

## **DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD**

**MEMO TO:** J. Kent Fortenberry, Technical Director  
**FROM:** Timothy Hunt and Dave Kupferer, Pantex Site Representatives  
**DATE:** 3 February 2006  
**SUBJECT:** Pantex Plant Weekly Report

**DNFSB Activity:** Outside Expert L. McGrew was onsite reviewing safety documentation in preparation for the start of the W87 Nuclear Explosive Safety Study next week.

**BWXT General Manager:** Dan Swaim was formally named this week to succeed Mike Mallory as the BWXT General Manager. Mr. Mallory will be taking a position as the Associate Director of Stockpile Manufacturing with the new contractor at Los Alamos National Laboratory.

**Investigation Notification:** DOE's Office of Price-Anderson Enforcement (OE) recently notified BWXT that it intends to conduct an investigation into the circumstances surrounding the unsuccessful attempts to disassemble a W76 unit nine months ago. During disassembly, production technicians overrode a tooling safety feature while turning a jackscrew, which caused a force to be applied to the unit that exceeded the maximum procedurally allowable loading. Subsequently, BWXT declared a TSR violation and successfully disassembled the subject unit. OE is tentatively planning to conduct the onsite portion of the investigation during early-March.

**Incident Tracking and Trending:** During the past year, PXSO has been developing a new process to mine and trend Pantex operational data based on the philosophy of Heinrich's Pyramid. In general, PXSO mines operational data from the Occurrence Reporting and Processing System (ORPS), Problem Evaluation Requests (PERs), and Event Fact Sheets and categorizes each datum as an incident, near miss, or deficiency. PXSO then trends incidents, near misses, and deficiencies according to the hazard (e.g., electrical, thermal). PXSO recently issued its Pantex Precursor Event Report for the first quarter of fiscal year 2006. This report identified a number of potential trends including: a large number of tooling deficiencies, apparent confusion regarding the entry requirements for Limiting Conditions of Operation, and continued problems with the lightning location and protection system. PXSO and BWXT met to discuss the increase in tooling deficiencies, but it is still unclear if issues exist in the tooling acceptance and validation process that could have contributed to the tooling deficiency trend.

**PXSO Conduct of Operations Validation:** Last month, a two-man PXSO team reviewed evidence packages for closed conduct of operations corrective actions - 21 from the original improvement plan and 12 additional from the revised plan - to verify proper documentation. Most completed actions had the appropriate verification paperwork - with the notable exception of some irretrievable standup training records. The primary weakness noted was with the documentation of time the Nuclear Safety Officers (NSOs) are spending in the field. BWXT management has stated that full engagement of the NSOs in their oversight and mentoring capacity will probably be delayed for at least a year while they support the numerous upcoming readiness reviews. The effectiveness of the documented actions at the floor level still needs to be validated during a planned NNSA conduct of operations review later this year.

**NNSA Readiness Assessment (RA) Post-Start Findings:** In response to incentives that were added to the FY06 Performance Evaluation Plan (PEP), BWXT tabulated all the open post-start findings that were identified during NNSA RAs. There are currently 54 open post-start findings, 15 of which were identified during an assessment conducted in August 2000 that validated BWXT's readiness to start-up W76 disassembly and inspection operations.