

## DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

January 22, 1999

**MEMORANDUM FOR:** G. W. Cunningham, Technical Director

**FROM:** T. Dwyer and H. Waugh, Pantex Site Representatives

**SUBJECT:** Pantex Plant Activity Report for Week Ending January 22, 1999

**DNFSB Activity Summary:** H. Waugh and T. Dwyer were on site Tuesday thru Friday. W. Andrews and OE R. West were on site Tuesday thru Friday observing the W87 EE.

**W87 Life Extension Program (LEP):** The Engineering Evaluation for the W87 LEP started this week. Although originally scheduled to begin last Wednesday, it had been delayed by preparation problems, as well as site wide resolution of actions required to prevent or mitigate the potential for fires associated with the use of flammables (due to the recent minor alcohol fire). In order to maintain the schedule for delivery of the first production unit, assembly of 2 Engineering Evaluation/Quality Evaluation weapons is being accomplished prior to approval and implementation of the Hazards Analysis Report (HAR) and Activity Based Control Document (ABCD). The initial Engineering Evaluation operations this week suffered through a series of work stoppages due to problems found with the condition of two required components, as well as the incorrect implementation of the required actions for cleaning evolutions as set forth in the *Justification for Continued Operation Involving Nuclear Explosives Processes and Flammable Solvents*. Once these issues were resolved, the process proceeded, albeit slowly.

**W76 SS-21 Program:** A W76 SS-21 Project Team meeting was held this week. Much of the first session was spent in venting the team's complete and utter frustration at trying to squeeze in all of the necessary reviews and verifications while still meeting the Integrated Weapons Activity Plan (IWAP) schedule established by DOE-AL. The meeting continued through today -- it appears that the schedule the team is developing will result in FPU slipping from October 29<sup>th</sup>, 1999, to November 30<sup>th</sup>, 1999. Given the amount of work remaining, even this revised FPU seems unlikely, and it is doubtful all of the required activity will be completed until the year 2000. On a positive note (from the W76 Project Team's standpoint), the B53 End Cap program, which was competing for the same resources as the W76 Program, has been suspended by the DOE-AL Project Team Lead.

**Lightning Protection:** In Albuquerque on Thursday, SNL made a presentation regarding potential vulnerabilities of full-up units transported during lightning warnings. The audience included M&H, AAO, and DOE-AL management and nuclear explosive safety personnel. Although the tenor of the presentation was that the subject transportation activity was safe/acceptable, the number and type of questions raised during the presentation had the opposite effect. DOE is therefore pursuing development of a Justification for Continued Operation (JCO) regarding this subject, in order to preclude the necessity of stopping all full-up unit transportation activities during lightning warnings.