



Commendation

January 25, 2000

SRS DOE-HQ Approved Low Level Waste (LLW) Disposal Authorization Statement

Background

The E-Area and Saltstone Facility Low Level Waste (LLW) Disposal Authorization Statement (DAS; see Reference 1) was granted by DOE-HQ in response to the DOE Order 435.1 requirement to obtain a DAS in order to continue LLW disposal. The DOE Order requirement responded to a Defense Nuclear Facility Safety Board Recommendation (94-2) that called for DOE's low-level waste program to undergo improvements in its regulatory structure. The analysis to support the DAS was prepared by an SRS contractor and a DOE-SR team and approved by DOE-HQ. The DAS authorizes DOE to continue LLW disposal activities at SRS, is analogous to a NRC license, and is one of only two approved by DOE-HQ to date. It signifies that the SRS management of LLW has been noteworthy.

To obtain the DAS, the team performed two major technical evaluations:

1. A Performance Assessment (PA) that evaluates disposal activities against DOE performance objectives over the long-term (~10,000 years) in order to set operational disposal limits for specific radionuclides. The PA focuses on a single LLW disposal facility with a Point of Compliance (POC) at 100 meters; and,
2. A Composite Analysis (CA) that evaluates all expected sources of radioactive material that could add to the long-term impact of current disposal operations from all potential radioactive sources in the General Separations Area (GSA) on hypothetical future members of the public. The Points Of Assessment (POA) for the CA are the locations of public access (the mouth of Upper Three Runs stream, the mouth of Fourmile Branch, and the Savannah River including the Highway 301 Bridge).

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The CAB believes that the DAS signifies excellent operational performance in the management of low-level wastes at the E-Area Vaults and slit trenches. And we believe that all SRS low-level waste can be managed at SRS safely and more cost effectively than shipping waste to sites across the United States.

Issuance of the DAS permits the CAB an opportunity to commend SRS on their LLW management activities.