SRS Plans Footprint Reduction

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009 was signed into law February 17, 2009. SRS CAB members were briefed on SRS plans at their boards March 24th meeting in Aiken, SC. The CAB Chair Manuel Bettencourt and Vice Chair Ranaoul Jzar were given the opportunity to hear a full presentation on ARRA from Dr. Inés R. Triay, Acting Assistant Secretary Office of Environmental Management (EM) at the semi-annual SSAB Chairs meeting in Augusta, GA on March 17th. Dr. Triay explained DOE-EM complex wide plans for the recovery act funding. Regarding SRS, she stated the focus will be on Area Closure, including soil and ground water remediation; the accelerated entombment of production reactors; and reduce environmental risk with large returns on investment which will result in roughly a 90 percent reduction of the site’s footprint.

During the Board briefing Ms. Helen Belencan of DOE Savannah River stated that EM has been given an opportunity with the Recovery Act funds to accelerate and achieve new success in their Program. She said the receipt of funds was due to EM’s ability to demonstrate programmatic results and meet accountability objectives. “We are doing what we are good at” she said, “Just more of it!”

(Continued on page 3)

Farewell to Donna

Every two years, the CAB assumes a new or re-elected Chairperson. During each tenure, members will settle comfortably into that leader’s style and direction, when “Bam!” it’s time to vote for a chair, again.

This year was just a little different than usual. Our chair, Donna Antonucci, who had only spent one year in the role, was leaving; not only the chairpersonship, but also the CAB. Donna, had reached the maximum membership term limit and was now retiring from the CAB. Of course she knew that she would be leaving after the January 2009 meeting, but you would not know it by her diligence and dedication. Having previously served for two years as Vice Chair, Donna had developed ideas she wanted to introduce to the CAB and had gained a vision of what she thought the future of the CAB should be. She introduced the concept of podcasting and electronic meetings, stating that everywhere we look we see the use of high tech computers, cell phones, MP3’s; and people are texting as the “now” way to communicate. “So”, she said, “we need to move more into the 21st Century with the use of available technology.” CAB members latched onto the idea and soon were excitedly testing the launch of electronic committee meetings.

So although we say so long to Donna Antonucci as a CAB member and Chair, for now we know she will keep in touch, and we will see her soon online in the not-so-distant techno-future. Thank you for leading us here, Donna!
Welcome to Our New Chairperson

Having taken the reins just a couple of months ago, Manuel Bettencourt is already off and running as the new Chairperson of the CAB. He has been a member of the CAB since 2005 and has served as the Chair of the Nuclear Materials Committee prior to running for and being elected CAB Chair. Manuel is very passionate about the role of the CAB and is enthusiastic about his new responsibilities. He shares and supports the vision set by the previous chair, but also has definite plans to propose a few of his own. CAB members are looking forward to this new leadership.

SRS CAB 2009 Issues and Accomplishment

Written and submitted by Manuel Bettencourt

March 17th is usually thought of as St. Patrick’s Day, but this year at the Savannah River Site (SRS) it was the beginning of the Department of Energy Environmental Management (DOE/EM) Site-Specific Advisory Board (SSAB) Chairs meeting. The Chairs hold a meeting at one of the EM sites twice a year and this spring it was our Citizens Advisory Board’s (CAB) turn to host the meeting, which was held at the Augusta Marriott Hotel and Suites in Augusta, Georgia.

There was a discussion period at the meeting in which each SSAB presents its top three site specific issues and one accomplishment. It was interesting to see the variety of issues and accomplishments from each site. At least two sites listed public involvement workshops as their accomplishment. I presented the idea to our Strategic and Legacy Management Committee to consider, thinking the SRS CAB begin working with the various volunteer organizations in the area and possibly conduct a public involvement event in which all SRS related volunteer organizations can participate.

