



Department of Energy
National Nuclear Security Administration
Washington, DC 20585

February 14, 2008

OFFICE OF THE ADMINISTRATOR

The Honorable A. J. Eggenberger
Chairman
Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board
625 Indiana Avenue, NW
Suite 700
Washington, DC 20004-2901

Dear Mr. Chairman:

This letter reports on the implementation of the Department of Energy (DOE) operating experience (OPEX) program for the National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) as specified in Commitment 19 of the DOE's Implementation Plan, Revision 2, October 2006, for Recommendation 2004-1, *Oversight of Complex, High-Hazard Nuclear Operations*.

NNSA has focused specifically on developing a more robust NNSA Corporate OPEX program as outlined in DOE Order 210.2, *DOE Corporate Operating Experience Program*. This includes integrating work performed in several areas of implementation including within the Integrated Safety Management (ISM) Core Function "Feedback and Improvement." The status of NNSA's OPEX implementation activities is enclosed for your information.

We have made progress in developing and assessing our lessons learned program. Sites were surveyed about what areas were working well with the OPEX program, and what areas needed additional support and/or improvement. Based on this feedback, NNSA further defined its expectations in a memorandum sent to the line managers.

The OPEX implementation survey shows that all sites implemented the program, but they are at different stages of formalizing their processes. The site offices now rely heavily on the contractor programs and, for the most part, have not fully developed a Federal lessons learned program.

Our plan for providing line oversight of the implementation of DOE Order 210.2 in FY 2008 is as follows:

1. Develop an NNSA Criteria, Review, and Approach Document (CRAD) that aligns with DOE Order 210.2 expectations, recently issued, to help ensure effective and consistent assessment of the implementation of the OPEX among the different sites.

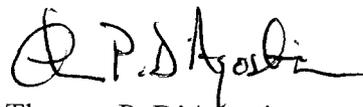


2. Clearly define NNSA organizational responsibilities for DOE Order 210.2 in the revised Safety Management Function, Responsibilities and Authorities Manual to be issued in late February 2008.
3. Direct NNSA site offices to perform self-assessments of their implementation of OPEX, as well as, assessments of their contractors OPEX programs using the developed CRAD. These assessments may be separate or part of another larger scope assessment, but shall be compatible with the developed CRAD, to start in Spring 2008, completed by December 31, 2008.
4. NNSA Headquarters will conduct OPEX line oversight assessments for at least two sites starting in the Spring 2008, and will review the field's self-assessment results of all NNSA sites in order to comprehensively evaluate NNSA complex-wide implementation effectiveness and prioritize future assessments.

We will provide an annual report summarizing the results of this comprehensive OPEX line oversight to your staff by December 31, 2008.

If you have questions, please contact me at (202) 586-5555 or Frank Russo at (202) 586-8883.

Sincerely,



Thomas P. D'Agostino
Administrator

Enclosure

cc: M. Whitaker, HS-1.1