

Rocky Flats Citizens Advisory Board Recommendation 97-15

Regarding Safeguards and Security Issues

Approved December 4, 1997

December 5, 1997

The Honorable Wayne Allard
7340 East Caley, Suite 215
Englewood, CO 80111

The Honorable Ben Nighthorse Campbell
19 Old Town Square, Suite 238 #42
Fort Collins, CO 80524

The Honorable David Skaggs
9101 Harlan Street, Suite 130
Westminster, CO 80030

The Honorable Diana DeGette
1400 Glenarm Place, Suite 202
Denver, CO 80202

The Honorable Bob Schaffer
Madison and Main Building
801 8th Street, Suite 220E
Greeley, CO 80631

The Honorable Dan Schaefer
3615 South Huron, Suite 101
Englewood, CO 80110

The Honorable Edward Markey
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Joe Barton
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Ron Klink
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Tom Bliley
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable John Dingell
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Ralph M. Hall
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Federico Peña
Secretary of Energy
1000 Independence Avenue
SW
Washington, DC 20585

Ms. Jessie Roberson
Manager, DOE-RFFO
P.O. Box 928
Golden, CO 80402-0928

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen:

The members of the Rocky Flats Citizens Advisory Board (RFCAB) have been closely monitoring safeguards and security concerns at Rocky Flats. We continue to notice a lack of coordination for safeguards and security oversight between the Rocky Flats Field Office and DOE-Headquarters. Over the past six months, we have received several conflicting reports on the status of security and safeguards at the site. Rocky Flats has been rated from satisfactory to marginal depending on whether the review was conducted by DOE-RFFO personnel or DOE-HQ review teams.

Various news reports including recent reports by CBS Evening News and USA Today have raised serious concerns for security and safeguard issues. The members of RFCAB would like to provide some recommendations relating to these issues to both Congressional members as well as the Department of Energy.

Recommendations

1. RFCAB highly recommends and supports Representative Edward Markey's request (letter November 25, 1997) that the Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations conduct hearings regarding the safety and security of nuclear materials at Department of Energy facilities. We believe that a Congressional inquiry into the safeguards and security issues is the only way to obtain a review that is independent of DOE. We further recommend that DOE-Rocky Flats Field Office staff be called to testify before Congress as to the nature of the deficiencies.
2. We recommend that the Department of Energy develop a coordinated framework for safeguards and security oversight and review that includes a single and consistent set of standards.
3. Secretary Peña has announced the formation of a new Security Oversight Board to investigate safeguards and security matters. We are concerned that this Board will not be independent of DOE. We recommend that an independent, third party oversight body be established to oversee safeguards and security matters for Rocky Flats and the rest of the weapons complex.
4. RFCAB recommends that DOE and Congress consider the future role the Nuclear Regulatory Commission might play in the oversight of safeguards and security issues. We recommend that consideration be given to allowing the NRC statutory authority to regulate nuclear safety at DOE

facilities.

Thank you for your consideration of this matter. We look forward to your earliest response to our recommendations and concerns.

Sincerely,

Tom Marshall
Chair

The Rocky Flats Citizens Advisory Board is a community advisory group that reviews and provides recommendations on cleanup plans for Rocky Flats, a former nuclear weapons plant outside of Denver, Colorado.

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