

Department of Energy

Washington, DC 20585

April 9, 2001

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

Dear Mr. Chairman:

On March 23, 2001, the Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board (Board) provided their observations of the recent thermal stabilization activities in Building 707 that included the unusual pressure fluctuations in the glovebox. My staff in the Office for Site Closure, along with the Rocky Flats Field Office (RFFO) and the contractor (Kaiser-Hill), have been evaluating the situation. My staff and I will remain involved in the follow-up necessary to resolve the issues related to these activities, including full implementation of authorization basis controls addressing past Board concerns.

As the first step, we have asked the RFFO for the corrective actions (see enclosure). Once agreement is reached on the corrective actions, arrangements will be made by my Office for Site Closure to brief the Board on both the RFFO and contractor's corrective actions, including the path forward.

Doing work safely is a priority for Environmental Management. We remain committed to safely cleaning up and closing our sites.

If you have further questions, please contact me at (202) 586-7710 or contact Mr. James J. Fiore, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Site Closure, at (202) 586-6331.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Carolyn L. Huntoon".

Carolyn L. Huntoon
Acting Assistant Secretary for
Environmental Management

Enclosure

cc:

M. Whitaker, S-3.1

J. Fiore, EM-30

B. Mazurowski, RFFO



memorandum

DATE: 30 MAR 2001

REPLY TO

ATTN OF: EM-33 (C. O'Dell, 301-903-9445)

SUBJECT: Board Letter on Thermal Stabilization Activities in Building 707

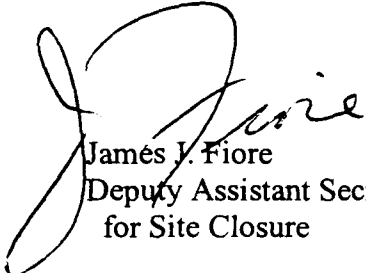
TO: Barbara A. Mazurowski, Manager, Rocky Flats Field Office

The Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board (Board) has provided their observations of recent thermal stabilization activities in Building 707. The Board letter dated March 23, 2001, to Carolyn Huntoon is attached. Please ascertain the root causes and provide to me within 45 days the corrective actions the Rocky Flats Environmental Technology Site (RFETS) is and will be taking.

My expectation is that the corrective actions will incorporate lessons learned to ensure the issues are resolved and that authorization basis controls are effectively implemented by the contractor and the Rocky Flats Field Office, including previous Board concerns with characterization prior to thermal stabilization operations.

Following receipt of the corrective actions, my Rocky Flats Program Office will make arrangements with you for a briefing to the Board on RFETS actions and path forward.

If you have further questions for clarification on the safety expectations, please contact Dr. Charles O'Dell at (301) 903-9445, or for closure issues related to the activities, contact Mr. Marcus Jones at (301) 903-3072.



James J. Fiore
Deputy Assistant Secretary
for Site Closure

Attachment