

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

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October 15, 2009

The Honorable Thomas P. D'Agostino
Administrator
National Nuclear Security Administration
U.S. Department of Energy
1000 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20585-0701

Dear Mr. D'Agostino:

Development and implementation of nuclear and nuclear explosive operating procedures at the Pantex Plant are closely monitored by the Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board (Board). The Board recognizes that improvements have been made since the Board's letter of April 24, 2007 on this subject, and acknowledges the sustained effort necessary to realize continuing improvements.

The enclosure to this letter summarizes observations identified by the Board's staff during recent reviews of technical procedures at the Pantex Plant.

Consistent with the Board's continuing interest in this important subject, and pursuant to 42 U.S.C. § 2286b(d), the Board requests a detailed briefing during the Board's next visit to the Pantex Plant on any actions taken or planned to strengthen processes used to develop and implement technical procedures, and the schedule for implementing them, at the Pantex Plant.

Sincerely,

John E. Mansfield, Ph.D.
Vice Chairman

Enclosure

c: Mr. Steven C. Erhart
Mr. Mark B. Whitaker, Jr.