

John T. Conway, Chairman
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Herbert John Cecil Kouts
John E. Mansfield

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

625 Indiana Avenue, NW, Suite 700, Washington, D.C. 20004-2901
(202) 694-7000



November 15, 1999

The Honorable Bill Richardson
Secretary of Energy
1000 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20585-1000

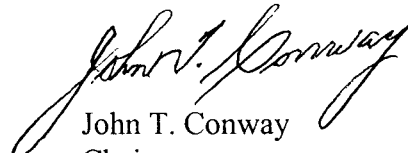
Dear Secretary Richardson:

The Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board (Board) has reviewed the summary of responsive actions and the technical resolution for each commitment described in the Department of Energy (DOE) letter of October 29, 1999. The Board considers the actions described therein sufficient to close Recommendation 93-5, *Waste Tanks Characterization Studies*.

The Board recognizes that tank characterization activities are required to provide needed information important to continued safe operations within Hanford's tank farms. The Board also realizes that high-level radioactive waste disposition activities at Hanford require characterization support far into the future. The Board strongly encourages DOE to maintain the existing infrastructure created to resolve Recommendation 93-5 issues with particular emphasis on retaining technically competent staff, within both the contractor and DOE, and the continued use of systems engineering methods.

If you have any questions regarding this subject please contact me.

Sincerely,



John T. Conway
Chairman

c: The Honorable Carolyn L. Huntoon
Mr. Mark B. Whitaker, Jr.