

May 3, 2004

The Honorable Spencer Abraham
Secretary of Energy
1000 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20585-1000

Dear Secretary Abraham:

The Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board (Board) was recently briefed on a “safety basis academy” proposed for establishment at Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL). The intent of the academy is to provide training that would lead to professional certification for those across the complex interested in careers in safety analysis and safety basis management. The LANL approach appears to have significant promise.

The Board notes that the initial intent of the safety basis academy is primarily to train contractor safety analysts and related personnel. In a separate effort directed at federal employees, the Department of Energy (DOE) is developing Draft TRNG-0046, *Nuclear Safety Specialist Functional Area Qualification Standard*. The safety basis academy has the potential to provide training for both contractor and federal personnel that would satisfy this standard.

The Board supports this concept of centralized safety basis training because of its potential for improving the quality of authorization basis documents for defense nuclear facilities.

Sincerely,

John T. Conway
Chairman

c: The Honorable David K. Garman
Mr. Edwin L. Wilmot
Admiral George Pete Nanos
Mr. Mark B. Whitaker, Jr.