

SPRING 2007



SAVANNAH RIVER SITE CITIZENS' ADVISORY BOARD

Board Beat

BOARD EXPRESSES SUPPORT AND DISAPPOINTMENT OF SALTSTONE OPERATIONS

The Savannah River Site (SRS) Citizens Advisory Board (CAB) prepared a letter to the Savannah River Operations Office Manager, to convey their support for the Saltstone operations and express the Board's disappointment for the interruption of operations as a result of the appeal submitted to the South Carolina Administrative Law Court on March 19, 2007.

The CAB has made more than 30 recommendations since 1995 concerning the liquid radioactive waste system at the SRS. The members' constant theme has been to reduce the greatest risk at SRS – the large volume of radiological waste in the liquid waste tanks. The Board's consistent prioritization with regard to risk reduction at SRS is 1) salt waste disposition, 2) bulk removal of waste from the tanks, and 3) ultimate tank closure. The Board asked that SRS work diligently and expeditiously to resolve this matter before the Administrative Law Court and pursue every legal recourse to resume operations.

The Saltstone Facility (Saltstone) will safely stabilize and disposes of low-activity liquid radioactive wastes at the SRS. It consists of two facility segments: Saltstone Production Facility (SPF) and Saltstone Disposal Facility (SDF). SPF will receive low-activity treated salt solution and stabilize it by mixing the salt solution

with dry materials to form a grout mixture, or slurry, which will be pumped into the engineered disposal vaults that make up the SDF. There, the grout solidifies into a non-hazardous low-activity waste form called "saltstone." The highly radioactive contaminants (cesium, strontium, actinides) removed from the salt waste will be sent to the Defense Waste Processing Facility, where they will be poured into glass, and contained in sealed stainless steel canisters.

The delay in the Saltstone permit is having a ripple impact on the overall program for processing, vitrifying and disposal of radioisotopes in tank sludge. This is because of the integrated relationship of the various treatment methods on different waste components in the tanks. A stay (interruption) of the Saltstone permit increases costs and delays treatment and disposal of waste. As such, the stay which is not in the greater public interest.



Saltstone Facility

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The mission of the SRS CAB is to provide informed and timely recommendations to DOE concerning decisions that affect SRS in areas of environmental restoration, waste management and related activities.

RECENT RECOMMENDATIONS HIGHLIGHTED

Recommendation 238- DOE Budget – Stakeholder Participation Consistency (adopted 9/26/07)

Concerned that they have not had an opportunity to provide meaningful input in the budget process, the SRS CAB Members issued another recommendation regarding the disparity and need for a more consistent and effective budget participation process across the DOE-complex. They had concerns about the lack of a current SRS stakeholder budget participation process which would include a site priorities listing, planned key accomplishments and over-target activities. They wanted DOE-SR to establish a consistent involvement process in the planning and formulation aspects of the SRS budget. Therefore, the Board recommended that for Fiscal Year (FY)2009 and all outyear budgets, DOE-SR provide a briefing to the SRS CAB in March of each year on the status of the fiscal year budget currently being formulated for the SRS. They asked that DOE-HQ reconfirm the length of the budget embargo period and provide potential alternatives to shorten this period to provide stakeholders more time to provide meaningful input in the budget process.

Recommendation 239 - Standard Review Plan Public Meetings (adopted 9/26/09)

In light of articles highlighting DOE's legal concerns about the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) Standard Review Plan process and based on DOE's contention that NRC's role should be more of a consultation role versus a role of licensing, certifying and regulating DOE, the SRS CAB recommended that DOE and NRC ensure that all meetings to review the important issues dealing with closing high level waste tanks be conducted in public. Also acknowledging the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (SCDHEC) concerns about the potential lengthy Waste Determination documentation process and the impact such delays could have on the tank closure process, the Board recommended that DOE work with NRC and SCDHEC to reduce the overall consultation timeframe and/or innovatively complete the consultation in a manner that supports compliance with the Federal Facility Agreement (FFA) schedules. The Board also recommended that DOE conduct a preliminary performance assessment for tank groups ahead of waste removal so that after waste removal, waste determinations for tanks may be conducted more quickly. Finally, the CAB recommended that DOE, NRC and SCDHEC make a joint presentation to the SRS CAB at the November 2006 CAB meeting on the roles and responsibilities and meeting processes of each agency in the Section 3116 process and they asked that these agencies provide an overview of how much efficiency can be

achieved by standardization processes to comply with FFA schedules (such as teams to jointly write documents).

