



## **SRS Citizens Advisory Board**

### **Nuclear Materials Committee**

#### **Meeting Summary**

March 14, 2002  
Aiken Federal Building  
Aiken, SC

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The Citizens Advisory Board (CAB) Nuclear Materials (NM) Committee met on Thursday, March 14, 6:00 PM at the Aiken Federal Building, Aiken, SC. The following topics were discussed: Update on Cleanup Reform Appropriations (CRA) Initiatives, DNFSB Presentation, NM Work Plan Implementation, and Public Comment. Those in attendance were:

#### **CAB Members**

Judy Barnett  
Ken Goad\*  
William Lawrence\*  
Murray Riley  
Marty Stringer  
Wade Waters  
Bill Willoughby

#### **Stakeholders**

John H. Austin  
Paula Austin  
Mike French  
Brandon Haddock  
Richard Herold  
Bill McDonell  
Russ Messick  
Karen Patterson

#### **DOE/Contractors**

George Mishra, DOE  
Sachiko McAlhany, DOE  
Tom Burns, DNFSB  
Todd Davis, DNFSB  
William Condon, WSRC  
John Dickenson, WSRC  
William Johnson, WSRC  
Teresa Haas, WSRC  
Lyddie Broussard, WSRC

\* CAB members of the NM Committee

Note: Jean Sulc is a CAB member of the NM Committee, but was unable to attend this session.

#### **Welcome and Introduction**

Ken Goad, NM Committee Chair, welcomed those in attendance and asked them to introduce themselves. He reviewed the evening's agenda and encouraged all to join in the discussions of the issues presented.

#### **Update on CRA Initiatives for NM**

Teresa Haas opened this part of the evening's agenda and described it as a follow-up of the presentations made to the CAB on February 26 in Augusta, GA. She indicated that SRS was on track to submit the proposals to DOE Headquarters on March 26 and assured the audience that there would be ongoing dialogue with the CAB on the CRA Initiatives as changes occur.

Bill Johnson thanked the CAB for their involvement and stated that he found the input from the February 26 meeting very helpful in maturing the proposal development process for the NM initiatives. He was pleased to be able to report to DOE Headquarters that stakeholder involvement had been sought and utilized in the proposals.

John Dickenson presented the line by line response to the 38 items identified by the CAB during the NM breakout session on February 26. For most issues, he reported that the specific CAB input had been

incorporated into the proposals as suggested. Detailed explanations on the remaining issues were provided as needed. Dickenson described the process of ranking activities based on risk as well as ensuring decisions made will meet final disposition criteria based on current knowledge. Questions relating to melt and dilute technology, disposition pathways, plans for PUREX solvent and legacy waste, H-Canyon capabilities and schedule, expansion of KAMs, and capabilities for accommodating Rocky Flats fuel were answered by Johnson and Dickenson. They stated that some issues could not be fully resolved until the impact of related key decisions are known. The NM committee was assured that a continuing dialogue would be maintained with them as this impact is determined and conditions change.

### **DNFSB Presentation on Savannah River Site Nuclear Material Stabilization Activities**

Todd Davis introduced himself and Dr. Tom Burns as the two DNFSB staff members who are assigned as site representatives to SRS. To further explain their role, he provided information on the establishment, organization, and the functions and powers of the board as part of a DNFSB overview. As experts in nuclear safety, he explained the DNFSB uses specific recommendations, letters, and reports as tools to make changes when warranted and cited several examples. Related questions were answered and web sites for additional and ongoing information on the DNFSB were identified.

Davis stated that DNFSB concerns in regards to SRS material stabilization activities resulted in the issuing of Recommendation 1994-1. Failure to make adequate progress prompted Recommendation 2000-1. While he acknowledged that the DNFSB has been critical of past delays in material stabilization activities, he believes there has been significant progress made since 1994. The DNFSB, at least conceptually, is in agreement with the proposed SRS implementation plan for stabilization activities, which is in revision. He said the DNFSB is watching with interest several key projects and provided a brief overview of them.

Questions on the plutonium solutions in H-Canyon prompted Davis to defer to the DOE representation. Sachiko McAlhaney stated the solutions are expected to be transferred to High Level Waste (HLW) but would not be able to provide the specific details at this time since plans are still being developed. Questions were also raised about the HEU Blenddown project and McAlhaney stated that it is a vital project but tank space is currently an issue. She said this project is being managed very closely to avoid delays.

Davis stated that due to the numerous missions that are targeted for H Area coupled with a proposed accelerated schedule, the DNFSB hopes to see an integration plan as soon as possible.

As to the current status of F-Canyon, Davis said the DNFSB had concerns about DOE's plans for long-term chemical separations activities which were detailed in a letter last May. At that time, it was the DNFSB's position that F-Canyon would be needed for future chemical processing. Earlier this year, DOE responded that the F-Canyon PUREX process will not be used for plutonium disposition purposes. As a result, F-Canyon suspension plans are ongoing. Davis indicated that the DNFSB continues its evaluation of nuclear materials at SRS and throughout the DOE complex. He stated if the DNFSB has any comment on the decision to suspend F-Canyon operations, it would be made very soon.

Davis concluded his presentation with a short discussion on spent nuclear fuel. He said the DNFSB's concern relating to the problems associated with the development of new technologies for the stabilization of nuclear materials remains unchanged since 1999. He stated that while the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and Record of Decision (ROD) had identified the Melt and Dilute technology as the preferred alternatives for treating most of the aluminum based spent nuclear fuel, it is not currently funded. The DNFSB supports utilizing existing facility capabilities (i.e., H-Canyon) to stabilize spent nuclear fuel while other disposition options are developed.

Davis thanked the committee for having him and said he would welcome the opportunity to return and update the CAB in the future.

### **NM Work Plan Implementation**

Ken Goad provided committee members with a list of NM topics from the CAB 2002 Annual Work Plan. Discussion was held as to the priorities of the work plan. Committee members were asked to forward their rankings to Lyddie Broussard.

Ken announced that the next NM Committee meeting would be held in conjunction with the Combined Committee meeting on March 26, 2002, Augusta GA. All were invited to attend.

### **Public Comment**

With no other public comment, the meeting was adjourned.

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