

## **DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD**

**MEMO TO:** J. Kent Fortenberry, Technical Director  
**FROM:** Timothy Hunt and Dave Kupferer, Pantex Site Representatives  
**DATE:** 9 March 2007  
**SUBJECT:** Pantex Plant Weekly Report

**Interactive Electronic Procedures (IEP):** In an effort to improve procedural adherence following an October 2001 Board letter on the subject, BWXT committed to implement the IEP system as a corrective action. BWXT is now proposing to NNSA that the plug be pulled on the IEP project for nuclear explosive operations. BWXT maintains it is no longer a workable option to replace paper procedures with electronically formatted ones. To date it has been rolled out only for testbed operations, with limited success. It has worked well as a data collection tool but has proven cumbersome to navigate and maintain control. The primary reason given for abandoning IEP is the difficulty with upgrading the vendor-supplied software to meet Pantex demands in a favorable timeframe.

**W76-1 Nuclear Explosive Safety Study (NESS):** This week, NNSA completed the first phase of the W76-1 NESS (the first phase covered proposed disassembly and inspection operations, the second phase will cover proposed rebuild operations). NNSA is planning to begin the second phase of the NESS during the first week of April. However, BWXT needs to complete the hazard analysis report and some tooling documentation before the NESS can be reconvened. There is a schedule driver for PXSO to authorize W76-1 assembly operations by July so that NNSA can assemble the first production unit by the end of this fiscal year.

**Tyvek Suits:** The production technicians (PTs) raised a concern to their production section manager (PSM) regarding a statement on the warning label of Tyvek suits that the fabric could create static electricity and should not be used around explosive environments. A BWXT evaluation determined that the surfactant applied to the fabric by the manufacturer to prohibit static build-up was adequate and the tag contained standard language that did not apply to the Pantex-specific suits and environment. Pantex has a one-time use policy on the suits so degradation of the coating from repeated use is not an issue. The PSM response to the safety concern raised by the PTs did not meet Manufacturing Division senior management expectations and decisive action was taken.

**Nuclear Explosive Safety (NES) Oversight:** In January, the NNSA NES Operating Division (NA-121.2) began conducting routine monthly assessments of NES at Pantex. The purpose of the two to three day assessments is to observe nuclear explosive operations, evaluate the implementation of NES study corrective actions, and discuss current NES issues and requirements with cognizant Pantex personnel. During the February review, two representatives from NA-121.2 observed nuclear explosive operations in four facilities and discussed static dissipative flooring, lightning standoff and fire suppression systems with BWXT systems engineering.

**Emergency Response:** On Monday, BWXT initiated emergency response actions after discovering two suspicious packages in the Visitor's Center. BWXT evacuated the Visitor's Center and requested that the Amarillo Police Department Bomb Squad respond to the site. BWXT also suspended all ongoing nuclear explosive operations including initiating actions to put all units into a safe and stable configuration. The suspicious packages turned out to be tools that were forgotten by a copy machine repairman.