

[DOE (GERMANTOWN, MD) LETTERHEAD]

December 29, 1995

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

Dear Chairman Conway:

On June 30, 1995, Secretary O'Leary transmitted the Implementation Plan (IP) that responds to your Recommendation 94-3, Rocky Flats Seismic and Systems Safety. I am providing this letter to advise you of the Phase I results (enclosure 1), our decision regarding interim storage of plutonium at Rocky Flats and the revised Integrated Program Plan (IPP) schedule.

Based on conclusions and technical evidence summarized in enclosure 1, we are taking two parallel paths forward to ensure safe storage of plutonium at the Rocky Flats Environmental Technology Site, pending a final decision on the interim storage facility in March 1996. Specifically, an upgraded Building 371 option and a new passive vault option address the safety issues relative to the interim plutonium storage mission, and we have elected to further narrow the uncertainties associated with costs and schedules of both options. Immediate action will be taken to reduce seismic risks in Building 371 through upgrades that are warranted based on committed near-term missions (through - 2002), regardless of the ultimate decision on the interim storage mission. Additionally, an effective near-term and interim residue strategy will be developed in sufficient detail to support the scheduled final decision.

The IPP will serve both to coordinate implementation of these recommendations and to complete the response to the Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board 94-3 recommendation. The completion date for the IPP has been extended from December 29, 1995, until January 17, 1996. The completion date was extended to accommodate pursuing both options into March 1996. I am enclosing a revised schedule (enclosure 2).

We will continue to keep you and your staff informed of our progress as we work toward completing the IPP. If you have any questions, please call me.

This information is unclassified and suitable for placement in the public reading room.

Sincerely,

[signed by Randal Scott, for]
Thomas P. Grumbly
Assistant Secretary for Environmental Management

2 Enclosures