May 20, 2025
Savannah River Site (SRS) Citizens Advisory Board (CAB)
Full Board Meeting Summary
DOE Meeting Center, Aiken, SC

Table of Contents

Tuesday May 20 Attendance

CAB Attendees

Marty Ball	Phyllis Britt	Patrick Kilroy
Kim Ray	Kenneth Sajwan	Janie Scott

Absent Board Members

Nathaniel Hartley	Michelle Bush	Scott McKay
Hubert Van Tuyll		

SRS Site Personnel

Edwin Deshong, DOE-SR Acting Manager	James Tanner, CAB DDFO, DOE-SR	Larry McDaniel, DOE-SR
Herbert Crapse, DOE-SR	Matt Baker, DOE-SR	John Clark, DOE-SR
Sonya Goines, DOE-SR	Mike Serrato, SKLS	Catelyn Folkert, SRNL
Karen Morrow, DOE-SR	Jeff Carter, SRNL	Lance Cramer, SRNS
Emily Saleeby, SRMC	Kayla Meyer, DOE-SR	Tony Polk, DOE-SR
James Harris, SMRC	Susan Blass, SRNS	Brian Cox, NNSA

SRS CAB Support Staff (S&K Logistics)

Audrey Barron, Public Outreach Coordinator	Juanita Campbell, CAB Administrator	Chris Parker, Meeting Coordinator

Agency Liaisons & Public

Jon Richards, EPA	Crystal Robertson, SC DES	Susan Fulmer, SC DES
Jana Dawson, EPA		

Meeting Summary
SRS CAB – Full Board Meeting
DOE Meeting Center, Aiken, SC
May 20, 2025

Meeting began at 9:00 AM Eastern Standard Time

Meeting Introduction: Juanita Campbell, CAB Facilitator

Ms. Campbell opened the May Full Board meeting by welcoming everyone and reminded those seated in the U-shape to speak directly into the microphones. She then had everyone in the U-shape introduce themselves and reviewed the meeting rules.

Chair Update: Phyllis Britt, CAB Chair

Ms. Britt welcomed everyone to the May CAB Meeting. She informed the attendees that she and the Vice Chair attended two meetings in the past month: the Environmental Management-Site Specific Advisory Board (EM-SSAB) Chairs Virtual Meeting and a meeting with the Government Accountability Office (GAO) Auditors. She mentioned that during the Chairs Meeting there was a round-robin discussion where each board shared the challenges and positive aspects they are currently facing. She noted that while communication is an issue at some sites, DOE-SR maintains positive interactions with their board. She also informed the attendees that GAO Auditors expressed interest in meeting to discuss the interpretation of high-level radioactive waste and to understand how the CAB works and interacts with DOE-SR.

Ms. Ray inquired about the Citizens Advisory Boards (CABs) still experiencing communication issues with the Department of Energy (DOE). She asked whether those CABs had indicated if they were in contact with their congressional delegations to help facilitate communication with DOE.
Ms. Britt responded that Hanford CAB is experiencing these issues, noting that they have had significant employment turnover and did not mention making communication with their congressional delegations.

Environmental Management (EM) Manager Update

Savannah River Site (SRS) EM Acting Manager, Mr. Edwin Deshong, provided an update on current SRS projects. Mr. Deshong noted that the Advanced Manufacturing Collaborative (AMC) is 98% complete, which will be a significant achievement.

EM Manager Update Q&A

Ms. Ray inquired about the AMC, noting that the building is beautiful and asked whether any part of it would be available for public use.
Mr. Deshong confirmed that the building will be available for public use, stating that one of DOE-SR's goals was to create more public meeting spaces and to collaborate with community academia.
Mr. Tanner added that the lease at the DOE Meeting Center ends in June, and DOE-SR intends to move the CAB meetings to the AMC.

Agency Updates

Mr. Jon Richards, with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), announced that Kevin McComber has been appointed as the Regional Administrator for Region 4. He also mentioned that a proposed plan for L-Area is scheduled for June, which will primarily involve land use controls. Additionally, a meeting is scheduled for Fall 2025 for the second round of sampling of per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS).

