



**Department of Energy**  
Washington, DC 20585

June 30, 2003

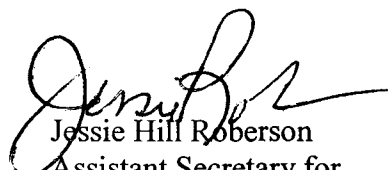
The Honorable John T. Conway  
Chairman  
Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board  
625 Indiana Avenue, NW, Suite 700  
Washington, D.C. 20004

Dear Mr. Chairman:

The purpose of this letter is to report completion of Quality Assurance Improvement Plan (QAIP) deliverable 1.3.4. QAIP 1.3.4 requires Environmental Management (EM) to conduct oversight reviews on schedule and track performance for Headquarters and Field/Operations offices. To satisfy this item, EM sites were assessed to determine: a) whether Vital Safety Systems are integrated into the Integrated Safety Management Systems (ISMS) and is the ISMS being updated, as needed; b) whether corrective actions are being entered, tracked, and closed in a corrective action management system; and c) whether performance measures are established. The enclosure documents the findings of the assessment.

We will use the results of this assessment to provide direction to the sites and to continue to improve our operations and operational performance. If you have questions, please call me or Mr. Paul Golan, Chief Operating Officer, Office of Environmental Management, at (202) 586-0738.

Sincerely,

  
Jessie Hill Roberson  
Assistant Secretary for  
Environmental Management

Enclosure

cc: Mark Whitaker, DR-1



QAIP 1.3.4  
Assessment Findings

- a) Are Vital Safety Systems (VSS) integrated into the Integrated Safety Management Systems (ISMS) and are the ISMS being updated, as needed?

All sites (Carlsbad Field Office, Idaho Operations Office, Miamisburg Closure Project, Oak Ridge Operations Office, Office of River Protection, Richland Operations Office, and the Savannah River Operations Office) have developed Integrated Safety Management Systems (ISMS) that are in place for FY 03 and are being updated, as needed. The Vital Safety System assessments and other assessments planned for FY 03 have been incorporated into the ISMS. One site, the Idaho Operations Office, however has an ISMS that identifies only the facilities where assessments are scheduled for FY 03. Further evaluation at this site showed that DOE and contractor staff via an established formal process jointly agreed upon which VSSs in a facility would be assessed in FY 03 and tentatively plan for assessments in the out-years. At Idaho, it was determined that all facilities except one have VSSs associated with them. All sites establish priorities for performing assessments based on worker safety, systems that are mission critical, and special circumstances. Results of the assessments are also used to plan and schedule when the next assessment will be performed on a specific system. For example, Idaho has implemented the following policy: If the final rating for an assessment is above average, then the follow-on assessment is not scheduled for 18 months, if the final rating for an assessment is average, then a follow-on assessment is planned for 12 months, and if the final assessment rating is below average, then a follow-on assessment is scheduled within the next 6 months. Since the beginning of FY 03, the planned assessments are on schedule with some modifications. The sites review their ISMS monthly or more frequently based upon conditions and special circumstances that arise to determine whether additional assessments are needed.

- b) Are corrective actions being entered, tracked and closed in a corrective action management system?

ISMS requires effective corrective action management systems. All sites have established either a single or multiple corrective action management systems that track corrective actions through closure. The sites use this information to track the contractor's ability to reach closure on time and track trends that are both increasing (negative) and decreasing (positive). At the Savannah River Operations Office, the line management divisions have their own systems for tracking corrective actions. Corrective actions at this site are being tracked, but additional work by the site staff is needed to monitor and assess the status of all site corrective actions. Savannah River staffs are evaluating ways to improve their action tracking system. The sites use both formal and informal techniques for monitoring the status of corrective actions. Some of these include daily safety meetings, monthly safety council meetings, facility representative discussions with the contractors, and formal written correspondence to the contractors. The vast majority of corrective actions are being completed on or before their originally scheduled completion date. Those that are not completed on time have been discussed with the contractor and an agreed upon path forward is identified in the ISMS.

c) Established performance measures

ISMS requires performance measures to be established. In general, the sites indicated they needed to develop better performance measures. These would also include creating leading indicators or measures. However, the sites believe they have put into practice a positive set of written and visual techniques to measure their contractor's performance. These include reviewing and evaluating: a) system engineers qualifications, b) the material condition (aging and degradation) of systems, c) deferred and preventive maintenance schedules and findings, d) accuracy and completeness of the configuration management control system, e) system readiness reviews, f) maintenance, testing and surveillance oversight reviews, g) documented safety analysis (DSA) documentation, h) observations from walk-arounds, i) follow-up on directed actions from safety meetings, j) development and completion of corrective actions, k) available tracking systems, and l) the contractor's ability to resolve adverse trends.