Department of Energy
National Nuclear Security Administration
Washington, DC 20585

August 11, 2003

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

Dear Mr. Chairman:

The purpose of this letter is to provide you the deliverable for the Commitment 4.2.1 and 4.3.1 in the Implementation Plan for Defense Nuclear Facility Safety Board Recommendation 2002-2, "U.S. Department of Energy Plan to Address and Resolve Weapons Laboratory Support of Defense Nuclear Complex."

Deliverable 4.2.1 in the implementation plan was for the National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) to request the national laboratories to review and revise, if necessary, their existing processes for selection criteria, training and mentoring, and succession planning for weapons points of contact. Deliverable 4.3.1 was for the NNSA to request the national laboratories to provide a document describing the roles, responsibilities, and authorities of the weapons points of contact. Both of these commitments are addressed in the enclosed letters to the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, Los Alamos National Laboratory, and Sandia National Laboratories.

If you have questions, please call me at 202-586-1730.

Sincerely,

M. Schoenbauer
Director
Office of Nuclear Weapons Stockpile
Defense Programs

3 Enclosures

cc:
M. Whitaker, DR-1

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Department of Energy
National Nuclear Security Administration
Washington, DC 20585

AUG 1 1 2003

OFFICE OF THE ADMINISTRATOR

Dr. C. Paul Robinson
President and Laboratories Director
Sandia National Laboratories
P.O. Box 5800
Mail Stop 0101
Albuquerque, New Mexico 87185-0101

Dear Dr. Robinson:

The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) places a significant emphasis on the role of the nuclear weapons program at the national laboratories. Recently, the Secretary has reiterated his commitment to the priority of weapons work at the national laboratories. The Secretary also stressed the importance of ensuring the availability of quality personnel supporting the weapons work. This is consistent with the first recommendation from the Chiles Commission Report to the Congress and DOE, that the Administration and Congress should make a concerted and continuing effort to convey to the nuclear weapons community that their mission is vital to the security of the Nation and will remain vital well beyond the planning horizons normally associated with programmatic decisions. The DOE has also committed to revising outdated policy, i.e., DOE Order 5600.1, "Management of the Department of Energy Weapon Program and Weapon Complex," on our weapons work this calendar year.

The National Nuclear Security Administration believes it is imperative that senior technically competent individuals are assigned as the single point of contact for each weapon system and that the laboratories must persevere in their training, mentoring, and succession planning for those individuals to ensure that an adequate pool of personnel exists when retirements and attrition occur. We recommend that these positions be included in your respective critical skills maintenance programs. Additionally, it is important for the laboratories to review and revise, if necessary, the processes describing the roles, responsibilities, and authorities of the weapons points of contact for effectiveness and continuous improvement.

First, I am requesting that you ensure that the selection criteria, training and mentoring, and succession planning processes are in place for the weapons points of contact and review these processes for continuous improvement. I am requesting you to respond by October 31, 2003, with a letter certifying that processes exist for the selection, training and mentoring, and succession planning for weapons points of contact and describe plans for improvement, if necessary. Specifically, for selection criteria, training and mentoring,

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you should ensure you have a program that identifies the skills necessary for a weapons point of contact to be selected and conduct his or her job; describe the vehicle by which the more experienced personnel transfer knowledge gained to an aspiring weapons point of contact; and identify a measurement of how the knowledge is effectively transferred by a periodic evaluation. Concerning succession planning, your process should identify the requisite job experience for the weapons point of contact; identify how career paths are established; describe any programs, incentives, and/or recruitment activities; and describe how this process will develop the needed expertise and yield a qualified pool of individuals for ensuring work on the enduring stockpile.

Secondly, I am requesting you to provide a deliverable by December 31, 2003, that describes basic qualifications and detailed roles, responsibilities, and authorities of the weapons points of contact; describes the organization/systems in place for providing point of contact resources, empowerment, resolution of emergent safety issues, and how prioritization is accomplished; describes the process of communicating point of contact roles and responsibilities within the laboratories; and describes plans for improvement, if necessary. The deliverable should demonstrate that your system results in clear and concise communication processes for the weapons point of contact, that the weapons points of contact should be empowered to integrate and coordinate for the laboratory all information needed to respond to questions concerning the system under his purview, and to provide technical support required by the defense nuclear complex with regard to the system. Additionally, the weapons points of contact must have technical and programmatic responsibility for that weapon, must be empowered to allocate and prioritize resources to ensure safe operations, have direct access to management authority to acquire the necessary support, and arbitrate and resolve issues pertaining to his or her weapons system or overarching issue to preclude schedule slippages on nuclear weapons program work.

I will ask Dr. Everet Beckner, Deputy Administrator for Defense Programs, to evaluate your responses to ensure that we achieve our objectives regarding these critical functions and positions.

Any questions may be directed to Dr. Beckner, 202-586-2179, or Mr. Marty Schoenbauer, 202-586-7130.

Sincerely,

Linton Brooks
Administrator

Department of Energy
National Nuclear Security Administration
Washington, DC 20585

AUG 1 1 2003

OFFICE OF THE ADMINISTRATOR

Dr. Michael R. Anastasio
Director
Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory
7000 East Avenue
Mail Stop L01
Livermore, California 94550

Dear Dr. Anastasio:

The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) places a significant emphasis on the role of the nuclear weapons program at the national laboratories. Recently, the Secretary has reiterated his commitment to the priority of weapons work at the national laboratories. The Secretary also stressed the importance of ensuring the availability of quality personnel supporting the weapons work. This is consistent with the first recommendation from the Chiles Commission Report to the Congress and DOE, that the Administration and Congress should make a concerted and continuing effort to convey to the nuclear weapons community that their mission is vital to the security of the Nation and will remain vital well beyond the planning horizons normally associated with programmatic decisions. The DOE has also committed to revising outdated policy, i.e., DOE Order 5600.1, "Management of the Department of Energy Weapon Program and Weapon Complex," on our weapons work this calendar year.

The National Nuclear Security Administration believes it is imperative that senior technically competent individuals are assigned as the single point of contact for each weapon system and that the laboratories must persevere in their training, mentoring, and succession planning for those individuals to ensure that an adequate pool of personnel exists when retirements and attrition occur. We recommend that these positions be included in your respective critical skills maintenance programs. Additionally, it is important for the laboratories to review and revise, if necessary, the processes describing the roles, responsibilities, and authorities of the weapons points of contact for effectiveness and continuous improvement.

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Sincerely,

Linton Brooks
Administrator

Department of Energy
National Nuclear Security Administration
Washington, DC 20585

AUG 1 1 2003

OFFICE OF THE ADMINISTRATOR

Dr. G. Peter Nanos
Director
Los Alamos National Laboratory
P.O. Box 1663
Mail Stop A100
Los Alamos, New Mexico 87545

Dear Dr. Nanos:

The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) places a significant emphasis on the role of the nuclear weapons program at the national laboratories. Recently, the Secretary has reiterated his commitment to the priority of weapons work at the national laboratories. The Secretary also stressed the importance of ensuring the availability of quality personnel supporting the weapons work. This is consistent with the first recommendation from the Chiles Commission Report to the Congress and DOE, that the Administration and Congress should make a concerted and continuing effort to convey to the nuclear weapons community that their mission is vital to the security of the Nation and will remain vital well beyond the planning horizons normally associated with programmatic decisions. The DOE has committed to revising outdated policy, i.e., DOE Order 5600.1, "Management of the Department of Energy Weapon Program and Weapon Complex," on our weapons work this calendar year.

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