

August 23, 2023

The Honorable Joyce Connery
Chair, Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board
625 Indiana NW, Suite 700
Washington, DC 20004

Dear Chair Connery:

The Department of Energy (DOE) received the Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board (DNFSB or Board) letter dated August 24, 2022, providing the results of your staff's review of DOE's Safety Software Central Registry (Central Registry). The letter also established a reporting requirement for DOE to provide a briefing that addresses DOE's plans for the Central Registry by the end of January 2023. In January 2023, we notified you that we were evaluating options and coordinating with internal stakeholders to reach a decision regarding our path forward, and that additional time would be needed to complete the coordination process.

As discussed in the June 8, 2023, status briefing to the Board, we have made significant progress in this area and continue to work with stakeholders to determine the most effectual decision to support nuclear safety across the DOE defense nuclear complex. The Department fully agrees that a more effective quality assurance process for software is needed, which we continue to work on to determine the most effective and efficient outcome. As noted during the June 8 Board briefing and consistent with the Board's letter and Staff Report, the Department is not aware of any related safety concerns associated with the Central Registry.

To ensure that all Departmental equities are considered and addressed, additional time is needed to determine the appropriate path forward. DOE plans to complete its evaluation and brief the Board on a path forward by September 30, 2023. During this time, we will conduct site visits to gather additional information, and we invite your staff to participate. We will continue to provide Board staff with periodic updates to ensure that they are kept informed of our progress and their input is considered.

If you have any questions, please contact Mr. Todd N. Lapointe, Director, Office of Environment, Health, Safety and Security, at 202-586-6740.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Granholm', is written over a faint, circular official seal.

Jennifer Granholm