UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD
PUBLIC MEETING ON OVERSIGHT
WEDNESDAY
DECEMBER 3, 2003

The Board met in the Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board Hearing Room at 625 Indiana Avenue, N.W., Suite 300, Washington, D.C., at 9:00 a.m., John T. Conway, Chairman, presiding.

PRESENT

JOHN T. CONWAY Chairman
A.J. EGGENBERGER Vice Chairman
JOHN E. MANSFIELD Board Member
R. BRUCE MATTHEWS Board Member

STAFF PRESENT

RICHARD A. AZZARO General Counsel
JAMES J. McCONNELL Deputy Technical Director
KENNETH M. PUSATERI General Manager

ALSO PRESENT

DANIEL E. GLENN Manager, Pantex Site Office
MICHAEL B. MALLORY General Manager, BWXT Pantex, LLC
WILLIAM J. BRUMLY Manager, Y-12 Site Office
DENNIS R. RUDDY General Manager, BWXT Y-12, LLC
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CHAIRMAN CONWAY: The clock here on the wall says 9:00. The Congressional Record indicates that we begin at 9:00. And I don’t want to relegate or do anything wrong that the Congressional Record requires us to do.

My name is John Conway. I’m the Chairman of the Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board [DNFSB], and I will preside over the continuation of this meeting.

Today’s meeting and hearing were publicly noticed in Federal Register on November 12, 2003. The meeting in hearing are held open to the public in accordance with the provisions of the Government in the Sunshine Act.

Today’s meeting is an extension of the hearings held on September 10, October 21, and October 23rd and constitutes the fourth in a series during which the Board is examining the Department of Energy’s [DOE] current and proposed models of safety oversight and management of the contracts and contractors it relies upon to safely accomplish the mission assigned to DOE under the Atomic Energy Act of 1954, as amended. We will focus on DOE’s proposed new
initiatives and what impact, if any, they may have upon assuring adequate protection of the health and safety of the public and workers at DOE's defense nuclear facilities.

I welcome today's presenters, members of the public, members of the press in our audience, and those viewing our proceeding electronically.

I might say that when this Board was first set up by the Congress in its report from the Senate Armed Services Committee, the Board was mandated to take certain actions and do certain things. Among those, according to the report from the Senate Armed Services Committee, the Board is expected: to raise the technical expertise of the Department substantially; to assist and monitor the continued development of DOE's internal ES&H [Environment, Safety and Health] organization, and; to provide independent advice to the Secretary. Above all, the Board should be instrumental in restoring public confidence in DOE's management capabilities; a clear prerequisite for the continued production of the nuclear material vital to the nation's security.

They went on to say, "The basic goals in establishing an independent safety oversight board are to assure and enhance" -- and I stress that word --
"and enhance the safety of operations of DOE's nuclear facilities and to restore public confidence that these facilities are operated without undue risk to public health and safety."

These hearings are in accordance with that mandate from the Congress, and we are holding these public hearings in order to ensure the public that we are doing our job, and that the DOE is moving ahead and doing its job in a safe manner. So that is part of the reasons we are holding this series of hearings.

Dr. Eggenberger?

VICE CHAIRMAN EGGENBERGER: I have no questions at this time. When the first witness appears, I have an extensive line of questioning.

CHAIRMAN CONWAY: Okay. Dr. Mansfield?

DR. MANSFIELD: Nothing at this time.

CHAIRMAN CONWAY: Dr. Matthews?

DR. MATTHEWS: Just a quick comment.

First of all, thanks to our colleagues from Pantex and Y-12 for coming today.

But I just want to state my overarching issue, which in my mind is the balance between safety and productivity and how much safety oversight is really needed to accomplish the mission efficiently and safely that we all have to -- that you work on.