

John T. Conway, Chairman
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DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

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October 1, 2001

The Honorable Spencer Abraham
Secretary of Energy
1000 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20585-1000

Dear Secretary Abraham:

The Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board (Board) received your letter of September 14, 2001, transmitting the revised Implementation Plan for the Board's Recommendation 2001-1, *High-Level Waste Management at the Savannah River Site*.

The Board has reviewed the implementation plan and finds it to be responsive to Recommendation 2001-1 and consistent with the guidance provided in our letter of May 24, 2001. The Board agrees that commitments and schedules for the design, construction, and operation of a salt processing facility are best deferred until additional information becomes available. Additionally, the Board is encouraged to learn that the Department of Energy Savannah River Operations Office (DOE-SR) is pursuing new options to dispose of lower activity salt solutions on a significantly accelerated timetable.

Our staff will continue to stay in close contact with representatives of DOE-SR and the Office of Environmental Management to follow the progress in implementing Recommendation 2001-1.

Sincerely,


John T. Conway
Chairman

c: The Honorable Jessie Hill Roberson
Mr. Mark B. Whitaker, Jr.
Mr. Greg Rudy