

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

July 18, 2014

MEMO TO: Steven Stokes, Technical Director
FROM: Thomas Spatz, Pantex Site Representative
SUBJECT: Pantex Plant Report for Week Ending July 18, 2014

DNFSB Staff on Site: R. Arnold was at the Pantex Plant this week to observe a B83 training class and provide site representative support.

Approval of the W78 Nuclear Explosive Safety (NES) Study: This week, the NNSA Production Office (NPO) sent a letter to Consolidated Nuclear Security, LLC (CNS), approving W78 disassembly and inspection operations and directing CNS to take three actions related to the NES study report. On May 30, 2014, the Assistant Deputy Administrator for Stockpile Management (NA-12) sent a letter to NPO approving the NES study report. In the letter, NA-12 accepted the two post-start findings, sided with the majority on the two minority opinions, accepted the 24 deliberation topics, and referred the two Senior Technical Advisor comments to the Senior Management Team for evaluation. NA-12 also directed NPO to ensure, prior to authorizing operations, that the operating procedures do not require actions that could hinder the evaluation by the Design Agency of possible damage to a detonator cable assembly. The letter from NPO to CNS stated that this concern should apply across all weapon programs, but asked for results of an evaluation to be delivered within 60 days.

Severe Weather: A severe thunderstorm passed over the plant this week causing a series of problems. The operations center received alpha fault alarms from at least seven nuclear facilities. Maintenance personnel were able to reset the alarms. There was an electrical power blink in the building that houses radiation safety technicians and production section managers. The occupants reported the phones in that building were dead following the power blink. The emergency services dispatch center (ESDC) reported receiving a phone line fault alarm from the fire alarm control panel for several nuclear explosive operating facilities. The fire department's first attempt to reset the fire alarm control panel was unsuccessful. The ESDC reported receiving a LaMarche charger trouble alarm for two nuclear explosive operating facilities. The facility representative entered these facilities into the appropriate Limiting Conditions for Operation (LCO) and placed the facilities into maintenance mode. The fire department was able to reset this alarm and the facility representative exited the LCO. Electrical power was lost to the building housing the cafeteria and the production technician changing rooms. Crafts personnel restored power after the weather had cleared.

Pause of Nuclear Explosive Operations: CNS paused nuclear explosive operations in six individual facilities for six different reasons. The reasons include, a cable was damaged during assembly operations, damage was found on a lock wire for a pin-connector cable, an electrical test failed, a fixture vacuum failed, a screw was stuck, and a broken electrical connector was discovered. In every case, safety analysis engineering (formerly authorization basis), nuclear explosive safety, and engineering personnel confirmed that the facility was in a safe and stable configuration.

Blast Door Interlock LCO: CNS entered the LCO for an inoperable blast door interlock system in one nuclear explosive operating facility. The facility representative reported that the breaker had tripped on the blast door interlock for this facility.