

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

July 26, 2002

MEMORANDUM FOR: J. K. Fortenberry, Technical Director
FROM: W. White, Pantex Site Representative
SUBJECT: Pantex Plant Activity Report for Week Ending July 26, 2002

DNFSB Activity Summary: W. White was on site all week. J. Deplitch, A. Matteucci, and R. West were on site Monday through Wednesday to review fire protection and emergency management. W. Von Holle was on site Wednesday and Thursday to observe a demonstration of the new W62 seamless safety process.

Resumption of W62 Operations: On Thursday, BWXT submitted supporting documentation and a negative unreviewed safety question evaluation to OASO to support continuing operations on the remaining W62 nuclear explosive from the current surveillance cycle. An earlier submission to OASO had been returned with comments requiring resolution. The documentation highlights process changes being implemented to prevent a recurrence of the incident last week. However, the documentation did not address the specific actions being taken to prevent the use of sensitive components to troubleshoot lifting fixtures. BWXT simply committed to writing an engineering instruction prior to resuming operations suspended as a result of a weapon or tooling anomaly. After reviewing the documentation, OASO requested that BWXT complete operations and packaging on the component involved in last week's occurrence prior to resuming operations on the remaining W62 nuclear explosive. [II.A]

W62 Seamless Safety Process: On Wednesday and Thursday, the W62 project team demonstrated the W62 seamless safety process to members of the W62 safety basis review team and to other observers. All of the tooling was not yet ready to demonstrate; in addition, NNSA and DNFSB staff observers present provided feedback on a few scenarios where additional improvements to the process might be possible. In general, however, the tooling and process concepts, as demonstrated by the project team, represent a significant improvement over the existing disassembly and inspection process for the W62. The single remaining lift on the new process occurs in the vacuum chamber facility.

The project team also presented an html-based information management tool that tracks and facilitates development of the W62 process. The software links process flow with hazards analysis information, identified controls, proposed changes, weapons response, tooling photographs, etc. In addition to serving as a useful tool for the project team, the information is presented in a format that should enhance and facilitate the review of the process by various independent review groups. BWXT might wish to consider long-term maintenance of the tool to support internal change control of the process and evaluations of ongoing operations. [II.A]

Fire Protection and Emergency Management: A DNFSB staff review this week addressed status of corrective actions for the *Pantex Plant Fire Department Baseline Needs Assessment* (BNA), fire protection upgrade projects, implementation of controls for the *Fire Protection Basis for Interim Operations*, and training requirements for emergency response personnel. Efforts to correct numerous fire department deficiencies identified in the BNA are progressing slowly, but the deficiencies are being addressed. Pantex's fire protection system upgrades continue to progress but there is no integration plan for these multiple projects, which are being performed over at least a seven year period. The lack of an integrated plan makes it difficult to understand the relative funding priority of the various projects and whether the projects fully address the known fire protection system deficiencies.

A DNFSB staff walk through of W79 operations to observe the implementation of combustible loading controls identified at least one violation of W79 combustible controls. Knowledge of the W79 combustible controls by operations personnel appeared deficient. [II.A]