**Department of Energy**
**National Nuclear Security Administration**
Washington, DC 20585

FEB 13 2004

The Honorable John T. Conway
Chairman
Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board
625 Indiana Avenue, N.W.
Suite 700
Washington, D.C. 20004

Dear Mr. Chairman:

In your letter of August 7, 2003, closing Recommendation 97-2, *Criticality Safety*, you established an annual reporting requirement. The report for Calendar Year 2003 is enclosed.

Overall, actions taken in response to Recommendation 97-2, DNFSB/TECH-29 (*Criticality Safety at Defense Nuclear Facilities)*, and your letter of July 20, 2001, have been effective and substantially improved the Department's criticality safety infrastructure and operational programs. Funding has been stabilized and the Nuclear Criticality Safety Program (NCSP) has been organized to maintain capability while addressing the most pressing operational criticality safety needs. Both the Los Alamos Critical Experiments Facility and the Oak Ridge Electron Linear Accelerator are recognized as important contributors to the NCSP and are being supported. Training and qualification programs have been established and are functioning. Pertinent criticality safety information is readily available on web sites supported by the NCSP, and feedback from the criticality safety community is being used to plan program work. Through implementation of the NCSP, a viable process for assessing needs and enhancing criticality safety has been institutionalized.

If you have any questions, please contact me directly, or have your staff contact Michael Thompson at 301-903-5648.

Sincerely,

David H. Crandall
Assistant Deputy Administrator
for Research, Development, and Simulation
Defense Programs

Enclosure

cc (w/encl):
M. Whitaker, DR-1
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