

## DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

March 27, 2020

**TO:** Christopher J. Roscetti, Technical Director  
**FROM:** Miranda McCoy, Resident Inspector  
**SUBJECT:** Pantex Plant Activity Report for Week Ending March 27, 2020

**COVID-19 Preparedness:** A federally led pandemic advisory group has been meeting daily to walk through challenges and logistics associated with COVID-19 response. As of this week, CNS has not modified expectations for employees or production, but has implemented a widespread telework policy that allows CNS employees to work remotely, provided they can adequately perform their job functions while doing so. NPO personnel are primarily working remotely, with a contingent of facility representatives continuing to provide onsite oversight.

**Documented Safety Analysis (DSA):** Last week, NPO approved a safety basis supplement (SBS) for snow loading affecting nuclear explosive and nuclear material facility structures. SBSs are standalone DSA documents that implement controls outside the safety analysis report and technical safety requirement documents. The snow loading SBS directly implements the compensatory measures implemented by a justification for continued operations (JCO) approved in March of last year (see 3/29/19 report). Due to competing priorities, CNS has not completed the necessary analysis to determine that all facility structures can withstand snow loading when considering the potential for drift. CNS anticipates that the snow loading SBS will remain active and implement the identified compensatory measures until a new calculation and any necessary structural upgrades can be completed.

This week, NPO approved a SBS that implements additional compensatory measures for retesting and disassembling two units that failed an electrical test. The new compensatory measures require the use of additional personal protective equipment and testing equipment. The SBS also refers to a number of currently-implemented design features and specific administrative controls in order to ensure safe operations.

NPO reviewed and approved a JCO implementing a compensatory measure to address a mechanical hazard posed to one weapons program. In January, safety analysis engineers declared a potential inadequacy of the safety analysis regarding three impact hazards that were not adequately captured in the hazard analysis report (see 1/10/20 report). The JCO implements one compensatory measure restricting the allowable height of a component during operations.

**Nuclear Explosive Safety (NES):** The resident inspector attended two NES change evaluations (NCE). One NCE evaluated a security-related change. The NCE concluded with one deliberation topic that asserted that the same positive measures discussed during the most recent security NES master study applied to the change in question. The second NCE evaluated a proposal to retest one unit that recently failed an electrical test (see 2/21/20 and 2/14/20 reports). The proposed path forward would allow production technicians to retest the unit up to three additional times. Among other topics, the NCE study group discussed the lack of NES personnel involvement in some of the documentation provided to the group, and whether multiple electrical tests constituted a best practice for hazard reduction or aligned with expectations for redundant electrical testing in the applicable DOE order.