

# DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

February 4, 2000

**MEMORANDUM FOR:** G. W. Cunningham, Technical Director

**FROM:** T. Dwyer and H. Waugh, Pantex Site Representatives

**SUBJECT:** Pantex Plant Activity Report for Week Ending February 4, 2000

**DNFSB Activity Summary:** H. Waugh was on leave all week. T. Dwyer was on travel on Monday, and on site Tuesday-Friday. F. Bamdad, C. Coones, A. Gwal, W. Shields, and Outside Expert R. West were on site Tuesday-Thursday reviewing the site Fire Protection Program.

**Fire Protection Issues:** Five members of the Board's staff conducted a detailed review of the Pantex fire protection program this week. The review team met with DOE and M&H representatives over a three-day period, and also reviewed documents and toured facilities to walk down fire protection program equipment. As a result of the review, six potential issues and seven observations have been identified. Key among the issues is the lack of funding to replace the ADT fire alarm system, which is obsolete and failing rapidly. It was also of concern that DOE and M&H appear to have been conducting programmatic fire protection assessments without properly qualified personnel. The team will be further investigating some questions related to those site S/RIDs related to fire protection, and the use of the implementation guidance associated with DOE Order 420.1, *Facility Safety*. On the positive side, the team noted that Pantex is planning to reconnect the ultraviolet (UV) actuated deluge systems in many nuclear explosive bays and cells to give greater assurance that incipient fires will be rapidly extinguished. A detailed report will be filed under separate cover.<sup>[II.A]</sup>

**Pit Issues:** On Tuesday, M&H began operating the 2<sup>nd</sup> AL-R8 Sealed Insert (SI) Pit Repackaging Line. This represents a major step forward in efforts to improve the repackaging rate to the desired 200 pits per month, and actually occurred slightly ahead of schedule. In operations this week, the 2<sup>nd</sup> line has suffered some of the typical performance difficulties that have plagued recent start-ups at Pantex, and throughput was limited to 3 units. However, program management remains confident that as the team operating the 2<sup>nd</sup> line gains experience, production will rise dramatically. In a separate but related issue, the DOE Implementation Plan for Recommendation 99-1 was delivered to the Board this week.<sup>[II.A]</sup>

**W62 D&I Program:** Final Disassembly and Inspection of the 1<sup>st</sup> W62 was completed this week. Multiple additional units continue to progress through the disassembly pipeline.<sup>[II.A]</sup>

**W87 Armed MSAD Operations:** M&H successfully conducted the 1<sup>st</sup> W87 armed MSAD operation on Monday.<sup>[II.A]</sup>

**Contractor Issues:** On Wednesday and Thursday, prospective bidders on the Pantex Plant Request for Proposals (RFP) were invited to attend a pre-proposal conference and site tour. Approximately 2 dozen companies appear to be interested in this contract, including such notables as: Bechtel, Day & Zimmermann (M&H), EG&G, Lockheed Martin, Stone & Webster, and Westinghouse. The anticipated proposal delivery deadline is March 10<sup>th</sup>.<sup>[II.B]</sup>