



Department of Energy  
National Nuclear Security Administration  
Washington, DC 20585



August 25, 2010

The Honorable Peter S. Winokur  
Chairman  
Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board  
625 Indiana Avenue, NW, Suite 700  
Washington, D.C. 20004

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DNFSB SAFETY BOARD

Dear Mr. Chairman:

As a follow-up to the August 11, 2010, Office of Defense Programs briefing to the Board, I want to emphasize that the National Nuclear Security Administration will be transparent with the Board regarding the decision logic and criteria for evaluating and selecting safety class structures, systems, and components (SSC) per the Implementation Plan for Recommendation 2009-2, *Los Alamos National Laboratory Plutonium Facility Seismic Safety*. We invite the Board's staff to participate in related discussions and our real-time, iterative process to refine the decision logic and criteria and apply the logic and criteria to our specific options. We will also discuss our status, progress, and issues in briefings to the Board in advance of any final decisions.

While it is too early to have a definitive list of attributes and preferences for choosing one solution over another, there are some key attributes that we will consider in our decision and some clear preferences to guide our choices.

Attributes for selecting safety class SSC upgrades include the following:

- Technical sufficiency to address derivative design basis accidents;
- Technical feasibility to design and procure;
- Cost;
- Schedule; and
- Operational impacts to install/maintain.

Preferences for selecting safety class SSCs include the following:

- Eliminating hazards is preferred over preventing or mitigating potential accidents;
- SSCs are preferred over administrative controls;
- Passive SSCs are preferred over active SSCs;
- Preventive controls are preferred over mitigative controls; and
- SSCs that are effective for a broad set of accidents are preferred over SSCs that are effective for a smaller set of accidents.



If you have any questions, please contact me or Mr. James McConnell, Assistant Deputy Administrator for Nuclear Safety, Nuclear Operations, and Governance Reform, at (202) 586-4379.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Don Cook", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

DONALD L. COOK  
Deputy Administrator  
for Defense Programs

cc: M. Campagnone, HS-1.1  
K. Smith, LASO