



The Secretary of Energy
Washington, DC 20585

July 23, 1993

The Honorable John T. Conway
Chairman
Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board
625 Indiana Avenue, N.W., Suite 700
Washington, D.C. 20004

Dear Mr. Conway:

On June 1, 1993, the Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board approved Recommendation 93-3 which deals with improving the technical capability of personnel associated with defense nuclear facilities programs. Recommendation 93-3 is accepted by the Department and the basis of our acceptance is discussed below.

The Department has established a statement of core values which captures the substance of this Recommendation regarding a commitment to improving the capabilities of our staff. In addition, a specific policy expanding the appropriate core value statements in this area will be issued by October 31, 1993.

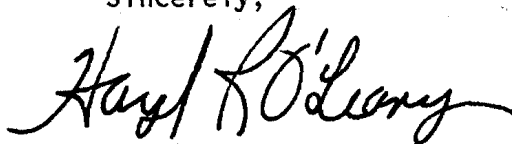
We will seek excepted appointment authority through appropriate Administration and congressional processes. The functions, numbers, and locations of the positions for which this authority is needed are yet to be developed. We are now initiating an effort leading to achieving this objective in advance of submitting a detailed implementation plan.

We agree that a technical personnel coordinator is necessary to assure timely and effective program execution. This coordinator must be qualified in technical training and recruitment and have a personal commitment and enthusiasm to forge a steadily improving program of technical qualification. He or she will have the authority to represent me and must have credibility with line managers to assure their needs are receiving proper priority. Additionally, this coordinator must have access to all top executives to assure that other competing forces do not dilute the focus of this effort. These attributes for the coordinator are key for realizing our objectives. However, the organizational assignment of the coordinator can be made in a number of areas and still be successful. In this regard, the appropriate individual to provide overall management on these initiatives is the Assistant Secretary for Human Resources and Administration. Since his responsibilities cover many intimately related supporting activities in the personnel and training areas, segregation of this initiative would detract from clear accountability. I will assure that the Assistant Secretary has the authority, resources, and support to carry out this mandate.

We will develop a broadly-based program giving strong consideration to each of the specific initiatives you recommended in the areas of internal initiatives, independent external assessment, and internal assessments.

As noted in my June 14, 1993, letter, this provides the opportunity for the Department to reevaluate current and past Board recommendations related to training and qualification and deal with them comprehensively. An "ad hoc" work group to respond to Recommendation 93-3 has been established and is reporting to the Acting Under Secretary. This group will be working with the task group you have created to address this recommendation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Hazel R. O'Leary". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Hazel" and last name "O'Leary" clearly distinguishable.

Hazel R. O'Leary