Department of Energy
National Nuclear Security Administration
Washington, DC 20585

June 24, 2004

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 notify the Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board (DNFSB) of the authorized startup of the W78 Seamless Safety for the 21st Century (SS-21) process as required by Commitment 4.4.5 to the DNFSB Recommendation 98-2, "Accelerating Safety Management Improvements at the Pantex Plant."

The W78 bay startup was authorized June 10, 2004, and the cell was authorized on June 21, 2004, for single-unit operations. All pre-starts on the nuclear explosive safety study and readiness assessment have been closed. Appropriate authorization basis changes were made and approved. A revision has been made to the Master Authorization Agreement. Authorized startup of the W78 SS-21 process completes Commitment 4.4.5.

If you have questions, please call me at 202-586-4879 or have your staff contact Ms. Debra Volk at 505-845-5106.

Sincerely,

David E. Beck
Assistant Deputy Administrator
for Military Application and
Stockpile Operations
Defense Programs

cc:
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