



SRS Citizens Advisory Board

Risk Management and Future Use Subcommittee Meeting

Meeting Notes

July 9, 1997

Aiken, South Carolina

The Risk Management and Future Use (RM&FU) Subcommittee of the Savannah River Site (SRS) Citizens Advisory Board (CAB) met on July 9, 1997, at 9:30 a.m. at the Rainbow Rooms, Savannah River Site, Aiken, South Carolina. CAB members attending were Suzanne Matthews, Deborah Simone, Kathryn May, Ken Goad, Brendolyn Jenkins, and Karen Patterson. Walt Joseph, CAB Facilitator, also attended. Members of the public who attended were R. S. Matthews, Lee Poe, Mike French, William McDonell, Tricia McCracken, and Murray Riley. Virginia Kay from the Department of Energy Savannah River Operations Office (DOE-SR) attended as the Associated Deputy Designated Federal Official. John Pescosolido, Charles Anderson, Jean Ridley, Dale Ormond, Heather Holmes-Burns, Lisa Gibbons, Morris James, Jay Bilyeu, Allen Gunter, Howard Gnann, Tom Temples, Virgil Saul, Jim Buice and Marian Woolsey also from DOE-SR attended. Westinghouse Savannah River Company (WSRC) attendees were Mary Flora, Craig McMullin, Mark DuPont, John Duane, Ed Claxton, Don Ellison, Robert Meadors, Gary Clark, and Gail Jernigan. Steve Stine attended for the Savannah River Forest Service. David Porter attended as a CAB technical advisor.

Suzanne Matthews, Chairperson of the Subcommittee, opened the meeting by welcoming everyone to the meeting. She stressed that she wanted comments and questions during the meeting and reminded the participants that the subcommittee will be developing a recommendation for the full Board. She also asked people to develop questions for the meeting with Mr. Al Alm, scheduled for July 15, 1997, at 6:30 p.m. at the North Augusta Community Center, North Augusta, South Carolina. She introduced Jim Buice, Director of Budgeting and Planning for DOE-SR, who gave an overview of the plan. (See attached slides.)

NOTE: Throughout the meeting, comments and questions were captured on a flip chart. These questions and comments, with clarification, are attached to these meeting notes.

Mr. Buice explained in this presentation that the plan is being used as a foundation for fiscal year (FY) 1999 budget and subsequent budgets as well. The RM & FU Subcommittee had previously provided comments which were incorporated in the prioritizing of SRS activities.

Mr. Lee Poe asked how DOE thought they could issue the next document draft in October when the public comment period doesn't end until September 9, 1997. Mr. Buice explained that the planning process is an ongoing process. For example, there are parts of the planning due in August.

A contingency plan was discussed among the stakeholders. They wanted to know what were DOE's plans if SRS did not get the funding they requested. A contingency plan should also consider that the technology may not be developed as planned. Someone asked if the prioritization list has an effect on the contingency plan. Mr. Buice explained that the prioritization would effect the planning activities. Based on this list, the most important items would be funded first; other activities would be postponed or removed from the list, if the funding were not available. He explained basic surveillance and maintenance commitments for the site totaled \$900 million. With a budget of \$1.2 billion, this would give \$300 million for additional work to be done.

During Mr. Buice's discussion on privatization, questions were asked about the problems DOE is finding with privatization. Comments were made about the problems with Pit 9 privatization at the Idaho National Engineering and Environmental Laboratory (INEEL). Others commented that Lockheed Martin was requesting additional funding for privatization. Mr. Buice and others explained that SRS has had some successes with privatization. The outsourcing of SRS laundry, the outsourcing of power and steam to South Carolina Electric and Gas Company, the transfer of vehicle fleet management to the General Services Administrations were examples cited. The Environmental Monitoring Laboratory might be possibly outsourced.

