

## DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

April 4, 2003

**MEMORANDUM FOR:** J. K. Fortenberry, Technical Director  
**FROM:** W. White, Pantex Site Representative  
**SUBJECT:** Pantex Plant Activity Report for Week Ending April 4, 2003

**DNFSB Activity Summary:** W. White was on site all the week.

**Readiness Assessment for B83 Rebuild:** NNSA continued its readiness assessment this week for partial rebuilds of B83 units. The process under review involves the build of B83 units from an Assembly C configuration to an Assembly D configuration. Although relatively minor in scope, this process has not been performed in over two years. BWXT wrote new procedures for the process to incorporate new site-wide controls and new guidance on writing procedures.

To minimize impacts to operating programs, BWXT chose to split the readiness review process in two phases, an approach approved by NNSA. The first phase, currently underway, involves a review of the process, tooling and procedures in a training bay. The second phase of the review, to be conducted later, will involve validation of the process installation into an operating facility.

The contractor readiness assessment for the first phase was completed on March 18 and noted only two pre-start findings: a tool without proper documentation and non-compliance with two-person control for electrical testers. The contractor readiness assessment also identified positive observations, including the thorough nature of the B83 readiness verification.

It is not clear how thorough the readiness verification could have been when, for the readiness verification and contractor readiness assessment, BWXT chose not to perform significant sections of the assembly procedure. The rationale was that those procedure sections were either currently being performed during ongoing processes or duplicated other sections of the procedure that were being demonstrated. The processes BWXT chose not to verify or review typically involved lifts, electrical testing, repetitive tasks and leak checks.

The NNSA readiness assessment, which is ongoing, is requiring BWXT to demonstrate several sections of the procedure that BWXT chose not to assess during internal reviews. In several cases, NNSA has found that the procedure sections that had been omitted from internal review could not be performed as written. These sections include critical lifts and leak checks for tritium. It may be prudent for BWXT, in the future, to ensure new procedures are demonstrated at least once through, in their entirety, without error, before declaring the procedures to be ready for NNSA review. Other, numerous and typically minor, procedure problems (ranging from typographical errors to inaccurate drawings) were noted that should have been corrected in the readiness verification process or the contractor readiness assessment. After another procedural problem was encountered this Friday morning, NNSA chose to pause its review until Monday. On a more positive note, the conduct and formality of operations demonstrated by production technicians during the NNSA readiness assessment has been exceptional. [II.A]

**Move Right System:** Late last week, NNSA wrote a letter to BWXT asking questions regarding the Move Right System used to control material movement at Pantex and its potential impacts on material control and accountability. To answer these questions, BWXT suspended transportation operations over the weekend to conduct a material inventory and do a preliminary assessment of system adequacy. BWXT found no discrepancies in its material inventory, but did note several compensatory actions that were being implemented to address potential concerns with the system. These actions include tighter control on data entry into connected systems and frequent checks of Move Right information against similar information available from other systems. BWXT resumed transportation operations on Wednesday. [II.A]