

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

January 14, 2005

MEMORANDUM FOR: J. K. Fortenberry, Technical Director
FROM: Timothy Hunt and Dave Kupferer, Pantex Site Representatives
SUBJECT: Pantex Plant Activity Report for Week Ending January 14, 2005

SS-21 Implementation. The recent realization that Pantex – especially the Directed Stockpile Work program – will be receiving less than its anticipated fiscal year 2005 budget is forcing BWXT to reallocate available funds and suspend non-labor contracts. The impacts to SS-21 programs are the lack of money to procure some production tooling, complete upgraded safety basis documentation, and prepare for the B83 nuclear explosive safety study. Site priorities appear to be completing the B61 hazard analysis and startup of SS-21 on the B83 program.

Work Authorization. Modifications were recently made to the safety-class compressed air system that feeds nuclear explosive bays and cells without first completing the unreviewed safety question process. Work was authorized and performed in 5 locations. The Design Change Proposal had been completed and preliminarily approved and work began without the approval authority confirming that the USQ that supports the DCP was negative. There also does not appear to be a formal system of checks and balances between the construction and facilities organizations that ensures the safety documentation is complete prior to work being authorized and the facility turned over to the construction group.

NNSA Readiness Assessment. NNSA wrapped up its readiness assessment this week to validate the adequacy to safely start the pit dimensional inspection operations. One of the two pre-start findings dealt with the Safety Analysis Report requirement that the facility appurtenances be seismically qualified, and one of the eight post-start findings noted a programmatic deficiency in the depth and detail of root cause analyses of contractor readiness assessment findings.

Integrated Safety Management. Based on the results of a September joint BWXT and PXSO ISM assessment focused on areas identified by the Board, BWXT last week issued its Corrective Action Response. Of particular note is that BWXT determined there is sufficient evidence to warrant establishing a senior level organization tasked to effect greater rigor and formality in the implementation of ISM at Pantex. A Program Manager of the Integrated Safety Management Systems has been named and the new organization will be fully functional next month.

Fire Alarm Notification System Failure. When an alarm is triggered on-site (including heat sensors, water flow sensors, equipment failure sensors), the signal is sent to one of two computer systems in the fire department dispatch center – the Security Information System (installed in 1998, no longer supported by the manufacturer) or the CentraScan (installed in 1994, not Y2K compliant). Both the SIS and the CentraScan have redundant back-up systems. Last week, both the primary and back-up SIS were unresponsive over a period of more than one hour. The “service soon” light is lit on three of the four Uninterruptible Power Supply systems that support the SIS and CentraScan. There are no preventive maintenance requirements for any of the systems in the fire department dispatch center. These systems are considered defense-in-depth as opposed to safety-class or safety-significant.