

# DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

April 19, 2002

**MEMORANDUM FOR:** J. K. Fortenberry, Technical Director  
**FROM:** H. Waugh and W. White, Pantex Site Representatives  
**SUBJECT:** Pantex Plant Activity Report for Week Ending April 19, 2002

**DNFSB Activity Summary:** H. Waugh was on leave Tuesday and was on site for the remainder of the week. W. White was on site all week.

**W80 Observations:** On Monday, the Board's site representative observed a W80 nuclear explosive package staged on an unstable work table in the operating bay. All table legs did not contact the floor leading to movement in the table whenever personnel would lean on the table or otherwise exert force on its surface. Technicians in the facility noted the table was to be replaced at some point in the future with a table from another bay. According to production technicians, the table had been stabilized previously with pieces of cardboard under the legs, but the cardboard was removed during a sweep to eliminate unnecessary combustible materials from the facility. It is not clear why BWXT personnel ever considered it appropriate to conduct nuclear explosive operations or stage main charge (insensitive) explosives on an unstable work surface.

After the concern was brought to the attention of BWXT personnel and the ASO facility representative, BWXT personnel took prompt action to stabilize the table with a piece of metal. BWXT evaluated the table in question and determined that the problem was with an uneven floor. BWXT took additional action on Monday afternoon to begin evaluation of all nuclear explosive facilities to determine whether this problem exists elsewhere. Where the problem exists, the table will be stabilized with small metallic plates inserted under the table leg(s). BWXT is currently evaluating the feasibility of an adjustable table. [II.A]

**Assessment of System Drawings for Vital Safety Systems:** On Tuesday, BWXT began an assessment to validate the ability of the plant system to deliver appropriate system drawings for vital safety systems. This availability of system drawings, or lack thereof, was identified as a weakness during several Phase I system assessments done in response to Board Recommendation 2000-2, *Configuration Management, Vital Safety Systems*. The assessment will include document and record reviews as well as field observations comparing available documents with installed systems. The assessment is expected to conclude in early May. In addition to the cross-cutting assessment of system drawings, BWXT also plans to conduct a Phase II assessment of systems used to monitor temperature in pit staging areas. This assessment will begin after the assessment of drawings is complete and, according to an April 2002 letter from DOE to the Board, should be finished by September 2002. [I.A]

**Training Program for W79 Procedure Readers:** BWXT has revised its training and qualification requirements for procedure readers on W79 nuclear explosive operations. Readers for this program are no longer required to be qualified to perform hands-on work. They are also not required to be enrolled in the personnel assurance program. A separate training and qualification program has been developed that provides an overview of the functions of a reader, a walk through or video review of the W79 dismantlement process, a walk through of W79 dismantlement procedures, and briefings on the job restrictions for readers who are not fully qualified to perform hands-on work. Readers will not receive the same in-depth training given to qualified W79 production technicians; it is not clear to what extent the value of the reader-worker process may be diminished by having a reader who has not received this same in-depth training on the dismantlement process. Implementation of the new reader qualifications is expected following observations by nuclear explosive safety personnel later this month. [II.A]