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DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

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October 13, 1995

The Honorable Thomas P. Grumbly
Assistant Secretary for Environmental Management
Department of Energy
Washington, D.C. 20585-0113

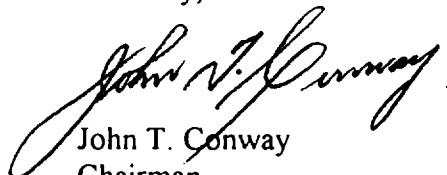
Dear Mr. Grumbly:

On August 7, 1995, the Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board (Board), in accordance with 42 U.S.C. § 2286b(d), sent you a letter requesting a report related to spill contingency plans for the High-Level Waste (HLW) Tank Farms. The Board received a response on October 6, 1995, to this reporting requirement from Mr. A. Lee Watkins, Assistant Manager of High-Level Waste, Department of Energy (DOE) Savannah River Operations Office. As stated in his report transmittal cover letter, the report partially responded to the first two of the four reporting requests. The remaining two items involved detailed logistics, resource requirements, and an evaluation of resource availability. The Board estimated that 60 days was sufficient time to have completed the entire task.

The Board remains concerned with the ability of the Savannah River Site's (SRS) HLW tanks to resist modern design basis natural phenomena events. This is especially significant because of the start-up of the In Tank Precipitation Facility and the impending start-up of the related Defense Waste Processing Facility. Therefore, the Board encourages DOE to move expeditiously to complete the remaining actions with added emphasis on making tangible improvements to accident planning. Completion of this effort should certainly help bridge the gap between potential accidents and the Department's ability to respond to them in an effective manner, thus protecting the health and safety of the public. The Board believes that 30 to 45 days should be more than ample time to complete the reporting requirement.

If you have questions concerning this, please call me or have your staff contact Mr. Joe Sanders.

Sincerely,


John T. Conway
Chairman

c: ✓ Mr. Mark Whitaker
Dr. Mario Fiori
Mr. A. Lee Watkins