

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

MEMO TO: Timothy J. Dwyer, Technical Director
FROM: Timothy Hunt and Rory Rauch, Pantex Site Representatives
SUBJECT: Pantex Plant Report for Week Ending August 7, 2009

Documented Safety Analysis (DSA) Improvement Initiative: The Technical Safety Requirement (TSR) Violation Action Plan released in early May has been revised and renamed the TSR/ DSA Improvement Initiative. The plan retains the same four primary focus areas: enhance TSR control ownership, appropriately bin the existing control set, improve TSR awareness, and improve the TSR violation causal analysis process. However, actions within specific focus areas were changed to clarify the role of the control owner program. Previously, the plan stated that control owners would evaluate whether a TSR control was properly categorized as a part of the effort to appropriately bin the existing control set. The plan now states that qualified authorization basis personnel will perform this function. At this time, only administrative controls are being evaluated for re-binning on a set schedule, with most evaluations scheduled for completion by the end of this fiscal year.

W76-1 Component Screening: B&W Pantex has been directed by the design agency to perform special processing (screening) on 12 copies of a major component used on the W76-1 to verify the hermeticity of a subcomponent. A technical risk was discovered recently associated with the potential for an outgassing product to leak unacceptably from the subcomponent into the sealed volume of the reentry body. If the components pass the screening test, they will be authorized for weapon use. All units currently assembled with the questionable component will be dispositioned in accordance with design agency direction. A design change to use a different material in the manufacturing of the subcomponent is being evaluated. B&W Pantex is in the process of determining the safety impacts of this new information.

Weapon Training: The staff issue report that accompanied a July 8, 2008, Board letter on the Pantex training program cited concerns with the lack of site guidance on how long production technicians or their first line supervisors could remain in “proficient” (“P”) status (i.e., allowed to perform work in the presence of certified personnel) without becoming fully certified. This concern was addressed by the recent issuance of the *Manufacturing Division Training Manual*, the latest version of the site procedure that implements the requirements of DOE Order 5480.20A, *Personnel Selection, Qualification, and Training Requirements for DOE Nuclear Facilities*. Personnel are now provided 6 months to attain certification after being granted “P” status. If the individual fails to certify in this time period, “P” status is removed and management must review the reasons for the delinquent certification. Management may take any action they deem appropriate at that time.

Weapon Trainer Units: The Board letter of July 8, 2008, identified a lack of formal preventive maintenance and parts procurement programs for weapon trainer units. In response, B&W Pantex developed a plan and schedule that outlines a formal program and process to ensure continued operation of trainer units. An action plan to identify replacement part requirements for each weapon program includes validating all trainers against design drawings, evaluating the fidelity of each trainer, an assessment of expected usage requirements and useable lives of parts, and a list of all parts and anticipated replacement dates. The plan to evaluate 14 trainer units in FY09 was completed recently; 14 more units will be evaluated in FY10. In a related item, B&W Pantex is experiencing some delays in receiving replacement parts in support of the W88 trainer upgrade project but is still working to meet the FY09 completion date on the two units.