Our CAB presented the following top three issues: 1) Liquid Waste Operations and Tank Closure; 2) Continued Operations of H-Canyon; and 3) Plutonium Disposition. Our accomplishment was the development of the CAB SRS Flow Chart (pictured) to use as a tool for orientation, discussion and presentations related to the site. The concept of site specific chart generated enthusiastic discussion and the Designated Federal Official, Cate Brennan, has already distributed our CAB chart to the other sites.

The group also heard from Frank Marcinowski, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Regulatory Compliance. His presentation stimulated much discussion on Yucca Mountain funding. We learned that, while work in Nevada has been halted, the essential work for licensing of the facility is continuing in Washington. There was also discussion concerning metal recycling and we learned that work on the Preliminary Environmental Impact Statement (PEIS) for Recycling Metals has stopped and any recycling issue will be handled on a case-by-case basis. This allowed our Waste Management Committee to close our oldest open Recommendation #144, PEIS on Disposition of Radioactive Scrap Metal, dated October 2001.

There were also presentations by our own Art Dombey and Donna Antonucci. Art presented “SRS CAB Board’s Eye View of Cleanup” which had been requested at the previous Chairs meeting to give the other sites an idea of what goes on at a very busy site. Donna informed the group about our continuing initiatives to update our website and put our committee meetings on-line. The on-line meeting concept generated much interest from the other sites and we are paving the way in this area.

The group was also given the “Federal Budget Process” briefing we heard from Kriss Nielsen, SRS Budget Director, at our October Process and Education Retreat. From the interest this generated it became obvious that many sites are just beginning to become involved in their site’s funding and budgeting issues.

Before adjourning, the Chairs discussed a
Welcome to our Newest CAB Members

Cleveland Latimore
Cleveland works has worked in community health for 17 years. He chairs the 100 Black Men of Savannah’s Health and Wellness Committee and is vice-chair of the Black Male High Blood Pressure Coalition and the National Black Leadership Initiative on Cancer. He resides in Pooler, GA.

Rose O. Hayes
Rose is retired from work in human engineering. She is interested in alternative energy sources and the environment. She has a MS in Social Science, a Professional Ergonomics Certification, and a Doctorate in Anthropology. She resides in Aiken, SC.

Gerald Wadley
Gerald is the owner of a publishing firm. He worked 15 years in environmental consulting. He is on the Board of Directors of the Beaufort Yacht and Sailing Club, where he also chairs Committees. He holds a BS in Biology and a Doctorate in Radiation Ecology. Mr. Wadley resides in Beaufort, SC.

Ric C. Castagna
Ric is a self-employed software developer. He has a long-time interest in the balance between nuclear technology and the effects it can have on the community. He currently serves as the president of his Homeowners Association and is a Microsoft Certified Professional. Mr. Castagna resides in Aiken, SC.

Marolyn J. Parson
Marolyn is a retired educator. She expressed a particular interest in future land use, long-term stewardship, and risk assessment issues relating to SRS. She has a BS and MS in Education plus a Doctorate in Biology. Ms. Parson resides in Bluffton, SC.

Emile Bernard (Picture Unavailable)
Emile is retired from Sandia National Laboratories where he worked in waste management programs. He has a BS in Physics, a MS in Nuclear Sciences, and a Doctorate in Nuclear Engineering. He resides in Beaufort, SC.

John Snedeker (Picture Unavailable)
John owns a consulting firm. He is a member of the Association of Energy Engineers and the American Bar Association. He holds a BS in Mechanical Engineering and a certificate in Government Contracting. He resides in Savannah, GA.

SRS Footprint Reduction (Continued from Page 1)

Ms. Belencan stated that the funds will create near-term environmental cleanup jobs with an eye toward lasting economic benefits. She said to qualify the projects must have a clear work scope, cost estimates, and schedules must be fully defined and supported. She assured the group that safety is the first priority in the execution of work performed under the Recovery Act. She said there would continue to be interaction with regulators to ensure compliance. She informed the group that good project oversight by DOE Headquarters, DOE:SR, and Savannah River Nuclear Solutions would be required to ensure that funds are spent appropriately and that work is accomplished in a timely manner and that projects will take all steps necessary to avoid delays and cost overruns. She also said that every step would be taken to prevent instances of fraud, waste, error, and abuse.

