

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

December 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 December 18, 1998

DNFSB Activity Summary: H. Waugh was on site all week. T. Dwyer was at DOE-AL Monday-Wednesday to discuss the IPSPP and Recommendation 98-2. M. Forsbacka and Outside Expert R. West were on site all week observing the W56 RA and the W87 LEP SIRR.

W56 Dismantlement Program Readiness Assessment (RA): The W56 Dismantlement Program RA was initiated this week, under the leadership of DOE-AL. This is the 1st recent attempt to use the DOE Order 425.1 process to review the readiness of a weapons program. The RA was suspended because of deficiencies found with the implementation of AB controls. Note that this RA followed a SIRR that resulted in 44 pre-start findings and concluded that the process was not ready. A prerequisite for the RA was that all SIRR pre-start findings had been closed, including a major finding that the HAR/ABCD had not been approved -- the SIRR Team was unable to review the flow down of controls from these documents. Although this finding was reported closed, the number and type of deficiencies found this week led the RA Team to question the SIRR Team closure verification. It was determined that the SIRR Team had not reassessed this finding; the RA Team leader viewed this as lack of proper preparation of the activity and recommended that the RA be suspended until the AB controls area was adequately reassessed and corrected. Training and Qualification may also be reassessed due to the extent and types of issues raised in this area. Overall, the RA Team exhibited the proper knowledge and experience to perform their duties and conducted their reviews in a professional manner.

W87 Life Extension Program (LEP) SIRR: The W87 LEP SIRR commenced Monday, immediately discovering that numerous prerequisites for the review were not satisfied. In particular: (1) the HAR is not complete -- a new draft was recently released; (2) the draft ABCD does not take into account the HAR changes; (3) the MSA closure report is not complete, and (4) several MSA findings remain open. Therefore, the SIRR Team could not verify implementation of controls. The SIRR Team will write a report on areas that they were able to adequately assess, and convene a limited scope SIRR for the remaining areas once the prerequisites are complete. Of note, there are instances of similar findings between the SIRR, MSA, and WPRR, indicating that the Project Team did not follow through with appropriate corrective actions.

Integrated Pit Storage Program Plan (IPSPP): After discussions with DOE-HQ, DOE-AL, AAO, and M&H this week, it is clear that the IPSPP submitted to the Board November 6th does not satisfy the systems engineering requirements of the December 31, 1997 Board letter. The 2 phases of systems engineering completed to date focus closely on the pit container selection process; the broader scope of the IPSPP remains to be analyzed. However, DOE-AL and the Design Agencies argue that the ultimate driver in these efforts -- placing the pits in a safer environment, quickly -- justifies proceeding down the path outlined in the IPSPP in advance of identifying all programmatic risks. A more detailed report will be filed separately.