

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

December 24, 2004

MEMORANDUM FOR: J. K. Fortenberry, Technical Director
FROM: Timothy Hunt and Dave Kupferer, Pantex Site Representatives
SUBJECT: Pantex Plant Activity Report for Week Ending December 24, 2004

Building 12-44 Upgrade Project. PXSO received critical decision 3 approval last Friday to begin construction activities on the \$21 million project to modify five production cells with the intent of establishing a capacity similar to newer cells. The primary project driver is to meet the life extension requirements for some programs. The cell modifications include plans to upgrade safety class systems, meet NQA-1 requirements, and address Board concerns associated with installation of surge suppression and replacement of electrical cabling.

Surveillance Requirement Documentation. During monthly preventative maintenance testing, the current output of an uninterruptible power supply system exceeded the 5 - 20 amps surveillance requirement step in the procedure. Engineering declared the system operable after determining that the manufacturer's recommended maximum current output is approximately 36 amps. The uninterruptible power supply system was modified in July of 2003 and this particular procedural step was not updated with the new value.

Tooling Restart Path Forward. On Thursday, BWXT submitted, and the site office approved, its path forward to complete Phase 1 (in-process units) and begin Phase 2 (new units) of the tooling restart to resume nuclear explosive operations. The path forward includes the implementation of two new standing orders before processing new units (as part of Phase 2); one focuses on verifying the torque of accessible threaded fasteners, the other focuses on verifying the functional safety features of tooling that are credited in the authorization basis. The site office intends to "shadow" BWXT's activities in preparing to restart operations involving new units. The site office is also expecting BWXT to submit a revised tooling program improvement plan of action by January 4, 2005. This plan is integral to the site office's response to the reporting requirement in the December 15, 2004 Board letter. BWXT completed an analysis that indicated tooling assembly practices did not compromise safety, and that no new accident scenarios or increased risks resulted from torquing specifications not being met. BWXT is in the process of assembling a team to perform a causal analysis of past tooling program failures. BWXT hopes to have long-term improvements to the tooling program in place by January 24, 2005 and is planning on performing readiness assessment activities at that time.