

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

October 17, 1997

MEMORANDUM FOR: G.W. Cunningham, Technical Director

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

SUBJECT: Pantex Plant Activity Report for Week Ending October 17, 1997

DNFSB Activity Summary: Timothy Dwyer was on site all week. Harry Waugh was on site Tuesday and Wednesday.

W79 Type 6B Program: The W79 Project Team is developing a plan to incorporate lessons learned in the first W79 Type 6B dissolution, which was conducted last week. Aside from necessary NEOP changes, physical modifications to the DMSO Workstation and the tooling, and a reordering of program modules are also being considered. Of particular concern is developing an acceptable means to separate two of the assemblies through which the tubulation passes from the pit. The fragility of the tubulation is forcing the Project Team to give healthy consideration to the consequences of accidental misapplication of any device or procedure developed. The Project Team is also considering several means of shortening the time required to process one unit -- currently, nearly three shifts. Among the means being considered are increasing the DMSO temperature, changing the running DMSO spray times, and increasing (or allowing change-out) of the amount of DMSO contained within the closed system. M&H is also investigating the discovery of HE residue on tooling, and, significantly, in the 12-98 Cell 1 task exhaust system.

Based on the number of program changes anticipated, the W79 Project Team is now advocating that another Type 6B dissolution be conducted before commencing the NESS. A third Type 6B would be consumed during the NESS. Additionally, M&H will conduct a readiness review prior to WR; the probable review leader has indicated that W79 trainer activity lacks sufficient fidelity for an adequate review, so a fourth Type 6B may be run at that time.

Dynamic Balancer: M&H continues to work toward restart of the Dynamic Balancer. Initial indications from the teardown/inspection of the machine in Building 12-60 Bay 2 caused some concern: although the shaft inspection was completed satisfactorily, a puddle of oil was discovered on top of the machine housing, under the (removed) faceplate. Analysis of the oil and consultation with the manufacturer resulted in a determination that oil was seeping past the upper shaft seal due to the seal packing grease having been flushed out over time. [Little to no grease was found remaining in the seal upon disassembly.] The manufacturer has indicated this is not unexpected, given cumulative machine runtime. After repacking, the seal appears to be seating properly. M&H has ordered replacement seals, with delivery expected by November 25th. A new seal will be installed upon delivery, but restart will not be held up pending its delivery.

W78 Program: Due to resource limitations, DOE has postponed further activity associated with the W78 program. The Project Team currently plans to resume operation in March 1998.

Attachment

Upcoming Pantex Events:

October 21 -- W69 Dismantlement Restart [target date]

October 27-30 -- Dynamic Balancer Independent Evaluation

October 28 -- W87 ASSET Meeting**

October 31 -- Dynamic Balancer startup [target date - *likely to be delayed*]

November 17-21 -- NESD Annual Appraisal**

November 26 -- W79 NESS starts

November 30 -- Electrical Tester Master Study completion

January 5-16 -- W56 SIRR**

NOTES: ** highlights events which are new listings or for which schedule has changed