

September 2, 2003

Admiral Frank L. Bowman (USN)  
Deputy Administrator of Naval Reactors  
National Nuclear Security Administration  
Naval Sea Systems Command  
Washington Navy Yard  
1240 Isaac Hall Avenue, SE, Stop 8010  
Washington, D. C. 20376-8010

Dear Admiral Bowman:

Thank you for your letter of July 7, 2003, which provided the recent Naval Reactors reports on radiological waste disposal and environmental monitoring, occupational safety and health, and occupational radiation exposure, as well as the annual overview of the program. These reports, together with the joint National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA)/Navy Benchmarking Exchange progress reports of December 2002 and July 2003, clearly demonstrate Naval Reactor's continuing high degree of commitment to protecting the public, workers, and the environment.

It is a pleasure to note once again that personnel with the Naval Reactors' program continue to exhibit extraordinary standards in the performance of their work. Naval Reactors consistently maintains a model program for the design, construction, operation, and decommissioning of nuclear-powered vessels. As noted by the joint NASA/Navy progress reports, several key leadership, organizational, and management attributes of the program's safety implementation are relied upon to achieve this proud tradition. The Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board (Board) considers traits such as the following worthy of emulation:

- ! Maintaining total programmatic and safety responsibility for a project, from design through decommissioning, for all U.S. Navy nuclear propulsion plants
- ! Maintaining well-documented, conservative, and achievable technical requirements whose implementation is verified through robust audit and review processes
- ! Recruiting, training, and retaining highly qualified people who are held personally accountable and responsible for safety
- ! Maintaining an institutionally embedded, closed-loop lessons-learned process that begins with a technical requirements base

The Board congratulates you for sustained superior performance. We extend our best personal wishes to you and your associates.

Sincerely,

John T. Conway  
Chairman

c: The Honorable Jessie Hill Roberson  
The Honorable Beverly Ann Cook  
The Honorable Linton Brooks  
Mr. Mark B. Whitaker, Jr.