



## Department of Energy

Washington, DC 20585

March 28, 2003

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:

### UPDATED LISTING OF DEPARTMENT PERSONNEL SERVING AS SUBJECT MATTER EXPERTS FOR SAFETY SYSTEM OVERSIGHT

In December 2002, the Department committed to provide the Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board (Board) with an updated list of personnel filling positions as subject matter experts at the Department's field and area offices. That updated listing is attached.

I am pleased to report that site managers are taking ownership of their subject matter expert (SME) programs and staffing. Twelve of 17 field offices (or 70 percent) have completed designation of SMEs for the identified safety systems at their sites. The Department has assigned a total of 64.23 Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs) out of a total of 77.71 FTEs needed for safety system oversight. Thus, 83 percent of the SME staffing needs have been met. Where SMEs have not yet been permanently assigned, sites are taking compensatory measures to accomplish the necessary safety system oversight.

The Department remains committed to full staffing of needed SMEs for safety system oversight. For the five field offices that are completing the staffing of their SME programs, paths forward have been provided to the extent possible. The Department will provide an updated status on paths forward to fill the remaining gaps by September 2003.

The personnel lists in the attached report are snapshots in time. Sites are maintaining lists of safety systems and personnel assigned for safety system oversight for their use. Sites are expected to make this information available to SMEs, contractor system engineers, DOE facility representatives, DOE managers and technical personnel, and other relevant personnel. In many cases, the site lists are in more detail than the attached report. Further inquiries about specific individual personnel assignments for safety system oversight responsibilities are most efficiently directed to the appropriate site.

The attached report shows that, in comparison to previous reports, some sites have revised their number of safety systems or their number of SMEs needed. The number of safety systems has tended to increase with identification of additional systems as a result of ongoing efforts to upgrade documented safety analyses. Site changes in the number of SMEs needed have been based on actual experience in implementing the SME programs performing safety system oversight. Whereas initial FTE estimates were more




theoretical, current FTE requirements are now more accurate, based on actual personnel assigned and performing the safety oversight duties.

In addition, work is underway by the Federal Technical Capability Panel (FTCP) to better define safety system oversight responsibilities and competencies, and to provide for more uniform implementation of safety system oversight throughout the Department.

If you have questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at (509) 376-6677.

Sincerely,

  
Roy J. Schepens, Chairman  
Federal Technical Capability Panel

cc: K. McSlarrow, S-2  
J. H. Roberson, EM-1  
T. Przybylek, NA-2  
M. B. Whitaker, S-3.1

**Enclosure**