board requests a report within 30 days of receipt of this letter that describes the scope and periodicity of the training assessments conducted as required under DOE Order 5480.20A for all NNSA site offices, including Pantex. Should it be determined that the required assessments of training programs are not being performed with the scope or periodicity required by the DOE Order, this report should provide corrective actions to resolve the issues identified and an implementation schedule.

Sincerely,


John T. Conway
Chairman

c: The Honorable Beverly Ann Cook
Mr. Mark B. Whitaker, Jr.