

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

October 2, 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 October 2, 1998

DNFSB Activity Summary: H. Waugh and T. Dwyer were on site all week.

Integrated Weapons Activity Plan (IWAP): The W62 and W84 Project Teams conducted IWAP reviews this week. This completes the series of initial IWAP reviews.

W79 Cell Dissolution: W79 cell operations resumed -- 3 units were dissolved this week. The site also received the final LLNL/SNL report concerning the potential uranium hydriding issue that had temporarily halted the program over the summer. The report confirms that LLNL/SNL chemists could "find no credible scenario under which hydride particles can form and present a threat of ignition, now or at any time in the future, under the conditions investigated" [emphasis added]. This conclusion is further clouded by a recommendation that remaining W79 units be stored in an environment having <5 torr of water vapor, and at <40°C, to minimize further oxide growth and the possibility of oxide spalling. M&H is currently trying to determine what restrictions this conclusion places on them, and how to meet the storage recommendation.

Building 12-116 Loading: Building 12-116 loading continued this week -- M&H achieved their FY 98 incentive for pit transfers Tuesday morning. Later efforts during the week centered on ³H bottles. The Building 12-42 south vault has now been emptied into Building 12-116.

High Explosive (HE) Aging Concerns: A meeting was held at LLNL September 15-16 to discuss an HE aging issue. After reviewing the information presented, LANL imposed some processing restrictions on the W69 Dismantlement Program and B61/W80 SLTs. Board staff will follow up on this issue on site (October 26-30) during an IHE/CHE review.

W56 Dismantlement Program: The W56 Dismantlement Program played host this week to the first Safety Basis Review Team (SBRT). The SBRT is chartered by the DOE-AL Standing Management Team (SMT) to provide a recommendation that program safety bases are adequate. The W56 SBRT consisted of 5 members, including representatives from DP, DOE-AL, and AAO. Review efforts this week concentrated on detailed observation of dismantlement steps with HAR and ABCD scenarios in hand, to verify the adequacy of the range of scenarios and their selected controls. Recommendations will be provided to the SMT in the next few weeks. However, the W56 SIID, which includes the latest revision of the HAR and ABCD, was formally issued today, so any recommended changes will require a SIID revision/addendum prior to the NESS.