



Department of Energy
National Nuclear Security Administration
Washington, DC 20585



November 29, 2005

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 memorandum provides updated information on the Nuclear Explosive Safety Top-Down Review and a revised schedule for issuing nuclear explosive safety directives.

The Top-Down Review is complete and the final report was issued on October 18, 2005. After vetting the report and a briefing through NNSA leadership, NNSA will deliver the report and present the briefing to the Board at the Board's convenience. The results of the Top-Down Review will be reflected in appropriate changes to NNSA organizations, NES directives, NES standards, and/or site and contractor implementing procedures. We intend to decide on the necessary changes and implement them in 2006.

DOE Order 452.1C, *Nuclear Explosive and Weapon Surety Program*, was approved by the Secretary on September 26, 2005, and is posted on the Departmental Directives Website.

DOE Order 452.2C, *Safety of Nuclear Explosive Operations*, is in the formal REVCOM (review and comment) process. Review and comment began on September 26, 2005, and closed on October 19, 2005. We are reviewing and responding to over 170 comments from Headquarters, the field, and your staff. Once we have stakeholder agreement, a final draft will be made available to your staff and the rest of the NES community. Completing this review, working with technical editors, and publishing the orders will take time. Our target date for publication is May 26, 2006.

Our target date for DOE-STD-3016, *Hazard Analysis Reports for Nuclear Explosive Operations*, has slipped to May 26, 2006. This effort has proven to be more challenging and time consuming than estimated. We are presently working with the Pantex Site Office and the weapon design laboratories to better characterize the process for the generation of weapon response information. We believe this will allow us to better articulate the related requirements in the new standard.

If you or your staff need additional information, please contact Mr. Chuck Westfall, at (301) 903-4051 or by email at Chuck.Westfall@nnsa.doe.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Xavier Ascanio". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "X".

Xavier Ascanio
Acting Assistant Deputy Administrator
for Military Application
and Stockpile Operations
Defense Programs

cc:
M. Whitaker, DR-1
M. Schoenbauer, NA-10