

Joyce L. Connery, Chair
Thomas A. Summers, Vice Chair
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**DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES
SAFETY BOARD**

Washington, DC 20004-2901



January 6, 2022

The Honorable Jennifer M. Granholm
Secretary of Energy
US Department of Energy
1000 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20585-1000

Dear Secretary Granholm:

This letter revises the previously established annual reporting requirement for the Department of Energy's (DOE) Nuclear Criticality Safety Program. The annual reporting requirement includes a report to the Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board (Board) on criticality safety performance metrics and a briefing to the Board.

The Board believes continued DOE focus on criticality safety is warranted. Based on review of recent DOE reports, the Board identified improvements to the annual report in the enclosure to this letter. The Board requests that DOE continue to brief the Board annually on the results of the annual report, and DOE's evaluation of criticality safety programs and issues across the complex.

Therefore, pursuant to 42 United States Code § 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 report on the criteria listed in the enclosure to this letter and an annual briefing to occur within 45 days after receiving the annual report. The Board requests that the briefing focus on results of the annual report, DOE's evaluation of criticality safety programs across the complex, and recent issues, corrective actions, and improvements. Due to this modification, we extend the due date for the Fiscal Year 2021 report to March 31, 2022, with all future reports due by the end of January.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Joyce L. Connery".

Joyce L. Connery
Chair

Enclosure

c: Mr. Joe Olencz

Enclosure

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

- The **number and a short description of criticality safety infractions** identified by each of the following: the contractor, DOE field office, and DOE headquarters;
- The **number and a short description 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 identified by each of the following: the contractor, DOE field office, and DOE headquarters;
- The **total number of criticality safety issues** in the issues management system for each of the following categories: open at the start of the year, added during the year, closed during the year, open for longer than six months, and open for longer than one year;
- **Contractor and federal criticality safety staffing levels**, including the number of qualified staff, average years of experience in criticality safety, the number of staff in training for initial qualification, and the number of vacancies. Also include for each the contractor and federal staff the numbers of staff hired and staff lost during the year; and
- A **summary of the health of the criticality safety program** as assessed by each DOE field office and DOE program office, 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 additional clarification as needed.