

## DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

December 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 December 15, 2000

**DNFSB Activity Summary:** H. Waugh and W. White were on site all week. K. Fortenberry and J. McConnell were on site to attend the DP-20 review of Pantex FY01 performance priorities. A. Matteucci was on site Thursday and Friday to review W78 Step 1 Process issues and W87 lightning protection control changes.

**DP-20 Performance Priorities Meeting:** On Wednesday, DP-20 met with DOE and Pantex contractor personnel to discuss FY01 performance priorities. Although the contractor appeared on target to meet most of the directed deliverables, the deliverables themselves did not cover many of the commitments made to the Board by DOE in Recommendations 99-1 and 98-2. Also of interest, MHC blamed delays in safety basis improvements (such as the Bays BIO) in part on resources used instead to justify a more limited set of lightning protection controls for the W87. It is unlikely the new lightning controls, if approved and implemented by DOE, will significantly enhance W87 productivity since most of the delays associated with W87 production occur as a result of quality issues and lack of availability of satellite facilities.<sup>[II.A]</sup>

**Pit Repackaging:** DOE conducted a review of the pit repackaging program at Pantex on Wednesday and Thursday. DOE Headquarters and DOE Albuquerque received briefings from MHC personnel on the status of the pit repackaging program. Items of interest include the following:

- The new automated torque station has been installed and is operational. Minor procedural issues delayed implementation when it was discovered that more tightening rotations were required than previously anticipated to achieve the necessary torque.
- The new shielded work station should be installed and operational by the end of the calendar year.
- 269 pits had been repackaged for FY01 as of December 12 (approximately 100 per month)
- MHC hiring efforts are still directed at having four crews (2 lines, 2 shifts) of technicians available by August 7, 2001.
- MHC anticipates using Inconel bolts starting with the container and cylinder procurement scheduled for delivery in March.<sup>[II.A]</sup>

**Pit Thermal Issues:** At the periodic pit thermal meeting on Thursday, LLNL questioned whether thermal expansion data exists for the new Inconel, sealed-insert bolts. The concern was raised that perhaps a thermal test was in order to determine whether there might be a relaxation of the preload on the flange joint when the sealed insert is cycled through the expected temperature extremes. On a more positive note, a recent LLNL report indicates that ALR8 sealed-insert containers in stage-right storage magazines have performed better than expected from a thermal perspective. As a result of the improved thermal performance of the ALR8 sealed insert, the thermal team might be able to provide new maximum air temperature guidance for storage of pits in ALR8 sealed-insert containers. The report concludes that thermally balanced magazines in the stage-right configuration might not require air conditioning.<sup>[II.A]</sup>