

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

August 2, 2013

MEMO To: Steven Stokes, Acting Technical Director
FROM: Thomas Spatz, Pantex Site Representative
SUBJECT: Pantex Plant Report for Week Ending August 2, 2013

Board Staff Activities: This week, R. Tontodonato was at the Pantex Plant to observe and evaluate Site Representative activities.

Low Water Level Alarm: This week, Babcock & Wilcox Pantex (B&W) entered Limiting Conditions for Operation (LCO) 3.4.4D, *Low Water Level Alarm System Indicator is found to be Inoperable on a tank with an Operable Diesel Fire Pump/Tank Combination*, on three separate occasions. On the first occurrence, B&W was flowing water to perform planned maintenance on the High Pressure Fire Loop when the Emergency Services Dispatch Center (ESDC) received the low level alarm. The Fire Department responded to measure the water level in the tank and reported it to be between 13'6" and 14'. The alarm is set at 12'8". The ESDC reported that the alarm was reset, and the tank level was measured again before exiting the LCO. On the second occurrence, B&W was not flowing water. The Fire Department responded to measure the tank level and found it to be at 13'7". B&W reset the tank level and exited the LCO. Approximately two hours later, the ESDC reported receiving the low level alarm again and entered the LCO for the third time. B&W had not exited the LCO at the time this report was issued. B&W is manually measuring the tank level every shift (24 hours) as instructed by the LCO. The last reported measurement of the tank level was 14'1". B&W is determining the path forward to replace the tank level indicator.

Pause Nuclear Explosive Operations: This week, B&W paused nuclear explosive operations in one facility when the Production Technicians could not apply a vacuum during an operational step. Nuclear explosive safety, process engineering personnel, and the production section manager determined that the unit was in a safe and stable configuration. B&W discovered that the ability to apply a vacuum was not operational within the entire building which houses several nuclear facilities. B&W had completed a large-scale maintenance effort that required a power outage to this building, and returned the building to service on July 15, 2013. Until Wednesday of this week, B&W had not needed to apply a vacuum for a nuclear explosive operation in this building, due to startup issues with the Integrated Program Planning and Execution System (IPRO) software and tooling cleanup associated with humidity control problems during the power outage. B&W has restored vacuum capability to the facility and the nuclear explosive operation has resumed. B&W will hold an event critique for this event next week.

Issue G Weapon Response: B&W continues to work on issuing a Justification for Continued Operation (JCO) following the July 8, 2013, release of the draft Issue G weapon response summary document. NNSA has issued a "Code Blue" for production impacts from the release of Issue G. According to the *Development and Production Manual*, Chapter 2.2, a Code Blue entails the creation of a response team that is activated for any identified problem that can result in a day-to-day unrecoverable delay to a given activity. Mechanical bay operations and satellite operations on this program remain paused. This week, B&W's management review of the JCO identified issues that the Authorization Basis personnel are still working to correct. B&W is still revising procedures to incorporate new controls associated with the weapon response, and Production Technicians are being trained on the procedure changes.