



The Secretary of Energy
Washington, DC 20585

July 30, 2001

The Honorable John T. Conway
Chairman
Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board
625 Indiana Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20004-2901

Dear Mr. Chairman:

The Department has received your May 24, 2001, letter concerning the Department's response to the Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board's Recommendation 2001-1, High-level Waste Management at the Savannah River Site.

We continue to evaluate the concerns described in your letter. As you know, we are taking action as described in the initial Implementation Plan. The Department completed operations to lower the level of liquid high-level waste in Tank 6 to a level below known leak sites and is preparing to pump Tank 5 to address those recent leak events. Also, the Department recently issued the Final Environmental Impact Statement on the Salt Processing Project, identifying the preferred alternative for the cesium separations technology.

By September 15, 2001, we will submit to you a revised Implementation Plan. The Department proposes to work with your staff to schedule a series of meetings related to the full range of issues identified in Recommendation 2001-1, to not only ensure our revised Implementation Plan meets your expectations but also to communicate progress and status of our ongoing initiatives, such as the overall high-level waste system risk assessment.

Mr. Mark W. Frei, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Project Completion, Office of Environmental Management, is the manager responsible for developing the Department's Implementation Plan to this Recommendation. Mr. Charles E. Anderson, Assistant Manager for High Level Waste, Savannah River Operations Office, will be the point of contact for the site-specific actions for this Recommendation. Mr. Frei may be reached at (202) 586-0370 and Mr. Anderson can be reached at (803) 208-6072.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Spencer Abraham".

Spencer Abraham

