

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

August 2, 2002

MEMORANDUM FOR: J. K. Fortenberry, Technical Director
FROM: W. White, Pantex Site Representative
SUBJECT: Pantex Plant Activity Report for Week Ending August 2, 2002

DNFSB Activity Summary: W. White was on site all week. Members of the Board held a video conference with the OASO Director on Monday afternoon to discuss resumption of W62 operations.

Resumption of W62 Operations: Last week, BWXT completed disassembly of the recently damaged W62 component. This week, BWXT completed packaging operations for that component and began disassembly of the remaining W62 nuclear explosive on Wednesday. This is the last W62 nuclear explosive to be disassembled under the current disassembly and inspection process. Future W62 nuclear explosive work will be conducted under the new seamless safety process. Two W62 sub-components remain to be disassembled. BWXT intends to brief OASO next week on actions being taken to minimize the possibility of an occurrence similar to the one last month. [II.A]

Material Movement Occurrence: On Wednesday morning, BWXT personnel involved in a movement of W87 units reached the loading dock to which they were moving and found the dock was to be occupied by an inbound movement of material. Concerned about the possibility of exceeding the dock material limits, BWXT personnel continued moving the W87 units past the dock and into an intersection. As they waited on the dock to clear, at least one W87 unit was parked in the 12-R-79 ramp. This constituted a violation of the *Technical Safety Requirements for Pantex Facilities* (5.6.22.20) which state "Movement of [nuclear explosives] will be prohibited in 12-R-79 . . ."

During a critique following the occurrence, several items were identified for resolution. Two signs, posted at the intersection for the 12-R-79 ramp, clearly stated "no nuclear explosives beyond this point." However, personnel involved in the movement interpreted the signs as applying only to the intersecting ramp and not to 12-R-79. Also, personnel involved in the movement arrived at their destination and were unable to complete the move as expected. Personnel chose to find an alternate, temporary destination rather than cancel the move and return the units to the original location. Finally, it appears there may be room for improvement in the timing and dispatching of incoming and outgoing material movements. [II.A]

Accelerated Seamless Safety Tooling: The W78 project team briefed the Standing Management Team this week on its plan to accelerate the implementation of the W78 seamless safety process. The plan now calls for implementation of the new W78 process by the end of August 2003. However, no disassembly and inspection of W78 units is scheduled between the accelerated implementation date and the date on the original plan. The W78 project team also separated out the project for establishing a new W78 assembly process. There is no requirement to rebuild W78 units in the immediate future. The start of the separate W78 assembly project will be contingent on the qualification of a new assembly process for the W88 program.

The W88 project team reiterated its proposed path forward to accelerate the implementation of new tooling only in the W88 bay because of uncertainties associated with implementing a new cell assembly process for the W88 program. [II.A]