

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

October 2, 2020

TO: Christopher J. Roscetti, Technical Director
FROM: Miranda McCoy, Resident Inspector
SUBJECT: Pantex Plant Activity Report for Week Ending October 2, 2020

DNFSB Staff Activity: C. Berg provided onsite resident inspector augmentation, observed process verifications by the issue resolution group for electrostatic discharge hazards affecting one weapon program (see 9/13/19 report), and continued conducting interviews on the topics of training and conduct of operations.

35-Account Material: CNS previously identified that approximately fifteen different types of 35-account gloves had not passed all electrostatic dissipative (ESD) testing requirements, and issued a stop work event for operations with the affected gloves (see 9/25/2020 report). This week, CNS revised the stop work event to discard nine of the affected glove types and allow certain lots of the remaining 35-account glove types to be used for ESD operations based on a review of historical data that indicated these lots had passed resistivity testing requirements. CNS will pursue resistivity testing of the remaining 35-account glove types and lots.

The gloves reauthorized for ESD operations are permitted to be used in multiple layers. CNS subsequently identified resistivity testing of these gloves in multiple layer configurations had not been performed for certain glove lots. As a result, the stop work event was again revised to prohibit ESD operations with these affected 35-account glove lots and require their removal from operational facilities until further testing is conducted.

Emergency Lighting: While entering a nuclear explosive cell for an unrelated reason, a CNS facility representative and a maintenance supervisor identified that six out of the eight emergency lights in the facility were not functioning. The emergency lights are subject to a monthly preventive maintenance (PM) activity; the last PM, performed approximately three weeks ago, determined that the lights were fully functional at that time. The facility representative interviewed technicians who had been performing staging activities in the cell, who asserted the emergency lights were functional the day prior. CNS categorized the event as a degradation of a safety system while not required to be operable.

Lock-Out/Tag-Out (LOTO): A subcontractor performed repairs on the fire suppression system without contacting CNS maintenance to install LOTO controls. The subcontractor—working on high pressure fire loop lead-in replacement for a section of nuclear explosive bays—leak tested the system and identified a leak. The subcontractor proceeded to perform system repairs without contacting CNS for LOTO controls. The CNS LOTO manager previously determined that if the subcontractor needed to repair the system, they would need to contact maintenance or their subcontractor technical representative so that maintenance could install LOTO locks on the applicable post indicator valves. CNS crafts workers noted a subcontractor in a facility attempting to tighten a leaking coupling. The craft workers were unsure as to whether or not they could issue a stop work for a subcontractor, and contacted their safety officer rather than direct the subcontractor to stop work. Based on interviews, the system was determined to not be pressurized while the subcontractor performed the repairs.