

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

March 15, 2013

MEMO TO: Steven Stokes, Acting Technical Director
FROM: Thomas Spatz, Pantex Site Representative
SUBJECT: Pantex Plant Report for Week Ending March 15, 2013

Board Activity: The Board conducted a public hearing in Amarillo, Texas, this week to discuss the safety culture, emergency preparedness and response, nuclear explosive safety, and nuclear facility safety systems at the Pantex plant. Board members P. Winokur, J. Roberson, J. Bader, J. Mansfield, and S. Sullivan received testimony from senior NNSA management, NNSA Production Office, and B&W Pantex management.

Positive Unreviewed Safety Question (USQ) Determination for Lightning Standoff: This week, B&W Pantex paused operations in several Bay facilities when they declared a positive USQ determination related to lightning standoff distances. B&W has a contract with Boeing to develop facility-specific models to analyze design basis lightning hazards described in the Sitewide Safety Analysis Report. (See report for 7/2/2011.) B&W received the first Boeing report recently and discovered that the lightning standoff distance evaluated by Boeing was one quarter of an inch more than the standoff distance in the existing safety basis. The lightning standoff is marked with tape on the floor around the inside perimeter of the bay. B&W has submitted an authorization basis change package to NPO and has already moved the tape in the affected facilities one quarter inch further from the wall.

Potential Inadequacy of the Safety Analysis (PISA) for Unanalyzed Hazard: This week, B&W Pantex declared a PISA for impact and electro-static discharge (ESD) hazards for the Linear Accelerator (LINAC) facilities. While performing the periodic assessment of control implementation, the control owner for LINAC tooling discovered that the hazards associated with the film carts and film stands had not been analyzed as an assembly in the LINAC Safety Analysis Report. B&W placed do-not-use tags on the film carts and film stands and removed them from the facilities. B&W paused all LINAC operations utilizing these carts and stands. B&W authorization basis personnel are performing USQ determination and developing an ESS.

Anomalous Unit: B&W declared an anomalous unit when an unusual noise was heard during assembly operations. (See report for 3/1/13 and 3/8/13.) This week, the project team (NNSA, B&W, and the Design Agency) continue to meet to determine the path forward. The project team determined that immediate action to cover the unit with a plastic bag needed to be performed to maintain the safe and stable configuration.