Ms. Susan Fulmer, with the South Carolina Department of Environmental Services (DES), provided an update on the central office activities. She introduced Crystal Robertson, the new Office Manager for the Aiken Office. Ms. Fulmer mentioned that a Preliminary Cease Waste Removal (PCWR) meeting for tanks 11 and 15 was held with EPA and DOE-SR, and she stated that the briefing went well. She noted that in 2022, they renegotiated the Liquid Waste (LW) milestones and established the PCWR milestones and the closure milestones, with DOE-SR being well ahead of schedule. She also noted that the monthly inspections performed by the Aiken office include Ambient Stream Monitoring and Saltstone. Additionally, she mentioned an upcoming wastewater compliance meeting.

Agency Updates Q&A

Mr. Kilroy inquired about the concentration levels of PFAS to determine if removal would be necessary.
Mr. Richards responded that a Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL) was established over a year ago and they recently had a decision update from their administrator. He noted that if PFAS is found in D-Area that requires treatment or monitored natural attenuation, they will ensure the levels are below the required threshold and take appropriate action.

Ms. Britt mentioned a recommendation regarding the possibility of L-Area becoming accessible to the public and asked if their evaluations would impact this possibility.
Mr. Richards stated that the evaluations would not have any impact, noting that the area has very minimal contamination.

Mr. Kilroy asked if the stream monitoring had increased over the last five years.
Ms. Fulmer stated that she would gather that information and follow up. She inquired if there was a specific chemical of concern, to which Mr. Kilroy replied that he was concerned about any toxic radionuclides.

L-Area Update: Larry McDaniel, DOE-SR

Mr. McDaniel provided an overview of the SRS Spent Nuclear Fuel (SNF) Program, covering its mission, L Basin Storage, cask processing, receipts, and shipments.

L-Area Update Q&A

Mr. Kilroy inquired about the percentage of fissionable uranium still in the rods.
Mr. McDaniel stated it is highly enriched uranium.

Mr. Ball noted that Mr. McDaniel used the term “final disposition.” Mr. McDaniel confirmed this, clarifying that it refers to the repository.
Mr. Ball then inquired whether there is a repository, to which Mr. McDaniel affirmed.
Mr. Tanner added that one reason DOE-SR does not have extensive information on the final repository is that the work is being carried out by the Office of Nuclear Energy (NE), while DOE-SR is under the Office of Environmental Management (EM).

Mr. Ball inquired about Yucca Mountain.
Mr. McDaniel noted that although Yucca Mountain is important, the more critical aspect for DOE-SR is that the material stored in L-Area is extremely safe. He explained that the material is kept in water because it serves as the perfect shield for all the material.

Mr. Ball inquired about the process of slowing neutrons to thermal levels to make them more reactive.
Mr. McDaniel responded by noting that there is no heat in the pool, it runs at an average temperature of 52 degrees Fahrenheit, and there is no cooling system in place.

Mr. Ball asked how it maintains a temperature below ambient if it is 52 degrees Fahrenheit, which is below room temperature.
Mr. McDaniel explained that the pool is located indoors, within a 6-foot-thick cement wall underground.

Ms. Ray inquired about how waste is transported to the facility from other countries.
Mr. McDaniel stated that the waste is transported by ship, rail, and road.

Liquid Waste Retrieval: Targeting High Risk Tanks: James Harris, SRMC

Mr. Harris provided an update on the waste removal and closure activity progress for high-risk tanks and acceleration with success.

Liquid Waste Retrieval: Targeting High Risk Tanks Q&A

Mr. Kilroy acknowledged his satisfaction with the drone footage of the tank. He then asked about the measures taken to address cracks in the tanks.
Mr. Harris explained the use of the contingency transfer system, which enables the deployment of a pump into the annulus to transfer waste back into the tank, preventing the annulus from filling up. In the event of a severe crack, the waste can be transferred into another tank.

Mr. Kilroy mentioned that since the tanks were constructed around 1950 or 1951, they lack x-rays on the welds.
Mr. Harris highlighted that one of their core values is continuous improvement and that the industry has enhanced its understanding of failure points in welds and metals.

