

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

June 21, 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 June 21, 2002

DNFSB Activity Summary: H. Waugh was out of the office for the week.

Fire Alarm Response: On Wednesday, a fire alarm from Building 12-69, a non-nuclear facility, was received at the fire dispatch center but the fire department was not dispatched. After personnel from 12-69 evacuated, someone called the operations center to inform them personnel were accounted for at the muster point. The plant shift superintendent who answered the call had not heard the fire department leaving (the fire department and the operations center are in the same building). He called the fire department to ask if they had responded to 12-69. The fire department was dispatched to 12-69 shortly thereafter. The alarm was determined to be a false alarm.

This is the fourth time in the past two years that the Pantex plant contractor has failed to respond to an alarm signal that required response. In this case, as in two of the others, the alarm was from a non-nuclear facility. However, the same alarm systems, dispatchers, and response processes are used for all facilities at the plant, including nuclear facilities. Per Pantex Plant Technical Safety Requirements (5.6.3 and 5.6.33), BWXT is responsible for establishing a fire protection program that, in part, establishes and maintains Fire Department response criteria and remote alarms to the fire station. However, adequate response criteria and well-maintained remote alarms serve little purpose if the dispatcher fails to initiate a fire department response upon receipt of an alarm.

In this case, as in the other occurrences, the Pantex plant contractor identified significant ongoing distractions (trouble alarms, handling calls unrelated to dispatch responsibilities, etc.) in the fire dispatch office. One of the immediate corrective actions taken by BWXT following this occurrence includes having two people on duty at all times for fire dispatch responsibility. BWXT also initiated additional corrective actions to evaluate reducing the scope of responsibility of the on-duty dispatcher. This supplements corrective actions taken after the prior occurrences which included requiring two dispatchers when the day shift dispatcher was not on duty. [II.A]

Vital Safety System Assessments: Last Friday, BWXT briefed the closure of an assessment completed in response to the Board's Recommendation 2000-2, *Configuration Management, Vital Safety Systems*. The assessment involved an in-depth look at the availability of adequate system drawings for vital safety systems at Pantex. Assessment team members included on-site personnel as well as subject matter experts from other DOE sites, such as SRS, Y-12 and INEEL. In general, the team found that an adequate configuration management system is in place for maintaining system drawings. Accurate system drawings appeared to exist for all vital safety systems, although the process required to identify the applicable drawings, change notices, redlines, etc. was not necessarily user-friendly for the casual user. The team did find a significant number of design change notices posted against existing drawings and noted that no process existed to manage the backlog of drawing changes. The team also noted that the prioritization of drawing updates was not driven by the safety classification of the system.

A phase II assessment of the pit temperature monitoring systems will begin later this summer and will conclude prior to the end of the fiscal year. An assessment plan has not yet been developed. [II.A]