

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

MEMO TO: J. Kent Fortenberry, Technical Director
FROM: Timothy Hunt and Dave Kupferer, Pantex Site Representatives
DATE: 6 October 2006
SUBJECT: Pantex Plant Weekly Report

DNFSB Staff Activity: J Shackelford was onsite to review specific administrative control development and implementation.

Specific Administrative Control Violation: BWXT violated a technical safety requirement control when a B61 unit was brought into a bay without the H-gear electrostatic discharge (ESD) adapter – in effect, a drag strap – installed. The control is designed to prevent a potential ESD insult to a second unit undergoing processing in the bay. The two production technicians (PTs) that moved the unit into the bay were not trained on the requirements associated with the B61 program. They were in the bay observing trained and certified B61 PTs performing nuclear explosive operations and providing administrative assistance as a precursor to their enrollment in an upcoming programmatic training class. A contributor to the occurrence was that the TSR control was embedded in the general instructions of the operating procedure.

Procedure Adherence: Due to operator error, a production technician performed the incorrect radio-frequency test during a W88 disassembly this week. The procedure required that the tester be configured in a certain mode, but a different mode was selected from the touchscreen options and the test parameters were not in accordance with requirements. It is not expected that any software or hardware enhancements will be implemented to preclude future events with this tester as the equipment is being phased out after a couple more units.

Specific Administrative Controls (SACs): This week, the staff reviewed BWXT's processes to develop and implement SACs. BWXT provided the staff with sufficient evidence that, for the most part, Pantex SACs are developed and implemented in accordance with the principles of DOE-STD-1186, *Specific Administrative Controls*. However, the staff had two concerns; (1) BWXT suggested that administrative controls that only provide worker safety may not be designated as SACs in the future, and (2) BWXT and PXSO did not provide evidence of a program to periodically reassess the adequacy and implementation of SACs.

Zone 4 Magazines: BWXT recently discovered that 11 storage magazines located in Zone 4 failed to meet annual in-service inspection requirements for minimum earth overburden depth. The visual inspections determined that the degraded areas violated the functional requirement that a minimum depth of soil be maintained around the magazines to provide the requisite fire and projectile barrier. BWXT personnel are working on a plan to restore the overburden and control future erosion due to wind and rain while simultaneously determining whether the overburden is actually necessary to meet safety requirements.

Engineered Lightning Bonds: During September, PXSO's System Engineering group assessed engineering bonds. PXSO generally concluded that appropriate maintenance and testing is being conducted on engineering bonding system components. In its report, PXSO questioned whether the periodicity and scope of the engineering bond in-service-inspection should be re-evaluated.