



**Department of Energy**  
**National Nuclear Security Administration**  
Washington, DC 20585

June 24, 2004

The Honorable John T. Conway  
Chairman  
Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board  
625 Indiana Avenue, NW.  
Suite 700  
Washington, D.C. 20004

Dear Mr. Chairman:

The purpose of this letter is to notify the Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board (DNFSB) of the authorized startup of the W78 Seamless Safety for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (SS-21) process as required by Commitment 4.4.5 to the DNFSB Recommendation 98-2, "Accelerating Safety Management Improvements at the Pantex Plant."

The W78 bay startup was authorized June 10, 2004, and the cell was authorized on June 21, 2004, for single-unit operations. All pre-starts on the nuclear explosive safety study and readiness assessment have been closed. Appropriate authorization basis changes were made and approved. A revision has been made to the Master Authorization Agreement. Authorized startup of the W78 SS-21 process completes Commitment 4.4.5.

If you have questions, please call me at 202-586-4879 or have your staff contact Ms. Debra Volk at 505-845-5106.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "D. Beck", is written over a large, faint, stylized signature.

David E. Beck  
Assistant Deputy Administrator  
for Military Application and  
Stockpile Operations  
Defense Programs

cc:

J. McConnell, DNFSB  
W. Andrews, DNFSB  
A. Matteucci, DNFSB  
M. Whitaker, DR-1  
D. Glenn, PXSO

