



### **Recommendation No. 121**

March 28, 2000

#### **FY 2001 Budget Deferment of Pu 3013 Stabilization Capability**

##### **Background**

The President's FY 2001 Department of Energy (DOE) budget request and the Savannah River Site (SRS) budget request were released to the public on February 7, 2000. Jim Buice, Department of Energy-Savannah River (DOE-SR), presented the SRS FY 2001 budget request to the SRS Citizens Advisory Board (CAB) Strategic and Long Term Issues Committee on February 22, 2000, and again on March 27, 2000.

The SRS FY 2001 budget request is \$1,642 million versus \$1,512 million for FY2000, an 8.6 percent increase. This budget will allow SRS to meet regulatory agreements, maintain progress toward meeting the Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board commitments, continue study and preliminary design for salt processing technology, meet all tritium recycle commitments, and support receipt and storage of Spent Nuclear Fuel. With this budget, SRS can begin TRU waste shipments to WIPP and support plutonium (Pu) disposition missions. However, this budget deferred approximately \$31 million for the Pu 3013 Stabilization Capability which the SRS CAB believes warrant further investigation.

The Pu 3013 activity was part of the original Actinide Packaging and Storage Facility (APSF). All work on APSF stopped in 1998 due mainly to its high funding needs. APSF was originally developed in response to the Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board (DNFSB) Recommendation 94-1 which was issued in May of 1994. This recommendation requested that DOE accelerate treatment of unstable nuclear materials to a form that was safe for interim storage. The Pu 3013 activity refers to a DOE Standard (DOE-STD-3013-96) called, "Criteria for Preparing and Packing of Plutonium Metals and Oxides for Long Term Storage" which requires the packaging of stabilized plutonium in two welded canisters (one inner and an outer canister) for safe storage up to 50 years.

In an effort to comply with DNFSB Recommendation 94-1, SRS evaluated several alternatives to the original APSF concept. One of these alternatives is to use the existing facilities in Building 235F to stabilize the plutonium and package the stabilized plutonium in 3013 canisters. Existing storage would be used to house the canisters. Modifications to the existing facilities plus the construction of the new packaging facility are referred to in the budget as the Pu 3013 Stabilization Capability. The packaging component is commonly referred to as the Plutonium Stabilization & Packaging System or "PuSPS".

The \$30.8 million deferred program funding for the Pu 3013 Stabilization Capability is the initial funding phase of a multiyear project. The initial funding would cover such things as completing the conceptual design, receiving DOE validation, starting detail design, and beginning the procurement of process equipment to name a few activities. Long term projected costs for the total project are estimated to be between \$150-\$200 million.

##### **Comments**

Along with the DNFSB, the SRS CAB is concerned about the stabilization of plutonium and its safe storage and believes SRS should comply with Recommendation 94-1. To meet this commitment the necessary funds must be made available. While partial funding would allow some of the needed activities to go forward, the SRS CAB believes such a piecemeal approach would continue to delay a long overdue commitment to safety.

##### **Recommendations**

In light of the comments above, the SRS Citizens Advisory Board (CAB) recommends that DOE-Headquarters:

1. Reinstate the \$30.8 million in the FY 2001 budget for the Pu 3013 Stabilization Capability project.
2. Fully fund the total projected costs to construct and operate the Plutonium Stabilization and

- Packaging System.
3. DOE-SR brief the SRS CAB on the impacts of the activities that would be deferred if additional funding were not provided.

#### **References**

1. Buice, Jim, February 22, 2000, presentation to the SRS Citizens Advisory Board (CAB) Strategic and Long Term Issues Committee, SRS FY 2001 Budget

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#### **Agency Responses**

[\*Department of Energy-SR\*](#)