



Department of Energy

Washington, DC 20585

January 21, 2000

Ms. Ann Loadholt, Chair
SRS Citizens Advisory Board
P.O. Box 365
Barnwell, South Carolina 29812

Dear Ms. Loadholt:

Thank you for your recommendations concerning equity implications for the use of the Consolidated Incineration Facility (CIF) and issuance of the Waste Management Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (WM PEIS) record of decision for the disposal of low-level waste and mixed low-level waste. Greg Rudy, Department of Energy, Savannah River Site, Manager, forwarded your recommendations and his response to Dr. Carolyn L. Huntoon, Assistant Secretary for Environmental Management, for her information and use in equity discussions. Since the subjects of both of your recommendations are within my purview as the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Integration and Disposition, Dr. Huntoon asked that I respond directly to you and let you know how we intend to move forward on both of these important topics.

First let me address items one and two in your recommendation No. 103 concerning the WM PEIS. Since the Citizens Advisory Board (CAB) adopted recommendation No. 103, the Department has issued its Notice of Preferred Alternatives for the disposal of low-level waste (LLW) and mixed low-level waste (MLLW). This notice, published in the Federal Register on December 10, 1999, identifies the Department of Energy's (DOE) preference to continue on-site disposal operations at six sites (Hanford, Nevada Test Site, Los Alamos, Idaho, Oak Ridge, and Savannah River); to continue receipt of off-site generated LLW at Hanford and Nevada; and to initiate receipt of off-site generated MLLW at Hanford and Nevada. The final Record of Decision (ROD) is expected to follow in February 2000. Once the ROD is issued, the Savannah River Site (SRS) would have access to off-site disposal of waste which cannot be disposed of at SRS due to on-site waste acceptance criteria restrictions.

Concerning your item number five of recommendation No. 103, in which you request a draft plan describing DOE's equity position for various wastes and materials, I refer you to the June 1998 Accelerating Cleanup: Paths to Closure document. Appendix E of that document describes each field office's plan for the disposition of LLW, MLLW, transuranic waste, high-level waste, spent nuclear fuel, and nuclear materials. To help you interpret the data in the Paths to Closure appendix, I have included a summary chart which depicts the roles DOE's 12 largest sites currently play in the disposition of these wastes and materials. Other than future updates to




"Paths to Closure," at this time DOE does not propose to draft any other plan describing its disposition of these waste types and materials.

I fully agree with Mr. Rudy's response to your recommendation No. 104 concerning the CIF. Minimizing costs and balancing equity are and should continue to be important tenets in DOE's decision making on the use of our incinerators. Through the creation of the Office of Integration and Disposition, Dr. Huntoon established my office as the preeminent sponsor and champion at headquarters for complex-wide activities, including the ongoing effort to evaluate how best to use the three DOE incinerators. Your CAB recommendations will be considered as the evaluation continues and when the Office of Environmental Management issues its decision.

Additionally, as you know, a record of decision for the treatment of LLW and MLLW will be issued under the WM PEIS at the same time as the disposal decisions. For MLLW, DOE has identified the SRS as one of the four DOE sites which may receive off-site generated waste for treatment. The other sites are Oak Ridge, Idaho, and Hanford. Sites will either treat their MLLW on-site or ship it to one of the regionalized sites, consistent with their Site Treatment Plan (STP) negotiated between DOE, the host state and/or the Environmental Protection Agency under the Federal Facility Compliance Act. DOE's pending MLLW treatment decision is intended to be generally consistent with STPs and other negotiated agreements. This pending decision anticipates and covers the eventuality that STPs and associated consent orders may undergo periodic renegotiation with regulators, and recognizes that the compliance orders issued by State and Federal regulators establish the requirements for treatment of DOE's MLLW. Along with this, DOE recognizes the established process of state and stakeholder involvement in decisions concerning intersite shipments of waste for treatment and fully supports the continuation of that process. My office will continue to work with DOE SRS and the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control to address equity issues concerning the use of the CIF for treatment of offsite waste.

I appreciate the time and effort you and the members of the SRS CAB have taken in the development of these recommendations and look forward to continuing a positive and constructive working relationship.

Sincerely,



David G. Huizenga
Deputy Assistant Secretary
for Integration and Disposition
Office of Environmental Management

Enclosure

cc:

Greg Rudy, SRS

Mark Frei, EM-40

Maxcine Miles, SRS

Waste and Materials Roles

