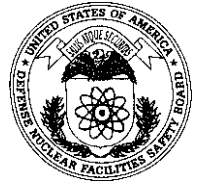


DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

John E. Mansfield, Vice Chairman
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January 20, 2010

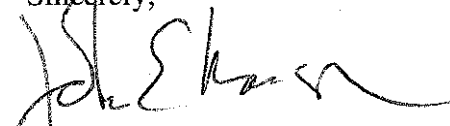
The Honorable Inés R. Triay
Assistant Secretary for Environmental
Management
U. S. Department of Energy
1000 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20585-0113

Dear Dr. Triay:

The staff of the Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board (Board) recently reviewed the Savannah River Site fire protection program. The enclosed report documents the findings from this assessment, which included fire protection modifications to Building 241-96H to support the cleanup of Tank 48 and necessary upgrades to support planned K-Area projects. The staff has concerns regarding the management of aging apparatus in the fire department fleet; the oversight of fire protection exemptions, equivalencies, and position papers; and whether known fire protection deficiencies and conditions are managed effectively throughout the site. The staff noted deficiencies and opportunities for near-term improvements, e.g., the Department of Energy Savannah River Operations Office's (DOE-SR) fire protection program plan is five years out-of-date and federal staffing is inadequate.

Of note, among all the sites recently evaluated by the Board, only DOE-SR has exceeded the normal 15-year life expectancy for all its major fire equipment. Of the six units, the three first-line fire engines are 17 years old, another is 20 years old, and the reserve engine is 31 years old. The ladder truck is also 20 years old. The Board requests that it be kept informed of progress in replacing this equipment.

Sincerely,



John E. Mansfield, Ph.D.
Vice Chairman

Enclosure

c: The Honorable Thomas P. D'Agostino
Mr. Jeffrey M. Allison
Mr. Mark B. Whitaker, Jr.