



Department of Energy
Savannah River Operations Office
P.O. Box A
Aiken, South Carolina 29802

FEB 08 2001

Ms. Karen Patterson
SRS Citizens Advisory Board
1103 Conger Drive
Aiken, SC 29803

Dear Ms. Patterson:

SUBJECT: Citizens Advisory Board (CAB) Recommendation No. 135 High-Level Waste (HLW) Tank Annulus Cleaning

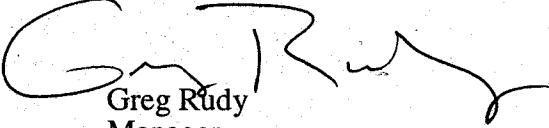
Thank you for your recommendation on HLW Tank Annulus Cleaning. The Savannah River Operations Office (SR) considers the issue of removal of waste from the tank annulus to be important to the long-term success of the HLW Tank Closure Program. Some other issues affecting the immediate performance of the system are the Salt Waste Processing Project, evaporator operations, and tank space availability. However, the development of methods for removal of waste from tank annulus as part of the longer term effort to close Tank 14 reflects a balanced and responsive approach to solving this important challenge.

Recommendations (1) & (3): As always, SR will be available to provide periodic updates to the CAB and the Waste Management Committee as needed. SR is committed to closing Tank 14 by 2010. In order to meet this regulatory commitment, a method for annulus cleaning will have to be demonstrated and proven before the closure date. Relative to the 2007 date for demonstrating an effective technology, SR will, as part of the periodic updates, status the technology development and demonstration effort and will include these activities in the planning effort discussed in response to Recommendation (2).

Recommendation (2): SR will work closely with the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Controls on a strategy for HLW tank annulus cleaning. SR will meet with the Waste Management Committee, as suggested, in July 2001 to discuss the status of negotiations with the regulators and the path forward relative to the tank annuli. An approved plan will not be available at this time but it is anticipated that a draft plan will be available for discussion with the committee.

If you have any questions please call me or Larry Ling at (803) 208-8248.

Sincerely,


Greg Rudy
Manager

OB-01-016