

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

July 17, 1998

MEMORANDUM FOR: G.W. Cunningham, Technical Director

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

SUBJECT: Pantex Plant Activity Report for Week Ending July 17, 1998

DNFSB Activity Summary: T. Dwyer and H. Waugh were on site all week. J. Preston and W. Andrews were on site Thursday for discussions with AAO and M&H Management.

W62 NESS Revalidation: Formal direction from DOE-AL as to the M&H-proposed path forward was received Wednesday. M&H is to deliver a plan of action and schedule by next Tuesday specifying which SS-21 attributes will be reviewed for potential inclusion in the W62 process. In the meantime, the project team will meet with the NESS Revalidation group next week to glean preliminary findings that they can begin to address during this timeout. DOE-AL intends to resume the W62 NESS Revalidation upon completion of this effort.

Electrical Equipment Control Program (EECP) Nuclear Explosive Safety (NES) Master Study: The EECP NES Master Study Single Integrated Input Document (SIID) Validation Review convened this week. Although there were certain areas that will require supplemental input data or briefings, the NESS Group ultimately concluded that the SIID was adequate, and the Master Study will convene as scheduled August 11th. The NESS Group believes that the thoroughness of the preparations on the part of M&H may allow the Master Study to be completed in 3 weeks. In particular, the NESS Group was pleased with the Hazard Assessment developed by Westinghouse Safety Management Solutions.

W79 Cell Dissolution: Dissolution of the 3rd W79 Dismantlement Program unit remains on hold, but resolution is finally in sight. On Friday, LLNL, SNL, M&H, and DOE-AL met to review progress to date and determine the remaining steps on the path forward. As a result of an exhaustive examination of the available materials, as well as detailed analyses of potential hazard scenarios, all personnel present agreed that there was no evidence that hydriding presented a safety issue. LLNL had prepared a draft revision to the Weapon Safety Specification (WSS), which stated that deplating may be observed during removal of the W79 midplate or aftplate, but that it poses no threat, and requires only that the PTs make note of it, take data, and call it to the attention of the project engineer. Once this WSS revision is signed out, M&H will be able to close out the USQ associated with the stoppage, and AAO/DOE-AL can formally authorize a restart. Note that, because the Design Agencies have concluded that there is no safety issue, DOE-AL will not be reconvening the NESS Group to evaluate this activity. It is possible that W79 dismantlements will resume by next Wednesday. SNL intends to issue a status letter next week, summarizing the investigative effort conducted. Ultimately, SNL will compile a report that fully documents the individual investigative efforts of all of the scientists involved.