

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

January 5, 2001

MEMORANDUM FOR: J. K. Fortenberry, Technical Director

FROM: H. Waugh and W. White, Pantex Site Representatives

SUBJECT: Pantex Plant Activity Report for Week Ending January 5, 2001

DNFSB Activity Summary: The Pantex Plant was closed on Monday for New Year's Day. H. Waugh was on site Tuesday through Friday. W. White was on annual leave on Tuesday, on site Wednesday and Thursday, and in Albuquerque on Friday.

Robotic Weigh and Leak Check System: DOE released its final report on the readiness assessment of the Robotic Weigh and Leak Check System in Building 12-116. The final report noted three pre-start findings and four post-start findings. The most significant finding (coverage of computer procedures under the unreviewed safety question process) was discussed in a previous weekly. The other two pre-start findings were as follows:

- Control of combustible materials was inadequate. The readiness assessment team found several examples of combustibles in the bay that were not needed for shift operations.
- Procedures were not used effectively. One procedure was out of date and the listing of procedures was not the approved, controlled list.

Post-start findings were identified in the areas of configuration management, conduct of operations, and maintenance. The team recommended to the DOE Amarillo Area Office Manager that he authorize start up of the system upon closure of the pre-start findings. ^[III.A]

W88 Surveillance Program: MHC has submitted closure packages to DOE for all pre-start findings that resulted from the nuclear explosive safety study and the DOE readiness assessment of the W88 existing operations reauthorization project. The change to the Master Authorization Agreement is in process. W88 operations are scheduled to start up on Monday, January 8, approximately one week later than planned. ^[III.A]

Separation Testing Restart: The Separation Testing Restart Project Team issued its project plan for restarting separation testing in Building 12-50 for the W76 and W88 programs. Restart is expected to be authorized sometime this summer. Both the W76 SS-21 project and the W88 existing operations reauthorization project excluded separation testing from the scope of their activities due to uncertainties in the lightning protection controls that might be needed in Building 12-50. Sandia National Laboratories has now completed its lightning protection evaluation of Building 12-50. ^[III.A]

W78 Step 1 SS-21 Project: The W78 SS-21 Step 1 program continues to experience delays. Issues with requirements specifications from the national laboratories, changing hazards analysis tables (with new, anticipated scenarios) and potential tooling issues may delay start up of operations under the Step 1 program until early FY02. The current, approved schedule proposes start up in July 2001. Any delays in completing the Step 1 process will likely be carried over into the full SS-21 program. The current schedule, as defined in the integrated weapons activity plan, shows start up of W78 SS-21 operations in FY05. ^[III.A]