Ms. Belencan informed the group that at that time Funding levels for each EM project have not yet been finalized and that contract modifications and various certifications are prerequisites. She said timing is uncertain but the planning activities are ongoing.

The full presentation given by Dr. Triay is available on the EM Website (www.em.doe.gov). Ms Belencan's presentation is available on the SRS CAB Website (www.srs.gov/outreach).

The SRS CAB agreed with the Inspector General’s Audit Report finding on the WSB that there was a lack of coordination between National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) and DOE’s Office of Environmental Management (EM) related to the treatment and ultimate disposal of waste from the Mixed Oxide Fuel Fabrication Facility. The CAB recommended that there be a plan for existing or planned EM waste treatment capabilities suitable for use or modification to satisfy the WSB capabilities. The CAB also asked for a cost benefit analysis documenting overlapping capabilities, cost saving potentials (if any), and reassurance for the need to construct and operate the WSB.

DOE responded that in 2005 NNSA and the SRS Managing and Operating Contractor fully evaluated waste treatment alternatives. The evaluation considered the potential utilization of existing SRS facilities as well as combinations of existing facilities with modifications that could provide a cost-effective path for waste disposition including operating costs and technical and regulatory issues. DOE stated that most of the evaluated alternatives presented technical risks with high probabilities of affecting Liquid Waste Project cost and schedules for completing legacy waste streams and tank closures and only support facilities could be utilized without impact the SRS Liquid Waste completion schedule. They assured the CAB that NNSA and EM programs are integrated to the maximum extent practicable with regards to waste treatment and disposal but continue to work with NNSA to ensure missions remain cost effective.

Recommendation 256 - Infrastructure Investment in System Planning - Adopted July 2008

The SRS CAB recommended that DOE provide an overview of how infrastructure risks on operations, closures, and regulatory milestones are evaluated over the entire Liquid Waste System. They asked for assurances that the planned operating capacity of the Liquid Waste System is adequate to meet the planned mission by 2028 and that all efforts are made to identify major existing equipment failures and risks that could potentially jeopardize the end date. The CAB asked specifically for DOE to identify, quantify, and communicate any existing limiting equipment, process or facilities and identify impact to the entire Liquid Waste System mission. The CAB also asked DOE to identify equipment or facilities that could increase the capacity of the Liquid Waste System and accelerate the mission.

DOE responded that the Liquid Waste Program uses a rigorous and disciplined risk management process to identify and handle risk that threaten project schedule. They stated that the process is comprised of Planning, Identification, Grading, Handling, Impact Determination and Integration. DOE maintains that risk relating to major equipment and infrastructure are systematically identified, likewise opportunities identified are integrated into the system plan. DOE agreed to provide additional details regarding critical facilities, equipment risks, and interface risks that could affect system performance in committee meeting briefings. DOE stated that the number of opportunities for accelerating the liquid waste mission are being considered.

Recommendation 257 - Facility Tour Recommendation - Adopted September 2008

The CAB recommended that to more effectively achieve its mission, a need existed for a public outreach program to aid in the growth in numbers and knowledge of potential CAB members. They believe that by offering on-site tours at appropriate locations would be a highly useful tool for both the public and DOE in order to: 1) explain how and where to get information about the site and its programs; 2) introduce the professionals who are actively involved in cleanup, waste management, and natural resources management at the site; 3) plan and give notice for public outreach activities; and 4) provide a mechanism for a concrete experience that frames the environmental management of nuclear waste as an industry focused on safety.

DOE responded that the Office of External Affairs and Savannah River Nuclear Solutions Public Affairs Office have been working on implementing a pilot program for public tours on a limited basis. They stated that they would continue towards implementing the tours and outline the process for the CAB.

