

John T. Conway, Chairman
A.J. Eggenberger, Vice Chairman
John E. Mansfield
R. Bruce Matthews

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

625 Indiana Avenue, NW, Suite 700, Washington, D.C. 20004-2901
(202) 694-7000



December 1, 2003

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) was directed by Congress to conduct a study of the adequacy of the K-Area Materials Storage (KAMS) facility and related support facilities such as Building 235-F at the Savannah River Site, Aiken, South Carolina, for the storage of defense plutonium and defense plutonium materials. This report was mandated by Congress in Section 3183 of the Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2003, Public Law 107-314. Section 3183 directed that this study be provided both to Congress and to the Secretary of Energy. Our report on this matter is enclosed for your consideration.

The Board concludes that plutonium can be stored safely in the KAMS facility as currently configured for a limited period of time. For extended storage, the Board believes that certain safety enhancements described in the enclosed report should be provided. The Board further concludes that the Department of Energy should expedite decisions on disposal of excess plutonium, and should re-evaluate its plutonium storage plan to determine if there are better options (such as a new plutonium storage facility) for extended storage of plutonium materials at the Savannah River Site.

The Board appreciates the support provided by the Savannah River Site to members of our staff as they conducted on-site reviews as part of this study.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John T. Conway".

John T. Conway
Chairman

Enclosure