

A.J. Eggenberger, Chairman  
Joseph F. Bader  
John E. Mansfield

# DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

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March 27, 2006

The Honorable Samuel W. Bodman  
Secretary of Energy  
1000 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, DC 20585-1000

Dear Secretary Bodman:

The Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board (Board) issued Recommendation 2000-2, *Configuration Management, Vital Safety Systems*, to improve and ensure the operability of vital safety systems. The Department of Energy's (DOE's) Implementation Plan for the Recommendation called for an initial assessment of the vital safety systems throughout the defense nuclear complex, followed by the development of a process to ensure that those assessments would be repeated periodically. The Implementation Plan also required the establishment at each site of qualified federal and contractor employees cognizant of the site's vital safety systems.

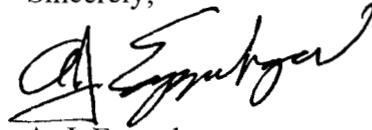
The Board believes that implementation of Recommendation 2000-2 is resulting in improved configuration management and reliability of vital safety systems at defense nuclear facilities. However, the Board continues to review progress toward completing institutionalization of the assessments of these systems, as well as the qualification and staffing of the federal safety system oversight and contractor systems engineer positions. Although all Implementation Plan commitments have been completed, the Board would like to validate certain aspects of DOE's vital safety system activities prior to closing the Recommendation.

Therefore, pursuant to 42 U.S.C. § 2286b(d), the Board requests to be informed of the following within 60 days of receipt of this letter:

- The current list of vital safety systems at each site, as well as the contractor systems engineer and federal safety system oversight personnel assigned to each system.
- The status of training, qualification, and staffing of federal safety system oversight personnel for vital safety systems at each site. For those sites that have completed the Safety System Oversight Final Assessment, submission of this assessment is acceptable if it represents the current status of the site.

- The activities performed to institutionalize the vital safety system assessments at each site, including the dates of the last assessment and the schedule for performing the next assessment for each vital safety system.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "A. J. Eggenberger". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "A" and "E".

A. J. Eggenberger  
Chairman

c: Mr. Mark B. Whitaker, Jr.