

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

MEMO TO: Timothy Dwyer, Technical Director
FROM: Tom Spatz, Pantex Site Representative
SUBJECT: Pantex Plant Report for Week Ending November 2, 2012

NNSA Independent Review of Nuclear Explosive Safety (NES) Change Control: This week, the NNSA Production Office (NPO) manager sent a letter to the B&W Pantex general manager requesting a response to the weaknesses and recommendations in the *NNSA Independent Review of the Pantex Nuclear Explosive Safety Change Evaluation Process*, final report. The independent review was one of the commitments in response to the Board's March 2, 2012, letter on NES change control. (See report for 8/3/12.) The NNSA independent review final report was issued on September 25, 2012, and contained five weaknesses and seven recommendations for B&W Pantex. The review team recommended that B&W improve the efficiency and effectiveness of contractor NES reviews. They also recommended that B&W NES should perform a detailed job task analysis of the NES functions to identify the required level of staff needed and prioritize efforts to recruit and retain NES staff. The review team recommended that B&W Pantex should conduct another comprehensive investigation of the factors surrounding the event that led to operations being conducted that were outside the NES authorized process. NPO requested a response to these recommendations within 30 days.

The NNSA independent review team identified a weakness in the formal definition of the NPO roles and responsibilities for implementation and oversight of the NES program. The review team recommended that NPO and NA-121 jointly conduct a detailed staffing analysis that fully addresses the federal NES activities as well as the oversight of the contractor's NES program, including the contractor's NES change evaluation process.

Formality of Operations Refresh: This week, B&W manufacturing division manager sent a letter to NPO in response to the *Formality of Operations Refresh B&W Pantex Manufacturing* letter sent by NPO. In the NPO letter, they expressed concerns with a downward trend in formality of operations by citing four recent events which occurred in a short period of time that involved tasks that should be ingrained in the work habits of personnel performing nuclear explosive operations. (See report for 9/28/12.) B&W manufacturing has taken two actions to assure NPO that manufacturing personnel are conscious and knowledgeable of their responsibilities for maintaining a high level of formality of operations. First, B&W manufacturing developed a formality of operations presentation that described the recent events and covered three topical areas (safety, security, and quality) to raise the knowledge level and expectations for the formality of operations. Second, the B&W manufacturing division manager tasked the production managers and production section managers to perform targeted observations, approximately 30 per month, on the topical areas covered in the presentation to verify and reinforce the expectation of formality of operations.

Safety Culture: B&W Pantex sent a letter to the NPO transmitting their safety culture plan for the Pantex plant. The plan includes actions required to address commitments from the implementation plan for the Board's Recommendation 2011-1, *Safety Culture at the Waste Treatment and Immobilization Plant*. B&W Pantex plans to utilize and integrate the Institute of Nuclear Power Operations, *Principles of a Strong Nuclear Safety Culture*. The DOE Office of Health, Safety and Security report on the Pantex plant survey results has not been issued.