

## DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

**MEMO TO:** Steven Stokes, Acting Technical Director  
**FROM:** Thomas Spatz, Pantex Site Representative  
**SUBJECT:** Pantex Plant Report for Week Ending February 1, 2013

**Board Activities:** Board members P. Winokur, J. Roberson, J. Bader, J. Mansfield, and S. Sullivan as well as staff members D. Ogg, B. Laake, and C. McLaughlin were at the Pantex plant to discuss various topics with the NNSA Production Office (NPO) and Babcock and Wilcox (B&W) Pantex. They also observed nuclear explosive operations being performed.

**Fire Penetration Seals Update:** This week, B&W Pantex and their subcontractor completed the replacement of fire penetration seals in the facilities from the first Justification for Continued Operation (JCO) several weeks ahead of schedule. The B&W Pantex scheduled completion of seal replacement under the first JCO was on February 28, 2013. (See report for 8/24/12.) B&W Pantex is still operating under two JCOs to continue operations in other facilities with suspect fire barrier penetration seals which are both scheduled to expire on June 30, 2013.

**Combustible Loading Disposition (CLD) Revision:** This week, B&W Pantex held an event critique for an event where an item in a special nuclear material (SNM) facility was found to be outside the bounds of the combustible loading program. In November 2012, B&W Pantex paused operations in a SNM facility due to a combustible loading Technical Safety Requirement violation. (See report for 11/30/12.) A legacy item was being containerized when the pause happened. During the effort to resume work, B&W fire protection engineers (FPEs) discovered that they did not have critical temperature data for legacy items and could only authorize resumption of work on current stockpile items. B&W FPEs updated the CLD to only authorize operations with current stockpile items, not knowing that there was a legacy item being processed when operations were paused. On January 22, 2013, B&W process engineers notified the FPEs that a legacy item was not fully containerized in the affected facility. The following day B&W FPEs determined that the item was outside the bounds of the combustible loading program. B&W Pantex has removed all non-fixed combustibles from the facility until the legacy item can be sealed in an approved container.

**Work Stand Issue:** B&W Pantex paused operations in one nuclear explosive operating facility due to a work stand malfunction. The B&W production technicians (PTs) were lowering a component onto an appendage of the work stand by lowering the upper trunnions. The PTs heard grinding coming from the gears of the work stand and it became difficult to move the hand crank. The PTs paused operations and made the appropriate communications. Nuclear explosive safety, process engineering, and the production section manager determined that the unit was in a safe and stable configuration. B&W is evaluating the path forward.