

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

April 25, 2014

MEMO TO: Steven Stokes, Technical Director
FROM: Thomas Spatz, Pantex Site Representative
SUBJECT: Pantex Plant Report for Week Ending April 25, 2014

DNFSB Staff on Site: R. Arnold was at the Pantex Plant this week to observe facility walkdowns by Consolidated Nuclear Security, LLC.

Fire Detection Trouble Signal: Babcock & Wilcox Technical Services Pantex, LLC (B&W) Emergency Services Dispatch Center reported receiving a fault signal from the LaMarche battery charger for one building containing several nuclear explosive operating facilities. The LaMarche battery charger is used to charge the batteries supplying power to the Det-Tronics control panel in case of a loss of power event. B&W Facility Representative entered the appropriate Limiting Conditions for Operation and the Fire Department silenced and tagged the control panel. B&W electrical technicians replaced the circuit boards in the LaMarche charger and the fault signal was reset. B&W responded quickly and exited the LCO within ten hours. B&W reported this event as a performance degradation of a safety system when it is required to be operable.

High Pressure Fire Loop (HPFL) Hardware Tryout Update: This week, B&W placed the two of the three new, soon to be Safety-Class, diesel fire pumps on line. B&W will observe the performance of the new diesel pumps for a 90-day trial period before crediting them in the safety basis. The new diesel pumps will start automatically when there is a loss of pressure in the HPFL. B&W is maintaining pressure in the system with one of the new jockey pumps, while they are diagnosing the problem with the breaker tripping on the second new jockey pump. (See report for 4/11/2014.) Both of the existing electric pumps are on line and available to provide increased flow rates for maintenance and/or Fire Department flow testing in case the jockey pumps cannot maintain pressure. The new electric maintenance pump is also available, but is manually started when needed.

Loss of Two-Person Control in Zone Coverage Update: The Site Representative observed the Causal Analysis/Mistake Proofing meeting for this event. B&W has not concluded the complete set of corrective actions yet, but has decided to emphasize to the production managers and production section managers the need to perform targeted conduct of operations observations. Independent of the current corrective actions, B&W had planned to implement the targeted observations in response to a formality of operations letter sent to B&W by the NNSA Production Office. (See report for 11/2/2012.) B&W will make two-person control the focus of this month's conduct of operations observations. The Site Representative also noted that, while there is no formal post-operations procedure to exit the facility, there is a reference-use procedure that instructs the Production Technicians (PTs) to place procedures in an approved fire container when the facility is unoccupied. The PT was attempting to comply with this requirement when the loss of two-person control occurred.

Special Nuclear Material (SNM) Facility Improvement: B&W has installed a vent in the ceiling of a SNM staging facility that was dripping water from the ceiling. (See report for 11/22/2013.) Other facilities of similar design have ventilation in the Gravel Gertie roof covering. B&W believes that condensation build-up on the rubber-based liner was the cause of the water dripping. B&W is closely monitoring the humidity in the facility.