One person asked for an explanation of the \$95 million per year savings shown on page 5 of the SRS Executive Summary. A more detailed explanation is needed for this subcommittee. During the discussion of Environmental Restoration accomplishments, Mr. Buice explained that 405 of the 467 inactive waste sites would be closed, including all high risk waste sites. Mr. Poe stated that he did not know of any high risk sites and asked for a clarification of the definition of "high risk". For example, in other presentations, L Area Basin has been defined as a high risk site. Mr. Poe does not believe that this basin is a high risk site. He explained that there were two types of risk being considered: (1) real risk and (2) environmental risk which are regulatory driven. He suggested that a process be developed to remove waste sites from the Federal Facility Agreement. He commented that the funding for many of the SRS waste sites could be better spent on other tasks. He stated he believes DOE will find it difficult to ask the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (SCDHEC) and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to delay the closure of some SRS waste sites. He further explained that a process is needed that defines and examines high risk, medium risk, and low risk at SRS.

Several questions were asked about the various end states of different programs at SRS. For example, questions were asked if the Nuclear Materials Management mission and end state shown in the Discussion Draft includes possible new missions for SRS, how many canisters can the Defense Waste Processing Facility (DWPF) produce, and what is the technology, schedule, and scope for the decommissioning and decontamination of SRS reactors. It was explained that DWPF was designed to produce a certain number of canisters per year, but the actual number produced would depend on the funding provided by Congress and DOE. If full funding is not provided, this will extend the schedule for emptying the waste tanks. The technology and schedule has not been developed for the decommissioning and decontamination of the reactors. These will depend on the final end state for the reactors, based on future use for the site. The present funding levels do not support any decommissioning and decontamination.

A comment was made that 90% of the SRS work is risk reduction, not mortgage reduction. Mr. Buice explained that if more funding was available for emptying waste tanks, then there would be a reduction in life cycle costs for the tank closure which is considered a mortgage reduction.

There was group discussion about the Defense Nuclear Facility Safety Board (DNFSB). Members of the public wanted to know if the DNFSB recommendations were considered as regulatory (enforceable) compliance in the plan and asked DOE to verify this. Others asked if DNFSB commitments are treated with the same priority as enforceable regulatory commitments. Mr. Buice explained that complying with state and federal laws and regulations were considered a higher priority than DNSFB commitments.

When reviewing the numbers for solid waste treatment, storage, and disposal, someone asked why more solid waste is not ready for disposal. Questions were asked if additional technology is needed. It was explained that most of the waste that is not ready for disposal is transuranic waste that cannot be shipped. While it is expected that the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant will open in 1998, there also may be scheduling problems.

Brendolyn Jenkins asked if the chapter of Workforce Restructuring would be discussed during the meeting. Since there were not plans to discuss it at this meeting, she asked that the Workforce Restructuring be addressed at a future meeting. Suzanne Matthews asked how the ER 2000 Program discussed in local newspapers in April 1997 fit into the plan. The ER 2000 is to have two-thirds of the waste sites remediated or closed by the year 2000. Ms. Matthews wanted to know how DOE planned to accomplish this. SRS expects to complete or remediate the highest risk waste sites first, followed by the lowest risk sites next. Lastly the medium risk sites will be addressed. Many of the low risk sites will require no further action and can, therefore, be considered closed quickly. The question was asked if the wastes from new missions had been factored into the plan. After hearing that they were not included, the suggestion was made to add language to address new missions and financial responsibilities for managing wastes. After a short break, discussion began on Action Plans by Allen Gunter speaking on the SRS Canyon Utilization. (See attached slides.)

Mr. Poe asked that DOE confirm that the Actinide Packaging Storage Facility schedule is consistent with the 2006 Plan. Others asked for a breakdown of the \$167 million cost for this facility, e.g., how much for conceptual design, how much for construction, etc. Jay Bilyeu gave a brief presentation on plutonium disposition as a possible new mission for SRS. (See attached slides.) Comments were made that the canyons should be utilized until decisions are made about plutonium disposition. Mr. Poe also stated that this presentation showed a compelling need for SRS to sell the MOX case. Plutonium is a valuable resource and should not be discarded through immobilization.

