



**Department of Energy**  
Washington, DC 20585

December 16, 1999

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DNE (S&P)

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:

In your letter of October 5, 1999, regarding the progress of Integrated Safety Management (ISM) at the Nevada Test Site (NTS), you expressed specific concerns regarding the challenge of developing a consolidated ISM system to govern the operations of the site operating contractor, Bechtel Nevada, and the weapons laboratories. I acknowledge the validity of your concerns, and I want to assure you that Defense Programs is working with the Field Managers and our contractors to achieve the Secretary of Energy's objectives and milestones for ISM implementation.

The Department of Energy's Nevada Operations Office (DOE/NV) functions as the operations integrator for the activities of Bechtel Nevada, the weapons laboratories, and the Albuquerque and Oakland Operations Offices. The DOE/NV Manager is committed to issuing a Nevada Safety Management System Policy that fully integrates the management of all operations at the NTS. The Los Alamos National Laboratory and the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory are also committed to integration of their activities at the NTS. The path forward to achieve integrated safety in operations is being worked cooperatively by all involved organizations. The DOE/NV Manager is personally involved and committed to assure that this goal is achieved.

Defense Programs is providing management and technical assistance to support these efforts. The planned Phase 1 verification of the ISM system, scheduled for February 2000, will provide insight into the progress and effectiveness of efforts to put in place a consolidated ISM system. Based on this verification review, modifications to the Nevada Safety Management System Policy will be implemented as appropriate.

DOE/NV Manager

DOE/NV Manager

DOE/NV Manager

DOE/NV Manager



We will keep your staff informed of progress. Please contact me if you have any questions regarding this matter, or have your staff contact Dennis Miotla, Acting Associate Deputy Assistant Secretary for Facilities Management & ES&H Support, at 301-903-5427.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Thomas F. Gioconda". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial "T".

THOMAS F. GIOCONDA  
Brigadier General, USAF  
Acting Assistant Secretary  
for Defense Programs

cc:

Mark Whitaker, S-3.1  
Manager, Albuquerque Operations Office  
Manager, Nevada Operations Office  
Manager, Oakland Operations Office  
Director, Los Alamos National Laboratory  
Director, Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory  
Director, Sandia National Laboratories