Recommendation 240 - Savannah River Ecology Laboratory - Funding Reductions (adopted 11/14/07)

The SRS CAB considers the ecology lab to be a national treasure and an important part of the SRS cleanup efforts in our community. The SRS CAB was greatly concerned about the impact of SREL budget cuts in FY06. They were disappointed to hear that DOE plans additional SREL funding cuts in FY07. The SRS CAB recommended DOE-EM sign the Cooperative Agreement to provide FY2007 funding for SREL at no less than the \$4.5 million level and provide a minimum base level of at least \$4.5 million for subsequent out-years in accordance with the pending Cooperative Agreement. The CAB asked that DOE-EM investigate the possibility of permanently establishing the funding for SREL under the authorization of the SRS landlord and the possibility of spreading the SREL funding across resources within the DOE-complex similar to technology development funding. They also asked DOE-EM to provide a report on the findings of the investigation to the SRS CAB at their March meeting. Finally, before any future budget cuts are made to the SREL budget, the CAB asked DOE-SR to notify them as soon as there is knowledge of any impending budget cuts.

Recommendation 241 - Progress of PUREX and Transuranic (TRU) Waste Disposition (adopted 11/14/2007)

The SRS CAB recommended that DOE continue to accelerate disposition of the final legacy organic PUREX (Plutonium URanium EXtraction Process, report to the SRS CAB once it is complete, and prepare a public news release that highlights this accomplishment. In addition, they asked DOE to transfer closure of CIF to the FFA program and provide a report to the SRS CAB in October 2007 on the progress made. The Board asks that DOE expedite shipments of legacy TRU drums, approval of the accreditation program for repackaged large boxed TRU wastes, and pre-licensing activities controlled by DOE for the TRUPACT III and also provide this report in October 2007. The Board recommends that DOE work with WIPP, EPA, and the State of New Mexico Environmental Division (NMED) to accelerate the necessary program approvals from EPA and NMED to begin removing the Battelle RH TRU waste and present the progress to the SRS CAB in October 2007. In addition, they asked DOE to expedite

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SRS CAB WELCOMES NEW MEMBERS



Undrey Bostic
Undrey works for the Georgia Department of Defense Youth Challenge Academy and is the Pastor of a small congregation in Jenkins County. He resides in Augusta, GA.



Franklin Boulineau
Franklin is a retired high school biology and chemistry teacher and school principal. He resides in Hephzibah, GA.



Terri Chaput
Terri was a licensed geologist focusing on soil and groundwater assessment and remediation of contaminated sites. Ms. Chaput resides in Aiken, SC.



Stanley Howard
Stanley has been a welder for many years and owns a farm adjacent to the site boundary. He currently works for Westinghouse Savannah River Company (WSRC). He resides in Windsor, SC.



William Palphreyman
William is a retired former President of a medium sized Engineering Company. He resides in Okatie, SC.



Sarah Watson
Sarah currently works in the financial services business and is a licensed insurance agent. She resides in Irmo, SC.

NEW MEMBER 2007 ORIENTATION



New Members listen as Board Chair Karen Patterson gives orientation overview of SRS

New Members were invited to the Savannah River Site on March 5, 2007 for **New Member Orientation**. They were introduced to Jeff Allison, DOE-SR Site Manager and Yvette Collazo, the DOE Deputy Designated Federal Official (DDFO) who both gave presentations. Gerri Flemming, the Lead Federal Coordinator, gave a presentation on the Site Specific Advisory Board (SSAB) overview. Sheron Smith spoke to the group on CAB Committee operations, and Mindy Mets gave an overview on the Boards makeup and operations. Committee Chair, Karen Patterson, presented the Site Overview of Savannah River Past, Present, and Future. After lunch the member were given a drive-by tour of SRS including Programmatic Overview by Laurie Posey, Westinghouse Savannah River Company.

