



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

Mr. Robert Slay
P. O. Box 192
Beech Island, South Carolina 29842

Dear Mr. Slay:

SUBJECT: Establishment of High Level Waste Tank Farm Closure Criteria

We are pleased to receive the Savannah River Site (SRS) Citizens Advisory Board Recommendation No. 15 pertaining to establishment of high level waste tank farm closure criteria and closure plan. We agree that establishment of closure criteria and the subsequent development of a tank closure plan is important and have initiated the process to determine acceptable closure criteria that is protective of human health and the environment.

A meeting was held on February 15, 1996, at the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (SCDHEC) to initiate discussions on development of high level waste tank closure criteria. Our goal is to reach agreement on tank closure criteria and complete a tank closure plan by the end of Fiscal Year 1996. The criteria being developed will be used to formulate a closure plan. The purpose of this meeting was to discuss the SRS approach that would result in acceptable tank closure criteria and solicit initial feedback and comments from the Regulators. Subsequent meetings were held on March 4 and March 19, 1996, with additional regularly scheduled meetings to follow. Our agencies will continue to work closely in order to finalize and establish acceptable tank closure criteria.

The development of the tank closure criteria will be a coordinated effort and will involve technical experts from our agencies. Additionally, other U.S. Department of Energy sites, Sandia National Laboratory, and outside consultants will be involved in the process. DOE is also performing an Environmental Assessment (EA) in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act to determine the impacts, if any, resulting from this initiative. We intend to conduct public meetings in order to provide our closure plan and EA to the stakeholders and answer any questions and address any concerns that may exist. There will be a public commenting period for the closure plan and EA, and we will welcome any comments that you or other stakeholders may have. We consider that this process will provide for a thorough review encompassing technical and environmental aspects as well as the interest of the public.

Again, thank you for the Board's recommendations. If you have questions or would like to discuss the matter further, please contact A. Lee Watkins at (803) 208-6053.

Sincerely,

Mario P. Fiori
Manager
U.S. Department of Energy
Savannah River
Operations Office

R. Lewis Shaw
Deputy Commissioner
Environmental Quality Control
S.C. Department of Health
and Environmental Control

John Hankinson, Jr.
Regional Administrator
U.S. Environmental
Protection Agency
Region IV

MB-96-0109