



Department of Energy
Germantown, MD 20874-1290

March 11, 1996

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

Dear Mr. Conway:

On February 28, 1996, we briefed you and the other members of the Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board on the draft Department of Energy (DOE) 5610 Series Orders, standards, and guides we are about to put into formal coordination in response to your Recommendation 93-1. During that briefing, concerns were raised by your staff over the Nuclear Explosive Safety (NES) Study revalidation process based upon their observations at the recently completed W76 NES Study Revalidation.

The purpose of this letter is to let you know I took those concerns very seriously, have personally reviewed the revalidation process, and have issued amplifying guidance for that process to be in place before the B61-3/4/10 NES Study Revalidation is conducted this week.

The NES Study revalidation process we have developed over the past 6 months provides a much more solid basis for me to address requests for extensions of previously approved NES Studies. I am committed to improving the process with lessons learned from each succeeding NES Study Revalidation we undertake, while we simultaneously move ahead with implementation of the improvements to the NES process contained in the new orders, standards, and guides.

I welcome your input, and have directed my staff to work closely with yours, as always, in ensuring maximum safety for operations conducted under the DOE 5610 Series Orders.



If you have questions, please call me or have your staff contact David McConagha of my staff at 903-3463.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'T. Seitz', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Thomas P. Seitz
Deputy Assistant Secretary for
Military Application and
Stockpile Management
Defense Programs

cc:

M. Whitaker, S-3.1

V. Stello, DP-3

B. Twining, DOE/AL