



SRS Citizens Advisory Board

Environmental Remediation and Waste Management Subcommittee

Meeting Summary

December 14, 1999
North Augusta Community Center
North Augusta, SC

CAB Members

Bill Lawless*
Tom Costikyan
Karen Patterson*
Wade Waters*

Stakeholders

Lee Poe
Mike French
Bill McDonell
Perry Holcomb
Luke Reid
Rick McLeod
Sam Booher
Laurie Booher

Regulators

Jonathan McInnis, SCDHEC

DOE/Contractors

Cary Stevens, BNFL
Jim Arnett, DOE
Donna Martin, WSRC
Jim Cook, WSRC
Joe D'Amelio, WSRC
Robert Hinds, WSRC
Kelly Way, WSRC
Paul Sauerborn, WSRC
Mike Simmons, DOE
Elmer Wilhite, WSRC
Bruce Lawrence, WSRC
Sonny Goldston, BNFL
Brian Hennessey, DOE
Andrew Vincent, WSRC
Gerri Flemming, DOE
Bill Noll, DOE
Julie Petersen, DOE

* Denotes ER&WM Subcommittee Member

Public Comments:

Wade Waters addressed the need to finish the status of 5 remaining "pending" motions. After a quick review, the path forward was to status the remaining "pending" motions at the next ER/WM meeting, which is scheduled for 1/11/99.

Schedule Review:

Paul Sauerborn presented the ER/WM schedule matrix. Mr. Sauerborn reviewed the topics for the next meeting scheduled for January 11th.

Overview of Low Level Waste (LLW) Disposal Authorization Statement (DAS):

Sonny Goldston presented the Disposal Authorization Statement Overview (DAS). The DAS was issued by DOE-HQ on September 28, 1999. He stated that the technical basis for the DOE authorization of low-level waste disposal is required by the DOE Order 435.1, which addressess Performance Assessment

(PA), Composite Analysis (CA), and the Disposal Authorization Statement (DAS). The DAS provides DOE with authorization to operate a low-level waste disposal facility, resulting from the review of the CA and PA and includes conditions the disposal facility must meet during operation. Mr. Goldston stated the DAS authorizes LLW disposal in the E-Area and Saltstone disposal facilities in accordance with the PA and CA, as follows:

1. Facility construction and design shall conform to the PA conceptual model.
2. Radionuclide limits, waste form, and packaging requires a waste acceptance criteria be developed for each unit based on the PA, CA, and Safety Analysis Report (SAR).
3. Closure plan is required in one year (9/2000).
4. Monitoring plan required in one year (9/2000).
5. PA and CA maintenance plans shall be developed by 12/31/99. Bill Lawless asked that the subcommittee be appraised of the closure and monitoring plan. Mr. Waters asked about the new high tech vadose zone monitoring equipment on site. Mr. Goldston stated that it was being deployed in the field and that he would be glad to present more about the way it works at a future meeting.

Issue: None.

Action: Add the closure and monitoring plan to the ER/WM schedule for review in one year. Add the new vadose zone monitoring equipment presentation to the ER/WM schedule for a near term review.

Site Treatment Plan Status:

Bruce Lawrence presented the status of the Site Treatment Plan as required by the Federal Facility Compliance Act of 1992 and a consent order issued by South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control. Mr. Lawrence gave the following area status:

1. Defense Waste Processing Facility (DWPF) commitment is to maintain canister production sufficient to meet the commitment for removal of high level waste by 2028. To date 742 high level waste canisters have been poured and DWPF is on target to meet the commitment, assuming there is no change in the Salt Waste Processing schedule.
2. In M-Area the Vendor Treatment Facility (VTF) commitments have been met.
3. The Consolidated Incineration Facility handles both PUREX and mixed waste and is currently on target to meet the commitment.
4. In the area of Solid Waste Division mixed waste activities, the Site Treatment Plan commitment is to evaluate the effectiveness of a DOE Broad Spectrum contract vendor for waste streams (62,69,73) by 3/31/01. Also there is a commitment to submit Part B permit modification for TRU MW by 9/30/01 and submit Part B permit modification for non-PUREX by 12/31/01. Both items are on target.

Lee Poe asked what is the DOE Broad Spectrum contract. Mr. Lawrence stated this was a DOE complex wide contract where contractors would be available to treat mixed waste from any of the DOE complex sites. This would alleviate the need for individual contracts across the complex. The effort would save both time and money to the DOE.

Issue: None.

Action: None.

Hazardous Waste Storage Facility RCRA Part B Permit Modifications:

Cary Stevens stated that the purpose of the modifications was to streamline the permit to allow continued efficient and effective operations, update the permit to remove or revise outdated and unnecessary text, ensure continued protection of the environment and public health and safety, and ensure worker health and safety.

