

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

October 18, 2013

MEMO To: Steven Stokes, Acting Technical Director
FROM: Thomas Spatz, Pantex Site Representative
SUBJECT: Pantex Plant Report for Week Ending October 18, 2013

Resumption of Operations: As of Tuesday this week, all facilities were placed into a minimum safe and secure configuration in preparation for a shutdown. Following the passage of appropriations legislation, Babcock & Wilcox Pantex (B&W) has cancelled their plans to fully suspend plant operations in a minimum safe and secure configuration and to furlough workers. B&W has developed a detailed recovery plan and transmitted the plan to the National Nuclear Security Administration Production Office (NPO). B&W is stating that it will take three weeks to achieve pre-shutdown operational status. B&W has communicated to NNSA that there will be an impact to the scope of work for fiscal year 2014, and that they will work with NNSA to prioritize start-up operations.

Move Right Event: This week, B&W held an event critique for a possible facility overload of high explosives. A B&W Nuclear and Explosive Surety expert was comparing the material in facilities based on the Integrated Program Planning and Execution (IPRO) system database with the Maximum Limits List, when he discovered a facility which appeared to have exceeded the high explosive limit. The Nuclear and Explosive Surety expert contacted the Operations Center, which in turn contacted the Production Section Manager to correct the possible overload. The event critique was scheduled when this overload condition appeared to be a possible Technical Safety Requirement (TSR) violation. B&W also discovered that the new IPRO Move Right module safety software program allowed three high explosive moves into the potentially overloaded facility on the same day the potential overload was discovered.

At the event critique, B&W Authorization Basis personnel determined that this event was not a TSR violation or a facility overload because of the particular category of high explosives involved. Prior to the implementation of IPRO, the old Move Right program did not track the this particular category of explosives because there was no TSR-related facility limit for this category of explosives. The new IPRO Move Right module tracks this category of explosives for accountability purposes but not as a TSR control.

At the critique, the B&W Move Right subject matter expert (SME) stated that the new IPRO Move Right module does not distinguish between categories of High Explosives and should have prevented the moves. The SME explained that there are 32 rules applied to seven different move transactions. The SME explained that the combination of move transaction and rule related to this event was not available to the Production Technicians (PTs) until about a week before the event. The SME also stated that the particular combination of transaction and rule used in this event had not been turned on from the time of the IPRO cut-over (July) until a half hour before the event critique, which explains why the IPRO Move Right module did not prevent the moves. The PTs had been performing explosive moves using other transactions where this rule had been applied since the IPRO cutover. The Site Representative expressed concern at the event critique that a condition of the credited control for these moves had not been turned on for several months while material moves were performed. B&W has performed an extent of condition review and determined that no facilities have exceeded the high explosive limits and that all other rules in the new IPRO Move Right module are turned on.