

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

MEMO TO: J. Kent Fortenberry, Technical Director
FROM: Timothy Hunt and Dave Kupferer, Pantex Site Representatives
DATE: 13 April 2007
SUBJECT: Pantex Plant Weekly Report

DNFSB Activity: Staff member M. Duncan was onsite this week to observe the first week of Phase II (assembly and satellite operations) of the W76-1 Nuclear Explosive Safety Study.

Mobile Permissive Action Link (PAL) Operations: Currently, all PAL operations are performed in a specific facility. This summer, BWXT is planning to implement a mobile system that will be used to perform these operations in any facility that a nuclear explosive is located. The two primary benefits to implementing the mobile PAL system are being able to perform other nuclear operations in the facility that PAL operations are currently being performed and reducing the frequency of on-site nuclear explosive movements between facilities. BWXT is also planning to upgrade the equipment used during PAL operations. The proposed system is called the Code Management System (CMS) and includes new hardware, software, and testers. A Nuclear Explosive Safety Study will be required prior to authorizing the CMS, which is currently scheduled for early CY2008.

12-44 Cells 2, 3, and 4: During the week of March 26th, NNSA conducted a readiness assessment to validate the operational readiness of 12-44 Cells 2, 3, and 4. The review focused on assessing the recent facility and equipment upgrades, including associated documentation such as the safety basis and maintenance procedures. The review team identified 3 pre-start findings, 7 post-start findings, and 5 observations. The pre-start findings were: (1) the approved crane parking locations interfere with the fire detection system, (2) technical safety requirements and in-service inspections are not being adequately tracked, and (3) configuration management of safety systems is inadequate.

Nuclear Materials Management: BWXT recently completed a management assessment of the requirements stipulated in DOE O 5660.1B, *Management of Nuclear Materials*, and concluded that the flowdown of the requirements into local implementing documents was not complete and accurate. The document currently designated as the flowdown procedure does not address specific requirements pertaining to the management of nuclear material—for example, how nuclear material inventories will be assessed and management plans developed. The review also found that there was not a secondary technical manager assigned to the order. BWXT is developing corrective actions to address each weakness.

Senior Management Team (SMT): The SMT—which includes representatives from NNSA, BWXT, LANL, LLNL, and SNL—met at Pantex this week to discuss the following: the status of Pantex throughput improvement activities, schedules for implementing SS-21 for the W76-1, W88, B53, and W84 programs, plans for implementing multi-unit operations on the W62 and W76 programs, and design agency interpretations of DOE Standard 3016.

Pantex Guard Union Negotiations: The union contract expires this upcoming weekend. During the past two weeks, BWXT has been implementing a contingency plan to allow the plant to continue to operate in the event of a strike. Most of the other NNSA sites have committed resources in support of this plan. Initial impact on nuclear operations is expected to be minimal.