



# November 1997 Meeting Minutes

**SRS Citizens Advisory Board  
November 18, 1997 8:30 a.m.  
Barnwell, S.C.**

## **Members Present**

Arthur Belge	Ann Loadholt	<i>Ex-Officio Representatives</i>
Tom Costikyan	Jimmy Mackey	Tom Heenan
Bill Donaldson	Kathryn May	Ann Ragan
Mary Elfner	Karen Patterson	Jim Brownlow (alternate)
Ken Goad	Deborah Simone	Jeff Crane
Brendolyn Jenkins	P.K. Smith	
Bill Lawless	Beaurine Wilkins	
	Becky Witter	

Members absent were Bill Adams, Thelonious Jones, JoAnn Nestor, Lane Parker and Ed Tant. Currently, there are five Board vacancies with the recent resignation of Suzanne Matthews. The Department of Energy (DOE) Designated Federal Official present was Tom Heenan. J. Walter Joseph of Aiken, S.C. served as the CAB Facilitator.

The meeting was open to the public and posted in the Federal Register in accordance with the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA).

## **Key Decisions Made by the Board**

The Board adopted a recommendation to store West Valley vitrified high level waste canisters at SRS prior to shipment to a final repository with several provisions. A minority report accompanied this recommendations.

The Board adopted a recommendation commending a DOE effort on early action strategies for environmental remediation and recommended opportunities for public involvement in the process.

## **Approval of Minutes**

The July and September meeting minutes were approved with no changes.

## **Agency Update**

Tom Heenan of DOE provided an organizational update stating that Dr. Mario Fiori had resigned in late October and that a decision on his replacement would likely be delayed until early next year due to the resignation of Assistant Secretary Al Alm. Mr. Heenan also provided a programmatic update stating that 16 canisters have been filled at the Defense Waste Processing Facility in fiscal year 1998 bringing the total canisters of waste completed to 250, which equals about one million pounds of waste. He also announced that the Consolidated Incineration Facility is back up and burning filter paper take-up rolls.

Mr. Heenan gave a brief review of the Environmental Remediation Program stating that 77% of the FY97 funds were used for actual cleanup work in the field as opposed to paperwork and that those waste units which constitute eighty percent of the risk are now being actively remediated.

Jeff Crane of the Environmental Protection Agency reported that a draft fact sheet and risk communication strategy regarding fish in the Savannah River had been prepared and would be provided to the Board's Outreach Subcommittee for review.

### **Nuclear Materials Management Subcommittee Report**

Subcommittee Chair Tom Costikyan briefly discussed upcoming activities. The Rocky Flats Draft Environmental Impact Statement has been issued for public comment through January. The Subcommittee plans to present a draft recommendation at the January Board meeting, he said. The draft nonproliferation study has been delayed until May 1998 and the subcommittee will continue to follow this issue. He announced that the EIS for Yucca Mountain is due in late 1999 and that the Nuclear Waste Technical Review Board was commissioned to study material headed for a final repository. A meeting will be held on Dec. 17-18 at the Radisson Riverfront Hotel in Augusta, Ga. The National Academy of Sciences has been commissioned to prepare an unbiased report on spent fuel alternatives and the public is invited to attend a meeting on Dec. 2-3, also at the Radisson in Augusta, Ga., he reported.

Mr. Costikyan then introduced Arnold Guevara of DOE-Headquarters who provided a presentation on a nuclear materials processing needs assessment (see attached). Mr. Guevarra stated the purpose of this effort is to identify any additional nuclear materials that may require SRS canyon facilities for stabilization or dispositioning prior to canyon decommissioning. He discussed a three-phased approach, which includes bringing in technical experts from across the DOE-complex to identify issues related to disposition pathways, look at environmental impacts, and review the plans of the field offices. The materials are being reviewed and placed in the following three categories: materials that should not go to the canyons, materials that should, and materials requiring further evaluation. Mr. Guevarra provided a status on the review of the various materials and discussed the path forward. The assessment for three subgroups should be completed by January and the results provided to senior management. The results should be included in the EMI effort by Sept. 98, he said.

