

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

October 9, 1998

MEMORANDUM FOR: G.W. Cunningham, Technical Director

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

SUBJECT: Pantex Plant Activity Report for Week Ending October 9, 1998

DNFSB Activity Summary: H. Waugh and T. Dwyer were on site all week. W. Andrews, F. Bamdad, D. Burnfield, M. Forsbacka, H. Massie, and OE R. West were on site Tuesday thru Thursday reviewing W62 and W87 safety bases.

W62/W87 Safety Basis Review: The Board staff reviewed the hazard analysis, controls identification and implementation process at Pantex for W62 Disassembly and Inspection (D&I) and W87 D&I and Life Extension Program (LEP) operations, as well as various Pantex safety basis upgrade initiatives. The staff found that the safety bases for ongoing W62 and W87 activities are ill-defined, not well-controlled, and not well-integrated with the facility and sitewide authorization bases. The program development process (from conception through readiness reviews) remains disjointed and is apparently being driven via a rogue DOE-AL ISP report and guide. Further, the budget process for work to be performed at the Pantex Plant is not based upon a prioritized risk system. Thus, important risk reduction work, such as the upgrade of the Basis for Interim Operation (BIO), is under-funded; or, in the case of the national laboratories, unfunded. This will adversely impact progress on the lightning, transportation and fire BIO upgrades, in particular. It also appears that there has been no consideration of out-year budgeting for the creation of the Final Safety Analysis Report that should supersede the BIO.

W62 D&I Program: Last week, senior M&H management issued a letter proposing a W62 path forward, essentially presenting a minority opinion to the expected Project Team SS-21 Attribute Review Report. AAO has withheld concurrence on this letter pending submission of the Project Team Report; at a minimum they will be forwarded together, although AAO hopes they can be melded into a single position. The Site Representatives have reviewed the letter and find that several attributes presented as "incorporated in the program" are, in fact, not complete.

W79 Dismantlement Program: The W79 Dismantlement Program Safety Evaluation (SE) was conducted this week. One "stop work" was encountered, due to incomplete removal of a penetration to the cell Faraday cage. This finding was corrected before resumption of the SE. Two post-starts (involving radiation safety technician techniques and waste characterization) were also identified. The SE Team also provided 26 potential enhancements, although several of them appear unimplementable unless the Design Agencies change the WSS/other process specifications.

Pit Issues: The monthly Sealed Insert (SI) Program Review took place on Thursday. M&H has now received 6 SIs from a small initial order (30). Flange problems required a certain amount of local rework. Procurement plans for a pilot lot of 500 SIs are in progress, leading ultimately to a procurement total of 13,000. Discussion of procurement activities revealed that M&H may not have sufficient qualified staff to manage procurement of 13,000 units, or even the 500 unit pilot lot. All pit programs continue to suffer from lack of an integrated program and weak leadership.