

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

July 26, 2013

MEMO To: Steven Stokes, Acting Technical Director
FROM: Thomas Spatz, Pantex Site Representative
SUBJECT: Pantex Plant Report for Week Ending July 26, 2013

Pause Nuclear Explosive Operations: This week, Babcock & Wilcox Pantex (B&W) Nuclear and Explosives Surety personnel paused bay operations on one weapon program. B&W Process Engineering personnel have revised some of the procedures for this weapon program. These procedure changes automatically require Nuclear and Explosives Surety review. B&W Nuclear and Explosives Surety personnel could not approve the procedure changes based on preliminary information from the Approved Equipment Program (AEP) Module 2 Nuclear Explosive Safety (NES) Master Study, which resulted in the pause of operations.

B&W issued two letters to National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA), Assistant Deputy Administrator for Stockpile Management, and the NNSA Production Office (NPO) Manager to address technical issues associated with a possible pre-start finding in the AEP Module 2 NES Master Study. In these letters, B&W identified a bay operation on this weapon program as having the potential for nuclear explosive safety consequences. Additionally, NNSA has completed a NES Operational Safety Review (OSR) of this weapon program. The Site Representative observed deliberations by the OSR team that focused on the letters and the possible pre-start finding from the AEP Module 2 NES Master Study. During deliberations, the OSR team concurred with the possible pre-start finding from the AEP Module 2 NES Master Study. NNSA has not approved the AEP Module 2 Master Study report even though the study ended in May 2013. Late in the week, B&W is working to resume operations under the approved existing Nuclear Explosive Safety authorization.

Pause Nuclear Explosive Operations: This week, B&W paused nuclear explosive operations on another weapon program due to information from the Design Agency. The Design Agency informally communicated (outside the Engineering Authorization System) to B&W that they need to review and clarify information in the Weapon Response Summary document. B&W paused operations on specific configurations of this weapon program while awaiting this clarification to be transmitted officially with an Information Engineering Release. Late in the week, B&W resumed operations on this weapon program and will evaluate the new information when it is formally transmitted.

Electro-Static Dissipative (ESD) Flooring: This week, a second newly poured ESD floor failed acceptance testing. (See report for 7/19/2013.) B&W and the subcontractor are still evaluating the cause of the failures and the path forward to repair the floors.

Integrated Program Planning and Execution System (IPRO) Cutover: This week, B&W restarted all operations utilizing the new IPRO computer system. B&W is performing a staged restart to work out any bugs in the programming. B&W has accomplished material moves successfully, and they continue to gradually increase user activity on the system. This week, NPO issued their Software Quality Assurance Assessment report for IPRO. NPO stated that all objectives had been met except three that could not be completed until operations return to normal.