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DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

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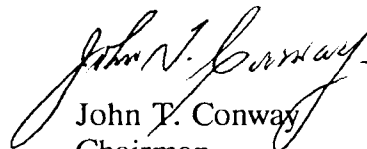
The Honorable Hazel R. O'Leary
Secretary of Energy
Washington, DC 20585

Dear Secretary O'Leary:

The Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board (Board) has received your letter of January 21, 1994, transmitting the Department of Energy's (DOE) Implementation Plan for Board Recommendation 93-5, which addresses health and safety issues associated with DOE's characterization program at Hanford's high-level radioactive waste storage tanks. We have also received Mr. Grumbly's letter of February 23, 1994, forwarding errata pages and the corrected text for the Implementation Plan. The Implementation Plan for Recommendation 93-5 conforms to the standards set forth in the Board's Policy Statement No. 1, "Criteria for Judging the Adequacy of DOE Responses and Implementation Plans for DNFSB Recommendations" (55 Fed. Reg. 43398), and is therefore acceptable.

The Board is encouraged by the efforts of both DOE and Westinghouse to develop an Implementation Plan that is responsive to Recommendation 93-5. We look forward to the timely implementation of the actions committed to in the Implementation Plan, as well as the timely delivery of quarterly status reports on DOE's progress. Nonetheless, we are concerned that DOE has already failed to meet several of the near-term commitments in the Implementation Plan. The Board is relying on DOE to maintain its management commitment and determination to resolve the important health and safety issues associated with the Hanford tanks, and to ensure that DOE and Westinghouse meet the commitments in the Implementation Plan on schedule.

Sincerely,


John T. Conway
Chairman

c: T. Grumbly, EM-1
M. Whitaker, EH-6
J. Lytle, EM-30
J. Wagoner, DOE-RL