



Department of Energy

Washington, DC 20585

MAR 30 1998

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

Dear Mr. Chairman:

This letter reports the completion of Milestone 4 for Commitment 6.2.1 of the Department's Implementation Plan (IP) for addressing the Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board's Recommendation 97-2, *Criticality Safety*. Appropriate sections of the experimental logbook for the pilot experiment have been digitized and will be made available in April 1998 on the criticality safety web site which is also being developed under the Recommendation 97-2 IP.

This milestone is part of the ongoing Criticality Safety Information Resource Center Pilot Program at the Los Alamos National Laboratory. This program will demonstrate methods of preserving calculational studies by permanently recording logbooks and notebooks in a digitized format and by videotaping the experimenters, where possible.

I also want to provide you with a status for IP Commitment 6.1, an assessment report of the criticality research program, due in March 1998. The data call for field sites to submit their input regarding criticality research needs is due in mid-April. These collective needs will be evaluated, and a draft of proposed experiments will be provided to your staff by April 30. This deliverable will be finalized at the Nuclear Criticality Technology Safety Project annual workshop in early May. I anticipate completion of IP Commitment 6.1 by the end of May 1998. We will continue to work closely with your staff as we complete our analysis.

If you have any questions, please contact me, or have your staff contact Mike Thompson of my staff at (301) 903-5648.

Sincerely,

Robin Staffin
Deputy Assistant Secretary
for Research and Development
Defense Programs

cc:

✓ M. Whitaker, S-3.1

