



Department of Energy  
National Nuclear Security Administration  
Washington, DC 20585



August 24, 2005

The Honorable A. J. Eggenberger  
Chairman  
Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board  
625 Indiana Avenue, N.W., Suite 700  
Washington, D.C. 20004

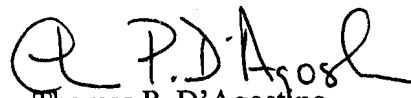
Dear Mr. Chairman:

In your May 31, 2005, letter on fire protection issues at the Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL), you requested a report describing the strategy that will lead to timely resolution of all fire protection deficiencies and achieve site-wide improvements in the Laboratory's fire protection program for defense nuclear facilities. In addition, you requested the report include a discussion of lessons learned at other DOE sites that have experienced similar challenges in fire protection, an estimate of engineering resources required, and a projection of when all fire protection upgrades will be completed.

NNSA has directed the Los Alamos Site Office (LASO) to respond to your concerns and develop the requested report. While LASO has reported progress in working with LANL to address fire protection issues and gather lessons learned information from other NNSA sites, the report is not complete and a significant effort is required to develop a comprehensive fire protection strategy at Los Alamos. The primary reason for the delay is related to the availability of the LASO Fire Protection Engineer, who is fully engaged supporting emergent operational issues at LANL nuclear facilities, solid waste operations reviews, and Source Evaluation Board support for the LANL contract.

Based on available resources and projected near-term workload at the Los Alamos Site Office, it is necessary for the Office of Defense Programs to request a 60-day extension to prepare an adequate report. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me or have a member of your staff contact Michael Thompson at (301) 903-5648 or Gerald Schlapper at (505) 665-7111.

Sincerely,

  
Thomas P. D'Agostino  
Acting Deputy Administrator  
for Defense Programs

cc: M. Whitaker, DR-1  
E. Wilmot, LASO