



97-0003258

Department of Energy

Washington, DC 20585
October 16, 1997

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:

This letter is to provide you with a status of the Department of Energy's (DOE) progress on commitments in the Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board (DNFSB) Recommendation 94-2 Implementation Plan regarding radiological assessments being prepared at Oak Ridge and Savannah River.

The Oak Ridge Operations Office has submitted a revised performance assessment and a composite analysis for the disposal facility at Oak Ridge to Headquarters for review. Site completion of the performance assessment and composite analysis were commitments due September 30, 1997, pursuant to Task Initiative VII.B.5 in DOE's Implementation Plan, Revision 1, for the DNFSB Recommendation 94-2. A copy of the performance assessment and the composite analysis is being provided to your staff.

The "Performance Assessment for Continuing and Future Operations at Solid Waste Storage Area 6," Revision 1 (ORNL-6783/R1) presents an evaluation of the long-term performance of the disposal facility against the performance objectives of DOE Order 5820.2A, *Radioactive Waste Management*. The "Composite Analysis for Solid Waste Storage Area 6" (ORNL-6929) presents an analysis of the combined long-term impacts of the low-level waste burial ground and other radioactive sources expected to remain at the Oak Ridge Reservation versus the Department's standard for radiation protection of the public. Upon acceptance of both the performance assessment and composite analysis, Headquarters will issue a disposal authorization statement for the Solid Waste Storage Area 6.

Another radiological assessment, the composite analysis for the Savannah River Site E-Area Vaults and Saltstone disposal facilities, was also to be completed by the end of September 1997. During its review, the Savannah River Operations Office raised some questions which the site contractor must respond to in the composite analysis. Therefore, this Implementation Plan commitment will not be able to be completed on time. Our expectation is that the Savannah River

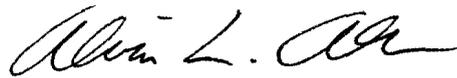


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Operations Office will submit the composite analysis to Headquarters at the end of October. I will notify you as soon as this commitment has been completed.

The Department has completed the initial actions for the Oak Ridge Solid Waste Storage Area 6 performance assessment and composite analysis identified under this task initiative and proposes that these parts of the commitment be considered complete.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Alvin L. Alm". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "A" and a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Alvin L. Alm
Assistant Secretary for
Environmental Management