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RECENT RECOMMENDATIONS HIGHLIGHTED

(continued from Page 2)

the disposal of the high activity TRU wastes on pad 1 including the submission of an application for the issuance of a RCRA Part B Permit and to the SRS CAB in October 2007. Finally, the Board wanted to accelerate the management decisions to decrease the high activity TRU waste inventory at SRS and report to the SRS CAB in October 2007.

Recommendation 242 - Disposition Processing Plan Critical Elements (adopted 11/14/07)

In an effort to expedite the critical elements of the Disposition Processing Plan (DPP) and to assure that these activities and associated dates are specified in any new revisions the SRS CAB recommended that DOE first, initiate deliquification, dissolution, and adjustment (DDA) operations in Tank 41 as soon as possible after the permit modification is issued by SCDHEC, but no later than March 15, 2007. They also asked that DOE initiate radioactive operations of Actinide Removal Process (ARP)/Modular Caustic Side Solvent Extraction Unit (MCU); as soon as possible, but no later than June 1, 2007. In addition, they requested a presentation explaining how concurrent operations of the three treatment facilities (DDA, ARP & MCU) will be accomplished and identify critical elements and plans to ensure their success. The Board requested that DOE initiate the removal of radioactive waste from Tank 50 with a target date for its recovery on or before January 5, 2007 and accelerate the construction of the lag storage for Saltstone feed by two years (2008 instead of 2010). Finally, they asked DOE make a decision on the Point of Compliance (POC), new performance modeling, and technology deployment by January 22, 2007.

Recommendation 243 - Plutonium Vitrification Update (adopted 1/23/07)

In an effort to expedite the plutonium vitrification facility at SRS, the SRS CAB recommended that DOE provide to them the anticipated NEPA documentation schedule and justify why it can not be started earlier in March 2007. In addition they asked to be provided with an overlay of the plutonium vitrification facility schedule versus the current DWPF operational schedule to demonstrate the anticipated impacts in March 2007. Finally, the Board requested that DOE provide final funding estimates for the plutonium vitrification facility to before July 2007.

Recommendation 244 - DOE Budget Formulation and Stakeholder Participation (adopted 3/26/07)

The SRS CAB recommended the following concerning the budget process, first, DOE-SR provide a briefing to

them in April on the Continuing Resolution and its potential impact. The SRS CAB is interested in the impacts that the Continuing Resolution has on the Salt Waste Processing Facility (SWPF) schedule and regulatory commitment funding. The SRS CAB requests DOE SR provide a timeframe to allow them to review and input to the SRS budget process. Also they request that DOE-SR clarify the budget embargo dates and identify where it can share funding performance measures for FY 2008, FY 2009 and each successive budget year. The Board recommended DOE-SR provide a formal presentation on the reasons behind the extension of the projected cleanup closure completion dates for SRS and what assurances are available to ensure that the dates do not continue to slip. Finally the Board recommended, DOE-SR ensure that all budget presentations to SRS CAB committees are clearly identifiable and that information presented is comparable and equivalent between budget presentations.

Recommendation 245 - Liquid Waste Systems Approach (adopted 3/27/07)

Even though work is underway to resolve technical design issues between Department of Energy (DOE) and Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board (DNFSB), the SRS CAB would like issues between DOE and DNFSB resolved quickly. The SRS CAB recommended that DOE provide the SRS CAB with quantitative systems-approach analyses for the liquid radioactive waste system that support the SWPF design decisions and explain to the SRS CAB the methods used to evaluate the liquid radioactive waste system and present all potential impacts on cost, schedule, and safety and any proposed mitigation strategies, including any "lessons learned" from previous risk informed decision analyses by May 2007.



CAB Members Joe Ortaldo (left) and Stanley Howard

SRS CAB CHAIRS ATTEND BI-ANNUAL MEETING

The SRS CAB Chair, Karen Patterson, and Vice Chair, Donna Antonucci, attended the Department of Energy (DOE) Environmental Management (EM) Site-Specific Advisory Board's (SSAB's) bi-annual meeting hosted by the Nevada Test Site Community Advisory Board. The EM SSAB is chartered under the Federal Advisory Committee Act to provide advice and recommendations to DOE at the request of the Assistant Secretary for Environmental Management. This meeting was held in Las Vegas, Nevada, on March 29-30, 2007, to allow SSAB chairpersons, administrators, and Federal coordinators from the seven SSABs around the DOE complex to discuss shared and individual issues among themselves and with the Department of Energy-Headquarters.

