



## **SRS Citizens Advisory Board**

### **Environmental Remediation & Waste Management Subcommittee**

#### **Meeting Record**

**July 21, 1997**

**Aiken, S.C.**

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The CAB ER & WM subcommittee met on July 21, 1997 at the University of South Carolina Aiken campus in Aiken, SC. CAB members present included Bill Lawless and Kathryn May, CAB ER & WM subcommittee Co-chairs, and Karen Patterson. Attending from DOE-SR were Will LaVeille, Tim Henderson, Larry Ling, Thomas Johnson, Rod Rimando, Virgil Sauls and Gerri Flemming. Ann Ragan and Michael Moore attended from the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (SCDHEC). Attending from WSRC/BSRI/BNI were Mary Flora, Sonny Goldston, Robert Cordani, Jeff Kisner, W. J. Creel, R.V. Carlson, Anne Roe, Gerry Stejskal, and Kelly Way. Public attendees included Trish McCracken, Lee Poe, Peter Gray, William R. McDonell, Ron J. Smith, and Chuck Powers. Gerri Flemming attended as the Associate Designated Deputy Federal Official, ADDFO.

Bill Lawless opened the meeting and asked Will LaVeille to give an update on the Technology Deployment Initiative (TDI) which is a complex-wide multi-year program with a proposed allocation of \$50 million dollars for FY98. Funding for the FY98 TDI program is still being considered by Congress, however, and until funds are actually made available, the entire program must be considered potential. Mr. LaVeille recounted the TDI program milestones and noted that SRS had submitted 11 proposals on May 12, 1997.

Mr. LaVeille explained that one SRS proposal, the AEA Fluidic Sampler by AEA Technology, was selected for deployment at SRS. This technology will be deployed at SRS in FY 98 and will be used to sample HLW tank material prior to its being sent to the Defense Waste Processing Facility (DWPF) for canister production. Mr. LaVeille noted the AEA Fluidic Sampler has several advantages over the sampling method currently being used. The AEA sampler is able to sample while the tank contents are being mixed, thus giving a more representative sample. Additionally, the AEA sampler is able to sample remotely thus saving worker exposure as compared to manual sampling methods. Mr. LaVeille said the \$1 million sampler investment was expected to save \$5.1 million over its useful operational life. He said he would keep the subcommittee apprised of future developments in the process leading to ultimate deployment. Tim Henderson gave the High Level Waste presentation and began with the status of cleaning and closing Tanks 17F and 20F; and noted that the AOP milestone of 7/31/97 for closing Tank 17F will not be met, (the date has slipped to 9/30/97, pending funding).

Mr. Henderson then discussed the 1F and 1H evaporators, their functions, past use, the basic evaporation principle, the current status, and the closure status. The following questions were asked: Are there any waste lines above ground? Mr. Henderson acknowledged that there is no radioactive waste in the above-ground lines. Most of these above-ground lines are for steam and electricity. One of the stakeholders mentioned that the tanks and evaporators are tied to other facilities in the area and connected through jumper boxes; therefore, SRS must do their homework and determine what is involved in the closing of these evaporators. Mr. Poe asked if the evaporator vessel would be taken out or left in place? An SRS representative stated that the old vessel is already out of the building and on a storage pad at the E-area vaults.

Kathryn May reviewed the draft motion on the HLW 1F and 1H evaporators. Rod Rimando, DOE-SR HWCTR Project Manager, gave an overview of the use of the Heavy Water Components Test Reactor, (HWCTR) facility as a pilot decommissioning project; including the HWCTR facility history and proposed plans for its decommissioning. HWCTR serves as the pilot for the joint DOE and EPA policy on decommissioning DOE facilities within a framework that parallels CERCLA non-time critical removal actions. HWCTR decommissioning is also a pilot for implementing an integrated safety management system to protect workers, the public, and the environment, (DNFSB 95-2). Mr. Rimando explained that non-defense (EX 20) funds had been specifically obligated for the HWCTR decommissioning. Mr. Rimando discussed the operating history of HWCTR and noted that HWCTR was operated from 1962 to 1964 to test fuel elements and other reactor components for use in heavy water moderated and cooled power reactors. In 1964 operations ceased and the facility was placed in standby. In 1975 duPont studied decommissioning options and issued a Decommissioning Plan.

