



SRS Citizen's Advisory Board

July 1999 Meeting Minutes

SRS Citizens Advisory Board

July 26-27, 1999
Adam's Mark Hotel
Columbia, SC

Members Present

Mel Galin	Karen Patterson	<u>Ex-Officio Representatives</u>
Ken Goad	Maria Reichmanis	Ann Clark
Brendolyn Jenkins	Murray Riley	Julie Corkran
Bill Lawless	P.K. Smith	Jeff Crane
Georgia Leverett	Ed Tant	Tom Heenan
Ann Loadholt	Bill Vogele	Myra Reece
Jimmy Mackey	Wade Waters	
Barbara Murphy	Beaurine Wilkins	
Lane Parker	Becky Witter	

Members absent were Bill Adams, Arthur Belge, Tom Costikyan, Earnest Marshall, Kathryn May, Lola Richardson and Charlene Townsend. Currently, there are no Board vacancies. The Department of Energy (DOE) Designated Federal Official present was Tom Heenan. Mike Schoener served as facilitator.

The meeting was open to the public and posted in the *Federal Register* in accordance with the Federal Advisory Committee Act.

Key Decisions Made by the Board

The Board endorsed the conclusions of the DNFSB report regarding interim maximization of canyon usage for spent fuel stabilization and requested a presentation from DOE on uncertainties with the melt and dilute option cited within the report.

The Board recommended that work suspensions in the Federal Facility Agreement not occur and requested information on the cause of a temporary suspension in progress. The CAB recommended that any suspended work be restarted as soon as possible but no later than November 15, 1999.

The Board concurred with the Solid Waste System Plan recommendations to use the trenches for disposal of low-level waste that meet the trench waste acceptance criteria, rather than utilizing expensive vault space unnecessarily.

The Board relayed its concerns in contractor replacement of the High Level Waste In-Tank Precipitation Process and requested information regarding the reasons DOE decided to change contractors and the expected incremental cost increase and schedule delay associated with this action. The CAB requested that DOE consider retaining the current contractor and that efforts be devoted to improvement in project management.

The Board issued a letter concurring with the selected remedial strategy for the L and P Area Bingham Pump Outage Pits.

The Board commended SRS for its timely notification regarding a potential groundwater contamination plume in the A/M Northern Sector, which was determined not to exist following months of sampling.

The Board approved funds for an independent scientific peer review of the Old Radioactive Waste Burial Ground closure not to exceed \$35,000.

A letter supporting transportation statements developed at a national meeting of all the Site Specific Advisory Boards was approved.

Approval of the Minutes

The May 1999 meeting minutes were approved with no changes.

Agency Update

Tom Heenan of DOE presented the Operations Update (see attached). He also announced that Dr. Carolyn Huntoon had been appointed to Assistant Secretary for Environmental Management. Mr. Heenan also noted that the last shipment of tritiated heavy water was moved to the L Reactor Buildings from D Area therefore removing any potential threat of contamination by this source to the Savannah River. Julie Corkran of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) introduced Julie Jacob, a visiting intern. Jeff Crane of EPA commented he thought there was a lack of understanding regarding the Federal Facility Agreement Modification and that the three parties are trying to reach cleanup decisions quicker. The goal of the suspension is to perform review and determine streamlining approaches to achieve more timely cleanup, he said. Ann Clark noted the GPRA (Government Performance??), which is a RCRA driven program to address repeat violators and escalate penalties where needed.

Public Comments

Ruth Thomas, Environmentalist, Inc. addressed the Board on Monday evening during the 6:30 p.m. public comment session. She thanked the Board for all the information she had received noting it helps her to better understand the issues. Ms. Thomas stated that Environmentalist, Inc. had been in operation for 27 years and has a lot to offer. She said they are not a "for or against" organization, but one in favor of the best type of decision-making process. She noted they had been making comments for years and working with the CAB feels more like a dialogue. She noted Bill Lawless' letter regarding democracy and said it tied in with their thoughts. Ms. Thomas also stated that she wished the Board had more meetings in Columbia.

No public comments were offered on Tuesday, July 27, 1999.

Facilitator Update

Mike Schoener provided a review of recommendations noting that 21 recommendations are pending, 33 open and 37 closed. He stated that the Board is awaiting 11 responses from EPA, 8 from DHEC and one from DOE. He said that requesting updates on Agency responses during the Agency Update portion of the CAB meeting might assist in more timely responses. Mr. Schoener also noted that a suggestion had been made to focus the next CAB process retreat on the recommendation process from start to finish.

