



**Department of Energy
National Nuclear Security Administration
Washington, DC 20585**



August 4, 2005

**The Honorable A. J. Eggenberger
Chairman
Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board
625 Indiana Avenue, NW.
Suite 700
Washington, D.C. 20004**

Dear Mr. Chairman:

Enclosed is the "Quarterly Report for the Implementation Plan Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board (DNFSB) Recommendation 98-2, Safety Management at the Pantex Plant," for the period April 1 through June 30, 2005.

During the third quarter of Fiscal Year 2005, the National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) made progress toward successful execution of the Seamless Safety for the Twenty-First Century (SS-21) process. This report documents the status as of June 30, 2005. As you are also aware, per your letter dated December 14, 2004, we provide monthly status briefings. At the July 13-14, 2005, DNFSB visit to the Pantex Plant, BWXT/Pantex provided a comprehensive status of the implementation and validation of technical safety requirement controls. The NNSA received DNFSB staff comments to the technical business practice (TBP) that incorporates value stream analysis and documents the process between the design agencies and Pantex for hazard analysis and weapon response. The draft TBP is in the final comment phase and is planned for official release prior to the end of Fiscal Year 2005. As of June 30, 2005, the B83 Nuclear Explosive Safety Study (NESS) Report was in final concurrence and signature. Resolution of NESS pre-starts will result in a modification to the Hazard Analysis Report, which in turn, results in a delay to the start of the readiness assessment reviews. Projected B83 reauthorization is January 2006.

Twenty-three out of twenty-seven commitments in the DNFSB Recommendation 98-2 have been delivered and four remain outstanding. If you have questions, please call me or have your staff contact Ms. Wendy Baca at 505-845-6340.

Sincerely,



Xavier Ascanio
Acting Assistant Deputy Administrator
for Military Application and
Stockpile Operations
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Enclosure

cc:

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Quarterly Report for the Implementation Plan

**Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board
Recommendation 98-2**

SAFETY MANGEMENT AT THE PANTEX PLANT

April 1 through June 30, 2005

*U.S. Department of Energy
National Nuclear Security Administration
Assistant Deputy Administrator
for Military Application and Stockpile Operations
Defense Programs*

Introduction

On September 25, 2000, the Secretary of Energy approved Revision 1 to the 98-2 Implementation Plan (IP) and provided a copy to the Defense Nuclear Facilities Board (DNFSB). Change 1 to Revision 1 of the IP was provided on October 28, 2002, and was accepted by the DNFSB on December 19, 2002. The following report for the period April 1 through June 30, 2005, tracks progress towards completing the commitments outlined in the 98-2 IP, Revision 1, as modified and expanded through Change 1 to Revision 1.

General Progress

From April 1 through June 30, 2005, the National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) continued to make progress toward completion of the outstanding recommendation commitments. Status of open items is provided below:

4.0 Safety Issue Resolution

4.2 Analyze Hazards

Commitment 4.2.2 - The purpose of this commitment is to create and publish a technical business practice (TBP) that includes guidance on expectations for the evaluation and documentation of weapon response to potential accident environments and stimuli.

Deliverable: A published TBP.

A DNFSB staff member reviewed the draft TBP and provided comments to the NNSA on June 15, 2005. The TBP will be released prior to the end of Fiscal Year 2005 after incorporation of comments from the Standing Management Team.

4.3 Develop and Implement Controls

Commitment 4.3.4 - The purpose of this commitment is to validate implementation of the improved site-wide technical safety requirement (TSR) controls for onsite transportation of nuclear explosives.

Deliverable: The Department of Energy Readiness Assessment (RA) Report.

The Pantex Plant has made extensive progress toward implementation of TSR controls. At the July 13, 2005, DNFSB visit to the Pantex Plant, BWXT/Pantex briefed the status of all TSRs including those related to improved controls for onsite transportation. After BWXT/Pantex declares readiness, the Pantex Site Office will conduct a RA on all the TSRs and issue a final report.

Commitment 4.4.6 - The purpose of this commitment is to authorize startup of the B83 Seamless Safety for the Twenty-First Century (SS-21) process.

Deliverable: The B83 SS-21 startup authorization.

The B83 SS-21 Nuclear Explosive Safety Study (NESS) Report is in final concurrence and signature with the Assistant Deputy Administrator for Military Application and Stockpile Operations. Resolution of NESS pre-start findings will result in a Hazard Analysis Report (HAR) revision. The subsequent RA will occur after approval of the revised HAR. The projected startup authorization approval date is January 2006.

Commitment 4.5.1 - The NNSA will complete a comprehensive assessment of the actions taken in response to the Recommendation 98-2.

Deliverable: Final Assessment Report.

The final Assessment Report will be completed after the NNSA closure of the Recommendation 98-2 commitments summarized in Sections 4.2, 4.3, and 4.4 above.