

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

November 20, 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 November 20, 1998

DNFSB Activity Summary: T. Dwyer and H. Waugh were on site all week. D. Burnfield and M. Helfrich were on site all week observing W62 hazard analyses. W. White and OE L. McGrew were on site all week for the W56 Dismantlement Program NESS.

W56 Dismantlement Program NESS: The W56 Dismantlement Program NESS commenced Monday morning. Project Team members from LLNL and SNL discussed the design of the W56 and gave an overview of potential hazards associated with the system. M&H briefed the NESS group on the mechanical dismantlement activities expected to take place in bays in Building 12-99. Briefings from M&H were appropriately interspersed with physical demonstrations of the mechanical dismantlement procedures by the PT's involved with the W56 program. Issues discussed during this 1st week included the potential for various tools to damage the physics package, and the use of TSRs/LCOs in the W56 dismantlement process. The NESS will reconvene December 1st with an overview of cell activities (physics package disassembly).

W62 D&I Program: The W62 D&I Project Team met this week to perform a hazards analysis (HA) of the W62 D&I process. The start of the HA was disorganized, in part because the team members were not adequately briefed ahead of time on the purpose and scope of the review, and therefore they had not made adequate preparations for the review. (For example, other HARs for similar weapons were not reviewed before the start of the process, hazards tables matching the existing W62 D&I NEOPS were not prepared ahead of time, etc.) In addition, the observed HA process was not always conducted in a manner that would lead to the conclusion that all significant hazards were identified. As the week progressed, the HA process appeared to become more efficient and effective; however, further improvements are necessary. The W62 D&I HA will resume November 30th; Board staff will continue to observe.

B83 Pipecutting Efforts: Case-cutting on the 1st of 3 B83 JTAs that have 'out-of-round' cases was completed this week. The final cut and subsequent removal of the mock nuclear package (inert except for live IHE and detonators) proceeded without incident. Based on the experience gained from this unit, the cut on the next out-of-round assembly will probably be made at a different point -- above the mitigator (the inner most stainless steel honeycomb layer). It appears that the physics package can probably be pulled out of the case by rounding up that layer after cutting the external layers.

Pantex Plant Citizens Advisory Board (PPCAB): The November PPCAB meeting took place on Tuesday, and the members narrowly avoided dissolving the board due to irreconcilable differences between two of the major caucuses currently seated. Pleas from AAO representatives and some skillful parliamentary maneuvering by the PPCAB Facilitator eventually resulted in 3 PPCAB members standing aside, allowing an affirmative vote to seat a slate of new members.