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# DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

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April 21, 2009

The Honorable Steven Chu  
Secretary of Energy  
U. S. Department of Energy  
1000 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, DC 20585-1000

Dear Secretary Chu:

The Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board (Board) issued Recommendation 2004-2, *Active Confinement Systems*, on December 7, 2004. The focus of this Recommendation is to ensure adequate structures, systems, and components are built-in and maintained at defense nuclear facilities to contain or confine radioactive material. The Department of Energy (DOE) accepted the Recommendation on March 18, 2005, acknowledging that active confinement ventilation systems provide added safety benefits and are normally the preferred alternative when confinement of radioactive materials is necessary for protection of the public or collocated workers in case of an abnormal event or accident. The original Implementation Plan for the Recommendation submitted on August 22, 2005, was revised on July 12, 2006, to provide more realistic completion dates for the plan's deliverables. DOE made some progress on meeting its commitments when implementation of the Recommendation began. Work on these important activities has now stagnated. Consequently, DOE is more than 2 years late in meeting several of its commitments and is prolonging implementation of needed safety enhancements. The enclosure lists overdue commitments and describes deviations to DOE's *Ventilation System Evaluation Guidance*.

Therefore, pursuant to 42 U.S.C. § 2286b(d), the Board requests that DOE provide a report within 60 days of receipt of this letter describing the actions to be taken to complete the delinquent deliverables and remediate deviations from DOE's *Ventilation System Evaluation Guidance* developed in accordance with the Implementation Plan.

Sincerely,

A. J. Eggenberger  
Chairman

Enclosure

c: The Honorable Thomas P. D'Agostino  
Dr. Inés R. Triay  
Mr. Glenn S. Podonsky  
Mr. Mark B. Whitaker, Jr.