



## **SRS Citizen's Advisory Board**

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### **Waste Management Committee Meeting**

**Aiken Municipal Conference Center  
July 12, 2005**

The SRS Citizens Advisory Board (CAB) Waste Management Committee (WMC) met on Tuesday, July 12, 5:00 PM, at the Aiken Municipal Conference Center, Aiken, SC. The purpose of this meeting was to discuss Potential Recommendations, Mound Waste, Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP) Permit Modification, Low Level Waste and Mixed Low Level Waste National Strategy Document, and to hear public comment. Attendance was as follows:

#### **CAB Members**

Bob Meisenheimer  
Joe Ortaldo  
Karen Patterson  
Bill Willoughby  
Jean Sulc  
Wendell Lyon  
Leon Chavous  
Art Domby  
Perry Holcomb  
Tracy Carroll

#### **Stakeholders**

Charles Hansen  
David Mates  
Brenda Utley  
Charles Utley  
Russ Messick  
Louis Zeller, BREDL

#### **DOE/Contractors**

Terry Spears, DOE  
Bill Spader, DOE  
Mike Simmons, DOE  
Gregory V. Johnson, DOE  
Ron Campbell, WSRC  
Sonny Goldston, WSRC  
Joe Carter, WSRC  
Teresa Haas, WSRC  
Lyddie Broussard, WSRC

Note: Cassandra Henry and Manuel Bettencourt are CAB members of the WMC, but were unable to attend this session.

#### **Welcome and Introduction**

Bob Meisenheimer, WMC Chair, welcomed the group and began the meeting at 5:00 PM. He informed the committee that the agenda had been altered to move the Mound Waste discussion to the first topic on the agenda followed by a discussion of the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP) Permit Modification.

#### **Stakeholder Discussion on Mound Waste - Additional Transuranic (TRU) Waste Shipments from Mound Recommendation, Bob Meisenheimer, WMC Chair**

Mr. Meisenheimer reminded the committee that under a previous agreement over eight years ago, Mound waste had been shipped to SRS in exchange for the ability to accelerate shipments to WIPP. He explained that while the last receipt of Mound TRU Waste at SRS was almost two years ago, Mound has requested permission for a small amount of additional TRU waste to be shipped to SRS. He said that this has been a successful process that is good for the taxpayers, the public, and the DOE while at the same time providing tangible equity incentives for SRS that have been detailed in the draft recommendation.

During the ensuing discussion, Mr. Meisenheimer agreed to delete the word “orphan” from the recommendation since it wasn’t a recognized SRS category of waste, but retained the point that waste without a final disposition path is a continuing issue. He also agreed to rework the recommendation to indicate that the equity issue is addressed by equal volume rather than by the number of shipments. The discussion was concluded and it was agreed that the recommendation would be presented at the July 25<sup>th</sup> Combined Committee Meeting.

**Stakeholder Discussion on – WIPP Permit Modification, Bob Meisenheimer, WMC Chair**

Mr. Meisenheimer identified a letter in the stakeholder packet that was addressed to the New Mexico Environmental Department (NMED) from the WM Committee. He explained that this letter was written in order to meet the deadline for public comments on the revised modification request to the Hazardous Waste Facility Permit for WIPP. He stated that in this letter, the WMC supports the incorporation of the implementation of Section 311 of Public Law 108-137, and the authorization for remote-handled TRU mixed waste in the WIPP Hazardous Waste Facility Permit. He further reported that a similar letter will be presented to the full Board for their submission to the NMED. It is expected to be approved at the July 26<sup>th</sup> CAB meeting.

**Stakeholder Discussion on – Potential Recommendations for Discussion, Bob Meisenheimer, WMC Chair**

Mr. Meisenheimer recognized Louis Zeller of the Blue Ridge Environmental Defense League (BREDL) and referenced a May 23, 2005 letter that he had sent to the Board as a follow-up to a prior discussion with CAB members. Mr. Meisenheimer asked that Mr. Zeller address the recommendations identified in that letter so that the committee could understand his concerns.

