

## Savannah River Site Citizens Advisory Board

---

### Recommendation #272 Increase the Number of Savannah River Site Public Tours

#### **Background:**

The SRS CAB has had a continuing interest in and support for public informational involvement in site activities and plans. In 2008 the CAB recommended that “DOE formulate a strategy to offer on-site public tours to augment and expand the opportunities for the general public to begin their journey towards becoming informed and involved stakeholders”. This recommendation (#257) was adopted September 23, 2008. DOE accepted the recommendation and public tours were initiated in 2009. The recommendation was subsequently closed in March 2009.

Fourteen public tours with 584 participants were conducted on a trial basis in 2009. For 2010, twenty three tours have been scheduled and have commenced. Registration for the tours is on a first come, first served basis through the online web registration system. **It is important to note that for the 2010 tours (23 tours/1150 seats) the registration for the entire year was completed in just 48 hours.** It is apparent that the public demand is not being satisfied by the limited number of tours that has been offered.

It is clear from the response that the tours have generated that the local public which is made up of a diverse demographic is interested and intrigued by current, past and future operations at the SRS. In addition, the tours could be an important step in developing new CAB members as well as, creating interest in employment opportunities at SRS (especially high school and college students). It is also important to inform the public and future leaders of the crucial role the SRS has played in our national defense. While the CAB appreciates the unique security and logistical challenges of conducting tours on the SRS, we think that these tours serve a valuable function in informing and educating citizens regarding the historical work begun here on the Savannah River Plant by the Atomic Energy Commission in 1950. This work is continued today on the SRS by the Department of Energy. Also, as the mission of the SRS evolves from production to cleanup and into the future, informed stakeholders will be better able to assist in the decision-making process about the potential uses of the SRS.

#### **Recommendation:**

The Savannah River Site Citizens Advisory Board (SRS CAB) recommends that DOE:

1. Formulate a strategy to increase the number and scope of on-site public tours for 2010 and beyond.
2. Consider privatizing and other methods of conducting tours which may significantly lower the cost, while supporting a larger number of tours.
3. Offer some tours on weekends so that interested students and the working public could have the opportunity to attend.
4. Offer an alternative registration method, perhaps on a limited basis, so that those without computer skills or access could have the opportunity to participate.