

## DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

December 4, 2015

**MEMO TO:** Steven Stokes, Technical Director  
**FROM:** Zachery Beauvais, Pantex Site Representative  
**SUBJECT:** Pantex Plant Report for Week Ending December 4, 2015

**DNFSB Staff Activity:** J. Anderson was onsite to observe activities associated with the W87 Nuclear Explosive Safety Study.

**Special Tooling Design Discrepancy:** On December 1, 2015, Consolidated Nuclear Security, LLC (CNS), conducted, and the site representative attended, a corrective action and mistake proofing meeting related to a recently discovered discrepancy in the flowdown of functional requirements for the base height of an assembly stand (see 11/20/2015 report). CNS is still developing and reviewing the corrective actions proposed during this meeting.

**Nuclear Material Moves:** While unpackaging a special nuclear material container, CNS technicians discovered that the serial number listed on the physical seal for the container did not match the number on the associated bar code card. The technicians paused the operation and notified their section manager. CNS subsequently suspended nuclear material movements in and out of the affected facilities. On December 2, CNS conducted, and the site representative attended, a critique on this event. The Pantex procedure for material movement authorization specifically requires individuals taking receipt of nuclear material to verify that the item matches its accompanying bar code. Based on the timeline of events established during the critique, technicians moved the container with the incorrect serial number multiple times prior to the discovery, each of which was a missed opportunity to identify the discrepancy. Following the critique, CNS canceled the nuclear material move suspension allowing technicians to physically verify the markings on the containers and correct the discrepancy in the Move Right System.

**Discovery of a Bulge on a Component:** While performing assembly operations in a nuclear explosive cell, production technicians (PT) noticed a bulged feature on a component installed on the unit. The bulge may have disallowed proper alignment of additional components. PTs paused the operation following the discovery, and CNS issued a nonconformance report on the component. On December 2, CNS issued an Information Engineering Release to the design agency formally communicating the issue and is in the process of developing a Nuclear Explosive Engineering Procedure to continue processing the unit.

**DOE Assessment of Pantex Emergency Management and Exercise Program:** This week, the DOE Office of Enterprise Assessments (EA) released a report documenting their assessment of the Pantex Emergency Management and Exercise programs. The scope of the assessment included an onsite review conducted in April and May of 2015 and an additional evaluation of the full-scale exercise conducted at Pantex in August 2015 (see 8/21/15 report). The assessment report noted that CNS has made some improvements to its exercise programs, including greater independence of controllers and evaluators; however, EA identified multiple significant weaknesses that persist in the exercise program. In addition to multiple opportunities for improvement, the assessment identified the following new findings: (1) the CNS exercise program does not validate all elements of the emergency management program over a five-year period, (2) CNS has not developed adequate emergency plan implementing procedures, and (3) CNS provided ineffective control at the event/incident scene during the August 2015 exercise.