

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

June 25, 1999

MEMORANDUM FOR: G. W. Cunningham, Technical Director

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

SUBJECT: Pantex Plant Activity Report for Week Ending June 25, 1999

DNFSB Activity Summary: T. Dwyer and H. Waugh were on site all week. J. Deplitch, M. Forsbacka, and OE L. McGrew were on site Tuesday-Thursday conducting a W79 in-process review. T. Burns and OE D. Boyd were on site Tuesday-Friday observing the AL-R8 SI RA.

AL-R8 Sealed Insert (SI): The AL-R8 SI Readiness Assessment (RA) was conducted Tuesday-Friday this week. In general, the RA team performed adequately; however, there was an occasional tendency to lose focus on verifying readiness and shift to assisting readiness. The RA team identified 21 pre-start findings and 14 post-start findings. The pre-start findings included an inadequately analyzed lid-drop scenario, and a variety of problems with procedures. The RA team recommended startup upon closure of the prestart findings, and development of adequate corrective action plans for the post-start findings.

In related issues, this week M&H began looking for ways to work around the Facilities Upgrade shutdown of Building 12-64. This facility, which houses the AL-R8 SI line that M&H is currently trying to start, is scheduled to be off line from August 1st to mid-December. AAO also reports that M&H has not yet proposed a change to the Building 12-116 Authorization Agreement to allow storage of AL-R8 SIs in Building 12-116. If the AL-R8 SI line began operating today, storage would be limited to the temporary staging bays in 12-64.^[II.B.2.b]

W79 Dismantlement Program: The Board staff conducted an in-progress review of the W79 Dismantlement Program Tuesday-Thursday. The program is meeting the current dismantlement schedule. Radiation exposures have been low, and the project team has proposed further process improvements designed to bring about additional reductions. A DMSO recycling process also has been proposed (with appropriate HE, radiation, and conductivity controls). Delays have been incurred during bay operations due to difficulties in removing pins from the aft end of the unit at the rocket motor interface. A slide hammer has been proposed as a removal tool. A drilling procedure also is being developed to correct stripped threads, which have been a recurring inconvenience. The change control process in place for the W79 appears sufficient to ensure all controls are preserved during change implementation. Observations of bay operations showed a well-trained and motivated crew capably accomplishing the dismantlement tasks. The staff observed no adverse safety issues.^[II.B.2.a]

Unaccounted External Events: The March 1998 Pantex Plant Emergency Hazard Assessment (EHA) documents a scenario involving the release of chlorine gas from either the drinking water Chlorinator Building (15-29) or the Sewer Control Building (13-47). M&H hazard analysts have confirmed that the plume for this postulated scenario would include IDLH concentrations of chlorine. Postulated accident frequencies range from "unlikely" to "extremely unlikely," but are credible. However, current site accident analyses (BIO, SARs, etc.) do not routinely account for this scenario as an initiating external event, and no controls are listed in the site TSR/CSSM. Further details will be provided in a separate Board staff issue paper.^[II.B.1.a]