Discussion revolved around international policy and nonproliferation issues. The Board asked for a briefing from the Material Disposition Program at an upcoming meeting.

### **Administrative Subcommittee Report**

Subcommittee Chair Beaurine Wilkins provided an update on the membership drive stating that the Board had received about 150 requests for applications and had approximately 125 on file for the selection process. Candidate selection will be made on Dec. 5-6 at a meeting of the Administrative Subcommittee in Savannah, Ga.

Brendolyn Jenkins stated she was uncomfortable with the issues surrounding Suzanne Matthew's resignation and would like clarification of the situation. Deborah Simone suggested Board members phone Ms. Matthews if they wanted clarification and Tom Heenan stated someone from Westinghouse familiar with the situation could address the Board if needed. Ms. Jenkins stated she was also concerned with the decision not to renew the subcontract of David Porter as a technical advisor of the Board, particularly since his work was not be adequately represented at the Executive Committee meeting at which the decision was made. She asked for a review of procedures at an upcoming Executive meeting. Ann Loadholt agreed to review procedures at an Executive Committee meeting in January and stated that the four members at the Executive Committee meeting voted unanimously not to extend Mr. Porter's contract for budgetary reasons. It was noted that Lane Parker was present at that meeting and was familiar with Mr. Porter's work. Ms. Loadholt stated she had requested that the work of all three individuals on contract to the Board be approved prior by a designated point of contact to ensure that all expenditures are necessary. Ms. Loadholt emphasized that Executive Committee meetings are open to the all Board members and encouraged members to participate.

### **Risk Management & Future Use Subcommittee**

Subcommittee Vice Chair P.K. Smith introduced Bob Lorenz of Westinghouse who gave an overview of the SRS Environmental Report for 1996 (see attached). He discussed the compliance record for 1996 and noted highlights for the year. Several highlights are as follows

- Radiological emissions and releases of toxic chemicals continue to decline
- Radiation dose to the public is small and continues to decline
- NPDES compliance exceeded 99.7% and SRS complied 100% with Clean Air Act regulations
- No notices of violation were issued to SRS and no fines were incurred

Mr. Lorenz discussed program drivers, the ALARA principle, environmental monitoring at SRS and contaminant pathways to man. He discussed the purpose of the annual report, which is to document the site's environmental performance; compliance with standards and requirements; significant programs and efforts, potential radiation dose and special surveys and projects. He also discussed compliance standards and the various monitoring programs at SRS. Discussion revolved around SRS releases, risks and long term effects.

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

Subcommittee Co-Chair Bill Lawless introduced Sonny Goldston of BNFL who briefly discussed the Environmental Management Integration initiative and the various recommendations made in a contractor report focusing on the management of various wastes across the DOE complex. Mr. Goldston went on to discuss the high level waste

recommendations contained within the EMI report and the benefits to SRS and DOE (see attached). The recommendation to ship West Valley vitrified high-level waste (~ 300 canisters) to SRS for interim storage would accelerate closure of West Valley and save millions. Bill Pearson of DOE presented three alternatives for managing the West Valley canisters and discussed why SRS should be a consideration for interim storage of this waste (see attached). The perceived benefits for shipping the HLW canisters to SRS are as follows:

- saves taxpayers \$150-650 million
- completes DOE high level waste mission at West Valley
- SRS builds canister shipping facility 13 years earlier
- SRS starts construction of second glass waste storage building 18 months early
- transportation licensing issue would be resolved

Karen Patterson read the subcommittee's draft motion recommending that the West Valley vitrified high level waste be shipped to SRS for interim storage provided that the shipments can be done safely; the shipping and receiving facility is constructed prior to starting shipment; shipments are licensed and shipping casks constructed; the second glass canister storage building is under construction and incremental operating funds are provided to SRS; and DOE commits to starting shipment of SRS high level waste to the geologic repository by 2015, completing shipments by 2026 with remaining waste to follow promptly. Bill Lawless moved the Board accept the recommendation. Kathryn May seconded.

The following six major concerns were identified during discussion.

