



## **SRS Citizens Advisory Board**

Risk Management and Future Use Subcommittee

### **Meeting Summary**

**December 2, 1996**

**Augusta, GA**

The Risk Management and Future Use Subcommittee Meeting of the Savannah River Site (SRS) Citizens Advisory Board (CAB) met on December 2, 1996, at the Ramada Plaza Hotel, Augusta, Ga. CAB attendees included Vernon Zinnerman, (Chairman), Karen Patterson, Ed Tant, and Kamalakar Raut. Regulators who attended included David Wilson and Shelley Sherritt from the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (SCDHEC). Virginia Gardner from the Department of Energy Savannah River Operations Office (DOE-SR) was the ADDFO. Chuck Borup from DOE also attended. David Thorntonberry from the Defense Nuclear Facility Safety Board was in attendance. Members of the public who attended were Gerry Stejskal, Robert Overman, Karin Schill (*Augusta Chronicle*), Ahmet Suer, Gary Kaplan, and Trish McCracken. Westinghouse Savannah River Company attendees were Gail Jernigan, Mary Flora, and Clay Jones. Mr. Zinnerman opened the meeting by welcoming everyone to the meeting. Attendees provided self introductions, and Mr. Zinnerman introduced Clay Jones. Mr. Jones provided an update on the status of the *Ten Year Plan*.

Mr. Jones began his presentation by saying he was going to cover where the Ten Year Plan has been, where it is now, and where it is going. The first draft of the plan was in response to Assistant Secretary of Environmental Management (EM) Al Alm's request for a new look at the EM Program. Most of the meeting attendees had attended the August public meeting on the Ten Year Plan and were familiar with the background information.

Mr. Jones asked for the meeting participants expectations of the meeting. These expectation included the following:

- Update on the status of the plan.
- Do we agree with Bob Overman
- How do the EISs fit in?
- Are assumptions realistic?
- How much input have lawmakers (Congress) had?

Mr. Jones reminded the participants that in August, the initial plan was drafted to try to decide how the various DOE sites can do things faster and reduce the life cycle costs for various projects. (See attached slides.) Since the current EM Program budget is \$6 billion, the sites need to reach an end state with lower surveillance and maintenance costs. The key assumption in the plan is that there will be constant funding from fiscal year (FY) 1998 to 2006. In doing so, the site planners assumed that SRS would receive \$50 million more than the targets established by

DOE Headquarters (DOE-HQ). The August draft discussed privatization where private companies might be able to perform various activities and save DOE some money.

A question was asked about “at risk” materials as shown on slide number 4. Mr. Jones explained that these are the nuclear materials to be addressed in Defense Nuclear Facility Safety Board Recommendation 94-1. (The first recommendation in 1994.) These materials are materials “in the pipeline”, but do not include plutonium being recovered from dismantled weapons. The Ten Year Plan proposes that these nuclear materials would be “road ready” (ready for shipment to a final repository and acceptance by final repository) as their end state in 2006. The plan is to ensure safe storage until the final repository is open.

Mr. Jones also explained that there are significant opportunities to help other DOE sites, particularly Rocky Flats. By accelerating the schedule for various tasks, sites can reduce the risks and reduce the life cycle costs.

Mr. Jones reviewed the new schedule for the Ten Year Plan, and he noted that since the first draft of the SRS Ten Year Plan was sent to stakeholders for review and comment the site team has received over 100-150 comments on the plan. Comments have come from stakeholder meetings, written comments, and the Citizens Advisory Board. Mr. Jones reviewed a summary of stakeholder comments and said that the new schedule for the plan allows for additional stakeholder opportunities to comment on the plan. Mr. Jones further “rolled up”: the comments into two general categories: prioritization and DOE complex optimization options. One stakeholder asked why funding is not included in the two categories. Mr. Jones explained that the category of “prioritization” includes funding issues.

Mr. Jones explained to the group that Mr. Zimmerman’s Risk Management and Future Use Subcommittee has been working on prioritization activities for over a year. In the last few weeks, there has been more interest on prioritization from the public in Savannah, Georgia. On February 1, 1997, there will be a town hall meeting with the subcommittee and the public in Savannah to discuss prioritization activities further. Mr. Jones also explained to the group that regulatory enforceable programs are essential and will continue to be funded with a high priority. With this information, Mr. Jones recommended that the Risk Management and Future Use Subcommittee continue their prioritization efforts and provide a recommendation to SRS officials to prioritize activities for the future.

The next steps include the public prioritizing activities for SRS based on new guidance from DOE-HQ. The Risk Management and Future Use Subcommittee is poised to do this. Additionally, the new schedule allows for additional stakeholder input and Mr. Jones encouraged participants to continue to participate in the planning process.

The following questions, answers and comments were discussed. The question and comments are in italics; the answers are in plain text.

*DOE is a political organization and is being driven by politics. There has been only one time DOE has done the “right” thing and that is when they decided to accept foreign research reactor fuel. Shutting down the canyons by a certain year is wrong. The canyons should not be*

*shut down until decisions are made about what to do with spent fuel from Hanford and other DOE sites. DOE must overcome the politics and consider the safety and environment for the United States and the world. We may not like to have SRS stabilize this fuel, but it is the right thing to do. SRS is the only DOE site with the capability to do this.*

One objective of the Ten Year Plan is to determine what makes sense for the nation and for the citizens. An example of this is the location for the federal repository.

*Will there be one report for the Ten Year Plan?*

Yes, DOE-HQ will publish a draft Ten Year Plan for the nation in March 1997 which will be a comprehensive plan for the entire DOE Complex. This draft will be distributed to Congress and to the public.

*Who are the authors of this plan? There should be consistency with other DOE documents.*

Clay Jones said that he and his staff are the authors and they are trying to make sure that all documents are consistent. Each program section is written by program managers. WSRC drafts the plan for DOE-SR review and comment.

*Where does BNFL (British Nuclear Fuels, Limited) fit into this Ten Year Plan?*

BNFL became a partner with WSRC after the first draft of this plan was completed. BNFL is managing the Solid Waste Program at SRS. Since they joined with WSRC on October 1, they will be included in future drafts.

*Any feedback from the regulators about the Ten Year Plan?*

David Wilson, SCDHEC, responded by saying that the regulators comments have been similar to those from the general public. They are also concerned with the funding issue and will look at national issues through the National Governors' Association.

*Will SCDHEC support acceleration of activities? Will they provide the review of documents in a timely manner to support this acceleration?*

Mr. Wilson responded by saying as long as the regulators have enough time to plan their activities, they will be able to support the acceleration.

Mr. Jones then reviewed the group's expectations from the beginning of the meeting. He told the group that the Ten Year Plan is not taking the place of Environmental Impact Statements (EISs). The plan will look at the programs and the "big picture" where the EISs will follow with specific analyses. So far the lawmakers have had little involvement in the Ten Year Plan. However, this will change in the future. The March draft of the comprehensive DOE-HQ plan will be sent to members of Congress. In addition, lawmakers get involved through funding DOE projects and activities. Mr. Jones reminded the participants that citizen input is still needed on the plan. The next draft will be issued in February-March timeframe. He encouraged public participation

through the Risk Management and Future Use Subcommittee, especially with the prioritization activities of this subcommittee.

Mr. Zimmerman closed the meeting by echoing Mr. Jones's comments. He told the group that the members of the CAB are not experts and that is why they seek input from other citizens. The meeting was then adjourned.

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