

## DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

**MEMO TO:** J. Kent Fortenberry, Technical Director  
**FROM:** Timothy Hunt and Dave Kupferer, Pantex Site Representatives  
**DATE:** 8 September 2006  
**SUBJECT:** Pantex Plant Weekly Report

**Operating Procedures:** An informal assessment of nuclear explosive operating procedures indicates that many are of questionable quality when issued to the field. Production technicians (PTs) are receiving procedures from process engineering at the beginning of an operation that must incorporate numerous hand written changes before they can be used. In some cases, more than ten changes must be added to the procedure, placing an unnecessary burden on the PTs to accurately and completely transcribe information from various documents. Some of the changes may be extant for several months before they are formally rolled into a revised procedure. A previous limit on the allowable number of annotated changes has been abandoned and it may take hours for the PTs to make the required procedural changes before starting work. It appears that guidance on incorporating annotated changes into work procedures is not clear and, as a result, procedure annotations are being incorporated inconsistently. Also, there does not appear to be a requirement to verify or peer review nuclear explosive operating procedure annotations.

**W88 Seamless Safety for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (SS-21):** Last month, NNSA's Office of Nuclear Weapons Stockpile directed PXSO to support activities necessary to complete implementation and authorization of W88 SS-21 processes by January 31, 2008. This week, BWXT informed PXSO that even if W88 SS-21 project implementation is given priority, primarily resulting in realignment of 19 tooling design engineers, W88 SS-21 authorization could most likely not be achieved until June 2008. In addition, the realignment of tooling design engineers from other projects to the W88 SS-21 project would negatively impact the schedule of B53, W76, W80, B83, W84, and W87 SS-21 implementation.

**Reprogramming of Funds:** Due to cancellation of the Building 12-64 upgrade project, approximately \$35 million has become available for NNSA reprogramming. PXSO has recommended to headquarters that the funds be applied to emerging safety issues at Pantex. According to PXSO, the first priority would be to replace degraded high pressure fire loop piping. Another possibility would be to complete construction upgrades to additional cells in Building 12-44.

**Interactive Electronic Procedures (IEP):** A Nuclear Explosive Safety Study (NESS) to review the application of the IEP system on nuclear explosive operations was completed in January 2005. Recently, BWXT has implemented IEP on testbed operations. BWXT is planning to implement IEP on Joint Test Assembly operations next. A NESS evaluation of the application of the IEP system to a specific nuclear explosive program is expected to be performed prior to implementation on nuclear explosive operations.

**Material Movement Discrepancy:** Upon receipt of a container used to transport explosive components, a technician discovered that there was one more component in the container than expected. No material limits were violated. Human error during packaging appears to be the cause of this discrepancy.