Mr. Stevens gave a background on the Hazardous Waste Storage Facilities noting that the facilities manage hazardous wastes for interim storage and radioactive/hazardous wastes awaiting treatment options, and are diked concrete containment slabs with sumps inside steel fabricated buildings.

Issue: None.

Action: None.

Transuranic Waste Update:

Dale Ormond presented the update on Transuranic Waste. Mr. Ormond identified three key areas: the status of WIPP's RCRA Part B permit, and the Ship to WIPP Program. The WIPP RCRA Part B Permit issued by the State of New Mexico, was effective 11/26/99 and stopped all TRU shipments. DOE filed a lawsuit contesting provisions regarding financial assurance, visual exam requirements, core sampling requirements and facility storage. New Mexico responded with a Compliance Order/Notice of Violation fine of \$1.3 million. Mr. Ormond stated that SRS was impacted in the following manner: the Waste Analysis Plan (WAP) replaces the WIPP Quality Assurance Program Plan (QAPP), which will require revisions to many of the programmatic documents. However, DOE's Carlsbad office will be providing assistance. Also, in the area of visual examinations an increase from 4 drums to 42 drums (first shipment) will be required, which will increase hazards for the workers, increase operation costs and require a more robust facility to handle the through-put. Several issues still exist relative to the first Savannah River TRU waste shipment, such as permit issues with DOE and New Mexico legal suits and fines, developing schedule/budget for TRU visual exam (VE) facility to meet requirements and funding issues for VE and additional requirements. Mr. Lawless commented that even though the program looks dismal at this time, the fact is that WIPP is open for business. In support of future shipments to WIPP is a national effort to reduce costs and increase the rate of TRU waste disposal. DOE has established three teams to look into characterization and certification, transportation, and disposal of TRU waste.

Issue: None.

Action: WSRC solid waste program to give update of ship to WIPP activities in the March timeframe.

Transuranic Waste Criticality Safety:

Andrew Vincent discussed Criticality Safety for TRU waste noting that if the Plutonium 239 that has been disposed of in the Burial Ground had been incorrectly configured then a criticality concern could have existed. However, Mr. Vincent pointed out that although SRS has a large inventory, none that's stored is configured in a way that would create any concern to the environment or the public. Mr. Vincent stated that SRS has the controls in place to avoid a criticality incident, such as extensive calculations looking at the actual conditions, limits set for the waste generation when filling waste drums referred to as "waste acceptance criteria", special additional analysis for criticality controls for "double assurance" referred to as "double contingency analysis", and other controls such as waste acceptance criteria, waste receipt procedures, inventory controls, container inspections and storage locations.

Issue: None.

*Action:*None.

Yucca Mountain Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) Draft Motion:

Tom Costikyan, CAB Nuclear Materials Management chair, opened the discussion on the Yucca Mountain draft EIS and recommendation development. Costikyan said his initial concern focused on the no action alternative (both scenarios) and the apparent absence of major health and safety risks. As a result, the no action alternative may appear plausible to some and potentially hinder the opening of Yucca Mountain. Many attendees, including Costikyan, emphasized, however, that there is a high level of uncertainty with the no action alternative because it was developed with hypothetical information. Lawless and Lee Poe, public, added that a no action alternative is required by law. Costikyan said he understood the EIS process although he had not expected the no action alternative to appear so viable. Discussion continued on the content and message of the recommendation. All of the members agreed that haste in following the proposed schedule is one of the most important factors in the opening of Yucca Mountain.

They also stressed that they do not want Yucca Mountain to face many of the delays that have occurred with the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant in New Mexico.

*Issue:*South Carolina and Georgia stakeholders need to be more vocal in their desire to move material to an underground repository.

*Action:*Continue development of the recommendation through the CAB's January process retreat and produce a thoughtful recommendation emphasizing the need to open Yucca Mountain.

Public Comment:

Mr. Waters asked for public comments. Lee Poe presented a letter to the attendees reviewing ER/WM Subcommittee attendance for the last year noting:

- Subcommittee activities foster communications between stakeholders and SRS staff. The program has resulted in about 1,800 person-hours of interaction at the meetings and probably an equal amount of time preparing for the meetings and perhaps one third in follow-up activities.
- Meetings also integrate a wide range of considerations, background, and ideas applied to problem solution.
- Activities appeal to a broad range of stakeholders who are willing to give their time to participating.
- The Subcommittee provides a valuable means of getting stakeholders involved with in-depth analysis of SRS activities through focus groups. The ER&WM subcommittee has sponsored 3 focus groups and 2 Independent Scientific Peer Reviews (ISPR).
- The only negative point is the lack of Regulator participation. Over the year, 37 regulators have participated, mostly in meetings that occur prior to full CAB meetings (15 persons in five meetings or an average of 3/meeting). In the other 15 meetings, the average attendance has been 1.5 regulator-persons/meeting and 5 meetings had no regulator participation.

Mr. Waters thanked Mr. Poe for his comments, and the meeting was adjourned.

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