

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

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

625 Indiana Avenue, NW, Suite 700 Washington, D.C. 20004-2901
(202) 694-7000



February 1, 2007

Dr. Ines R. Triay
Chief Operating Officer for
Environmental Management
U.S. Department of Energy
1000 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20585-0113

Dear Dr. Triay:

The Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board (Board) acknowledges receipt of your letter of December 4, 2006, which transmitted a response for Commitment 3.11 of the Department of Energy's (DOE) Implementation Plan for the Board's Recommendation 2001-1, *High Level Waste Management at the Savannah River Site*. The submitted program evaluation reflects the current unmitigated impacts of the delay in initiating the deliquification, dissolution, and adjustment process and the improved understanding of tank waste characterization. The Board appreciates that a comprehensive analysis of the impacts could not be supported at the current time because several of the key assumptions have been in a state of flux during the last several months.

However, the recent resumption of processing at the Saltstone Facility and the completion of the Tank 48 Independent Technical Review reduce the uncertainty of some of the programmatic assumptions. Progress on these activities will allow detailed modeling in support of a revised Disposition Processing Plan (DPP) and an updated Lifecycle Liquid Waste Disposition System Plan (System Plan) in the first half of 2007. These planning documents reflect a more comprehensive evaluation of the high-level waste system at the site and demonstrate diligent management of tank space as envisioned in Recommendation 2001-1.

The Board considers your letter to be a good interim status of DOE's high level waste management at the Savannah River Site. Final analyses and assessment of DOE's efforts to respond to Commitment 3.11 by the Board requires the submittal of the revised DPP and the updated System Plan. If the release of the System Plan is delayed beyond the expected date of June 2007, please advise the Board by letter when the plan is expected to be issued.

Please contact me if you have any questions on this matter.

Sincerely,

A. J. Eggenberger
Chairman

c: Mr. Jeffrey M. Allison
Mr. Mark B. Whitaker, Jr.