

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

June 20, 2014

MEMO TO: Steven Stokes, Technical Director
FROM: Ben Laake, Acting Pantex Site Representative
SUBJECT: Pantex Plant Report for Week Ending June 20, 2014

DNFSB Staff on Site: B. Laake was at the Pantex Plant this week while Tom Spatz was on leave.

High Pressure Fire Loop (HPFL) Lead-in: Babcock & Wilcox Technical Services Pantex, LLC (B&W) production personnel placed a nuclear operations facility in maintenance mode following discovery of a break in the HPFL lead-in to the facility. At the time of the pipe failure, emergency services personnel reported Diesel Pump B at 15-34 started and production personnel reported water around the 12-98 roll up door. The operations center, contacted the 12-98 facility manager, who investigated and found a water leak outside the west side of 12-98. The facility manager entered the appropriate Limiting Conditions for Operation and placed the affected facilities in maintenance mode. Fire Protection Engineering personnel responded and closed the post-indicator valve, shutting off the leak. During this event, Diesel Pump B at 15-34 started to support HPFL water demand as designed. B&W is reporting this event as a “Safety Structure/System/Component Degradation, Performance degradation of any Safety Class SSC, or any support system that is required for safety operation of the SC or SS SSCs, that prevents satisfactory performance of its design function when it is required to be operable.”

Improper Move of Radioactive Materials: B&W moved a high explosive (HE) component contaminated with radioactive material to a facility that was not approved to receive radioactive materials. The HE component was dispatched from an explosive staging facility and arrived at the HE machining facility. As the custody check was completed, personnel noted that the component was labeled as radioactive material, but the facility was not posted as a radioactive material area (RMA). B&W radiation safety personnel were contacted and determined that the component should be returned to the point of origination. Later, B&W radiation safety personnel properly posted the HE machining facility as an RMA and the component was transported.

Operations Resumed and Paused: B&W resumed operations on a unit with a crack in a non-energetic component (see report for 4/18/2014) but had to pause again when components would not fit properly. Although operations were originally paused on this unit during disassembly, B&W has determined that continuing disassembly of this unit could require extensive changes to procedures and tooling, due to the cracked component. To free the facility for other work, B&W began executing a nuclear explosive engineering procedure to assemble the unit to a configuration approved for transportation and staging; however, the components would not fit as planned and operations were again paused. B&W and the design agency are considering options.

Pause in Operations: B&W paused operations in one nuclear explosive operating facility when the production technicians (PTs) discovered damaged components. The PTs determined the unit is in a safe and stable configuration. B&W has contacted the design agency and is investigating the cause of the damage and how to repair the unit. B&W paused operations in another facility due to failure of anti-rotation pins on a workstand during a disassembly operation. The PTs were able to partially reassemble the unit to put it in a safe and stable configuration before pausing operations. B&W has paused all operations using this particular workstand while they perform an extent of condition review.