Mr. Kilroy then asked about the steps to take if the annulus tank were to leak.
Mr. Harris responded that they would use the contingency transfer system to remove all the waste from the annulus.
Mr. Kilroy inquired if they would subsequently clean it out and fill it with grout, to which Mr. Harris agreed.

Ms. Britt referred to slide three, which discusses "known primary tank leak sites" and noted that there are no environmental leaks. She asked for clarification on what that means.
Mr. Harris explained that the primary tank is an FR-type tank with a 750,000-gallon capacity. Surrounding the primary tank is a smaller space known as the annulus. He explained that some leaks have occurred from the primary tank to the annulus, but the annulus acts as a final barrier to prevent waste from entering the environment.

Mr. Kilroy commented that once the tank is filled with grout, the grout hardens, and inquired how it could be removed afterward.
Mr. Harris responded that the grout remains in place; it is not removed once it has been filled.

Mr. Kilroy then inquired about the procedure if a leak were to occur.
Mr. Harris explained that there would be no leaks at the point when all the waste has been removed and all infrastructure dismantled, leaving the tank to sit empty.

Mr. Kilroy noted that there is residual plutonium and uranium at the bottom of the tank, and that the grout used is water-based with calcium hydroxide.
Mr. Harris stated that the tanks are grouted with an approved grout formula that has been proven to meet performance analysis requirements for the closure of both tank farms.

Mr. Kilroy asked if there had been discernible leakage from the tanks in the last five years.
Mr. Harris responded that there have been no leaks outside of the tanks. He added that, as an example, there was a case in the last five years where the primary wall of a tank leaked into the annulus. However, now that all the waste has been removed, it is no longer leaking.

Lower Three Runs (LTR) Remediation Completion: Susan Blass, PhD, SRNS

Dr. Blass presented on the Lower Three Runs watershed at SRS, focusing on contaminant monitoring, risk assessment, and remediation.

LTR Remediation Completion Q&A

Ms. Britt inquired about the meaning of PAR. Dr. Blass explained that it stands for P and R reactor.

Ms. Britt then asked if any actions are being taken regarding mercury levels.
Dr. Blass responded that the current mercury levels in their systems are consistent with those in the Savannah River and attributed this to atmospheric deposition and historical mercury facilities in Augusta, GA.

Ms. Britt mentioned that before Langley Pond was drained, swimming was discouraged, but now it is allowed.
Dr. Blass clarified that mercury is primarily a concern in fish tissue rather than surface water, which is where the human health implications arise.

Mr. Ball asked for clarification on the disposal process of contaminated materials, specifically mentioning that they are put in bags and taken to the E area for disposal.
Dr. Blass explained that the materials are buried underground.

Ms. Ray inquired about the date of the original sampling that identified cesium contamination.
Dr. Blass noted that the remedial investigation work plan documented the compilation of existing data for LTR in 2002, and that the LTR characterization effort was conducted in 2010.

Ms. Ray also asked how the lake's water level is managed during the droughts that Aiken area experiences from year to year.
Dr. Blass responded that the stream systems maintain themselves. She mentioned that most recreational lakes managed by organizations like Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) and
the U.S. Corps of Engineers (USACE) are lowered in the fall to anticipate rainfall during heavy seasons.
However, at the Savannah River site, they do not follow this practice as the water levels maintain themselves.

Mr. Ball inquired about changes in groundwater flow.
Dr. Blass responded that groundwater flow is not covered in the Integrator Operable Unit (IOU) and that groundwater and surface water do not exchange. She also noted that cesium-137 is not a concern for groundwater, and it is related to reactor groundwater issues.
Mr. Richards added that a separate groundwater treatment was conducted in the P-Area, which is independent of the IOU.

Ms. Fulmar mentioned that there is a fish consumption advisory for Langley Pond. She stated that more information can be found on the South Carolina Department of Environmental Services website.

Mr. Deshong introduced Mr. Brian Cox, the communications lead for NNSA, ensuring that everyone knew he was present and could see who he was.

