

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

January 7, 2000

MEMORANDUM FOR: G. W. Cunningham, Technical Director

FROM: T. Dwyer and H. Waugh, Pantex Site Representatives

SUBJECT: Pantex Plant Activity Report for Week Ending January 7, 2000

DNFSB Activity Summary: T. Dwyer was on site all week. H. Waugh was on leave all week. W. White was on site Tuesday-Friday observing the Lightning JCO RA. D. Burnfield was on site Wednesday-Friday observing the W62 D&I Program first production unit.

W62 D&I Program: After validating and approving closure of pre-start findings from both the NESS and the DOE-AL Readiness Assessment (RA), M&H began mechanical disassembly operations on the first W62 D&I unit on Thursday. As a “compensatory measure,” an M&H conduct-of-operations mentor provided continuous oversight of these activities. A team of AAO Facility Representatives and Production Operations Team staff, as well as Board’s staff, provided additional oversight. Three Design Agency personnel also observed the operations as part of their Process Verification Tryout. Oversight by M&H, DOE, and the Board’s staff will continue through at least next week. It is noteworthy that the M&H mentor effectively provided feedback to improve minor conduct of operations errors and to reinforce positive behaviors. Work on this 1st unit has proceeded slowly because of difficulties of the type that have typically plagued M&H initial start-up processes. In particular, 2 open issues involving lightning protection in the W62 bays and cells, and a 3rd issue involving the technical standard for tester isolation, have the potential to stall operations. [In fact, the tester issue interrupted work Friday coincident with the end of the workday.] It is expected that these issues can be resolved within the next week.^[II.A]

Authorization Basis Issues: On Tuesday, DOE-AL approved the *Master Authorization Agreement for Nuclear Operations at the Pantex Plant* (MNL-258600). This document serves as the umbrella Authorization Agreement for all Pantex weapons programs. Site wide evaluations, applicable to multiple programs (e.g., S/RIDs, NESS Master Studies, etc.), are cited in Appendix B. Individual operations, with specific terms and conditions, are added to Appendix C as they are approved. DOE-AL has granted M&H 60 days to implement this agreement.^[II.A]

Lightning Issues: M&H conducted a limited scope RA on PX-JCO-99-002, Revision 4, *Evaluation of Lightning Hazards and Justification for Continued Operation (JCO) of Nuclear Explosive Operations* between December 22nd and January 4th. The RA Team identified 8 pre-start findings, and 5 post-start findings. Most of the pre-start findings were fairly specific in nature, requiring formal documentation of a specific control or link that had been inadvertently overlooked in the JCO development process. [Note that as a result of the documentation changes, Revision 5 of the JCO and Revision C of associated NEEP ED99-850 have been developed for issue on implementation day.] However, proper closure of these items took longer than expected, and the start of the AAO RA was delayed until Friday. AAO expects to complete their RA by next Tuesday. One slight complication is that the current lightning protection controls all expire this Sunday. M&H is therefore revising the existing controls documents [NEEP ED99-527, EI ED98-029] to remain effective for an additional week.^[II.A]

W87 Armed MSAD Operations: Thursday afternoon, the W87 Armed MSAD Contractor RA commenced. The RA team has had some difficulty deciphering the W87 control scheme related to lightning protection, in part due to the juxtaposition of implementation of the newly revised W87 ABCD, imminent implementation of the lightning JCO, and W87 LEP operations [already in progress], which also fall under the purview of this revised control scheme.^[II.A]