



## News from the Savannah River National Laboratory

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### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

#### **SRNL EMPLOYEE TO SERVE INTERNATIONAL ENERGY PROJECT**

AIKEN, S.C. (December 12, 2008) – David Babineau from the U.S. Department of Energy’s (DOE) Savannah River National Laboratory has been selected to serve as the Tritium Plant Responsible Officer for the ITER project, in Cadarache, France. ITER is a major international research project with the goal of demonstrating the scientific and technological feasibility of fusion energy.

The U.S. is one of seven partners in the project, along with China, the European Union, India, Japan, Russia, and South Korea. Under the auspices of the U.S. ITER Project Office, SRNL is a partner laboratory in the project, using its decades of tritium expertise to lead the design, fabrication, assembly and testing of the Tokamak Exhaust Processing (TEP) system. The TEP system will separate hydrogen isotopes from the exhaust stream of the Tokamak, the giant “machine” that creates the fusion reaction – the combining of two isotopes of hydrogen (deuterium and tritium) to form helium – a critical element in the ITER project.

Babineau will take a leave of absence from SRNL to assume his international duties, which include providing guidance and oversight for the safety, licensing, design, and schedule activities associated with the ITER Tritium Plant. He says he is looking forward to working with the ITER International Organization because it gives him the opportunity to make a significant international contribution in the area of magnetic confinement fusion energy, a field that has interested him since high school. “I look at this as a unique opportunity to utilize my SRNL experience as well as experience gained in the in the design, start up, construction and operation of Savannah River Site tritium facilities to help ITER get its Tritium Facility up and running,” he says. He joins the project as site preparation for the Tritium Plant is almost complete, and the design of the plant is being finalized.

Fusion is the process that powers the sun and the other stars. When light atomic nuclei fuse to form heavier ones, a large amount of energy is released. Fusion research is aimed at developing a prototype fusion power plant that is safe and reliable, environmentally responsible, and economically viable, with abundant and widespread fuel resources.

SRNL is DOE’s applied research and development laboratory at the Savannah River Site (SRS). SRNL puts science to work to support DOE and the nation in the areas of environmental management, national and homeland security, and energy security. The management and operating contractor for SRS and SRNL is Savannah River Nuclear Solutions, LLC.

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