

[DNFSB LETTERHEAD]

August 26, 1997

The Honorable Federico F. Peña
Secretary of Energy
1000 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 205851000

Dear Secretary Peña:

This letter acknowledges receipt of your acceptance, dated [July 14, 1997](#), of Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board (Board) [Recommendation 97-2](#), *Criticality Safety*. The Board is encouraged by your timely acceptance of the recommendation, in concert with the informative and productive initial briefings by your staff.

The Board would like the DOE 97-2 implementation plan to build upon the successful corrective actions taken in response to [Recommendation 93-2](#), *The Need for Critical Experiment Capability*. A key to achieving this linkage is to establish funding authority and to recognize the organizational crosscutting importance of this issue.

While you are reviewing the various organizational alternatives for implementation, we suggest that you consider one option that has a strong probability of success: Establish a responsible line manager at Headquarters, reporting directly to an Assistant Secretary with responsibility for leading this crosscutting activity and for managing the DOE funds allocated for its accomplishment.

Closure of Recommendation 93-2 may be possible as long as mechanisms are in place to ensure that continued successes are captured in the implementation plan for Recommendation 97-2.

The Board has established a project team to work closely with your staff in the development of an implementation plan that will fully address the technical issues outlined in Recommendation 97-2, and looks forward to continued progress in this important area.

Sincerely,

John T. Conway
Chairman

c: Mr. Mark B. Whitaker, Jr.