

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

September 15, 2000

MEMORANDUM FOR: J. K. Fortenberry, Technical Director
FROM: H. Waugh and W. White, Pantex Site Representatives
SUBJECT: Pantex Plant Activity Report for Week Ending September 15, 2000

DNFSB Activity Summary: H. Waugh was on site all week. W. White was off site Wednesday and Friday.

W76 D&I Program: Work continues on the closure packages for both the readiness assessment and nuclear explosive safety study findings. Assuming that procedure changes are necessary, additional production technician training will be required. As a result, it now appears that disassembly and inspection activity may not get under way until September 25 at the earliest.^[II.A]

Pit Thermal Test-Building 12-116: The test plan for monitoring pit temperatures in Building 12-116, including deliberately turning off the air conditioning for several days, has been released. DOE's Amarillo Area Office will not be required to approve this document since the contractor USQ determination was negative. The test is scheduled to begin on October 5, when the air conditioning system will be turned off. Assuming no surprises, the air conditioning system will be turned on again on October 10. There will be continuous pit temperature monitoring for the duration of the test.^[II.A]

Pit Packaging: Procurement activities are in progress for approximately 367 of the new bolts for the sealed insert. Because of the different relaxation characteristics of this bolt, production technicians may have to torque the bolts to 45 ft-lbs 4 times, rather than the current 2 times. Because of a loss of production technicians to weapon programs, the sealed insert packaging line will operate on 2 lines, but only 1 shift. As of September 8, 14 sealed inserts had been packaged for the month, 869 for the fiscal year, and 1016 total.

Emergency Exercise: The Director of the Office of Independent Oversight and Performance Assurance (OA-1) was on site with two of members of his staff who had observed the August 30, 2000, emergency exercise at Pantex. The team conducted a validation visit to verify accuracy of the draft OA report on the exercise. The OA team briefed DOE and plant management on its findings. Overall, the team found that the scope of the exercise and the resources devoted to it reflected a significant commitment on the part of management. The team did find communications breakdowns between the emergency operations center and the on-scene commander and between off-site operations centers and the Pantex emergency operations center. Pantex was given a marginal rating for the exercise.

NNSA: The Administrator of the National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA-1) was on site with his Deputy Administrator for Defense Programs (DP-1) to tour Pantex and receive briefings on current issues at the Pantex Plant. Board Site Representatives met with NNSA-1 and DP-1 to discuss current Board issues at Pantex, including Recommendation 99-1, Recommendation 98-2, and safety basis development at Pantex. Site Representatives also accompanied NNSA-1 on his tour of various production facilities.^[II.A]