

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

October 24, 1997

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 24, 1997

DNFSB Activity Summary: Timothy Dwyer and Harry Waugh were on site all week.

W79 Type 6B Program: The W79 Project Team projects that the second Type 6B dissolution (for internal observation) will not take place until December. A third Type 6B will be run for the WR SIRR, and a fourth (probably) for the NESS and SE reviewers. The Project Team is also considering Type 6B prove-in of the second and third workstations.

Significant technical decisions remain open, some entailing physical changes to the dissolution workstation and associated tooling. Tooling is being proto-typed to separate two assemblies from the pit tubulation before it is placed into the dissolution workstation, but the Project Team remains divided on how to test the tooling properly. Changes to the DMSO loadout and Hot Water System are being worked. Of note, the modifications to the Hot Water System may include a test raising DMSO temperature to 185 °F. In this operating range, pit surface temperature may become a concern. A shielded filter to prevent HE buildup in the Task Exhaust System is in the preliminary design stage. Training issues also remain open, including training of another shift of PTs, as well as (previously neglected) W79 program training for Radiation Safety Technicians, who are the response team for any emergency condition. Not addressed on the schedule is development of a W79 pit packaging standard.

Dynamic Balancer: The Project Team will declare the Dynamic Balancer ready for restart Monday morning, October 27th. Independent Review Team (IRT) efforts will then commence. DP-3 (Stello) will be on site late next week to evaluate readiness from the DOE-HQ perspective.

W69 Program: As reported three weeks ago, W69 dismantlement was halted due to detonator assembly separation upon attempted removal from the HE hemispheres. The W69 Management Team has approved a path forward that includes removing the HE hemispheres from the pit prior to removing detonators from the HE, then transporting the HE/detonator assembly to Building 11-50 for detonator operations. The Hazard Assessment Team review, a peer review, and an SE are now complete. Resultant changes to the W69 Authorization Basis have been finalized in Erratta C to Revision 3 of the W69 ABCD. Restart was authorized today.

Personnel Matters: AAO expects that DOE-AL will open the vacancy announcement for the AAO Senior Scientific Technical Advisor by next Friday. Publication is contingent on DOE-HQ Executive Resources Board (ERB) approval -- the ERB is meeting today. It is expected that the applicant pool for this position will be defined as DOE-nationwide.

NESS Efforts: Competing resource requirements are driving the site NESS schedule further to the right. The *NES Master Study of Nuclear Explosive Area Testers and Other Electrical Equipment* is well behind -- the hazards assessment that was scheduled for completion last week has just been initiated. Therefore, this effort will not be completed before the end of the year, and the associated NESS has now been scheduled to begin in January. The W79 NESS is delayed by technical issues (see above), and has therefore been moved to next in line behind the Tester effort.

Attachment

Upcoming Pantex Events:

October 27 -- W69 Dismantlement Restart [target date]**

October 27-30 -- Dynamic Balancer Independent Evaluation

October 27-30 -- W56 Final Cell Process Walkdown for HAT

October 28 -- W87 ASSET Meeting

October 31 -- Dynamic Balancer startup [target date]

November 6 -- Nuclear Weapons Council Standing and Safety Committee site visit**

November 17-21 -- NESD Annual Appraisal

[unknown] -- NES Electrical Tester Master Study completion**

[unknown] -- W79 NESS starts**

January 5-16 -- W56 SIRR

NOTES: ** highlights events which are new listings or for which schedule has changed