

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

MEMO TO: Timothy Dwyer, Technical Director
FROM: Tom Spatz, Pantex Site Representative
SUBJECT: Pantex Plant Report for Week Ending October 19, 2012

DNFSB Staff Activity: R. Arnold was at Pantex this week to observe the W80 Operational Safety Review and provide site representative support.

Deluge Fire System Failure: This week, B&W Pantex paused operations in all nuclear explosive facilities due to the failure of a solenoid on the deluge fire suppression system during preventive maintenance operations. B&W Pantex entered the appropriate limiting condition for operation (LCO) and placed all facilities into maintenance mode. This is the second solenoid valve failure that B&W Pantex has experienced this year. (See reports for 3/30/12 and 4/13/12.) The postulated cause of the previous failure was calcification caused by extended high-pressure fire loop outages. Following this previous failure, B&W fire protection engineering verified operability of any system that had experienced an extended outage, and took corrective action to test the deluge systems more frequently. Following the current failure, B&W Pantex is replacing all the solenoid valves. B&W Pantex has replacement solenoid valves on site and some facilities are back in service.

Tooling Malfunction: B&W Pantex continues to pause operations on four weapon programs due to the failure of a lifting and rotating fixture. (See report for 9/21/12, 9/28/12, 10/5/12, and 10/12/12.) This week, NNSA convened a Nuclear Explosive Safety Change Evaluation (NCE) to evaluate the use of lifting and rotating fixtures on units that were in process when the pause was declared, and to evaluate the corrective measures that are intended to ensure the fixtures operate as designed.

B&W Pantex authorization basis personnel submitted a Justification for Continued Operation (JCO) to the NNSA Production Office (NPO) for review and approval. B&W Pantex is proposing more frequent inspection of the lifting and rotating fixture as well as the addition of a spacer between the two rotation handles to prevent a single handle failure from allowing the fixture to rotate.

W80 Operational Safety Review (OSR) Suspended: This week NNSA suspended the W80 OSR shortly after it started. According to *Nuclear Explosive Safety Evaluation Processes*, DOE M 452.2-2, there must be at least one Senior Technical Advisor (STA) on the OSR team. NNSA suspended the OSR when the STA at the review was told to leave because the contract between NNSA and the STAs had not been funded. NNSA has not specified a date to resume the OSR.

Safety Culture: This week, B&W Pantex sent out a system-wide announcement stating their commitment to a culture and environment that encourages the free and open expression of employee concerns. B&W Pantex has made changes to their management structure in response to the feedback provided from the DOE Office of Health, Safety and Security, and Human Performance Analysis Corporation, survey results. Effective this week, the Employee Concerns Program, No More Surprises, Equal Opportunity Employment, and Ethics departments will all report directly to the office of the General Manager.