



SRS Citizens Advisory Board

Old Radioactive Waste Burial Ground Focus Group

Meeting Summary

February 13, 2001
Aiken County Council Building
Aiken, SC

The Citizens Advisory Board (CAB) Old Radioactive Waste Burial Ground (ORWBG) Focus Group met on February 13, 5:00 p.m. at the Aiken County Council Building, Aiken, SC. The topics of discussion were the sections of the draft Focus Group Final Report and the path forward. Those in attendance were:

CAB Members

Jimmy Mackey
Bill Willoughby
Jerry Devitt

Stakeholders

Lee Poe
Todd Crawford
Bill McDonell
Bill Lawless

DOE/Contractors

Ed McNamee, BSRI
Don Toddings, BSRI
Sonny Goldston, BNFL
Jim Moore, WSRC

Jimmy Mackey, Administrative Lead, welcomed those in attendance and introduced Lee Poe, Technical Lead, to discuss the sections of the draft Final Report.

Lee Poe reviewed the draft sections of the Final Report that have been completed to date. In section 4, under institutional control, Mr. Poe stated that the Focus Group expected active and passive institutional control to prevent people from drinking the water between the Old Burial Ground and the Savannah River. In section 5, he mentioned three conclusions that the Focus Group should consider, they were: (1) There is no human health or environmental risk with the active and passive institutional controls considered, (2) Regulators and the Savannah River Site (SRS) should make use of a mixing zone to help dilute the contamination, and (3) No additional remediation is required to protect public health.

In section 6, Surface Occupation of Lands, a surface management plan would be needed to reduce erosion to the surface of the burial ground.

In section 7, Intruder Analysis for Failure to Observe Deed Restrictions, while the hot spots are the major concern, the Focus Group feels there is never a point at which there is an acute hazard.

In section 8, Comparative Risk for Reuse DOE and DOD Facilities, Bill Willoughby stated that he had changed the name of this section to Comparative Radioactive Inventories for DOE Sites. He stated that he had not considered DOD facilities and it was difficult to find information related to risk at the other sites in which to compare. Mr. Poe recommended that the word "Radioactive" be removed from the title.

Mr. Willoughby stated that in the analysis for all Transuranic (TRU) waste for the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP) they only talk about 13 latent cancer fatalities in 10,000 years. The Focus Group felt as long as active and passive institutional controls are in place and the cap is maintained on

the burial ground there is insignificant risk. Mr. Willoughby stated that in the final project environmental statement on radioactive waste for the complete DOE complex, the projected waste was increased at all SRS sites from 15,000 cubic meters to 510,000 cubic meters.

In section 9, Applicability of Drinking Water Standards, Mr. Willoughby stated that there is concern on which standards should be applied. He stated the Independent Scientific Peer Review (ISPR) team that developed the report for the Focus Group used the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) 1991 proposed revision standard International Congress on Radiation Protection (ICRP) 20. However, the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Protection (SCDHEC) drinking water standards are based on the National Bureau of Standards (NBS) Handbook 69 that was published in 1963. Mr. Poe stated that Elmer Wilhite pointed out this difference. Mr. Poe said that Patricia Lee, WSRC, was asked to determine the extent of difference between the two standards. The dose level will be higher using the NBS Handbook 69 standard.

Ed McNamee, BSRI, stated that the approach used in the Corrective Measures Study/ Feasibility Study (CMS/FS) was to determine how good a job is needed to protect the source. If more action is taken today, can you mitigate future consequences? The site looked at different caps on the burial ground to see if in the models the caps could have an effect in the future. Mr. McNamee said there was very little effect from the different caps. Concern was expressed that with this approach, one would never be finished with the burial ground.

After much discussion, Mr. Poe stated that he felt that Gene Rollins, Todd Crawford, Bill Willoughby and himself should get together to determine the strategy for solving this problem. They would look at two questions. (1) The Focus Group paid top scientists to determine the radiological health. Why did they use the standards (1991 standards) they used? The ISPR should defend that use. (2) How does the Focus Group deal with the drinking water standard from 1963 and 1991? Mr. Poe said they would have a strawman by the next meeting. Mr. Willoughby stated that until these questions were answered, he could not complete section 9.

Mr. Poe asked that all members review all the sections and appendices of the report and get comments back to the authors. Dr. Lawless requested that a copy of all the sections and appendices be sent to him electronically. (That occurred on February 14, 2001.)

Bill McDonnell lead a discussion on how the document was written and to whom the document was directed. He suggested that there were many superfluous parts in the document (particularly the appendices) and they should be weeded out. Mr. Poe stated that Todd Crawford had agreed to do an editorial review of the document. It was stated that this document should be collectively addressed to the CAB, DOE, DHEC and EPA. It is expected that once the Final Report is completed, it would be presented to the CAB and the CAB would generate a recommendation.

There was discussion on when the report should be issued, before the draft Proposed Plan or after. It was decided that the Final Report should be issued before the draft Proposed Plan as input to that plan. The Focus Group would also be able to comment on the draft Proposed Plan once it is distributed. Ed McNamee stated that the draft Proposed Plan would probably not be out until the fall. Therefore, the objective is to have the draft Final Report to the CAB for their July meeting.

The time and location of the next Focus Group meeting will be determined and communicated to the Focus Group.

With no other comments, Mr. Mackey adjourned the meeting.

Copies of the meeting handouts may be obtained by calling 1-800-249-8155.