

Peter S. Winokur, Chairman
Jessie H. Roberson, Vice Chairman
John E. Mansfield
Joseph F. Bader
Larry W. Brown

**DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES
SAFETY BOARD**

Washington, DC 20004-2901



January 28, 2011

The Honorable Steven Chu
Secretary of Energy
U. S. Department of Energy
1000 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20585-1000

Dear Secretary Chu:

The Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board (Board) has received your letter of November 24, 2010, transmitting the revised Implementation Plan for the Board's Recommendation 2001-1, *High-Level Waste Management at the Savannah River Site*. The Board accepts this Implementation Plan.

The Board reviewed the Implementation Plan and finds it to be responsive to Recommendation 2001-1 and consistent with the guidance provided in the Board's letter of May 27, 2010. However, the Board remains concerned about changes in strategy and several delays that may adversely impact the high-level waste system at the Savannah River Site. Some of these delays have slowed the treatment of salt wastes and forced the Department of Energy (DOE) to incur additional risk by extending the use of older-style tanks that are not compliant with modern standards. The Board urges DOE to pursue additional measures to mitigate the impacts of these delays and associated risks at the tank farms.

The Board's staff plans to carefully track the efforts of DOE and its contractor to meet the interim commitments included in the revised Implementation Plan. The staff will continue to stay in close contact with representatives of the DOE Savannah River Operations Office and the Office of Environmental Management to ensure safe and timely implementation of Recommendation 2001-1.

Sincerely,

Peter S. Winokur, Ph.D.
Chairman

c: The Honorable Inés R. Triay
Dr. David C. Moody
Mrs. Mari-Jo Campagnone