

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

September 18, 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 September 18, 1998

DNFSB Activity Summary: T. Dwyer and H. Waugh were on site all week. D. Thompson and OE R. Lewis were on site Tuesday thru Thursday observing the sitewide emergency exercise.

ISMS Verification Review: The site ISMS Verification Review closeout briefing was held Tuesday. The Team found that current ISMS implementing documents do not capture current practices for key ISM functions related to Nuclear Explosive (NE) Operations. In particular, DOE was cited for failure to provide M&H with a complete, formal definition of the Integrated Safety Process (ISP), including clear expectations and process guidance. The Team also indicated that, while execution of current NE ISMS functions appeared to be adequate, it was neither consistent nor repeatable. Another Verification Review will be conducted following correction of these deficiencies. The final ISMS Verification Review report is expected September 28th.

Annual Sitewide Emergency Exercise: Pantex Emergency Exercise EMEX 98-2 was conducted on Wednesday. The exercise simulated an accident with a dual-fuel pickup truck that resulted in the truck's natural gas and gasoline tanks exploding. 2 of 4 simulated weapons being transported through the Building 12-98 loading dock were affected, with 1 of the weapons assumed to be ruptured, exposing insensitive high explosives and the plutonium pit. High levels of localized contamination and several personnel casualties were hypothesized, including 2 immediate fatalities, and 1 victim who died of a heart attack during treatment at medical. Overall, the exercise was graded "satisfactory," but a number of areas requiring improvement were identified. These will be summarized in a separate Information Report to the Board. Of note, 2 Westinghouse Savannah River Corporation Emergency Management Team members were invited as observers; they provided a number of significant comments to the M&H Exercise Team.

Integrated Weapons Activity Plan (IWAP): The W88 and B83 Project Teams conducted IWAP reviews this week. Informal walkthroughs of assembly and disassembly processes allowed intense DOE-AL and Design Agency interaction -- in some cases, due to turnover of personnel, it was the first time team members had an opportunity to observe performance *in situ*. The reviews appeared similar to SS-21 Attribute Reviews -- there was a definite focus on improvements that could be made immediately, plus those ultimately required to comply with SS-21 standards.

DOE Public Meeting: AAO led a public meeting on Thursday to discuss the rationale behind and impacts of AAO's petition to EPA Region 6 requesting deletion of Pantex from the EPA National Priority [Superfund] List. The path forward to deletion includes EPA and Texas Natural Resource Conservation Commission (TNRCC) review of the Pantex petition; EPA publication of a Notice of Intent in the Federal Register for public comment; a series of EPA-sponsored public meetings; and, ultimately, EPA and TNRCC concurrence on the petition. Of 24 persons in attendance, 4 were members of the media and 1 was from the general public.