

Joyce L. Connery, Chairman
Jessie H. Roberson, Vice Chairman
Sean Sullivan
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**DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES
SAFETY BOARD**

Washington, DC 20004-2901



February 26, 2016

The Honorable Ernest J. Moniz
Secretary of Energy
U.S. Department of Energy
1000 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20585-1000

Dear Secretary Moniz:

This letter revises the previously established annual reporting requirement regarding the Department of Energy's (DOE) Nuclear Criticality Safety Program. This reporting requirement included an annual report on criticality safety and a formal briefing to the Board to discuss the report. While this report has served as a valuable resource for information on complex-wide criticality safety issues, trends, and corrective actions, improvements can be made.

Consequently, our staff has collaborated with your staff to develop revised reporting criteria with the goal of improving DOE's criticality safety programs while minimizing the administrative burden associated with producing the report. Therefore, pursuant to 42 U.S.C. § 2286b(d), the annual reporting requirement established for closure of Recommendation 97-2, *Continuation of Criticality Safety at Defense Nuclear Facilities in the Department of Energy (DOE) Complex*, is modified to require an annual metrics table on criteria listed in the enclosure to this letter in lieu of a full report. We still desire an annual briefing and will communicate the requested briefing topics to your staff no later than 45 days prior to the briefing. Due to this modification, we extend the due date for the Fiscal Year 2015 annual metrics table and briefing to April 1, 2016.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Joyce L. Connery". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of the first and last names being capitalized and prominent.

Joyce L. Connery
Chairman

Enclosure

c: Mr. Joe Olencz

Enclosure

The Department of Energy (DOE) annual metrics table on criticality safety should include, at a minimum, the following items for each DOE site and major project:

- The number of criticality safety infractions in each severity level, per site specific criteria;
- The number of identified non-compliances with DOE Order 420.1, *Facility Safety*, and the American National Standards Institute/American Nuclear Society-8 series of criticality safety standards. Include the number of contractor-identified non-compliances and the number identified by external parties;
- The number of contractor and federal criticality safety assessments completed including the total number of findings and opportunities for improvement from these assessments;
- Current contractor and federal criticality safety staffing levels, including the average years of experience in criticality safety, number of qualified staff, number in training, number of staff lost, number of staff hired in the previous year;
- DOE's overall evaluation of the contractors' performance in the functional area of criticality safety, consistent with DOE Order 226.1B, *Implementation of Department of Energy Oversight Policy*.

The Board's staff will work with DOE's staff to provide an example template of the requested metrics table.