Mr. Schoener provided a recap of the Executive Meeting held Monday. He noted that he would be developing guidance as to what would warrant a conflict of interest for members of the public who assist the Board, which would become the Board's policy regarding the matter. He also discussed the October 26-27 Stewardship Seminar to be held in Oak Ridge, TN. and noted that the subcommittees planned to have something available for full Board review in September. Mr. Schoener also announced the formation of the Transportation Working Group to continue dialogue on a national level regarding transportation issues. Brendolyn Jenkins is the SRS CAB representative.

The following 2000 full board meeting dates and general locations were also announced:

January 24-25	Hilton Head Island, S.C.
March 27-28	Aiken, S.C.
May 22-23	Savannah, Ga.
July 24-25	Augusta, Ga.
September 25-26	Beaufort, S.C.
November 13-14	North Augusta, S.C.

Outreach Subcommittee Report

Subcommittee Chair Lane Parker noted work conducted by various Board members on several initiatives including a Point of Contact database and Speaker's Bureau. He announced that speaker training for Board members will be conducted on August 11 and August 23 at the North Augusta Community Center. He also announced plans by the Outreach Subcommittee to host displays at the Greekfest Carolina on August 28 in Columbia, S.C. and the Sister-to-Sister Expo on October 30 in Augusta, Ga. The CAB next viewed an introductory video produced for the Board by the National Environmental Training Office at SRS.

Fish Advisory Fact Sheet Discussion

Ann Clark of SCDHEC noted that several fish advisories are issues and notifications are made annually. Several of these are for mercury. One mechanism for communicating the fish advisory is a fact sheet. She requested the Risk Management & Future Use Subcommittee evaluate the communication strategies used to inform the public of fish advisories. Beaurine Wilkins noted that this is not the first time the Board has seen this fact sheet and was glad to see it brought to the Board's attention once again. She noted local concern with Thurmond Lake and the Lock&Dam. Bill Vogeles commented that the fact sheet is alarmist and implies that all fish are contaminated. He stated it should be tempered with a statement regarding risk levels. Bill Lawless agreed that the fact sheet should be put in perspective, noting this is a relatively minor problem. P.K. Smith agreed to review this issue further in subcommittee.

Nuclear Materials Management Subcommittee Report

Subcommittee Vice Chair Ken Goad presented a draft motion regarding the Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board Report (see attached). The primary conclusion of the report is that the use of the canyons to stabilize spent nuclear fuel should be maximized until the development and design of the alternative treatment technology has been completed. **The draft motion reiterated Board concern that canyons continue to operate for at-risk SNF and be reexamined as a viable treatment option. It also endorsed the DNFSB conclusion and requested a presentation from DOE regarding uncertainties with the melt-and-dilute option for SNF management. Bill Lawless moved the Board accept the motion and Barbara Murphy seconded. The motion was adopted with 17 members in favor and one abstention.**

Yucca Mountain Presentations

Chris Kouts, Yucca Mountain Liaison of the Office of Civilian Radioactive Waste Management provided a program overview of the Yucca Mountain Project (see attachments). Mr. Kouts discussed program history and legislation, program strategy, the Yucca Mountain Viability Assessment, waste acceptance, transportation and integration. The Nuclear Waste Policy Act directed repository operation by 1998, a deadline, which was not met. The current schedule calls for a Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) in 2000, a recommendation to the President in 2001, licensing in 2002 and waste acceptance in 2010, he said. Yucca Mountain will receive commercial spent fuel from 72 locations in 35 states plus defense wastes. Mr. Kouts discussed how Yucca Mountain was identified from nine potential sites. He discussed site characterization, steps to waste acceptance, long-lived radionuclides of concern and legislation to amend the Nuclear Waste Policy Act. Board members inquired about waste placement within Yucca Mountain and when SRS waste would be accepted. Currently, defense waste acceptance is scheduled to begin in 2014. Other inquiries were regarding Congress' response to the viability assessment, which appears positive and whether the Secretary is pushing for an interim repository, to which Mr. Kouts stated he is opposed.

Joe Ziegler of the Yucca Mountain Site Characterization Project provided an overview of the Draft EIS for a Geologic Repository for the Disposal of Spent Nuclear Fuel and High-Level Radioactive Waste at Yucca Mountain, Nye County, Nevada (see attachment). Mr. Ziegler discussed National Environmental Policy Act objectives and how this EIS differs from a typical EIS. He discussed preparation of the EIS by technical support contractors and the variety of decisions to be made. DOE proposes to construct, operate and monitor, and eventually close a geologic repository for the disposal of 70,000 metric tons of heavy metal (MTHM). Commercial spent fuel comprises 63,000 MTHM while DOE spent fuel and high level waste accounts for only 7,000 MTHM. The Draft EIS looks at only two alternatives-the proposed action and no action. Mr. Ziegler discussed national transportation scenarios; locations of spent fuel and high-level radioactive wastes; estimations of long-term repository impacts; and environmental justice issues.

