



Department of Energy
Washington, DC 20585

June 29, 2000

John T. Conway, Chairman
Defense Nuclear Facilities
Safety Board
625 Indiana Avenue, NW, Suite 700
Washington, DC 20004-2901

Dear Mr. Chairman:

Thank you for your letter of June 7, 2000, expressing the Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board's views concerning the design approach suggested for the final building ventilation for the Pit Disassembly and Conversion Facility (PDCF).

The Department of Energy has initiated a study to address all design, performance and cost aspects of the PDCF filter design. All appropriate parties will be involved in this study which should be completed by October 31, 2000. The Department should then have all facts and data necessary to make an informed and defensible decision. The results of this study also will be used as a basis for similar design decisions for the Mixed Oxide Fuel Fabrication Facility (MOX FFF) and the Plutonium Immobilization Facility (PIF).

Action has been taken to ensure that ongoing design work on these three facilities is not invalidated regardless of the Department's final decision. A final decision by the end of this calendar year should not impact the schedules for PDCF and PIF. However, the final choice of the building ventilation design may have a significant impact on the MOX FFF schedule.

As soon as all necessary information is available, we will discuss with you and your staff the details and justification for our decision.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kenneth E. Beh".

for
Rose Gottemoeller
Acting Deputy Administrator for
Defense Nuclear Nonproliferation