Mr. Rimando discussed the work done with HWCTR since 1993 when the facility was turned over to DOE's Office of Environmental Restoration (EM 40) for decommissioning. In 1994 and 1995 asbestos insulation was removed from the reactor dome and four reactor support buildings were demolished. In 1996 and 1997 the HWCTR facility was characterized and a reunion of former employees was convened to gain information on former operations and practices. An Analysis of Removal Alternatives report was then prepared and released for public comment in November 1996. The analysis report considered four alternatives: (1) Dismantlement, (\$15,822,000); (2) Partial Dismantlement and Interim Safe Storage, (\$8,693,000); (3) Partial Dismantlement and Beneficial Reuse, (\$14,424,000); and (4) Entombment, (\$8,951,000). The report showed a slight scoring advantage for the dismantlement option. DOE chose the dismantlement option because it is a key step in preparing for the upcoming stream of facilities to be decommissioned within the next five to ten years. The dismantlement option also has adequate and dedicated funds and is consistent with the *SRS Waste Management Final Environmental Impact Statement and the EM's draft Accelerating Cleanup: Focus on 2006*.

Karen Patterson reviewed the draft motion on HWCTR and asked Lee Poe, Peter Gray, and Rod Rimando to present and defend the postpone, entomb, and dismantle options. Lee Poe, public citizen, presented the postpone option and noted that to reprogram the money designated for HWCTR to cover other higher risk reduction activities was a realistic option. Mr. Poe proposed continuing surveillance of HWCTR, reprogramming the money for HWCTR, and reevaluating the decommissioning needs for HWCTR in 2001 and 2007. Mr. Poe noted that by postponing action on HWCTR, the radioactivity of the cobalt-60 would be reduced to one-half by the year

2001. He said postponement would minimize worker exposure and by waiting there would be more information on potential uses, new closure technologies, and as decommissioning plans mature, HWCTR would serve as a better prototype. Mr. McDonell, public citizen, asked how the money would be spent if it was not spent on HWCTR and said he considered the \$4 million dollars/year a small amount of money. A discussion on the merits ensued. Rod Rimando said that since the money was designated as non-defense and HWCTR was the only non-defense project at SRS, if this project was delayed, it is likely the funds would be re-programmed by DOE-HQ to another DOE facility.

Peter Gray, public citizen and former SRS employee with 45 years of site-related experience, presented the entombment option. Mr. Gray noted that after the HWCTR reunion he was hired to work on the planning for decommissioning HWCTR and originally he favored the dismantlement option. Mr. Gray said his position evolved to favoring entombment. Mr. Gray noted that with entombment, by not moving the HWCTR components, there would be only one quarter the radiation dose to workers as compared to the dismantlement option. Additionally, he noted, the costs and schedule for entombment are about half that of dismantlement. . Mr. Gray also pointed out that the ranking of the two options in the alternatives document was not significantly different. Lastly, Mr. Gray explained why he did not favor postponement and noted that by getting on with decommissioning HWCTR now, the lessons learned could be applied to other decommissioning work, such as the production reactors in the 100 Areas. In summation, Mr. Gray pointed out the valuable resource SRS has in its former employees and their collective memories and experiences. Mr. Gray urged "the use of us old guys while we're still available" in the decommissioning of other facilities at SRS.

Bill Lawless said the subcommittee would be drafting other motions on decommissioning and asked Mr. Gray and others who are interested in decommissioning to participate in drafting the motions. Mr. McDonell pointed out that there were really not significant differences in terms of radiation exposure or cost between dismantlement and entombment.

Rod Rimando reiterated the reasons why DOE had chosen the Dismantlement option, in particular was the use of HWCTR as the prototype for the decommissioning program for nuclear reactor facilities. Mr. Rimando also pointed out that decommissioning is consistent with DOE's goal to lessen the cleanup burden of future generations and the risks to the public are minimal and the risks to the workers is low. Mr. Rimando also noted that dismantlement affords the greatest flexibility in the future use of the property.

