

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

MEMO TO: J. Kent Fortenberry, Technical Director
FROM: Timothy Hunt and Dave Kupferer, Pantex Site Representatives
DATE: 26 October 2007
SUBJECT: Pantex Plant Weekly Report

DNFSB Staff Activity: R. Rauch was onsite to augment site representative coverage.

Electrostatic Discharge (ESD) Program: In 2005, PXSO directed BWXT to evaluate and document the Pantex ESD environment for use in requesting weapon response from the design agencies. BWXT developed and issued an environment definition (in engineering evaluation EE-06-005) in April 2006. In July 2006, an ESD task team was formed with the goal of achieving complex-wide consensus to use a unified ESD environment in support of weapon response determinations. To that end, BWXT committed to: (1) develop a revised ESD environment definition, (2) develop a new chapter for the Sitewide safety analysis report that describes the ESD program, and (3) develop a procedure (P7-2020) that will be used to implement the ESD program. BWXT has completed the first of these three tasks. Subsequently, BWXT requested that a Nuclear Explosive Safety change evaluation be performed to assess the safety impact of applying the new ESD environment definition to all of the weapon program operations at Pantex. In addition, the design agencies committed to determine the impact of using the revised ESD environment definition to develop weapon response determinations. It appears that the design agencies have not yet completed this task. The ESD task team has not met since February 2007, indicating that the visibility and priority for accomplishing the objectives of the ESD task team have diminished.

New Information Processes: In a June 2007 memo, PXSO directed BWXT to revise the new information process to ensure that new information is handled in an appropriate manner. Specifically, it appeared to PXSO that there were a number of issues captured in the new information database that should have been reported as potential inadequacies in the safety analyses (PISAs), but had not been because of inadequate criteria in the relevant work instruction (WI). BWXT recently issued a revision to the subject WI that addressed PXSO's concerns. Thirty-one issues in the new information database were evaluated against the new criteria and two PISAs were declared. Several issues that were once thought to be PISAs received enough supporting information to be dispositioned as negative unreviewed safety questions.

Specific Administrative Controls: Last June, PXSO directed BWXT to develop a corrective action plan that would result in achieving compliance with DOE Standard 1186, *Specific Administrative Controls*. BWXT submitted the plan in August. Subsequently, BWXT has revised the Authorization Basis manual to align SAC definitions and associated requirements with the expectations in the Standard. The Sitewide SAR is being revised accordingly and BWXT expects to submit the associated AB change package to PXSO by 26 October. BWXT plans to begin the process of re-verifying implementation of SACs in 2008.

Safety Basis Process Improvements: On 7 August, BWXT and PXSO met to discuss safety basis philosophy and identify potential improvements to safety basis development and implementation processes. The parties involved came to a tentative agreement on potential improvements, but no formal action plan has been developed to date. Some of the tentative actions from the meeting include: a BWXT evaluation of the impact of DOE directives on the time it takes to complete unreviewed safety questions determinations, incorporating outstanding justifications for continued operations into documented safety analyses during FY08, and facilitating the archival of the Paint Bay SAR by instituting a process change to paint components prior to their use in nuclear explosive operations.