

## DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

**MEMO TO:** Timothy Dwyer, Technical Director  
**FROM:** Tom Spatz, Pantex Site Representative  
**SUBJECT:** Pantex Plant Report for Week Ending November 23, 2012

**Urgent Nuclear Explosive Safety (NES) Concern:** This week, NNSA sent a letter to B&W Pantex approving the four-hour clear-weather window compensatory measure for resuming nuclear explosive operations with the PT4183 Radio Frequency (RF) Tester. The Approved Equipment Program (AEP) Master Study members had characterized the use of the PT4183 RF tester as an “Urgent NES Concern”. (See report for 11/16/12.) The AEP Master Study is ongoing and will resume deliberations next week.

**Fire Barrier Penetration Seals:** This week, B&W Pantex started a review of the technical baseline for the fire barrier system as part of the extent of condition of the fire penetration seal issue. Last week, B&W Pantex issued a Potential Inadequacy in the Safety Analysis (PISA) when several cell facilities were found to have suspect fire penetration seals. (See report for 11/16/12.) B&W fire protection engineers are performing a document review of all fire barrier systems and structural design change proposals to determine the exact material used and the installation details for each fire penetration. In some cases, they have not been able to identify specific information on the exact material used. B&W fire protection engineers designate the seals to be suspect for facilities where no information could be found regarding the material used or where the material appears not to be fire-rated.

B&W fire protection engineers have not finished the extent of condition review, but have identified approximately seven cell facilities and twenty-one bay facilities with suspect fire penetration seals. B&W Pantex has paused all operations in the affected facilities. B&W Pantex will request a second Justification for Continued Operation (JCO) for this new set of facilities. The first JCO was issued in August, 2012, and is scheduled to expire on February 28, 2013. (See report for 11/9/12 for status update of existing JCO.) B&W Pantex will not be able to replace the fire penetration seals in the recently identified facilities within the time-frame of the existing JCO.

**Deluge Fire System Failure:** This week, B&W maintenance personnel finished replacing all the deluge fire suppression system solenoid valves. This valve replacement effort began when B&W Pantex experienced two failures of solenoid valves; one on demand and one during preventive maintenance operations. (See report for 10/19/12 and 10/26/12.)