

Sean Sullivan, Chairman
Bruce Hamilton, Vice Chairman
Jessie H. Roberson
Daniel J. Santos
Joyce L. Connery

**DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES
SAFETY BOARD**

Washington, DC 20004-2901



December 13, 2017

The Honorable James Richard Perry
Secretary of Energy
U.S. Department of Energy
1000 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20585-1000

Dear Secretary Perry:

On September 26, 2017, the Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board (Board) closed Board Recommendation 2014-1, *Emergency Preparedness and Response*. In the Recommendation, the Board expressed concerns with: (1) the Department of Energy's (DOE) ineffective implementation and oversight of emergency preparedness and response requirements at defense nuclear facilities; and (2) the outdated baseline emergency management directive, DOE Order 151.1C, *Comprehensive Emergency Management System*.

The remaining deliverable in the DOE implementation plan is the development of a Criteria and Review Approach Document that aligns with the revised directive, DOE Order 151.1D, *Comprehensive Emergency Management System*. However, DOE has not standardized and improved implementation of its review approach, and it is our view that DOE has not succeeded in identifying and understanding deficiencies at its defense nuclear sites to ensure appropriate corrective actions are taken.

We are closing the current Recommendation because we have concluded that DOE's implementation plan will not adequately address the concerns raised in the Recommendation. A summary of the Board's concerns is enclosed.

Pursuant to 42 U.S.C. § 2286b(d), the Board requests that you provide the Board a briefing addressing the issues identified in the enclosure and DOE's assessment of the progress made to date to address Board Recommendation 2014-1, within 90 days of receipt of this letter.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sean Sullivan".

Sean Sullivan
Chairman

Enclosure

c: Mr. Joe Olencz

Summary of Board's concerns with DOE's response to Board Recommendation 2014-1

- DOE's implementation plan (IP) assigned the responsibility for all but one deliverable to DOE's Office of Emergency Operations (NA-40), which does not have authority to ensure implementation of the IP actions in the field at DOE's defense nuclear sites.
- DOE has not demonstrated the ability to consistently review and adequately identify deficiencies in its emergency preparedness and response programs across the complex nor ensure appropriate corrective actions are taken.
 - As stated in the enclosure to the Board's letter of February 8, 2016, regarding the first version of DOE's implementation plan, "The IP does not include how recurring program issues will be identified, critiqued through common cause analysis, and addressed by corrective actions."
 - The Board has not observed that DOE analyzed or leveraged information from the deficiency report produced under the IP to inform senior leaders about vulnerabilities in emergency preparedness and response. Therefore, the Board concludes that the report did not serve its intended purpose.
- In Recommendation 2014-1, the Board expressed concerns about the effectiveness of DOE's criteria and review approach in identifying deficiencies with emergency preparedness and response, conducting causal analysis, developing and implementing effective corrective actions to address these deficiencies, and evaluating the effectiveness of these actions. Contrary to its IP, DOE declared its corrective action procedures and risk-based oversight approach milestones as complete based on the sites' intentions to implement DOE's existing directives. The deficiencies identified by the Board developed and persisted under the existing directives; therefore, the Board has little confidence that this approach will address the deficiencies.
- The Board has observed some improvements in the field with respect to implementation of the requirements of DOE Order 151.1C, *Comprehensive Emergency Management System*. However, the improvements are not consistent across all the defense nuclear sites, so the Board concludes that Recommendation 2014-1 is not driving improvements in implementation at the sites. Without assistance from DOE headquarters, sites that struggled to implement the requirements of Order 151.1C will likely continue to struggle with implementing the improved requirements in Order 151.1D.