

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

January 10, 1997

TO: G. W. Cunningham, Technical Director
FROM: Jim McConnell and Harry Waugh, Pantex Site Representatives
SUBJECT: Pantex Plant Activity Report for Week Ending January 10, 1997

1. DNFSB Activity Summary: Harry Waugh was on site all week. Jim McConnell was in Albuquerque for meetings Tuesday through Thursday.

2. New Issues:

a. W87 NESS Revalidation: The W87 NESS Revalidation was performed this week. Staff member Wayne Andrews was on site to observe this activity. He indicated that this revalidation was improved over previous revalidations. Details of Wayne's observations will be forthcoming in a contact report.

3. Issue Follow-Up:

a. Special Purpose Activities: DOE, Mason and Hanger (M&H), and the Design Agencies continue work to restart the shutdown special purpose activities. The activities of most immediate concern are the linear accelerators (linacs) and the dynamic balancer. M&H completed calibrating the linacs and most now complete a revision to the Basis for Interim Operations to resolve the unreviewed safety question and gain nuclear explosive safety approval for the changes. Once the authorization basis questions are resolved, M&H is planning to conduct a Weapons Program Readiness Review (WPRR) and then DOE will conduct a Safety Evaluation. The path forward for the dynamic balancer is less clear at this time. M&H must complete an analysis of the holding fixture hold-down bolts to determine their minimum strength and then an analysis of the worst case overspeed accident to determine the strength requirements of the bolts. If the bolts are determined to be inadequate, then M&H will need to design a safety system to prevent or mitigate the overspeed accident. The Site Representatives will continue to follow the analysis and plans for corrective actions. When the authorization basis revisions are completed, the Site Reps will forward them to the staff for additional analysis.

b. AT-400A Pit Repackaging: M&H postponed the Corporate ORR for pit repackaging until at least March to allow time to correct additional safety problems. Recent analyses identified that a single 24V power supply powers the welder safety systems. This 24V supply is not supervised and is not interlocked with the welding system. This means that if the 24V power supply were to fail, the operators would not be warned and the welder would not stop operating.

c. W69 NESS: The W69 NESS is scheduled to begin on February 4. It appears that the NESS will take at least three weeks to complete. The Single Integrated Input Document (SIID) prepared for the NESS was mailed to all participants last week. The SIID, which includes the Nuclear Explosives Hazard Assessment (NEHA) portion of the Hazard Analysis Report (HAR) and other information, consists of eleven separate documents in three volumes totaling approximately 2600 pages and weighing about 21 pounds. While all the documentation in the SIID may be necessary and appropriate to explain the analysis performed to ensure safety of the W69 dismantlement, it appears to the Site Representatives that DOE has not yet gotten a handle on what subset of the documentation is required to support a technically rigorous and inquisitive NES Study. The NESS Group members and their technical advisors are expected to review the document in the next three weeks.

4. Additional Information:

a. DOE-AL Management Changes: Steve Guidice retired from DOE-AL effective January 3, 1997. His former position as Assistant Manager for Energy, Science, and Technology will be filled by Earl Whiteman who had

been the Director of Weapons Quality Division under the Office of National Defense Programs (ONDP). Kathy Carlson has been named the permanent Assistant Manager for ONDP.

b. DOE-AAO Reorganization: The Amarillo Area Office has finalized a reorganization that attempts to align AAO with the missions at Pantex. The four AAO assistant manager titles used to be Weapons Programs; Facilities; Environmental Management; and Administration. The new positions are Weapon Operations; Nuclear Material Operations; Engineering & Environmental Management; and Administration. The reorganization is intended to make the AAO manager who is responsible for an activity also responsible for the facility in which that activities is conducted.

5. Future Activities:

- a. January 14 - Pit Thermal Meeting
- b. February 4-28 - W69 Dismantlement NESS
- c. February 11 - W80 NESS Revalidation begins
- d. February 17 - W87 WPRR begins
- e. March 3 - W87 Safety Evaluation for Production begins
- f. March 18 - W79 MC3395 Removal begins
- g. March ? - M&H AT-400A Corporate ORR begins (tentative)
- h. March ? - DOE AT-400A ORR (tentative, based on conclusion of M&H ORR)

Copy to: Board Members

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