



## **SRS Citizens Advisory Board**

Risk Management and Future Use Subcommittee

### **Meeting Summary**

**June 17, 1997**

**North Augusta, S.C.**

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The Risk Management and Future Use (RM&FU) Subcommittee of the Savannah River Site (SRS) Citizens Advisory Board (CAB) met on June 17, 1997, at 6:00 p.m. at the North Augusta Community Center, North Augusta, South Carolina. CAB members attending were Suzanne Matthews, P. K. Smith, and Deborah Simone. Walt Joseph, CAB Facilitator, also attended. Members of the public who attended included W. L. Boettinger, J. Lee Gilbert, Lee Poe, Don McWhorter, and Murray Riley. Danny Hansen attended the meeting, representing the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (SCDHEC). Virginia Kay from the Department of Energy Savannah River Operations Office (DOE-SR) attended as the Associated Deputy Designated Federal Official. John Pescosolido, Bill Taylor, and Marian Woolsey also from DOE-SR attended. Westinghouse Savannah River Company (WSRC) attendees were Clay Jones, Matt Zimmerman, Mary Flora and Gail Jernigan.

Suzanne Matthews, Chairperson of the Subcommittee, opened the meeting by welcoming everyone to the meeting. She briefly reviewed the agenda, asked participants to introduce themselves, and introduced John Pescosolido, DOE-SR. Mr. Pescosolido told the group that DOE-SR is soliciting input as to what SRS work activities are the most important ones. SRS activities must be prioritized as part of the budget process. The priority of work activities leads to decisions on which tasks can be done and which tasks can be deferred.

The budget prioritization process and the Discussion Drafts of Accelerating Cleanup: Focus on 2006 are being developed in parallel and are related. The budget priority list shows a one year planning window of the 2006 Plan, and the list will be a tool used in development of the 2006 Plan. (See attached slides.) Since 1994 DOE-SR has been working with the RM&FU Subcommittee on the SRS budget before it is submitted to the Department of Energy Headquarters Office (DOE-HQ).

The members of the subcommittee have provided valuable perspectives to previous budgets, and Mr. Pescosolido thanked the stakeholders for taking the time to review the fiscal year (FY) 1999 budget priority list. He explained that the FY 1999 budget priority list from DOE-SR is due to DOE-HQ on June 27. Although comments can be accepted beyond this date, it is easier to make changes to the list before it goes to DOE-HQ.

After June 27, 1997, the draft DOE-SR priority list will be reviewed by program representatives in DOE-HQ. The DOE-SR list will be merged with other field offices' lists to determine the national priority list. Once DOE-HQ program representatives agree on complex-wide priorities,

then the budget targets are allocated by program. (Examples of the programs include Waste Management, Environmental Restoration, Nuclear Materials & Facility Stabilization, etc.) This process includes a national meeting, called the Corporate Forum, where DOE field office managers and program managers work together to establish national priorities and develop the final priority list. The national list is reviewed by the Secretary of Energy before going to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), the President, and Congress.

Although the DOE-SR priority list will be sent to DOE-HQ on June 27, 1997, stakeholder involvement will continue. For example, Al Alm, Assistant Secretary of Energy for the Environmental Management, will visit many DOE sites while the national priority list is being developed, including the SRS area July 15-16. There will also be national and regional video conferences and meetings.

Mr. Pescosolido explained that this year's process was slightly delayed because of the focus on the 2006 Plan. This plan's goals are to maximize cleanup of sites and maintain regulatory compliance. Mr. Pescosolido explained that SRS is the safest site within the DOE complex and DOE-SR wants to keep that safety record. He went on to explain there are several DOE-HQ budget scenarios being considered, ranging from \$5 billion to \$6 billion. However, once SRS has developed a credible priority list, then the site can analyze the consequences of any proposed budget. Mr. Pescosolido then explained that the priority list distributed for the meeting is still a draft list. (See attached.)

Mr. Pescosolido told the group that the FY 1999 priority list is based on the FY 1998 priority list. While reviewing the list, he explained that surveillance and maintenance of nuclear facilities are the first priority because they represent the largest threat to the public and worker safety and health and the environment. He also added that DOE has taken the position that once regulatory agreements are signed, they must be fully funded; however, there may be some flexibility in negotiating the agreements.

Mr. Pescosolido encouraged stakeholder participation during that process. With the proposed budget targets DOE-SR is uncertain if the studies for spent nuclear fuel alternative studies will be funded completely. He also explained that activities such as infrastructure improvements and preventive maintenance (bridge replacements), Savannah River Forest Station, etc., will continue to be funded. However, once reactor buildings are deactivated, they can be maintained in that state without risk to the health and safety of the public, workers, and the environment.

Mr. Pescosolido told the participants that dollar amounts were not included on the handouts for the meeting so that they could concentrate on the priorities, regardless of the cost. He explained that tasks that are shown in italics represent tasks that are on the priority list more than one time. These tasks have been divided into several sub-tasks for ranking based on priorities. He then asked how the group wanted to proceed with the balance of the meeting.

