



SRS Citizens Advisory Board

Nuclear Materials Management Subcommittee

Meeting Summary

March 27, 1995

Savannah, Ga.

The Citizens Advisory Board (CAB) Nuclear Materials Management Subcommittee held a subcommittee meeting on Monday, March 27, 7 - 10 p.m. at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Savannah, Ga. Subcommittee members who attended included Tom Costikyan, Pat Tousignant, Alice Hollingsworth, Mildred McClain, and Thelonius Jones. Savannah River Site resource personnel attending included Jim Giusti, Department of Energy-Savannah River (DOE-SR), and Ray Conatser and Donna Martin, Westinghouse Savannah River Company (WSRC).

Tom Costikyan, NMM chairperson, began the meeting by defining screening and performance criteria and explaining how a DOE Executive Committee uses the criteria to evaluate alternatives for environmental impact statements (EISs). Costikyan referred to a letter and handouts sent to each committee member on March 14 to prepare for the March 27 subcommittee meeting. The package contained screening and performance criteria definitions as well as the objective, scope and background information the Proposed Policy for Acceptance of Foreign Research Reactor Spent Nuclear Fuel Draft Environmental Impact Statement (FRR DEIS).

Discussion Summary

Thelonius Jones asked about the status of South Carolina court actions against DOE concerning the urgent shipment of 409 spent fuel rods from foreign research reactors. According to DOE representative Jim Giusti, no other shipments will occur until after the FRR DEIS is completed.

Jones also questioned the safety of transporting spent nuclear fuel, citing that he heard of an incident of fuel "spilling" enroute from North Carolina to South Carolina. Giusti stated no such incident occurred, although he did note that one fuel rod dropped to the bottom of the RBOFF basin when the rods were being unloaded at SRS in the Receiving Basins for Offsite Fuel. No spillage or contamination occurred, however.

To confirm transportation safety, DOE and WSRC explained that casks used to transport spent nuclear fuel are rigorously tested to meet safety requirements governed by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) and the Department of Transportation (DOT).

Screening Criteria

On the specific issue of developing screening criteria, discussion centered around what the subcommittee members and the constituents they represent would consider as "absolute"

requirements. Costikyan stated that compliance with the United States non-proliferation policy may be the only "absolute" criterion. Pat Tousignant, Mildred McClain, and Alice Hollingsworth said no "significant" increase in risks to the public, workers or environment was very important and should be considered as an "absolute" or screening criterion.

The subcommittee agreed that compliance with the country's non-proliferation policy and no significant increase in health risks to public, worker or environment constituted screening criteria. In later discussion, the subcommittee added technical feasibility as a third screening criterion.

Performance Criteria

Performance criteria were explained as elements that would be preferred, although not absolute, when DOE chooses an alternative. It was recommended that the performance criteria be ranked in categories (high, moderate, low) to show the order of importance of each criterion.

Minimizing risks to the public was the highest preference, while cost effectiveness, expediting ultimate disposition and compliance with regulatory requirements were considered of equal value. Transportation was added as a final performance criteria, and though important, it was considered a category of less concern.

Conclusion The subcommittee agreed to make a recommend to the full CAB at the March 28 meeting on the following screening and performance criteria for the FRR DEIS:

Screening Criteria

- Supports the national non-proliferation policy
- Creates no significant increase in health risks to public, workers, or environment.
- Is technically feasible

Performance Criteria

Highest

- Minimizes risks to public, workers, and environment

Moderate

- Is cost effective over life of materials
- Expedites ultimate disposition
- Complies with regulatory requirements

Lowest

- Minimizes transportation

The subcommittee also recommended that the CAB evaluate alternatives in the FRR DEIS using the screening and performance criteria agreed upon by the full committee.

Note: Meeting handouts may be obtained by calling the SRS CAB toll free number at 1-800-249-8155.