



The Secretary of Energy
Washington, D.C. 20585

May 11, 2009

The Honorable A. J. Eggenberger
Chairman
Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board
625 Indiana Avenue, NW, Suite 700
Washington, DC 20004-2901

Dear Mr. Chairman:

Thank you for your March 23, 2009, letter in which you summarized the Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board's (DNFSB) views on the state of nuclear safety at the Department of Energy (DOE). You have raised a number of important operating issues facing the Department, such as integrating nuclear safety early in the design of defense nuclear facilities, the safety concerns associated with operations at our aging facilities, and your list of priority safety issues at specific sites. You have also raised a number of important institutional issues that the Department faces in its management of nuclear safety, including those associated with our Directives, the functions of DOE's Central Technical Authority, the capabilities of our technical staff, and DOE's implementation of recommendations for crosscutting safety improvements made by DNFSB.

The Department remains committed to the safety of our nuclear facilities and to drive continuous improvement through use of our Integrated Safety Management System approach. I am meeting with my nuclear safety staff on these and related issues. I look forward to meeting with you to discuss nuclear safety at a mutually convenient time.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Steven Chu".

Steven Chu