Environmental Remediation & Waste Management Subcommittee Report

Federal Facility Agreement Modification Presentation

Brian Hennessey presented an explanation of the developments surrounding a FFA modification suspension letter. He explained the overall schedule impact to the site cleanup effort and although it would appear that the schedules would slip significantly, the actual slip would be minimal in the near term with significant improvement to the overall schedule, he said. The FFA modification affects 11 projects and the suspension has a defined schedule with well-defined objectives. The objectives are to carefully define problems causing recurring project delays and develop solutions, including improvements to documents and communication processes. Extending project schedules without examining the Remedial Investigation/Feasibility (RI/FS) Study process treats the symptom, he said. Resolving ingrained problems now will let us get through future projects more smoothly. Mr. Hennessey presented an example of a RI to FS problem and a schedule for suspension activities. **Jimmy Mackey presented a draft motion requesting that the three agencies ensure that another suspension does not occur; that the Board be provided a list of items which caused the suspension and the actions being taken; and that any suspended work be restarted no later than November 15, 1999. Bill Lawless moved the Board adopt the motion and Ken Goad seconded. The motion was adopted by a unanimous vote.**

Solid Waste Division System Plan

Sonny Goldston, BNFL, presented the Solid Waste Division's System Plan Low-Level Radioactive Waste (LLW) Disposal options (see attached). 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. These changes would ensure protection of human health and the environment is maintained; ensure compliance with DOE Order 5280.2A/435.1; and be more cost effective. The solid technical and regulatory basis for LLW disposal include the approved radiological Performance Assessments (PAs) and Composite Analyses (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).

Mr. Goldston explained how current practices are extremely conservative. The PA showed that disposal in vaults is far too conservative for low curie content waste, he said. 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. Mr. Goldston stated 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. **Karen Patterson presented the subcommittee's motion concurring with the System Plan recommendation to use the trenches for disposal of LLW meeting the trench WAC (see attached). Bill Lawless moved the Board accept the motion and Ken Goad seconded. The motion was adopted by a vote of 16 members in favor and one abstention by Lane Parker due to conflict of interest considerations.**

L and P Area Bingham Pump Outage Pits Proposed Plan

Tom Temples, DOE, presented background information on the L&P Area Bingham Pump Outage Pits Proposed Plan (see attached). This unit contains waste debris generated by upgrades to primary and secondary reactor cooling systems in 1957 and 1958. Wastes consist of miscellaneous construction material such as pipes, cables, ladders, and concrete. Mr. Temples discussed soil and groundwater contamination, which are low level threat waste for soil and no current or predicted future impact for groundwater. Institutional controls are the preferred alternative selected for this unit. Maria Reichmanis read the subcommittee's motion endorsing the preferred alternative selected for the L& P Area Bingham Outage Pits and encouraging future applications of the ASCADä process. P.K. Smith questioned with this motion was being offered as a recommendation and suggested a letter would suffice. Following some discussion, Karen Patterson moved the Board submit the subcommittee's motion in the form of a letter to DOE. P.K. Smith seconded. All members were in favor of this approach.

High Level Waste Salt Disposition Alternatives

John Reynolds, DOE, provided a historical overview of the In-Tank Precipitation (ITP) failure and efforts to find an alternative technology replacement (see attachment). The ITP facility was shutdown in 1996 to address significantly greater than anticipated benzene generation rates. Assumptions regarding benzene generation had not been adequately challenged until this time. Once it was determined that the ITP process could not cost effectively meet safety and production requirements, a system engineering team was formed to identify alternative solutions. The SRS CAB reviewed selection process conducted by the team In May 1999, the GAO completed a review of the ITP project. It was critical of project management and the time it took to abandon the project. Following the release of this report, DOE-Headquarters announced that WSRC would not be the contractor for the new project once a preferred alternative is selected.

Wade Waters presented the subcommittee's draft motion requesting the reasons DOE decided to replace the current contractor to design, build and operate the ITP replacement rather than continue to work with the existing contractor (see attached). The motion also requested the expected incremental cost increase and schedule delay associated with the major action to secure another qualified contractor. Discussion revolved around what parties were at fault for the failure of the ITP process and whether the Board should make recommendations regarding these types of management decisions. **Bill Lawless moved the Board adopt the recommendation and Barbara Murphy seconded. The motion was adopted by a vote of 13 in favor, two opposed and one abstention by Lane Parker due to conflict of interest considerations.**

