

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

September 18, 2020

TO: Christopher J. Roscetti, Technical Director
FROM: Miranda McCoy, Resident Inspector
SUBJECT: Pantex Plant Activity Report for Week Ending September 18, 2020

DNFSB Staff Activity: A staff review team conducted a teleconference with CNS to discuss lines of inquiry regarding conduct of operations and training of production technicians, quality assurance technicians, production section managers, and nuclear safety officers.

COVID-19 Pandemic: CNS transitioned to Phase 2 of the NNSA COVID-19 Recovery and Re-Entry Plan. Transition requires a local downward trend in COVID-19 cases for fourteen days. The transition allows CNS to resume non-essential travel. All standing order requirements, such as face masks and social distancing precautions onsite, remain in place (see 5/15/20 report).

Emergency Management: The resident inspector attended a quarterly emergency management agreement-in-principle (AIP) meeting. AIP meetings allow NPO and CNS personnel to meet with local government officials and relevant state agencies to discuss emergency exercises, community outreach, and emergency response planning. Among other topics, the group discussed proposed revisions to the emergency planning zone (EPZ) map. CNS revised the EPZ map previously to base section divisions by roads and natural features as opposed to radial slices, which are more difficult to implement (see 12/20/19 report). The proposed revision would further modify divisions to minimize impact on unaffected sectors and simplify traffic control. Local county officials also presented recent natural phenomena incidents in Carson County, including a high wind event last month that resulted in a train derailment.

Safety Basis: NPO reviewed and approved a safety basis change package. The change package revises the hazard analysis report for one weapon program to incorporate a justification for continued operations (JCO). Last year, CNS determined that hazards identified for specific proposed activities were also applicable to the current process; CNS entered this into their new information process and determined that the hazards presented an unreviewed safety question. CNS subsequently developed a JCO to allow resumption of operations, implementing both existing controls and compensatory measures (see 6/28/19 report). In the change package, CNS modifies the control set to include several additional specific administrative controls and a number of design features, such as inherently conductive properties of bonding straps and carts. NPO provided one condition of approval (COA) and five directed changes that clarify language or correct minor errors. The COA requires that CNS revise new specific administrative controls to include performance criteria. NPO is allowing the change package to be posted prior to resolving the COA, and provides approximately one year for resolution of the COA.

Excavation Impacts: CNS is actively conducting a formal root cause analysis to address recent events involving impacts to sources of energy during construction and excavation onsite. CNS has experienced a number of these events, including an impact to a gas line resulting in an operational emergency last summer (see 7/17/20 and 8/23/19 reports). CNS transmitted correspondence to NPO outlining a number of measures CNS is undertaking, including increasing lockout/tagout use and pursuing the procurement of additional locator equipment.