Attendees received briefings from James Rispoli, Assistant Secretary for Environmental Management, on how his office is working to better take advantage of existing capabilities at individual sites and the implementation of a more robust project management system and acquisition strategies. He stated that the Federal Advisory Committee Act compliance is of high importance for SSABs. He also stated he would be seeking SSAB input on the National Strategy on Waste Disposition, as well as continued input on the EM Budget Development. Fred Butterfield, of the Environmental Protection Agency's Science Advisory Board Staff Office, detailed the

essentials of the Federal Advisory Committee Act as it pertains to the SSABs; Mark Gilbertson, Deputy Assistant Secretary for the Office of Engineering and Technology, explained his office's role to help translate EM needs. He talked about new technologies, such as the Rotary Tank Removal Technology at SRS. He stated the four areas of responsibility for his office are communication, diversity, roles and responsibility, and business practices. Dennis Ferrigno, Vice Chair, Environmental

Management Advisory Board (EMAB), explained that the role of the EMAB is to directly advise the EM Assistant Secretary in much the same way as the SSABs advise site managers. Dave Moody, Manager, Carlsbad Field Office, gave some background information on the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant and an update on transportation, packaging of waste, and shipments.



CAB Chair and Vice Chair attend a presentation at the SSAB's Bi-Annual Meeting in Las Vegas

The SRS CAB chairs shared information with the group regarding the SRS High Level

Waste System; Plutonium Disposition decisions; storage, treatment, and disposal of waste from new and other missions; and clarified a By-Law revision mandate.

Two suggested letters were discussed as a product of the SSAB meeting. The group agreed to prepare a letter commending DOE on opening dialog regarding technology. The letter is to be presented to individual SSABs for signature approval by respective chairs.

CAB'S BUDGET RECOMMENDATIONS SUCCEEDS IN CHANGING PROCESS

On February 6, 2007, the EM Site Specific Advisory Board (SSAB) received a memo from DOE's Deputy Assistant Secretary for Program Planning and Budget regarding "Participation of the EM SSAB in EM Budget Requests" This guidance was issued in response to a June 2006 SSAB recommendation to EM that the CAB provide input to the budget process. This SSAB recommendation paralleled the SRS CAB recommendation #234 documenting the local stakeholder frustration at not being involved early enough in the budget process.

In response to the new guidance, DOE-SR requested the SRS CAB provide input to the FY2009 budget priority list. The SRS CAB was given only ten days to respond

to the request and was able to submit a response to DOE in eight days.

The SRS Citizens Advisory Board acknowledged the schedule pressure that affects all SRS staff working to prepare the site budget, and expressed appreciation to the DOE-SR effort to get them involved based on the recent DOE-HQ guidance. In the future, DOE is expected to involve the CAB earlier in the development of the EM Priority List, so that they can more effectively review and comment on such an important topic. In March 2007 the CAB wrote Recommendation 244 - DOE Budget Formulation and Stakeholder Participation for DOE's response. (See Page 4)

CAB MEMBERS REVIEW SRS ACTIVITIES

Eight members of the SRS Citizens' Advisory Board toured the **Defense Waste Processing Facility (DWPF)** and received a presentation on SRS Liquid Waste Planning on Tuesday, April 17, 2007. Bill Barnes and John Occhipinti, both with Washington Savannah River Company (WSRC), provided an informative presentation and tour of the DWPF. Board Members viewed aspects of the glass pouring process which contributed to a better understanding of the facility mission. Ginger Dickert and Steve Thomas, of WSRC, provided a presentation on the background and current needs of the Liquid Waste Planning efforts at SRS, including assumptions and risk planning for tank space needs.



Defense Waste Processing Facility (DWPF)



Members receive information during tour of TRU Waste Facilities

On February 20, 2007, seven members of the SRS Citizens' Advisory Board expressed appreciation and positive feedback after participating in a tour of the **Caustic Side Solvent Extraction (CSSX) system** at the Energy Solutions facility in Barnwell, SC. The CSSX full-scale testing will validate the SWPF full-scale design capability. The tour included informative presentations with descriptions and diagrams for the canister separation processes and a walk down of the full-scale testing area.



