

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

October 22, 2004

MEMORANDUM FOR: J. K. Fortenberry, Technical Director
FROM: T. Hunt, Pantex Site Representative
SUBJECT: Pantex Plant Activity Report for Week Ending October 22, 2004

Electrical Near Miss. A subcontractor cut into a live 480 volt power line this week while using a hand held reciprocating saw. Although the worker was uninjured, arcing was noted and the circuit breaker tripped. The subcontractor was in the process of cutting all conduit on the exterior of a building in preparation for demolition. The electrical junction box where the incident occurred is located about three feet from the building but does not provide power to it; instead it feeds a satellite facility. The procedure step required all conduit lines outside the building to be cut. There appeared to be some confusion as to what the junction box in question actually serviced and whether it was in the scope of the procedure. The cut conduit was last verified deenergized 10 days before the actual cutting took place. This type of occurrence continues to frustrate BWXT management which has seen a series of similar events over the past couple months. Additional training on lockout/tagout and increased oversight by BWXT following the previous events has not resolved the problem.

Suspect/Counterfeit Parts. On Wednesday, BWXT reported that suspect/counterfeit bolts were discovered during receipt inspection of four relief valves procured to quality level 1. The suspect items were part of an order involving several valves of various sizes that had been sent to a local vendor for refurbishment and were being returned to the plant following repair and testing. The approved qualified vendor had sent the valves to an unqualified vendor for testing due to lack of proper equipment. Some of the valves were destined for service in the Pantex Plant steam system. All of the valves involved with this refurbishment order were rejected by receiving personnel, the valves were quarantined, and no suspect/counterfeit material was introduced into the plant population. BWXT is investigating its process that allows qualified suppliers to subcontract work to unqualified vendors.

B53 Disassembly Project. PXSO recently requested that BWXT participate in the B53 disassembly project and provide cost estimates for (1) operations conducted at both the Pantex Plant and the Device Assembly Facility, (2) design and procurement of tooling, and (3) development of authorization basis documents. BWXT predicts the entire project will take 27 months to complete – 15 months to prepare and receive authorization to proceed, and 12 months to disassemble all units – at a cost of about \$16 million. Currently, there is no funding in the BWXT budget to support the dismantlement effort.

Technical Safety Requirement (TSR) Controls Implementation. This week BWXT posted a revision to the TSR Applicability Matrix that added 25 more controls to the list of effective TSRs. Currently there are 56 upgraded controls that have been approved by PXSO and are effective. BWXT is currently processing an authorization basis change for the next 40 controls and expects to have a total of 96 controls effective in the near future. BWXT had forecast in its project plan that 150 controls would be implemented, verified, and effective to date.