



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

OCT 20 2003

Mr. Wade Waters, Chair
Savannah River Site Citizens Advisory Board
308 Pinewood Drive
Pooler, GA 31322

Dear Mr. Waters:

SUBJECT: Citizens Advisory Board (CAB) Recommendation Number 170 – Storage and Disposition of Environmental Management (EM) - Owned Plutonium (Your letter, 09/29/03)

Thank you for your Recommendation concerning storage and disposition of EM-owned plutonium at the Savannah River Site (SRS). Following the Department of Energy's (DOE's) cancellation of the plutonium immobilization program in 2002, my staff has been working with EM and the National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) to define a path to disposition for materials originally intended for immobilization.

My responses to your specific recommendations are as follows.

1. Provide the specifications for plutonium that will be acceptable as feed material for the Mixed Oxide (MOX) Fuel Fabrication Facility by January 15, 2004.

My staff has been working with EM and the NNSA to review MOX feed specifications to determine what material will be acceptable to the MOX facility. NNSA has a concern that the plutonium-bearing materials that have been, or will be, packaged in accordance with DOE-STD-3013 do not have a chemical analysis to determine the impurities; instead this is based on process knowledge. SRS continues to work with NNSA to identify the materials that are leading candidates as feed to MOX; however, without chemical analysis on the impurities, it is difficult to determine can by can which material will definitely be fed to MOX based on the current NNSA design. In addition, as disposition alternatives are evaluated, the entire inventory of EM-owned plutonium is being included, not just the "non-Moxable". My staff will keep you informed on the progress on this effort.

2. Identify the disposition path(s) for all "non-MOXable" plutonium by DOE site and present the preferred disposition method by January 15, 2004.

My staff is working with EM and the Office of Civilian Radioactive Waste Management in evaluating conceptual ideas for the disposition of EM-owned plutonium. To date, no decision has been made, nor has a date been established when an option will be selected. My staff will keep you informed on the progress of these proposals.

Mr. Wade Waters

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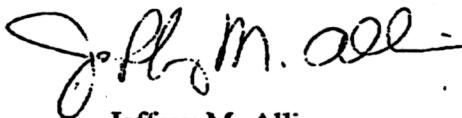
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3. Prepare all options, including a review of equity and safeguards, for the consolidation of plutonium to SRS and present the options for stakeholder consideration by January 15, 2004.

DOE continues to evaluate options for the storage of EM-owned plutonium and no decision has been made to consolidate EM-owned plutonium to SRS or on the selection of a disposition alternative for "non-Moxable" plutonium. My staff will keep you informed on the progress of these proposals.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact Allen Gunter of my staff at (803) 952-4536.

Sincerely,



Jeffrey M. Allison
Manager

ED-04-001

cc: D. Haygood, WSRC (CAB Files)