Energy Communities Alliance (ECA) Comments on Board Recommendation 2019-2
Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board
Public Meeting
October 28, 2019

As noted by the SRS Community Reuse Organization set forth in Attachment A, DOE and NNSA should operate the SRS Tritium Facilities with adequate protection of the public’s health and safety. DOE/NNSA should continue its approach to safety at SRS and improve it as needed if deficiencies arise.

ECA also wants to remind DOE/NNSA and DNFSB, DNFSB plays a critical role in oversight of DOE’s defense nuclear facilities and activities. ECA continues to be concerned about DOE’s unilateral change in the process for DOE/NNSA to work cooperatively with DNFSB. We urge the Department and the Board to establish an agreement that clarifies how they will work together. ECA continues to stress that the absence of an agreement can lead to unresolved and unreported safety issues at DOE/NNSA sites – something that no one wants to see at the sites.

Energy Communities Alliance (ECA) is a non-profit membership organization of local governments adjacent to or affected by U.S. Department of Energy activities. The mission of ECA is to bring together local government officials to share information, establish policy positions, and promote community interests to address an increasingly complex set of constituent, environmental, regulatory, and economic development needs. Additional information is available at www.energyca.org.
The SRSCRO is a non-profit community organization representing five counties in Georgia and South Carolina and an active member of the Energy Communities Alliance (ECA). Their counties surround the Department of Energy’s Savannah River Site. The SRSCRO’s primary mission is to support economic development efforts and job creation … to promote new missions for the Savannah River Site ... And to also serve as a unified voice for the region.

As a community, they are proud of the impressive safety record compiled by one of their region’s largest employers. SRS is one of the safest sites in the DOE complex and one of the safest major industrial sites in the world. The SRS outstanding safety performance has not gone unnoticed.

Both Site Contractors, Savannah River Remediation and Savannah River Nuclear Solution have received numerous safety awards from the National Safety Council, the South Carolina Manufacturers Alliance, and the South Carolina Labor, Licensing, and Review Board, to name a few. In addition, Savannah River National Laboratory is considered the safest national lab in the complex.

SRS has been recognized as the nation’s center of excellence for tritium, and it is the only place in the United States where tritium production now occurs. SRS’s tritium facilities have a proud tradition of excellence and exacting perfection. In more than 50 years of operations, they have never missed a shipment to DoD.

In their view as a nuclear community, SRSCRO believes NNSA management and its contractors are committed to protecting workers, the public and the environment as well as our national security interests. The state of emergency preparedness and safety at SRS is not an issue they worry about and they support the job NNSA is doing.

They appreciate the role the Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board provides in technical safety oversight of the DOE’s defense nuclear facilities and activities. However, it appears to them that the DOE/NNSA does operate the SRS Tritium Facilities with an adequate existing conservative safety philosophy and provides adequate protection of the public’s health and safety from a community perspective. The Community fully expects DOE/NNSA to continue this practice and enhance and expand it as needed when they find any deficiencies that need correcting.