Mr. Zeller thanked the committee for the opportunity to discuss his issues, presented a second letter addressed to the Committee dated July 12, and displayed two tables identified as “Estimates of Savannah River Site Tank Residual Wastes” and “Savannah River High-Level Wastes as of 2/13/1999.” Mr. Zeller explained that this data was presented to Congress by DOE and is incorporated into his May 23, 2005 letter to the CAB. He remarked that he has received no response challenging the accuracy of the data. Joe Ortaldo, WMC Vice Chair, countered that Mr. Zeller had been invited so that the committee could hear him explain his recommendations but it wasn’t the role of the CAB to support or negate his data. During a discussion between Art Domby and Mr. Zeller, it was determined that the table within Mr. Zeller’s letter was Mr. Zeller’s work product based on a subset of data selected by him from the two tables that had been provided to Congress.

Mr. Meisenheimer asked that Mr. Zeller explain his position and discuss his recommendations. Mr. Zeller then restated each of the recommendations in his letter including:

- Blocking DOE from disposing high-level radioactive waste in South Carolina
- Direct DOE to implement a public review process on tank closures
- Ensure that an external regulator set up an appropriate cleanup standard for high-level waste that protects the public and environment

Mr. Meisenheimer reminded Mr. Zeller that the intent of his appearance before this committee had been to discuss his recommendations. Furthermore, the committee not only had no authority to block or direct DOE from doing anything but that the committee's responsibilities did not

include evaluation of his allegations against the DOE. It was further stated that it has been the long-standing intent of this committee to work diligently to effect the disposal of SRS high-level waste in the deep underground repository planned for Yucca Mountain in Nevada. He then added that this committee and the CAB had worked hard to ensure a public review process on tank closure, that an open and transparent process has been our goal since inception of the CAB, and that we take considerable pride in having achieved that goal to date.

Mr. Zeller questioned why the CAB was satisfied when the definition of high level waste is different in South Carolina as opposed to other states. It was pointed out that SRS is in South Carolina, not the other states. Joe Ortaldo reminded Mr. Zeller that the site was following the law through their approach for oversight and addressing the tank closure process. Mr. Ortaldo stated that it is not unusual for laws to be different among states and used speed limits as an example. Mr. Ortaldo reminded those present that the full Congress passed the law that allows the site to proceed with tank closure in the manner challenged by Mr. Zeller.

When asked by the committee who Mr. Zeller felt should have the regulatory authority for tank closure, he responded that it should be removed from DOE and given to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The ensuing discussion centered around regulatory agency oversight including, specifically, the SCDHEC.

While various committee members voiced their concerns with some of Mr. Zeller's statements, Mr. Meisenheimer said that everyone was interested in protecting human health but there was disagreement on how to achieve that goal. He reminded everyone that the WMC is an important element of the public review process for tank closure. He thanked Mr. Zeller for attending the meeting and said that there were grounds for agreement on many of the areas of mutual concern and encouraged him to continue attending the WMC meetings.

### **DOE Preliminary Draft Low Level Waste and Mixed Low Level Waste National Business Strategy Document, Karen Patterson, WMC Member**

Ms. Patterson reminded the committee that the site-specific advisory boards (SSABs) were asked to look at a national strategy on addressing legacy wastes needing disposal and to provide feedback on how it could be improved. She summarized the comments as one where the SRS stakeholders appreciated the opportunity to comment on a preliminary document but felt that several key issues would require resolution before the strategy could be implemented. She said the primary concerns focused on:

- Risk reduction
- Schedule and cost
- Equity issues

One concern raised was that due to the differences at each of the sites, it was difficult to determine what was the highest risk. Ms. Patterson said that it was felt that no site should get all of the money and that it was important that if waste is sent to another state, it should not create a problem for that state. Another concern was that the purpose and goal of the document was not clear, and it was important to know how this strategy was different from past attempts. She said

it was also noted that the SRS information in the document appeared to be inaccurate, and there was concern that it was not an appropriate basis by which decisions could be made.

Ms. Patterson introduced a draft letter to be sent to DOE Headquarters that summarized all of the concerns. As a result of the input provided during the meeting, Ms. Patterson agreed to revise the document and present it on behalf of the WMC at the Combined Committee Meeting for consideration by the full Board.

### **Public Comment**

During the public comment period, Art Domby remarked that he wanted to thank the committee and site personnel for their patience in answering questions for new CAB members. As a separate point, he wanted to comment on Mr. Zeller's concern about the legislative process that allowed South Carolina to proceed with tank closure. Mr. Domby encouraged Mr. Zeller's organization to get more involved in the legislative process if they were unhappy with the laws that have been passed.

Mr. Meisenheimer asked for any other public comment and with none, he then adjourned the meeting.

***For additional information or meeting handouts, call 1-800-249-8155.***