



**Department of Energy**  
**National Nuclear Security Administration**  
Washington, DC 20585

September 30, 2003

The Honorable John T. Conway  
Chairman  
Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board  
625 Indiana Avenue, NW.  
Suite 700  
Washington, D.C. 20004

Dear Mr. Chairman:

The purpose of this letter is to report on the status of commitment 4.4.7 in the Implementation Plan for the Defense Nuclear Facility Safety Board Recommendation 98-2, "Accelerating Safety Management Improvements at the Pantex Plant."

The commitment 4.4.7 requires the delivery and implementation of accelerated critical tooling for the W78 and W88 weapon programs. Critical tooling for the W78 has been incorporated into the W78 and is undergoing readiness reviews and a Nuclear Explosive Safety Study for approved use. For the W88, the National Nuclear Security Administration approved the Nuclear Explosive Safety Study on September 5, 2003 (enclosed); the Pantex Site Office approved tooling implementation on September 8, 2003; the BWXT authorized operations on September 8, 2003; and operations commenced on September 9, 2003. This correspondence transmits partial closure of this commitment. Final closure will be met and reported in January 2004 when the W78 operations, using the new tooling, are approved.

If you have further questions, please call Mr. Marty Schoenbauer on 202-586-1730.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "DEB", is written over a faint, larger version of the same signature.

David E. Beck  
Assistant Deputy Administrator  
for Military Application and  
Stockpile Operations  
Defense Programs

Enclosure

cc:  
M. Whitaker, DR-1



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**Department of Energy**  
**National Nuclear Security Administration**  
Washington, DC 20585

September 5, 2003

MEMORANDUM FOR MANAGER, PANTEX SITE OFFICE

FROM:

David E. Beck   
Assistant Deputy Administrator  
for Military Application and  
Stockpile Operations  
Defense Programs

SUBJECT:

Approval of the Nuclear Explosive Safety Study (NESS) of  
W88 Assembly and Disassembly Operations at the Pantex  
Plant – Addendum for Accelerated Bay Tooling

The Department of Energy/National Nuclear Security Administration approves the subject  
NESS.

It is recognized that this was a limited-scope NESS to address the changes to the process  
brought about by the introduction of new Accelerated Bay Tooling. The W88 remains subject  
to all the provisions of the Integrated Weapons Activity Program, including those for the full  
implementation of new tooling and process steps associated with the seamless safety  
operations.

If you have questions, please call me or have your staff contact Dr. Kamiar Jamali of my staff  
on 301-903-7167.

cc: NNSA SC/TSD/NESSD



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