



The Deputy Secretary of Energy

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January 16, 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:

Thank you for your letter regarding the Department's *Integrated Nuclear Materials Management Plan* (Plan). Integrated safety management is one of the Department's top priorities. The Department recognizes the importance of integrating the management of the nuclear materials that are under our custodianship. Integration is important both to enhance our ability to comply with the environmental, safety and health protection requirements built into all of the Department's operations, as well as to benefit from the efficiencies, cost reductions and enhanced operational capability that will result.

As noted in the *Integrated Nuclear Materials Management Plan*, the Department has identified the issues and established a process to improve nuclear materials stewardship. Under the direction of the Nuclear Management Council, chaired by the Under Secretary for Energy, Science and Environment, we are making significant progress to complete the 25 tasks identified in the Plan. The proposed Nuclear Material Management Groups are being studied in a pilot project to be completed at the end of this fiscal year.

Regarding the Savannah River Site F-Area facilities, the Department is in the process of studying (1) what materials require canyon processing, and (2) which canyon facility would be the best in which to conduct the processing. We have been working closely with your staff in conducting these studies and plan to brief you separately on the results once the studies are complete.

The Department issued the 2000 version of the *Plutonium Storage Report* (Report) on November 30, 2000. After consideration of all factors, including near-term funding availability and progress in the Plutonium Disposition Program, the Report reaffirms our previous decision to use existing facilities to store surplus plutonium. We appreciated the discussions we had with your staff on this matter. Their comments have been given thorough consideration during preparation of this version of the Report.

I appreciate the Board's continued assistance and advice regarding safety issues affecting the Department. The continued interaction of Department staff with the



Board's staff is essential in ensuring that these issues are understood by both organizations and addressed properly.

If you have any further questions, please contact me or have a member of your staff contact Mr. Phillip Niedzielski-Eichner, Chairman of the Department's Nuclear Material Stewardship Task Force, at (202) 586-1849.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "T. J. Glauthier". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of the first and last names being capitalized and prominent.

T. J. Glauthier