



Department of Energy  
National Nuclear Security Administration  
Washington, DC 20585

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March 15, 2005

The Honorable John T. Conway  
Chairman  
Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board  
625 Indiana Avenue, NW  
Suite 700  
Washington, DC 20004-2901

Dear Mr. Chairman:

Thank you for your letter to Ambassador Brooks, dated February 24, 2005, in which the Board expresses its concerns about the Chemistry and Metallurgy Research Facility Replacement (CMRR) at the Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL). The two concerns the Board raised relate to the selection of a design-build acquisition strategy and the process by which the National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) and LANL will provide due diligence in overseeing the development and approval of the design.

Consistent with the verbal commitment from the Administrator to the Board on March 1, 2005, I welcome an opportunity to brief the Board and its staff on these matters soon after obtaining Critical Decision-1 for the project. NNSA intends to design and construct the CMRR in a rigorous manner that will ensure that the project meets its technical scope, cost, and schedule baseline. We are prepared to demonstrate to the Board that we have a plan to successfully execute the CMRR project, including the capabilities to implement a comprehensive and rigorous review of the design of the facility.

Sincerely,

Everet H. Beckner  
Deputy Administrator  
for Defense Programs

cc: M. Whitaker, DR-1

