

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

December 26, 2003

MEMORANDUM FOR: J. K. Fortenberry, Technical Director
FROM: W. White, Pantex Site Representative
SUBJECT: Pantex Plant Activity Report for Week Ending December 26, 2003

DNFSB Activity Summary: The Pantex Plant was closed on Thursday and Friday for Christmas. W. White was on site Monday and Tuesday and was on leave for the remainder of the week.

W62 Process Tooling: In an attempt to recover from a tooling problem last week on W62 physics package disassembly operations, BWXT personnel utilized tooling that had not been reviewed and approved through the unreviewed safety question (USQ) process. The original problem occurred when a weapon component could not be removed from its holding fixture. The problem had occurred to some extent with most of the units disassembled under the new seamless safety process. In this case, the component remained stuck in fixture after some time. A procedure was written to disassemble the fixture to facilitate removal of the component. However, the holding fixture could not be disassembled as desired.

BWXT then wrote another procedure to use facility air supply to apply slight pressure inside the fixture. An air nozzle was required to make the connection between facility air supply and the component. The air nozzle had a specific tooling number that was not referenced in the procedure. The procedure was reviewed and approved by nuclear explosive safety personnel and through the USQ process. However, when the procedure was reviewed by authorization basis personnel, they did not realize the use of tooling was required that had not previously been approved. This did not come to the attention of authorization basis personnel until after the air nozzle had been utilized successfully by production technicians. The use of the air nozzle is no longer authorized. Long-term corrective actions are being evaluated through a causal analysis. [I, W3]

Special Nuclear Material Component Requalification Facility (SNMCRF): On Monday, PXS0 approved the preliminary documented safety analysis for the new SNMCRF. BWXT will modify an existing facility for use as a category 2 nuclear facility. This new facility will be used for testing and certification of weapon components.

The safety analysis was approved with no comments that require resolution prior to the beginning of modification work on the existing facility. There were several comments, however, that require resolution prior to submission of the final documented safety analysis. The following are two of the comments:

- The *Sitewide Safety Analysis Report* does not address the control of a seismically induced fire in light of not having a seismically qualified water supply system for the wet-pipe fire suppression system.
- Two controls were elevated to safety-significant status as a result of comments from the safety basis review team, but no information was added to characterize the hazards to which these controls apply.

The comment concerning a seismically induced fire appears to apply to the analysis for existing nuclear facilities, as well. Rapid resolution of this comment appears warranted for operational facilities. [I, W3]