Recommendation 258 - TRU Waste Disposition Program Follow-up - Adopted September 2008

The CAB recommended that DOE ensure SRS funding for FY 2009 is at a level that continues to address the highest risk activities and to complete the removal of all legacy TRU waste no later than FY 2013. They requested a FY09 budget update to assess the planned for disposition alternatives for all SRS legacy TRU waste. The CAB asked that DOE provide an update to the Board on the status of the TRU Pad 1 disposition schedule and to provide assurance that efforts are in place to step up obtaining the NRC license for the TRUPACT-III. They requested the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) be invited to brief the CAB on licensing requirements. In addition, the group requested the completion date of WIPP certifying the large box NDA and NDE systems; and requested Carlsbad (WIPP) be invited to outline the process with the CAB Waste Management Committee, and regulatory parties in an effort to resolve technical issues.

DOE responded that the site was under a budget continuing resolution (CR) that limited available funding for FY09. They stated that it is DOE’s goal to reduce risk by shipping the remaining TRU legacy waste drums to WIPP and DOE will consider it a significant accomplishment that cumulates 9 years of shipments and safe disposal of over 31,000 drums. They affirmed that SRS would continue to balance TRU waste disposition as a key risk reduction activity in the Integrated Priority List along with other site priorities. They said DOE is working diligently to obtain a license for the TRUPACT-III shipping container and working with Carlsbad Field Office (CBFO) and the NRC to resolve technical challenges pursuant to the licensing of the TRUPACT-III. They stated that at the time SRS forecasts certification of the unit in the first quarter of FY09 and were currently resolving imaging issues. They confirmed an update to the CAB and to invite CBFO to discuss the certification process.

(Continued on page 5)
Cab Recommendations


The SRS CAB recommended that DOE continue to aggressively pursue measures to keep the H-Area assets (people and equipment) fully engaged in stabilizing and dispositioning all DOE legacy nuclear materials provided the current consolidated schedule for SRS clean-up is not jeopardized. To that effect, DOE should propose an updated agency-wide call for any additional nuclear materials requiring processing and inform the new DOE nuclear materials coordination team since they may impact H-Canyon schedule, plans for closure, and additional waste streams. They asked that DOE provide updates on the replacement group for NMDCCC to ensure continued timely and accurate information/presentations on activities and missions for H-Canyon to the SRS CAB. In addition, the CAB requested an update on the progress of updating the safety documentation for H-Canyon operations.

DOE responded that H-area assets (people and equipment) were fully engaged to operate through 2019. They stated that Savannah River Operations Office (SR) hosts periodic meetings with personnel from Headquarters (HQ) and other sites within the DOE Complex to discuss materials planned for shipping to SRS for disposition. They stated that upon a request from EM, SR will evaluate the impacts to SRS facilities and provide the impacts to EM, and await their decision on whether to include the material in the H-Canyon mission. They said the CAB would continue to be updated including a safety documentation update for H-Canyon and HB-Line facilities.

Recommendation 260 - A/M Groundwater Plume Program Update to the Public - Adopted March 2009

The CAB recommended that DOE advise the board and the public of the major milestone highlights and accomplishments pertaining to the A/M groundwater organic solvent plume. They asked that the accomplishments include a description of plume size reduction, migration control, and source removal efforts. They clarified that DOE’s evaluation of the protection of groundwater resources both on and off the Site be presented to the SRS CAB and the public and requested a public workshop to share successes to date. In addition, the CAB recommen

Farewell Loyal Members

At right Leon Chavous leads Gerri Flemming, DOE Federal Coordinator and the group to the Pledge of Allegiance one last time after 6 years service on the board. In a public acknowledgement he asked that Alex Williams carry on the tradition.