Charles Anderson discussed spent nuclear fuel. (See attached slides.) Since there is not a final repository (and therefore, no waste acceptance criteria) for spent nuclear fuel, there was some discussion on how SRS can design a SNF Transfer and Storage Facility. Additional questions were raised about the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) licensing process for the final repository. Transportation issues were also discussed. After a brief break, Virgil Sauls, DOE-SR, led the discussion on the Environmental Management (EM) Integration. He told the participants

that this report was requested by Al Alm to reduce costs or reduce risks. He said that DOE wants a cost/benefit analysis, more information from stakeholders, and whether these ideas are acceptable to stakeholders. (See attached slides.) Howard Gnann, DOE-SR explained high level waste issues in EM Integration; Charles Anderson discussed EM Integration for spent nuclear fuel; and Tom Temples led the discussion on Environmental Restoration issues. (See attached slides.)

Ms. Matthews told the participants that she had asked several people to provide comments and questions on these plans. Mr. Poe provided a presentation on his comments and questions. (See attached slides.) Murray Riley told the group that his primary concern is about the safety and working conditions of employees. Exempt, non-exempt, and construction employees should all be treated equally and should all focus on safety. He expressed concern that DOE might be shifting to a production rate, and if this were so, Mr. Riley is worried that safety may become second to production. With privatization and outsourcing, Mr. Riley asked that safety remain the number one priority onsite.

Deborah Simone asked if a non-governmental agency had looked at the DOE budget to suggest ways to be more cost effective. The DOE national Discussion Draft told how the Corps of Engineers had reviewed the plan and how DOE were benchmarking with the private industry.

Ken Goad provided more background on NRC licensing by saying that if NRC provides oversight to DOE, there will be more requirements, based on his experience. For an example, he cited shipping containers. Presently DOE can certify its own shipping containers, consistent with Department of Transportation requirements, but if NRC provides oversight, then all containers will need to be licensed.

There was a brief discussion among the participants on Workforce Restructuring. Questions were raised about the attrition rates quoted in the plan. Mr. Poe said the plan quoted a 3 percent per year today, but he believed that the attrition rate in the past was 0.2 percent per year. This attrition rate may indicate that staff members are not satisfied and are looking elsewhere for employment. Some were dissatisfied with the Workforce Restructuring chapter and suggested that it be omitted from the document. Kathryn May suggested a national meeting be held with stakeholders since there are many decisions yet to be made. Her suggestion included a national meeting of all interests to try to resolve issues among the stakeholders.

After further discussion, the participants developed a list of ideas that should be considered when drafting the recommendation for the full Board. These are shown below:

- Need Contingency Plans for Identified Actions (HQ & SRS) Probabilities Need Reality, i.e., Efficiency Goals
- Need Executive Summary . . . "We Will Do. . ." (SRS)
- Write It Cohesively, Easy to Follow, Reader Friendly
- Need to Include 5 Items from North Augusta Meeting (SRS) - High Risk & Compliance (Both) - Compliance Issues Shouldn't Be Used As Basis For Funding
- Concern About Privatization . . . - Approach With Caution - People, Safety, Technology, . . . (Both)

- Documents Must Sell Themselves (Both)
- Need Stakeholder Input On National Issues (HQ) Including Document Rev.
- Need SRS & SRS Stakeholders Input On National Issues That Impact SRS (HQ)
- Productive Effort in Optimizing Cost and Schedule . . . Raises Issues (Preamble) (HQ)
- Recommend This Concept Be Considered For Other Programs (HQ)
- Document Should Reflect New NRC Regulatory Oversight (HQ)
- Process Defined On Page F-1, third paragraph, 1-2 Sentences -- Good But Should Be Implemented (Both) Plan Should Follow Format
- Need To Respond To The Issues On Page ES-10 and in Chapter 6 (Also G-12) -- Need CAB Input
- Evaluate Realism Of Assuming DWPF Productivity Improvements Above What Is Already Assumed (SRS)
- Involve CAB In Workout (SRS)
- After developing the above list, Ms. Matthews asked participants to draft a motion or part of a motion for the CAB. The proposal was made to have the recommendation similar to the one for future use where the recommendation was backed up with additional text. Ms. Matthews also reminded participants to send in their comments to DOE, as there are more comments than can be addressed in the CAB recommendation. With that, she thanked the group members and adjourned the meeting.