

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

June 6, 2014

MEMO TO: Steven Stokes, Technical Director
FROM: Thomas Spatz, Pantex Site Representative
SUBJECT: Pantex Plant Report for Week Ending June 6, 2014

DNFSB Staff on Site: B. Linzau (Y-12 Site Representative) was at the Pantex Plant this week to provide site representative support.

Loss of Control of 35-Account Material: Babcock & Wilcox Technical Services Pantex, LLC (B&W) utilities personnel discovered a box on the roadside containing eight small vials of 35-account petroleum ether. (35-Account material is commercial material that is authorized to be in the nuclear explosive facility.) The box had fallen off a cart in route to a nuclear explosive operating facility. The B&W utilities personnel notified the operations center, who in turn notified the fire department. The fire department investigated and determined there was no hazard present and recommended placing the contents of the box in a flammable cabinet until the contents could be disposed. The petroleum ether 35-Account material has a requirement that the temperature not exceed 90°F. B&W will dispose of the material since they cannot verify the temperature requirement has been met.

35-Account Material Independent Review: B&W has completed an independent review of the 35-Account material program. The NNSA Production Office (NPO) requested B&W perform the assessment following an event in November 2013 where B&W discovered four sizes of the same type of 35-account nitrile gloves that had not passed acceptance testing prior to being issued in a nuclear explosive operating facility. (See report for 12/6/2013.) B&W has briefed NPO of the findings and weaknesses identified in the assessment; however, the report has not been issued. B&W will enter the findings and weaknesses into their Problem Evaluation Request system.

Recovery Plan for Technical Safety Requirement (TSR) Violation on Task Exhaust Duct Penetrations: B&W sent a letter to NPO documenting the actions taken to resolve the TSR violation declared on the discovery of a non-compliant 2-hour fire rated barrier with no damper in the task exhaust. (See report for 1/24/2014.) B&W submitted a Justification for Continued Operations (JCO) in lieu of a recovery plan and NPO approved the JCO and compensatory measures. (See report for 2/7/2014.) In this new letter, B&W described their method of meeting the 2-hour fire rated barrier requirements. B&W plans to remove a portion of the task exhaust ductwork passing through the fire-rated barrier and placing fire-rated blocking and sealant material in accordance with the subcontractor's design. B&W will abandon in-place the remaining task exhaust ductwork. B&W stated this approach would expedite the repair and limit the amount of work required within the nuclear facility.

New Micro-Focus X-Ray and Laser Gas Sampling Station (LGSS) Devices: As part of the new equipment start-up, B&W is performing readiness verification on new micro-focus x-ray and LGSS devices. Once readiness verifications are completed, Pantex will have two of each device which is needed to meet capacity demands for pit surveillance data. These devices are installed in a different facility than the existing devices however there are no changes to the safety basis of the facility. Both devices are operational but not yet qualified for war reserve product.