

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

July 14, 2000

MEMORANDUM FOR: J. K. Fortenberry, Technical Director

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

SUBJECT: Pantex Plant Activity Report for Week Ending July 14, 2000

DNFSB Activity Summary: W. White was on site all week. H. Waugh was on site Monday, Thursday, and Friday, and on leave Tuesday-Wednesday. T. Dwyer was on site Monday-Tuesday, and on military leave Wednesday-Friday.

B61 Mod 10 Project: The B61 Mod 10 Project NESS Report was briefed to DP-1[acting] and NNSA-1 last Friday. On Tuesday DP-20 approved the report, but inserted several conditions of approval (COAs) on the operation. The 1st condition explicitly limited authorization to one particular unit, specifying that any future operations of this nature would require separate authorizations. Four other COAs were also delineated, although it is not clear that they provided any value. Meanwhile, AAO has been reviewing the closure packages from the DOE Readiness Assessment; late this week, DOE-AL approved the Authorization Agreement. The operation is now scheduled to begin at midnight on Monday, July 17th [Tuesday graves shift].^[II.A]

Canned Secondary Assembly (CSA) Issues: The Site Representatives walked down the interim combustible controls imposed on W78 repair operations and discussed the controls with W78 PTs. With the new combustible stand-off restrictions, it is still possible to work on 2 units in the bay (which was the case observed). Combustibles were at a minimum, and stand-off distances appeared well implemented, with 1 exception: a large wooden crate designed to hold a piece of W78 test equipment had been identified to the PTs as non-combustible, by virtue of an exterior coat of fire-retardant paint. Accordingly, the PTs were under no constraints with respect to stand-off distances for this crate. The Site Representatives found it difficult to believe that the crate, which was splintering on the corners and lined with felt padding, was not combustible.^[II.A]

Lightning Issues: The contractor Readiness Assessment for the lightning protection BIO module concluded this week. Seven pre-start findings were tentatively identified [2 will be reexamined before the final report is issued]. Among the more important findings were a lack of knowledge among some weapons program PTs, loose bonds in a facility, equipment that violated stand-off distances, and surveillance procedures that could not be followed. Important post-start findings and observations included a lack of resources to implement BIO surveillance requirements [i.e., a general expectation that the maintenance backlog will expand], and system design descriptions that do not include BIO controls related to those systems. The DOE Readiness Assessment is tentatively scheduled to begin July 24th.^[II.A]

Electrical Safety Issues: M&H began an internal self-assessment of the authority having jurisdiction for the electrical safety program at Pantex. Key elements of an adequate electrical safety program [the authority having jurisdiction and an electrical safety committee] do not appear to be adequately implemented and funded at Pantex.^[II.A]