

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

November 24, 2000

MEMORANDUM FOR: J. K. Fortenberry, Technical Director

FROM: H. Waugh and W. White, Pantex Site Representatives

SUBJECT: Pantex Plant Activity Report for Week Ending November 24, 2000

DNFSB Activity Summary: H. Waugh was on site all week. W. White was on leave all the week. The Pantex Plant was closed on Thursday and Friday for the Thanksgiving Holiday.

W88 Independent Review Activities: The revalidation of the W88 Nuclear Explosive Safety Study and the DOE readiness assessment of W88 operations were suspended for the Holiday week and will resume next week.^[II.A]

RTG Storage: MHC and DOE have started initial planning efforts to prepare for DOE Albuquerque's withdrawal of the certification for the DOE 6M shipping container used to store and transport RTGs at Pantex. Options under consideration include approving the container as an on-site shipping container only and writing a justification for continued operation to support current on-site storage and staging operations without off-site certification. Certification has not yet been withdrawn.^[II.A]

W87 Lightning Protection: MHC submitted its final W87 authorization basis changes to support easing some of the lightning protection controls currently in place. DOE reviewed the changes and approved them through a safety evaluation report. As expected, the controls allow most transportation, hoisting, and manifold operations to continue during lightning warnings. The new control scheme does allow certain scenarios where weapons components are the only credited controls. DOE provided three conditions of approval, none of which require any changes to the control scheme. The W87 authorization basis now clearly credits specific weapon components as safety-related controls. The W87 controls for lightning protection are now significantly different than the controls for other weapons programs, especially with respect to transportation. The change control process for these authorization basis changes indicated that a nuclear explosive safety study will be required for final approval. This study is expected to take place in early December.^[II.A]