

**Department of Energy**

Washington, DC 20585

January 21, 2003

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DNF SAFETY BOARD

The Honorable John T. Conway
Chairman
Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board
625 Indiana Avenue, NW, Suite 700
Washington, DC 20004-2901

Dear Mr. Chairman:

The Department has completed the preparation of Tank 37 as a receipt tank for the Savannah River Site's 3H Evaporator as outlined in Commitment 3.7 of the Implementation Plan for Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board's Recommendation 2001-1. All physical modifications and tie-ins have been completed and sufficient space has been made available to sustain 3H operations. Actual use of Tank 37 as a receipt tank for the 3H evaporator occurred on January 11, 2003.

The initial transfer of low curie salt to the Saltstone facility (Commitment 2.9 of the 2001-1 Implementation Plan) was not met by the December 31, 2002 due date. Saltstone startup problems, the discovery of excessive solids in the bottom of Tank 50, and delays in facility permit modifications contributed to not meeting this commitment. Saltstone operational problems have been resolved; however, disposition of the Tank 50 solids issue and receipt of permit modifications are not expected until mid-2003.

In addition, 2001-1 Implementation Plan Commitment 3.4 (Return Tank 50 to Service by March 31, 2003) will likely be missed due to the excessive solids in Tank 50. As a result of the current uncertainty surrounding the Tank 50 solids and permitting activities, the Department proposes to provide new expected completion dates for Commitments 2.9 and 3.4 by June 2003.

Questions you or your staff may have concerning these issues may be directed to Jeff Allison at 803-725-2405 or me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Paul M. Golan".

Paul M. Golan
Chief Operating Officer
Office of Environmental Management

cc: Mark Whitaker, S-3.1