Board Business:

Ms. Campbell had the board review the draft recommendation: Preventing Water Damage and Turf Growth on In-situ Deactivated and Decommissioned Facilities Using Epoxy

Mr. Kilroy provided information on the draft recommendation. He stated over the past year, it was observed that vegetation had begun to grow on the flat tops of these buildings due to the accumulation of soil and seeds. While these building tops are primarily concrete, which is advantageous, concerns were raised about some areas having bituminous coverings. Bituminous materials have a limited lifespan of 15 to 30 years and can deteriorate over time.

Mr. Kilroy mentioned that while epoxy coating is resilient, it may not effectively adhere to deteriorating bituminous surfaces. Instead, he recommended considering epoxy coatings with ultraviolet (UV) protection and fiberglass fillers for a longer-lasting solution. He suggested that covering the reactor tops could help reduce vegetation growth by preventing water accumulation, which leads to freezing, expansion, and eventual cracking.

Additionally, Mr. Kilroy noted that filling in any divots to enhance water runoff would prevent water from settling and vegetation from growing, thereby preserving the integrity of the concrete. The feasibility of using epoxy-based materials with suitable additives to coat the reactor tops should be considered, as epoxy is effective in preventing moisture and oxygen ingress, like its use in automotive bodywork.

Ms. Campbell encouraged the board to discuss the draft recommendation.

Ms. Britt commented that she was under the impression the roofs over the reactors are not flat and that runoff had been managed during decontamination and decommissioning (D&D). She noted that she believed the experts had already addressed this issue and saw no need to move the recommendation forward.

Ms. Ray asked Mr. Kilroy if he had consulted with the Facilities and Disposition Site Remediation Committee while forming the recommendation.

Mr. Tanner noted that with only ten members, the board has not formed separate committees. Instead, we had a subcommittee version meeting last month where anyone interested could provide input. He explained that breaking into subcommittees with only ten members can be different, but we maintain a working group environment to work through issues before presenting them to the full board.

Ms. Ray then clarified her question, asking if any input was received from anyone who attended the April Subcommittee meeting.

Mr. Kilroy stated no.

Ms. Campbell asked if there were any more questions. No one responded. Ms. Campbell then brought the board's attention to the paper ballots.

Mr. Kilroy stated that there should not be any water or soil accumulating on top of the building.
Ms. Britt countered, mentioning that many people have ivy growing on the sides of their houses without water accumulating.

Mr. Ball motioned to vote on the draft recommendation: "Preventing Water Damage and Turf Growth on In-situ Deactivated and Decommissioned Facilities Using Epoxy."

Ms. Scott seconded the motion to vote on the draft recommendation: "Preventing Water Damage and Turf Growth on In-situ Deactivated and Decommissioned Facilities Using Epoxy.

Ms. Campbell noted where the ballots were located and explained that a "yay" vote means proceeding with the draft recommendation, while a "nay" vote means ending the discussion.

Ms. Campbell collected the ballots and counted them with Mr. Tanner. She then announced that the draft recommendation, "Preventing Water Damage and Turf Growth on In-situ Deactivated and Decommissioned Facilities Using Epoxy," was not approved.

Public Comments

No public comments.

Closing Remarks

Ms. Campbell announced that the subcommittee meetings will be virtual only, and the only in-person meetings will be the Full Board Meetings. The next Full Board Meeting is scheduled for July 22 at the Center for African-American History, Art, and Culture in downtown Aiken. She also reminded the board about the upcoming subcommittee meeting on June 24 and noted that more information will be emailed soon. Additionally, she reminded everyone to sign their travel vouchers and mentioned that Chris will collect them.

Ms. Britt expressed gratitude to everyone for attending and participating. She reminded everyone of the subcommittee meeting in June, which will be held virtually on Teams. She inquired about updating the website. Ms. Campbell responded that approval is required from DOE-Headquarters (DOE-HQ) and that they are currently working on it. Additionally, Ms. Britt asked about the status of the membership packages.
Ms. Campbell noted that the packages have moved to the next level and that is all the information available at this time.
Ms. Britt concluded by thanking everyone again for their participation.

Meeting adjourned at 11:30am EST.


CAB
Savannah River Site Citizens Advisory Board