Discussion on the HWCTR motion was tabled until after the EM Integration presentation. Trish McCracken requested information on the independent verification of the decommissioning process.

Virgil Sauls, DOE-SR, gave an overview of the EM Integration plan which was developed by contractors to identify opportunities to reduce costs and risks through complex-wide integration of efforts. They did not look at political or equity issues. The EM Integration document is made up of two portions a baseline or "as is" mapping and a second proposed "alternative" mapping of the waste streams. The review came up with 26 recommendations and is available for review and

comment. Karen Patterson reviewed the draft motion on the EM Integration effort which involved forming a national group of stakeholders to review the plan.

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



## **SRS Citizens Advisory Board**

### **Joint Subcommittee Meeting**

#### **Meeting Summary**

**July 21, 1997 6:30 p.m.**

**Aiken, S.C.**

A joint subcommittee meeting followed the SRS Citizens Advisory Board public meeting on Monday, July 21, 1997. All Board members present for the July Board meeting and approximately 20 members of the general public attended. The meeting was chaired by Risk Management & Future Use Subcommittee Chair Suzanne Matthews and Environmental Remediation & Waste Management Subcommittee Co-Chairs Bill Lawless and Kathryn May.

Tony Polk of the Department of Energy gave a presentation on privatization of the Consolidated Incineration Facility (CIF) (see attached). Mr. Polk provided a brief background of the CIF and its permitted capacities. He stated the reason DOE was considering privatization of CIF is to utilize its capacity and counter staffing reductions. A private company could pursue possible commercial waste alternatives in addition to SRS and DOE complex waste, he said. An expanded customer base could counter staffing reductions and potentially provide substantial savings.

Mr. Polk said an advertisement was being placed in the Commerce Business Daily to gauge interest among private companies. (This advertisement was later cancelled.) Westinghouse has also been asked to provide a proposal consolidating the operations of the Effluent Treatment Facility, the Saltstone Facility and the CIF. Mr. Polk stated DOE may entertain thoughts to privatize all three facilities to provide additional cost savings.

Much discussion pursued. One board member stated that DOE should not expect the same quality of work from employees hired at a lower wage by a private contractor. Mr. Polk stated that 100 employees were needed to operate CIF regardless of who they are and that the retention of current employees would be encouraged. When asked if DOE would sell the facility, Mr. Polk responded it would be leased. DOE would lease the land and facility and not be involved, he stated. Another board member asked what prohibited the Managing and Operating (M&O- Westinghouse) contractor from providing these services. Mr. Polk responded that the M&O is legally tied to the same laws and statutes as the government. A private business would not have to follow DOE orders, he said.

Ann Ragan stated that South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (SCDHEC) is strongly opposed to privatization of CIF. She said years ago when DOE approached SCDHEC about an incinerator, the State was reluctant for just this reason, however they were assured that only SRS waste would be treated by the facility. Privatization could open the door to anyone's waste coming to SRS, she said.

Discussion of the regulatory impacts continued. One gentleman asked that the risk be put in perspective, stating that if we are in a position to help the nation and little risk is involved, then this may be a good idea. Lee Poe stated he had heard the SRS commitment to SCDHEC, and was surprised by this initiative. He also stated he was perturbed that it had been brought to the public after the fact. He asked if DOE was telling the public this is the first step toward privatizing all of its operations? Mr. Polk responded that the core businesses, such as the Defense Waste Processing Facility were not under consideration.

One Board member asked why DOE was making this attempt if SCDHEC does not support it. Mr. Polk stated the Department still intends to determine interested parties. He stated privatization may still be a good idea, even if the effort only benefits DOE wastes. One gentleman stated that giving away operations such as ETF and CIF, would be incompetent and plug up the pipeline for core processes.

Due to time constraints, the meeting was adjourned. Another meeting will be scheduled in the near future to continue discussions.

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