

## DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

March 29, 2024

**TO:** Timothy J. Dwyer, Technical Director  
**FROM:** A. Holloway and C. Stott, Resident Inspectors  
**SUBJECT:** Pantex Plant Activity Report for Week Ending March 29, 2024

**Conduct of Operations:** Last week, CNS production technicians discovered that they had used an incorrect revision of a procedure during nuclear explosive assembly operations. Prior to initiating work on two separate occasions, while performing pre-operational checks, the production technicians did not notice that a new revision of the procedure had been published. However, the technicians discovered the error before performing any steps that were changed in the current revision. During the event investigation, the production section manager noted that not all technicians had been trained on a new digital program feature that color codes the revision number to indicate the revision status. CNS operations management informed the resident inspectors that they will brief all current technicians on this new feature. Additionally, CNS operations personnel will notify the training department when issuing operational enhancements to ensure new technicians receive the most up-to-date information. CNS operations management are also pursuing a more permanent change that will require production technicians to scan each procedure's barcode before use to verify the correct revision.

**Technical Safety Requirements:** This week, CNS declared a technical safety requirement violation for not having a qualified Emergency Services Dispatcher on duty at all times to monitor and respond to the fire alarm receiving system. During this particular shift, CNS scheduled two dispatchers, but one became ill and was unable to continue to staff the position. The other qualified individual continuously stood watch with the exception of a three-minute break that was covered by another individual who was presumed to be actively qualified. Subsequently, CNS discovered that the interim individual lacked complete training documentation for fulfilling the dispatcher role. The resident inspectors note that during the short lapse of coverage, there were no conditions that required the dispatcher to take action. In response, CNS plans to conduct an event investigation to determine corrective actions.

**Facility Appurtenances:** This week, while lowering the hook of the manual chain hoist during operations within a nuclear explosive cell, CNS technicians observed a metal data plate fall from the hoist to the ground. CNS paused operations in the facility and performed walkdowns of similar facilities to determine the extent of condition. CNS engineering personnel published an evaluation to resume operations in the affected facility. Additionally, CNS plans to replace other metal data plate fasteners in other facilities found during the extent of condition walkdowns with more robust hardware.

**Nuclear Explosive Safety:** CNS declared a nuclear explosive safety violation due to the presence of unanalyzed equipment—i.e., a personal medical device—within a nuclear explosive facility. A portion of the device—the sensor—had been properly evaluated and approved in October 2023. CNS discovered that the medical device had an additional receiver component, which had not been evaluated or approved for use in the presence of a nuclear explosive. Subsequently, CNS removed the employee and unapproved device from the material access area and instructed the employee to request an additional medical device review.