Old Radioactive Waste Burial Ground Independent Scientific Peer Review

Bill Lawless presented a proposed draft scope of work to determine with an ISPR the scientific adequacy of the proposed plan and record of decision for the Old Radioactive Waste Burial Ground (see attached). He explained how the scope had been expanded and divided into four phases since it was last presented to the Board in May. It was also recommended that the work be competitively bid for up to \$35,000. Discussion revolved around who would determine what company or individual was awarded the contract. A small group of 5-6 CAB members will make the selection with input provided by the Focus Group members. **The Board voted to competitively bid the ISPR work not to exceed \$35,000 by a vote of 14 members in favor, one opposed and one abstention by Beaurine Wilkins due to lack of information.**

A/M Area Northern Sector Plume

Paul Huber presented a final report on the status of the Northern Sector A/M Groundwater Plume. 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 site. All offsite well samples came back clean, therefore screen level data was not substantiated, he said. Bill Lawless presented a draft commendation letter regarding the timely notification of a potential groundwater contamination plume in the A/M Northern Sector (see attached). The Board voted unanimously to provide the commendation.

Risk Management & Future Use Subcommittee Report

P.K. Smith presented Transportation Statements developed at the SSAB Transportation Seminar on May 20-23, 1999. She requested the SRS CAB support these statements as general non-binding statements regarding transportation issues. She stated that these had been taken before the Risk Management & Future Use Subcommittee, however they were unable to reach a decision to endorse the statements due to lack of information and the fact that they were trying not to modify the statements. She noted that because they were consensus statements they are very generic. Discussion revolved around the wording of the transmittal letter. Some members felt they should reserve the right to propose other solutions. It was determined that the Board did support the statements in principle and should provide support without reservation and that the SRS CAB would continue to make SRS specific recommendations as necessary. The Board was unanimously in favor of transmitting a letter in support of the transportation statements.

Jimmy Mackey presented risk communication improvements for the SRS Citizens Advisory Board (see attached). These suggestions were the result of the Risk Working Group Team B meetings. Discussion revolved around who should be the spokesperson for the SRS CAB and how letters to editors should be handled. It was determined that the improvement suggestions should be forwarded to the SRS CAB Outreach Subcommittee for review. Mr. Mackey next presented risk communication improvements for SRS (see attached). In regard to a formal plan to communicate with down stream populations, Tom Heenan clarified that DOE does have a formal plan and offered to make it available at an upcoming Risk Management & Future Use Subcommittee. Mr. Heenan also agreed to inquire about when courtesy notifications are made to the SRS CAB.

Administrative Subcommittee Report

Beaurine Wilkins announced that the Administrative Subcommittee had reviewed proposed bylaws amendments, which would be presented for voting in September. They also approved a membership solicitation plan and selection process schedule. The 60-day membership solicitation period will be conducted August 27-October 29. Selection of candidates will be made on December 4 during a meeting to be held in the CSRA.

Handouts

July 27, 1999 Meeting Agenda
Operations Update, July 1999
Eating Fish from the Savannah River
CAB Nuclear Materials Management Subcommittee, Draft Motion, DNFSB Report
Nevada and the Yucca Mountain Project
Viability Assessment of the Repository at Yucca Mountain, Overview
Why are scientists studying Yucca Mountain?
Office of Civilian Radioactive Waste Management Program Overview, Chris Kouts, DOE
Draft EIS for a Geologic Repository for the Disposal of Spent Nuclear Fuel, Joseph Ziegler
FFA Modification, FS Scoping and Primary Document Quality, Brian Hennessey, DOE
Draft Motion, FFA Modification, Feasibility Study Scoping and Primary Document Quality
Suspension of Milestones, materials to Aid Understanding, Brian Hennessey, DOE
Solid Waste Division System Plan, Sonny Goldston, BNFL
Motion, Solid Waste Division System Plan Low Level Radioactive Waste Disposal
L and P Area Bingham Pump Outage Pits Proposed Plan, Tom Temples, DOE
Draft Motion, Land P Area Bingham Pump Outage Pits Proposed Plan
SRS High Level Waste Salt Disposition Alternatives Historical Overview, John Reynolds, DOE
Draft Motion, Contractor Replacement High Level Waste In-Tank Precipitation Process Replacement
Draft Scope, Proposal for an ISPR of ORWBG
A/M Groundwater Update, Paul Huber, Bechtel Savannah River Company
Commendation Letter, July 27, 1999 from Ann Loadholt, SRS CAB
1999 SSAB Transportation Workshop Stakeholder Statements, P.K. Smith, SRS CAB
Draft Motion, Risk Communication Improvements, Jimmy Mackey, SRS CAB
Memo to CAB Members dated July 20, 1999, Karen Patterson, SRS CAB

Article, Checking What's Below Ground Can Help Prevent a Disaster, Lane Parker, SRS CAB Monthly
NEPA Report
1999 SRS CAB Activity Calendar
SRS CAB Recommendation Summary

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