1. That SRS is going to start accepting waste from all over and concentration of high level waste is a big issue.
2. The cost analysis data associated with the three alternatives is insufficient.
3. That this recommendation forces a DOE decision regarding a final repository.
4. That the recommendation sets a precedent for accepting waste.
5. That although the recommendation is presented as a means of ensuring transportation licensing, this is not the only means of acquiring the licensing.
6. Fulfilling a commitment to the stakeholders of New York should not be a priority of the SRS CAB.

Ann Ragan of SCDHEC noted that the State is not in favor of receiving the West Valley high-level waste. She stated SCDHEC was not yet ready to make a policy decision regarding environmental management integration.

The proposed recommendation passed with eight members in favor and seven opposed. A minority report summarizing the concerns above was submitted with the formal recommendation.

Mike Simmons of DOE provided a progress report on the SRL Seepage Basins (see attached). He gave a brief historical background of the basin and discussed recent focus group meetings established to explore ways to accelerate cleanup of the basins. The current status of the basins is that radioactively contaminated vegetation has been removed, mulched and is contained within

the basins. A combined document that addresses the remedial investigation, a baseline risk assessment, feasibility study, proposed plan and draft record of decision is 85 percent complete, he said. Four remedy options are being reviewed by DOE. The Board will continue to receive updates on this project.

Phil Prater of DOE gave a presentation on an Environmental Restoration Early Action Strategy (see attached). The Early Action Strategy was jointly developed by the three agencies to provide a series of gates or decision points that identified key criteria necessary to determine the appropriateness of an early action and how it should be applied. He briefly discussed how an early action would be implemented and applied to Federal Facility Agreement Appendix C operable units at the initiation of the remedial investigation.

Kathryn May read the subcommittee's draft motion commending this effort and recommending opportunities for public involvement in the process. Bill Lawless moved the Board accept the motion and Ken Goad seconded. Discussion revolved around the need for focus group involvement in the early action strategy and the addition of another unit to the public involvement process and whether the Board should be commending DOE efforts. The draft motion was adopted with 12 members in favor and two opposed.

Karen Patterson distributed a letter in support of new legislation (S.981) regarding the Regulatory Improvement Act of 1997 that was drafted by technical advisor Todd Crawford at the subcommittee's request. It was determined that the Board should not be taking positions without a more thorough understanding of the legislation. Board members were encouraged to support the legislation as individuals. It was agreed that a copy of the bill would be distributed for further evaluation.

### **Budget Subcommittee Report**

No report was provided due to the absence of the Subcommittee Chair Thelonious Jones.

### **Facilitator Update**

Walt Joseph announced the release of the Board's first issue of its newsletter "Board Beat" and the availability of the 1996-97 Annual Report.

### **SSAB Chair Trip Report**

P.K. Smith gave a brief update on the national SSAB Chairs meeting held in Dallas, TX on Oct. 28-29 (see attached trip report). Several Boards presented proposals to facilitate cross-site interactions between SSABs on various issues. The next step appears to be a low-level waste forum in Nevada hosted by the Nevada Test Site CAB. Another SSAB chair meeting may be held in conjunction with the forum next spring.

### **Public Comment**

No public comments were received during the full Board meeting. On Monday, November 17 the following comments were provided:

**Trish McCracken, Augusta, Ga.**

Ms. McCracken stated she had read about a CRESP meeting the Board was invited to attend at SRS in the CRESP update and asked if all public meetings could be advertised either on the web site or by mail.

**Administrative Items**

Brendolyn Jenkins commended the Board for participating in the upcoming Kwanzaa Fest in Aiken, S.C. on Dec. 6 from 9 a.m. - 6 p.m. She also stated she had toured the CRESP facility at Rutledge University and was very impressed. She stated CRESP could be a very valuable resource to the Board. Ms. Jenkins also announced she had been contacted by the United Native American Council and would like for the Board to hear a briefing from this organization in the future.

There was also discussion about a vote earlier in the day and the parliamentary procedure followed by the Board. It was clarified that a motion to table is the only one to take precedent and it must be made as a firm motion. A process for presenting a minority report with the EMI-High Level Waste Motion was then determined.