



Department of Energy
National Nuclear Security Administration
Washington, DC 20585
February 22, 2001

The Honorable John T. Conway
Chairman
Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board
625 Indiana Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20004

Dear Mr. Chairman:

Previously, the Department of Energy's (DOE) 98-2 Implementation Plan identified a November 2000 publication date for revisions to DOE Orders 452.1 B, "Nuclear Explosive and Weapon Surety Program," 452.2B, "Safety of Nuclear Explosive Operations," and DOE-STD-3015, "Nuclear Explosive Safety Study Process." After the National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) was established, the Secretary of Energy directed that all DOE directives be reviewed and revised to be consistent with the NNSA Act. As a result, the Departmental review and comment period (REVCOM) was delayed for 2 months.

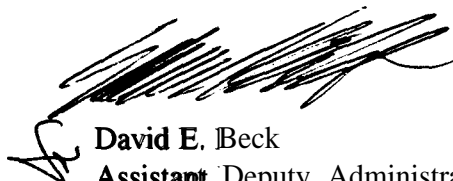
The REVCOM period for both orders was October 23- November 24, 2000, and additional comments were not formally received from the Albuquerque Operations Office Nuclear Explosive Safety Program until January 18, 2001. Over 500 comments required resolution. All reviewer comments have been evaluated, issues resolved, and necessary revisions were **incorporated**,

With the change in Administration and the absence of a Deputy Secretary, the Secretary of Energy must approve the orders since they govern NNSA operations. Because of this situation, we anticipate **publication** of the DOE 452 Orders about May 2001. Meanwhile both the Albuquerque and Nevada Operations Offices have implemented the new or revised requirements in the orders, such as a restructured Nuclear Explosive Safety Study (NESS) Group, the use of senior technical advisors, the development and implementation of an integrated Nuclear Explosive and Weapons System Appraisal Program, and the elimination of expiration dates for a NESS performed after January 1997. The DOE-Standard-3015 has been submitted for publication and should be available by April 2001.



If you have questions, please contact Mr. Edward Cassidy on 301-903-7559 or Dr. Helmut Filacchione on 301-903-7519.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David E. Beck', with a stylized flourish at the end.

David E. Beck
Assistant Deputy Administrator
for Military Application and
Stockpile Operations
Defense Programs

cc:

M. Whitaker, S-3.1

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