Lee Poe asked how the "cut line" is drawn in the priority list, if the list is composed of various programs. It is his understanding that once money from Congress is allocated by programs, the money cannot be moved from one program to another. Mr. Pescosolido explained that this can be accomplished by asking Congress to reprogram funds so that the fiscal year budget will fund

activities based on the priority list. However, DOE can ask for a budget amendment to move funding from one program to another, if necessary. There were several questions about the highest priority on the list, the surveillance and maintenance of F Canyon facilities.

Mr. Pescosolido explained this surveillance and maintenance did not include stabilization of nuclear materials, and the priority list can change from year to year based on risks. For example, the canyon facilities are considered the highest priority this year. However, once the materials in the tanks and canyons are stabilized and put in interim storage prior to shipment to the federal repository, surveillance and maintenance activities will continue for these facilities until they are deactivated and placed in a "cheap to keep" status. The R Reactor is the only reactor considered "cheap to keep" now although some reactors have been deinventoried. For reactors that have some inventory, surveillance and maintenance activities are more expensive than those which have been deinventoried. Eventually the reactor and canyon facilities will need to be decontaminated and decommissioned.

Mr. Pescosolido explained that \$900 million is needed just to maintain SRS facilities which is why the 2006 Plan provides an attractive alternative—reduce the costs needed to maintain these facilities. The 2006 Plan proposes that that funding be used to deactivate facilities so the surveillance and maintenance costs are no longer needed.

When asked about the SRS canyon strategy, Mr. Pescosolido said that DOE-SR plans to run both F and H Area Canyon facilities for a short time (F Area Canyon facilities until 2000 and H Area Canyon Facilities until 2004). The FY 1998 proposed budget includes \$47 million needed to maintain this two-canyon strategy. There is still a decision to be made on what will be done with plutonium from Rocky Flats which may defer deactivation of these canyon facilities. Someone asked if additional funding has been provided by DOE-HQ to fund SRS activities for the Foreign Research Reactor Spent Nuclear Fuel. Mr. Pescosolido explained that some foreign countries pay for the shipping of the fuel to the United States and pay the United States for the managing of this fuel. Undeveloped countries do not pay anything.

When asked if DOE-HQ sends all the funds necessary to perform this work, Mr. Pescosolido explained that most of the necessary funding is included as a subsidy. He further explained that the fees collected from these foreign countries are to pay for all life cycle costs upfront so the United States government has accepted the funds and liability for managing these nuclear materials.

After much discussion on the ways the participants could provide comments on the budget prioritization, they agreed to develop a list of suggestions, reached by consensus by those present. The suggestions developed were as follows:

- DOE should renegotiate low risk items in FFA. Reallocate funding to higher risk SRS issues.
- Funding should be spent to reduce risks to protect health and safety of the public, workers, and environment.
- Nuclear Materials Stabilization should be a higher priority than Spent Nuclear Fuel Shipments, Receipt, and Storage. (See the "SRS Priorities" slide in the attachment.)

- No funds for Spent Nuclear Fuel Alternatives Evaluation (storage of spent nuclear fuel is low risk) until higher risk activities are completed.
- New missions should be financed by mission sponsors.
- Ms. Matthews reminded the group of the following meetings:
- Surplus Plutonium Disposition Environmental Impact Statement Scoping Meeting on June 19, 1997 at 1:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m. at the North Augusta Community Center in North Augusta, S. C.
- DOE-SR meeting on the national and SRS Discussion Drafts of Accelerating Cleanup: Focus on 2006 on June 26, 1997, at 6:30 p.m. at the Stevenson-McClelland Building in Aiken, S. C.
- Risk Management and Future Use Subcommittee meeting on July 9, 1997, at 6:00 p.m. at the Savannah Rapids Pavilion. (NOTE: THE MEETING HAS CHANGED TO AN ALL DAY WORKSHOP TO BE HELD ON JULY 9, 1997, AT 9:00 A.M. AT RED ROOM IN BUILDING 703-41A AT THE SAVANNAH RIVER SITE.) This workshop will allow for more time for discussion on the 2006 Plan.
- Risk Management and Future Use Subcommittee meeting on July 12, 1997, in Savannah, similar to the meeting in Aiken on July 9, 1997. (NOTE: THE MEETING WILL BEGIN AT 9:30 A.M. AT THE HAMPTON INN, 201 E. BAY STREET, SAVANNAH, GEORGIA.)
- DOE-SR meeting with Assistant Secretary Al Alm to discuss the 2006 Plan and FY 1999 DOE-EM budget on July 15, 1997, at 6:30 p.m. at the North Augusta Community Center in North Augusta, S. C.

Mr. Poe suggested for Ms. Matthews to appoint four people to review the plans and report back with their questions at the July 9 meeting. Ms. Matthews agreed and asked Lee Poe, Deborah Simone, Murray Riley, and Lee Gilbert.

Ms. Matthews adjourned the meeting at 8:15 p.m.

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