At the January 2009 meeting outgoing members receive certificates of appreciation from SRS Site Manager Jeff Allison. From left to right: Wendell Lyon, 6 year member; Mary Drye, 6 year member; Leon Chavous, 6 year member; Alan Eckmeyer, 1 year member and previous Technical Advisory; Donna Antonucci, 6 year member and previous Chairperson; Jeff Allison, SRS Site Manager.
EM SSAB Chair’s Meeting Held in Area

Chairpersons from DOE sites across the country gathered at the Augusta Marriott Hotel on March 18, 2009. These citizens represent a diversity of views, cultures, and demographics from communities and regions affected by site clean-up activities across the nation. The SRS CAB was represented by Manuel Bettencourt and Ranowul Jzar, SRS CAB Chair and Vice-Chair, respectively.

During two days of meetings, the group shared a unique opportunity to discuss Department of Energy (DOE) Environmental Management (EM) cleanup issues directly with DOE EM officials. Dr. Inés Triay, Acting Assistant Secretary for Environmental Management explained the DOE EM vision and priorities for the present and future. Other DOE EM Headquarters participants included: Merle Sykes, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Program Planning and Budget, Mark Gilbertson, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Engineering and Technology, and Frank Marcinowski, Deputy Assistant Secretary for regulatory Compliance.

Direct communication with community stakeholders is exactly what DOE intended when the Environmental Management Site-Specific Advisory Board (EM SSAB) was developed. The Board is chartered under the Federal Advisory Committee Act to advise DOE EM on cleanup decisions. While only one EM Site-Specific Advisory Board exists, eight local Boards under the EM SSAB umbrella charter have been organized at Hanford in Washington State, Idaho, Northern New Mexico, Nevada, Oak Ridge in Tennessee, Paducah in Kentucky, Portsmouth in Ohio, and Savannah River in South Carolina. The Savannah River Board is commonly known as the SRS Citizens Advisory Board (CAB). These local Boards submit advice and recommendations to local DOE management on site-specific EM issues. They also keep the public informed on key issues, upcoming decisions, and board recommendations.

Twice a year, Chairpersons from each local Board gather to communicate with DOE EM on a national level. The March 18 meeting was hosted by the SRS CAB and included a site tour, information about the region and valuable communication between the local boards and DOE leadership. The next EM SSAB Chair’s meeting will be held in Idaho during the fall.

More information about the EM SSAB and public involvement can be found at: www.em.doe.gov

SSAB Issues and Accomplishments

(Continued from Page 2)

number of possible suggestions/letters to work on between now and the fall meeting in Idaho Falls. The SSAB Chairs submit suggestions to DOE/EM, much as our CAB provides Recommendations to SRS/EM. After the Chairs approve suggestions or letters, they are submitted to each SSAB which must then vote to allow their Chair to sign the suggestion/letter without change. As a result of this process, some suggestions/letters are not always signed by all Chairs. At this meeting some of the topics discussed for possible further development included Yucca Mountain, metal recycling, and EM budget priorities. It was decided that further work on the Yucca Mountain/Geological Repository issue was warranted.

The semi-annual SSAB Chairs meeting requires more preparation work than one of our full CAB meetings and that work falls on the staff of the host site. Our SRS CAB staff put together an outstanding meeting and agenda, even while having to prepare for our Aiken CAB meeting which began just a few days later. After this Chairs meeting, representatives from across the entire DOE complex came to an understanding of just what a talented CAB staff we have at SRS.
The Spring 2008 Board Beat reported the first "mock" Internet committee meeting thanks to the efforts of the CAB's Support Team. The team faced several challenges since that first mock meeting with a lot of trials and errors along the way.

In March 2008, the CAB support team launched the first committee meeting using the WebEx meeting website. Much of the trials and errors from the past year was finding a reliable website to host the meetings that would provide all the features the CAB needed. Without a doubt the WebEx site has been reliable so far. It hosts thousands of customers including NASA and DOE Headquarters, who recently announced the start of their new program.

