



SRS Citizens Advisory Board

Environmental Remediation and Waste Management Subcommittee

Meeting Summary

July 13, 1999
North Augusta Community Center
North Augusta, SC

CAB Members

Maria Reichmanis
Karen Patterson
Wade Waters

Stakeholders

Tod Crawford
Bill McDonell
Lee Poe
Mike French

Regulators

Craig Marriner, SCDHEC

DOE/Contractors

Jim Cook, WSRC
Elmer Wilhite, WSRC
Gerri Flemming, DOE
Paul Huber, BSRI
Paul Sauerborn, WSRC
Gerry Stejskal, WSRC
Peter Hudson, BNFL
Bill Noll, DOE
Michelle Ewart, DOE
Helen Villasor, WSRC
Virgil Sauls, DOE
Sonny Goldston, BNFL
Rod Rimando, DOE
Chris Bergren, BSRI
Mike Simmons, DOE
Dan Wells, WSRC
Mary Flora, WSRC
Cliff Thomas, WSRC

Public Comments: Karen Patterson opened the meeting by asking for any public comments. There were no comments.

Issue: None.
Action: None.

Solid Waste Division System Plan, Low-Level Radioactive Waste Disposal (LLW): Sonny Goldston introduced the Solid Waste Division's System Plan Low-Level Radioactive Waste (LLW) Disposal options, which is a follow-up presentation requested by the ER&WM Subcommittee at a meeting on April 14, 1999 at the Savannah Rapids Pavilion in Augusta, GA. The Solid Waste System Plan proposes implementing recommended changes in disposal practices for several of the LLW streams by altering disposal practices in a disciplined manner to better utilize disposal capacity while maintaining protection of human health and environment (e.g., protecting groundwater), remaining in compliance with DOE Order 5280.2A/435.1, and being cost effective. The solid technical and regulatory basis for LLW disposal includes the approved

radiological Performance Assessments (PAs) and Composite Analysis (CAs) which demonstrate that both vault and trench disposal practices are protective of human health and the environment. Additional control includes the Waste Certification Program that consists of waste characterization, waste certification and meeting waste acceptance criteria (WAC). During the development of the plan, the systematic analysis of disposal options considered included the following:

- technical and regulatory criteria (including environmental, safety and health)
- public concerns, whereby the public would be involved early on in the process and if changes were required, the public would be involved in providing input
- cost

It was also found that the current practice is extremely conservative, in fact the PA showed that disposal in vaults is far too conservative for low curie content waste. About 50 percent of the waste volume now going to the vaults would meet trench WAC radionuclide limits, and that valuable vault space is being used for low curie content waste, which will require that expensive new vaults begin design within a year if the current practice continues. The proposal under consideration by the System Plan is to continue disposal of LLW in the vaults, but shift low curie content compacted, non-compactable/non-incinerable and large equipment encapsulated in concrete waste to the trenches. It will be shown that SRS will continue to meet the standards for protection of human health and environmental protection as well as to provide cost effective disposal methods. Some of the advantages of this proposal include:

- the level of protection of human health and environment (e.g., groundwater) will remain the same
- solid technical and regulatory basis (within PA and CA) will be maintained (previous stakeholder involvement (CAB) has indicated acceptance of PA and CA)
- cost effective
- reserves vaults for higher curie waste (more efficient use of vault space)
- delays the need for vault replacement by 9 – 10 years

Issues: Assured protection of the environment to Drinking Water Standards; distinction between DOE points of compliance versus Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) points of compliance.
Action: Develop a Motion to be discussed and reviewed at the July 26-27 CAB meeting in Columbia, SC.
Commendations: From a scientific standpoint it appears that SRS is doing the right thing by using a technical, engineering approach to solving LLW disposal issues and the public could not ask for more.

Northern Sector A/M Groundwater Plume: Paul Huber presented a report on the status of the Northern Sector A/M Groundwater Plume. This presentation is a follow-up from the January 19th ER/WM Subcommittee meeting where this topic was presented as being an area of possible concern. Mr. Huber indicated that the tests that were performed early in the investigation had essentially provided a false positive analysis, determined after further tests were conducted at the unit. The analysis indicated that no Volatile Organic Compounds are present in the groundwater in the extreme northern portion of the unit. Mr. Lee Poe asked if there has ever been any groundwater releases off the SRS? Mr. Huber stated that to the best of his knowledge, the answer is no.

Issue: None.
Action: None.

Working discussion on Pending ER&WM CAB Recommendations: Ms. Karen Patterson opened discussion on the CAB Recommendations. Ms. Patterson asked the subcommittee if they would support assignment of the pending ER/WM CAB subcommittee recommendations to each of the members of the subcommittee in order to bring the recommendations to closure in a timely manner. There was discussion by the group and all accepted the challenge posed by Ms. Patterson. In addition, Ms. Patterson asked that as new Recommendations are generated that they be discussed at the next subcommittee meeting following their approval. All subcommittee members that were present at the meeting agreed to follow this plan.

Issue: The subcommittee is concerned that the pending recommendations need to move toward closure in a expeditious manner.

Action: Each member of the subcommittee is to be assigned follow-up responsibility for the pending recommendations. The review and status is to take place at the subcommittee meeting following the CAB meeting in Columbia, SC. July 26-27.

Status of the TNX Operable Unit: Karen Patterson was concerned that there was no change in the progress of the Unit. Paul Sauerborn explained that the TNX unit was a part of the FFA slowdown, however the Feasibility Study (FS) should be out within the next month approximate. Ms. Patterson asked that the review be moved to the September time frame.

Issue: Concern by the subcommittee that there is slow down on the TNX Operable Unit.

Action: Schedule the TNX Operable Unit status for the September time frame.

Minor Discussion on Draft Motions: Karen Patterson briefly discussed three draft motions as follows: L&P Bingham Pump Outage Pits Proposed Plan, Pollution Prevention at SRS, and Federal Facility Agreement Modification Feasibility Study Scoping and Primary Document Quality. Ms. Patterson touched briefly on each motion, which received varied comments by the meeting attendees. Mr. Crawford, (technical advisor to the CAB) proposed that due to time everyone take the drafts home with them and should they have any specific questions or input to the motions refinement, to please call or e-mail him at his home.

Final Public Comment: Karen Patterson asked if there were any final public comments. Mr. Mike French asked to present a slide, which expresses his disappointment in the DOE-HQ directive to take Westinghouse off the ITP replacement project without consulting the public. The slide asked that DOE-HQ urgently provide a detailed cost estimate to the CAB and public for this new approach, which will undoubtedly require significant, additional taxpayers' dollars to implement. Information should be provided on the incremental cost increases, including R&D programs, as well as those attributable to the inevitable schedule delay and contractor turn over process. DOE is requested to provide this information prior to the announcement of any procurement action/plans.

Issue: Public is concerned as to why they were not notified of the DOE-HQ decision to take Westinghouse off the ITP replacement program. Mr. Todd Crawford Technical Advisor to the CAB expressed similar concerns, and was directed to develop a Draft motion on this issue for the July 26th subcommittee meeting.

Actions: DOE is requested to notify the public of the cost scope and schedule impacts associated with their decision and advise any subsequent actions with the public prior to taking the action. Todd Crawford to develop Draft motion for the July 26th subcommittee meeting in Columbia, SC.

Ms. Patterson asked for any other public comments. There being none the meeting was adjourned.

Meeting handouts may be obtained by calling 1-800-249-8155.