SRS Citizen's Advisory Board

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Environmental Remediation & Waste Management Subcommittee

Meeting Record
May 12, 1997
Savannah, Ga.

The CAB ER & WM subcommittee met on May 12, 1997 at the Marriott Riverfront Hotel in Savannah, GA. CAB members present included Bill Lawless CAB ER &WM subcommittee Co-chair, Ann Loadholt, CAB Chairperson, Karen Patterson, Deborah Simone, Lane Parker and Arthur Belge. Todd Crawford technical consultant to the SRS CAB also attended. Attending from DOE-SR were Larry Ling and Les Germany. Keith Collinsworth attended from the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (SCDHEC). Jeff Crane attended from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Attending from WSRC/BSRI/BNFL were Helen Villasor, Gerry Stejskal, Ron Steve, Gerald Blount, Sonny Goldston, and Sam Kelly. Chuck Powers attended from the Consortium for Risk Evaluation and Stakeholder Involvement (CRESP) Gerri Flemming attended as the Associate Designated Deputy Federal Official, ADDFO.

Bill Lawless opened the meeting with introductions. Larry Ling, DOE-SR, presented an overview of the High Level Waste (HLW) tank closure activities and the CAB`s involvement with tank closure activities. Mr. Ling noted that CAB Recommendation 15 which requested DOE-SR to establish HLW tank closure criteria by the end of FY 1996 was received in January 1996 and planning efforts were begun in February 1996. Mr. Ling said SRS had worked closely with SCDHEC, EPA, and the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, (NRC) in developing the criteria and had kept the CAB informed of tank closure activities by means of periodic updates.

In June of 1996 a public informational meeting was held to present and discuss the Tank Closure Plan and in July 1996 regulator approval of the General Closure Plan was received. Closure of the first tank (Tank 20) was begun on April 24, 1997. Mr. Ling described the general process for tank closure which includes removal of most of the waste followed by sampling of the residual waste. The sample results are input to a computer model to ensure performance objective goals are met. Then an individual tank closure module is developed. Next the residual waste in the tank is stabilized with a specially formulated grout and the tank is filled with a controlled-low-strength-material (CLSM). Finally, a strong grout cap is placed over the fill material. Mr. Ling explained that most of the tanks are grouped in sets of four tanks called 4-packs. The tanks range in size from 750,000 to 1.3 million gallons. The first 4-pack scheduled for closure completion in FY 99 includes Tank 20, 17, 19, and 18. Mr. Ling explained that Tank 20 closure is in progress, Tank 17 is in the waste removal stage, and closure planning has begun for Tank 19. He said Tank 18 would be closed in FY99.

Mr. Ling circulated pictures of Tank 20 which had been taken with a robotic camera and showed a video of the inside of the tank. He noted that when the grout is poured in it actually lifts the heel of residual sludge off the tank floor. Questions and discussion covered final closure of the 4-pack and the subsequent turnover to Environmental Restoration for final closure which is expected in the year 2000 or 2001.

Les Germany, DOE-SR Waste Area Group manager for the L area units, presented the L Area Oil & Chemical Basin and L Area Acid/Caustic Basin (LAOCB/LAACB) proposed plans for remediation. Mr. Germany explained the LAOCB/LAACB unit, its characteristics and history, the results of characterization studies, the risks involved with the unit, and the selected alternative remedy for the unit. Discussions and questions concerned the projected cost of the action, the land use scenarios used in calculating unit risk, and whether an interim action of backfilling the basin with clean soil would be as effective as the proposed alternative. It was noted that the LAOCB/LAACB had received 270 curies of material during its operating life and was the second highest ranked unit in the ER program in terms of risk. Keith Collinsworth said the alternative which is effective in the long term is preferable to the State. Since consensus could not be reached on the draft motion, it was decided to include both the interim action alternative of backfilling and Deed restrictions and the alternative of in situ stabilization and a soil cover for the LAOCB. Chuck Powers, CRESP, suggested that a cost and risk matrix be included/developed for the project.

Todd Crawford discussed the SRL Seepage Basins and the draft motion to convene a focus group and initiate early clean up action at the basins.

Bill Lawless noted the watershed remediation and integrator operable units draft motion would be tabled until after July to allow more time for gathering and studying the facts of the case for the watershed concept. The draft motion for an ISPR of the Savannah River Integrator Operable Unit Study was discussed and it was decided to go forward the motion.

Bill Lawless noted that the ISPR contract for Dr. Joel Massmann would include reviews of the Burial Ground and A/M groundwater projects, Tank 20 closure, the ER Management Action Plan, and the Savannah River Integrator Operable Unit Study. Karen Patterson said the tasks in the contract should be specifically defined.

Bill Lawless closed the meeting at 9:00 p.m.

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