

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

August 14,1998

MEMORANDUM FOR: G.W. Cunningham, Technical Director

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

SUBJECT: Pantex Plant Activity Report for Week Ending August 14, 1998

DNFSB Activity Summary: H. Waugh was on site all week. T. Dwyer was on Military Leave all week. T. Davis and W. White were on site Tuesday-Friday observing the NES Electrical Tester Master Study (Part I).

W79 Cell Dissolution: W79 dissolutions resumed again this week after internal parts associated with the Workstation were reworked and necessary approvals were obtained. The restart began Tuesday evening. The dissolution was completed and the pit packaged by Thursday night. The next unit is scheduled to begin the dissolution process Sunday night.

NES Electrical Tester Master Study (Part I): The Electrical Equipment Control Program (EECP) Nuclear Explosive Safety (NES) Master Study began this week at Pantex. M&H and SNL gave presentations on the programs, standards, and procedures that govern the design, procurement, fabrication, control, etc., of electrical equipment used in nuclear explosive areas at Pantex. M&H also presented the results of a hazards analysis that evaluated the effectiveness of these programs, standards, and procedures. Issues raised by the study group during the first week include the lack of direction regarding identification of credible abnormal environments for test equipment and the lack of an independent internal oversight function at SNL. In addition, while presenting the set of controls evaluated in the hazards analysis, M&H also presented recommendations developed as a result of the hazards analysis, without a clear path forward regarding implementation of the recommendations. M&H appeared to be asking the NES study group to perform a line management function, deciding which recommendations needed to be addressed and which were less important. The master study will continue next week.

Building 12-116: Thursday, the authorization for Phase I Operation of Building 12-116 was signed and distributed by AAO. Copies of the authorization have been provided to Board staff. Initial operations will consist of staging tritium and pits in certain designated locations. The first tritium movement is scheduled for today (Friday) and the first pit movement (from 12-44, cell 8) will follow on Saturday, all with appropriate photographic coverage.

W87 SLT/Testbed: The investigation into the W87 Stockpile Laboratory Test (SLT)/Testbed Program, which was suspended on July 30 because of test hardware and procedure problems, continued this week. The review to date has already resulted in a Design Agency decision to revise one cable drawing and to request DOE to authorize M&H to build up another Testbed to allow them to further investigate the problems that exist. The investigation will continue next week.