



Department of Energy
National Nuclear Security Administration
Washington, DC 20585

October 30, 2001

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

Dear Mr. Chairman:

In response to your letter dated December 1, 1999, and as part of the continuing dialogue that Defense Programs (DP) has had with you and your staff regarding quality assurance (QA) at National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) sites, the enclosed report is provided.

Pursuant to an NA-10 (Deputy Administrator for Defense Programs) memorandum, dated October 11, 2000, establishing the approach, a review of QA at six NNSA field sites began in January 2001. Recently completed or in progress construction projects were the focus with an emphasis upon vital safety systems or modifications thereto as defined by Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board Recommendation 2000-2. This report details the six site visits that were conducted and provides a summation of results that was presented at the public meeting on August 15, 2001.

Please feel free to contact me or have your staff contact Mr. Jeffrey Roberson (301) 903-8026 if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ralph E. Erickson".

Ralph E. Erickson
Acting Associate Administrator
for Facilities and Operations

Enclosure--Quality Assurance Best
Practices Reviews and Initiatives

cc (w/o enclosure):
Gen. J. Gordon, NA-1
M. Whitaker, S-3.1
S. Carey, EH-1
R. Hardwick, EH-2



United States Government

Department of Energy
National Nuclear Security Administration

memorandum

DATE: October 30, 2001

REPLY TO:
ATTN OF: DP-45:J. Winter:3-2874SUBJECT: RESULTS AND FUTURE ACTIONS FOR COMPLEX-WIDE QA REVIEWS AT
DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIESTO: Manager, Albuquerque Operations Office
Manager, Amarillo Area Office
Manager, Kansas City Area Office
Manager, Kirtland Area Office
Manager, Livermore Site Office
Manager, Los Alamos Area Office
Manager, Nevada Operations Office
Manager, Oakland Operations Office
Manager, Oak Ridge Y-12 Area Office
Manager, Savannah River NNSA Area OfficeREF: Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board Letter to the Assistant Secretary for Environment,
Safety and Health (EH-1) December 1, 1999.

The National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) embarked upon headquarters reviews of Quality Assurance (QA) activities at defense nuclear facilities for the express purpose of evaluating and sharing best practices and lessons learned in this important area. Several areas needing improvement were discovered and additional headquarters reviews are being planned. Attached are the results and an associated analysis. The attached information has been shared with site QA representatives (Federal staff and Contractors), other Departmental stakeholders, and the Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board over the past several months.

Each Field Office and Contractor management team should review the attached report and take actions appropriate for their site and facilities. Future field element self-assessments should evaluate the effectiveness of any corrective actions.


The NNSA is establishing a headquarters field element performance review process that will include quality assurance as a principal activity. Each field site will be visited, and the review process will serve as a primary means to appraise and report to NNSA management the status of implementing safety and quality assurance policy at NNSA sites.

For the just completed QA reviews, each team concluded that no imminent safety issues were discovered. However, based on observed programmatic weaknesses included in this report, there is a potential that issues warranting Price Anderson Amendment Act Non-Compliance Tracking System reports may exist. Discuss this matter with your Contractors. Identification

and correction of each site's weaknesses and related self-assessment activities prior to future visits is expected.

A follow-up QA Best Practice Workshop has been integrated with the Quality Assurance Working Group (QAWG) meeting scheduled for November 28-29, 2001. Support to this effort is expected. Please contact Tom Rotella, oncoming QAWG Chairperson, (301) 903-2649, for additional details.

Should you have further questions on the review results, please call Dick Crowe at (301) 903-6214 or Jeff Roberson at (301) 903-8026.



Ralph E. Erickson
Acting Associate Administrator
for Facilities and Operations

Attachments

cc: w/o Attachments
S. Cary, EH-1
R. Hardwick, EH-2
J. Mangeno, NA-6
D. Beck, NA-12
D. Crandall, NA-11
M. Moury, DNFSB
A. Leivo, AAO
M. Ulshafer, AAO
P. Chimah, AL
R. Simonton, KAO
G. Betzen, KCO
D. Webster, LAAO
M. Kunich, NV
A. De La Paz, OAK
L. McLemore, OAK
D. Zweifel, SRO
M. Glasman, YAO