

## DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

**MEMO TO:** Timothy J. Dwyer, Technical Director  
**FROM:** Timothy Hunt and Rory Rauch, Pantex Site Representatives  
**DATE:** 20 March 2009  
**SUBJECT:** Pantex Plant Weekly Report

**W88 SS-21 Authorization:** This week, PXSO transmitted to B&W Pantex the NNSA readiness assessment (RA) report on W88 SS-21 cell and mass properties operations. The RA team documented no pre-start or post-start findings. Of note, one RA team member observed several deficiencies with the conduct of the emergency response drill and concluded these deficiencies warranted categorization as a post-start finding. The RA team lead disagreed with this designation and downgraded the finding to an observation. The positions of both parties were documented in the report. PXSO has requested that B&W Pantex review both positions and provide a report addressing the identified issues and any corrective actions that may be warranted. Authorization and commencement of W88 SS-21 cell and mass properties operations is expected next week.

**Facility Crane Malfunction:** Last Friday, a crane that was transferring a weapon from its shipping container to an assembly cart malfunctioned. The crane trolley stopped moving transversely along its rail and the assembly cart had to be moved under the load to complete the operation and put the unit in a safe and stable configuration. The crane was then moved to a far end of the bay—away from the unit—to await troubleshooting and repair. Maintenance personnel found that a key connecting the trolley shaft to the reduction gear had slipped out during the move and the part was reinstalled. After a functional test, the crane was returned to service.

**Compressed Gas Cylinder Storage Racks:** An inspection this week found that seven compressed gas cylinder storage racks in the Zone 12 South material access area were beyond their maintenance due dates. In addition, one storage rack had a blank maintenance sticker. An investigation determined that the in-service inspection (ISI) requirements for the racks were discontinued when a documented safety analysis change deleted the racks as a credited design feature. However, the ISIs were never deleted from the tooling design document for the racks; thus, the ISI should have been performed per production tooling support procedure. The ISIs were never completed because racks with compressed gas cylinders were considered “in process,” a maintenance caveat that is intended for maintenance that expires while a unit is in process, not for passive storage conditions such as this. The maintenance stickers will be removed and an extent-of-condition assessment will be performed to identify other instances in which the “in process” designation is being misapplied. Also, one location being used for cylinder storage was not approved and did not have the proper posting (Non-flammable Compressed Gas Storage Area). B&W Pantex subsequently moved the rack with three cylinders to an authorized area and provided reinforcement training to the material handlers.

**Procedure Adherence and Adequacy:** This week, separation testing operations were suspended when technicians found that a piece of tester equipment was not procedurally authorized, as it should have been, for the program under test. The technicians had used the procedure for the first time last week without recognizing the error. The procedure omission was recognized by the procedure custodian several months earlier, but the procedure revision experienced several delays and was not issued in time for the subject operations. The revision was issued this week, allowing the technicians to resume operations.