On October 25, 2007, ten CAB Members toured the **Transuranic (TRU) Waste Facilities**. Bert Craspe, DOE-SR provided a presentation and tour of the facilities. Board members were updated on Ship-to-WIPP Pads; Characterization Pads; Storage Pads; and the Modular Repackaging System.

On November 30, 2007, three CAB Members attended the **T Area Closure** celebration. T Area is the first area at SRS closed under an "Area Closure" concept endorsed by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control. Also attending the event were Jim Rispoli, DOE Assistant Secretary for Environmental Management who said "It was a significant accomplishment, both in cleanup and in working together as a team."



T Area Closure Celebration

SRS CAB's 2007 Work Plan Topics

The Citizens' Advisory Board uses issue-based committees to focus on various topics. There are a variety of issues of interest to the CAB. A Work Plan has been prepared to establish priority issues for each of the four issues based committees. The 2007 Work Plan topics by committee are as follows:

Waste Management Committee

- Transuranic (TRU) Waste Disposition
- Low-Level/Mixed Low-Level/Hazardous Waste Disposition
- Liquid Waste including the MCU and ARP
- Performance Assessment Modeling
- Waste Determinations and Interactions Between DOE, SCDHEC, EPA, & NRC
- Tank Space Management and Closure
- Saltstone Permit Issues
- Salt Waste Processing Facility

Facility Disposition and Site Remediation Committee

- SRS Groundwater Strategy
- Soils and Groundwater Remediation & Technology
- C-Area Burning Rubble Pit
- M-Area Operable Unit
- P-Area Operable Unit
- Deactivation & Decommissioning Updates
- P-Reactor End State Workshop
- F-Area End State & ROD

Strategic and Legacy Management Committee

- Budget Development
- Gold Metrics
- End State Vision Document
- Land Management Plan
- Biomass Utilization
- Integrated Operable Units
- Historic Preservation

Nuclear Materials Committee

- EM Vision on Plutonium
- Plutonium Storage & Surveillance
- Disposition of Plutonium Not Suitable for MOX
- Spent Fuel Storage and Disposition
- Canyon Utilization
- K-Area Storage & Operation

Meet Our Support Staff



From left to right (seated) - Sheron Smith, Gerri Flemming; (standing) Mindy Mets, Debbie Wisham

- ☞ **Lead Federal Coordinator - Gerri Flemming**
 - Responsible for overall CAB functions
 - Serves as first point of contact for CAB members on general Full-CAB, Executive, and Administrative Committee matters
 - Works closely with Meeting Coordinators and Facilitator
- ☞ **Federal Technical Coordinator – Sheron Smith**
 - Responsible for committee-level technical information and presentation coordination
 - Serves as the first point of contact on all committee issues and requests for information
 - Works closely with Technical Advisor
- ☞ **Meeting Coordinators (V3 Technical Services) – Mindy Mets and Debbie Wisham**
 - Arranges logistics for CAB meetings
 - Prepares copies of presentations, documents, etc.
 - Processes travel
 - Maintains general files, databases, and web site



Rick McLeod

- ☞ **Technical Advisor (V3 Technical Services) – Rick McLeod**

Assists the CAB in the development of recommendations and correspondence
- ☞ **Facilitator (MAS Consultants) – Mike Schoener**

Facilitates full-CAB meetings and special meetings (i.e., retreats, membership selection process, etc.)



Mike Schoener



Savannah River Site Citizens Advisory Board

Key criteria for Board membership includes a time commitment and the willingness to study the issues and work toward clear, implementable recommendations.

To apply for membership to the Citizens Advisory Board, please call 1-800-249-8155.

**Board Beat* is published semiannually by the Savannah River Site Citizens Advisory Board. Content is provided by Board members and support staff. Please send your comments and suggestions to:

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Upcoming 2007 Citizens Advisory Board Meetings

May 21-22	DoubleTree Hotel, Savannah, GA
July 23-24	Newberry Hall, Aiken, SC
September 24-25	Sheraton North Hotel, Charleston, SC
November 26-27	Augusta Marriott Hotel, Augusta, GA.

Note: Individual committee meetings will be held as required.

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