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DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

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April 7, 2000

The Honorable Bill Richardson
Secretary of Energy
1000 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20585-1000

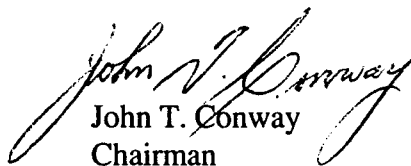
Dear Secretary Richardson:

The Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board (Board) has received the Department of Energy's (DOE's) Implementation Plan for Recommendation 99-1. This recommendation stresses the need to accelerate efforts to improve pit storage at the Pantex Plant. The commitments and path forward outlined in the Implementation Plan adequately address the issues raised in Recommendation 99-1. The Board therefore accepts the proposed Implementation Plan, predicated on the assumption that adequate funding will be provided to execute the commitments therein.

As DOE proceeds with the implementation process, it is imperative to recognize that pit storage is but one component of a safe pit management system. Coordination of storage with transportation and disposition efforts will form the basis of a successful pit management program. The Board believes the Integrated Pit Management Plan, which DOE intends to complete by October 2000, will be an invaluable tool in achieving the necessary program coordination.

The Board looks forward to continuing to work closely with DOE and its contractors throughout the implementation process and future pit management activities.

Sincerely,


John T. Conway
Chairman

c: Mr. Mark B. Whitaker, Jr.