



Department of Energy
Under Secretary for Nuclear Security
Administrator, National Nuclear Security Administration
Washington, DC 20585



September 25, 2023

The Honorable Joyce L. Connery
Chair, Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board
625 Indiana Avenue NW, Suite 700
Washington, DC 20004

Dear Chair Connery:

This letter is provided on behalf of the Secretary in response to your August 3, 2023, letter expressing concern about the design of the Savannah River Plutonium Processing Facility (SRPPF). In your letter, the Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board (DNFSB or Board) identified safety concerns related to protecting facility workers and the control designation currently proposed by the project.

The National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) is committed to providing reasonable assurance of adequate protection of the workers, the public, and the environment. NNSA understands the concerns identified in your letter. NNSA's Associate Administrator for Environment, Safety and Health previously directed a review of the SRPPF safety basis, focused on hazard analysis and control derivation with participation from multiple Department of Energy (DOE) program and staff offices. This review, in part, addressed the issues that are the subject of the DNFSB's reporting requirement. The final report is complete as was shared with the DNFSB.

NNSA is actively addressing the DNFSB's concerns and formulating a position and path forward regarding the safety strategy and safety designation of the gloveboxes. NNSA will further respond to your request when a path forward has been determined.

We appreciate DNFSB observations and will continue to keep the Board and DNFSB staff informed. If you have any questions, please contact Mr. Ahmad Al-Daouk, Associate Administrator for Environment, Safety, and Health, at (505) 845-4607.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jill Hruby".

Jill Hruby