

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

MEMO TO: Timothy Dwyer, Technical Director
FROM: Tom Spatz, Pantex Site Representative
SUBJECT: Pantex Plant Report for Week Ending September 7, 2012

Technical Safety Requirement (TSR) Violation: B&W Pantex held a critique this week for a Convoy Right-of-Way Specific Administrative Control (SAC) TSR violation. An employee failed to yield to the convoy until hearing the lead vehicle horn; at which time he pulled over in front of another vehicle that had properly yielded to the convoy. The employee's supervisor was notified and the employee reported to the Occupational Medical Department for required drug screening and breath alcohol testing. This is the first Convoy Right-of-Way TSR violation since B&W Pantex eliminated the Generic Limiting Condition of Operation (LCO) 3.0.7, which stated that upon discovery of failure to comply with one or more of the listed SACs, compliance with the SAC shall be restored immediately. In previous events, (See weekly report for 12/23/2011) B&W Pantex implemented the Generic LCO to restore compliance with the SAC, and the events were not considered TSR violations.

Work Stand Malfunction: This week, B&W Pantex paused nuclear explosive operations in a facility due to a work stand malfunction. Production Technicians (PTs) were using the work stand to lower a piece of tooling onto the unit, when they heard grinding and popping sounds coming from the work stand. The PTs paused operations, made the appropriate communications, and placed the unit in a safe and stable configuration which included removing the tooling from the work stand. B&W Pantex is preparing a Nuclear Explosive Engineering Procedure to remove the unit from the work stand and place it in an Enhanced Transportation Cart-2 so the work stand can be repaired.

Weather Related Outages: On Wednesday, the Pantex Plant experienced severe thunderstorms that temporarily knocked out power to two zones. The Operations Center received fault signals from a number of facilities' fire suppression systems during the storm. B&W Pantex placed a small number of facilities in maintenance mode due to the complete failure of the central processing unit (CPU) of the fire suppression system for those affected facilities. The CPU only collects data from the Det-Tronics® input/output cards (one-way communication) and does not directly affect the performance of the fire suppression system. B&W Pantex and the NNSA Production Office (NPO) determined that the fire suppression system was operable during and after the storm. B&W Pantex has restored the functionality of the CPU and the facilities are operational.

Corrective Action Plan Returned to Contractor: Last week, NPO returned the corrective action plan for the Hoist Insulator Design Feature Safety System Functional Assessment to B&W Pantex without approval. NPO stated that the corrective action plan did not include the cause analysis or the actions to prevent the cause from recurring. In March, 2012, NPO sent a letter to B&W Pantex regarding NPO's assessment of the effectiveness of the contractor's corrective actions. As a response, B&W Pantex Engineering Division committed to providing extent of condition reviews as well as cause analysis as part of future System Engineering corrective action plans. NPO felt the corrective action plan for the Hoist Insulator Design Feature Safety System Functional Assessment fell short of that commitment.