



SRS Citizens Advisory Board

Outreach Subcommittee

Meeting Summary

January 27, 1997 2 p.m.

Hilton Head Island, S.C.

The Outreach Subcommittee met on January 27, 1997, at 2 p.m. at the Hilton in Hilton Head Island, S.C. in conjunction with the regular bi-monthly Board meeting. Outreach Subcommittee Chair Lane Parker presided over the meeting. Board members attending included JoAnn Nestor, Arthur Belge, and Brendolyn Jenkins. Board facilitator Walt Joseph and Westinghouse Board administrator Dawn Haygood also attended. deÕLisa Bratcher and Gerri Flemming of the Department of Energy (DOE) acted as Associate Designated Federal Official. Camilla Warren of the Environmental Protection Agency also attended a portion of the meeting.

Subcommittee Chair Lane Parker asked deÕLisa Bratcher of DOE to provide a brief presentation on recent focus groups conducted by the Medical University of South Carolina as part of a project involving community-based risk communication programs and public participation at SRS. Ms. Bratcher stated that the project was conducted under an Environmental Justice grant funded by DOE-Headquarters and was aimed at low income and minority communities. She explained how a focus group strategy was used to provide information on relevant aspects of public opinion and to provide guidance for outreach and participation programs that meet the needs of people living in surrounding communities.

The research objectives of Phase I of the project was to obtain perceptions pertaining to the overall image of SRS on variables such as past and present missions, trust and credibility; beliefs about environmental health risks associated with SRS; and perceptions about the barriers to public participation in SRS outreach efforts. Ms. Bratcher explained that to address the information sought from both minority and non-minority citizens, a total of 12 focus groups were conducted. Three focus groups were conducted in each of the four locations chosen for their proximity to SRS:

- Barnwell, S.C.
- New Ellenton, S.C.
- Jackson, S.C.
- Waynesboro, Ga.

In each location, three focus groups were conducted, one consisting of minority participants, one consisting of non-minority participants and one racially mixed group. Only people who did not work at SRS were asked to participate and focus group members were recruited through a combination of methods including newspaper advertisements, signs, cold-calls and networking.

Ms. Bratcher briefly highlighted findings from the focus groups. She stated the overall image is that SRS has both positive and negative dimensions. She said members of the public have no idea what the mission of SRS is suppose to be. There is also concern for environmental equity. Although many blacks see economic advantages associated with SRS, the majority agrees these benefits are not equitably distributed. Hiring practices were also questions, she said. Ms. Bratcher also stated that many of the focus group members believe SRS is responsible for significant health risks in their communities. Many stated they had uneasy feelings about SRS and that things are covered up, she said. It was also discovered that not many focus members were familiar with the Citizens Advisory Board or its function.

Ms. Bratcher asked the Subcommittee if they would like to receive a full briefing regarding the project from Jan Temple of MUSC. All agreed they would. She also mentioned follow-up meetings being held in the four communities that will focus on the site's annual environmental report. Subcommittee members volunteered to attend the meetings and take the Board's display to help spread the word about the CAB. The following are tentative dates and subject to change:

Barnwell, S.C. April 21 Brendolyn Jenkins

New Ellenton, S.C. April 29 Lane Parker

Jackson, S.C. May 1 Dawn Haygood

Girard/Waynesboro, Ga. May 13 Arthur Belge (if date changed due to 5/13 CAB mtg)

Board Facilitator Walt Joseph discussed a 1997 Outreach Subcommittee Plan. The Subcommittee discussed various methods for disseminating information and looked at upcoming activities. Arthur Belge suggested the Board conduct some test advertising in the "I Want a". Others discussed issuing a newsletter on a bi-annual basis. The newsletter would include stories from subcommittee chairs regarding the various recommendations, profiles on Board members, meeting schedules, etc. Development of a bi-annual newsletter will be added to the scope of work in the new request for proposals on the Board facilitation contract which is due for renewal in March 1997.

The meeting adjourned at 4:30 p.m.