There is a monthly fee for the WebEx program but it is hoped that the CAB members and public participants will find on-line committee meetings a suitable alternative to travel and eventually the benefits will outweigh the cost. The new meeting site offers many options the first trial meeting and free services didn't include. Such as video streaming along with document viewing and interaction for meeting participants. Attendees are allowed to browse presentations and even print from their own printer. As the slide presentations are displayed at the committee meetings they can be shown at the same time to attendees who can "talk" to each other or ask a question of the Presenter by using the Chat panel on the meeting screen. Additionally, the meetings are recorded for CAB members who were unable to attend the meeting at the designated time. The recording will soon be available on the CAB's website. However, it is likely only 2 months of prior recordings will be available at one time. Therefore, all recordings will be stored on disc.

"This is just the beginning", says a member of the CAB support team. "Once everyone sees and understands the possibilities of this program the benefits are endless". The basic meeting is what is being creating now. Future options could be useful ideas for the CAB such as Webinars; training; or document editing.

There are currently 25 positions to log on to a meeting. In order for these meeting to be fully tested, whenever you see an upcoming web meeting, log on and provide feedback. If you have questions contact the CAB support team at 800-249-8155.

The CAB Internet Meeting Site: www.srsmeetings.webex.com

Citizen Advisory Board Tours

Twenty-one members of the Savannah River Site - Citizens Advisory Board (SRS-CAB) participated in a tour the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) and the Joint Information Center (JIC) on Monday, July 28, 2008. The Department of Energy - Savannah River Operations Office (DOE-SR) hosted the tour with presentations provided by Savannah River Nuclear Solutions. The purpose of the tour was to provide first-hand look at the emergency center; receive a briefing of the emergency operations; and provide information on how notifications are made to the surrounding communities during a site emergency event. Donna Antonucci, SRS-CAB Chairperson at the time, stated in a thank you letter to Mr. Allison, Manager, DOE-SR, that, "members really appreciated the opportunity to see this facility and gain an understanding of the procedures in their operational context."

Fourteen members of the SRS-CAB participated in a two-hour tour on Monday, November 17, 2008. They received an overview and walking tour inside the Defense Waste Processing Facility (DWPF) the largest radioactive waste classification plant in the world that converts the liquid nuclear waste currently stored at the Savannah River Site (SRS) into a solid glass form suitable for long-term storage and disposal. The members also saw first-hand the work ongoing at the Salt Waste Processing Facility construction site. The tour concluded with a drive-by of the MOX facility construction site.

New Technical Advisor

After serving as a CAB member for over 6 years (until membership term limits were implemented), Bill Lawless realized that he could certainly have stayed longer. So when the CAB's Technical Advisor announced plans to leave the area, Bill applied for the position, and was selected.

He is discovering just how different the roles of being a member and being an Advisory are, but he seems to be adjusting well. His vast knowledge of both the Savannah River Site and the CAB is proving to be a tremendous asset as he assists the CAB committees through the development of CAB recommendations.

We applaud Bill, now, for helping the CAB to tackle the headaches, heartaches, and hard work ahead that is certain to result in great recommendations to DOE.

Welcome, Bill!
Savannah River Site
Citizens Advisory Board

Key criteria for Board membership includes a time commitment and the willingness to study the issues and work toward clear, implementable recommendations.

To apply for membership to the Citizens Advisory Board, please call 1-800-249-8155.

*Board Beat is published semiannually by the Savannah River Site Citizens Advisory Board. Content is provided by Board members and support staff. Please send your comments and suggestions to:

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Citizens Advisory Board Meetings
2009 Meeting Schedule

May 18-19
The Mulberry Inn
601 East Bay Street
Savannah, GA

July 27-28
North Augusta Community Center
495 Brookside Drive
North Augusta, SC

September 28-29
Embassu Suites Hotel
and Convention Center
5055 International Boulevard
North Charleston, SC

November 16-17
Marriott Hotel & Suites
Two Tenth Street
Augusta, GA

SRS Citizens Advisory Board Members