



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

DEC 12 2006

Ms. Karen Patterson, Chair
Savannah River Site Citizens Advisory Board
1103 Conger Drive
Aiken, South Carolina 29803

Dear Ms. Patterson:

SUBJECT: Citizens Advisory Board (CAB) Recommendation Number 242 – Disposition Processing Plan Critical Elements (Your letter, 11/15/06)

Thank you for your recommendation titled *Disposition Processing Plan Critical Elements*. My response to each part of Recommendation 242 is provided below:

1. **Initiate Deliquification, Dissolution and Adjustment (DDA) operations in Tank 41 as soon as possible after the permit modification is issued by the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (SCDHEC), but no later than March 15, 2007.**

The Department of Energy Savannah River Operations Office (DOE-SR) is committed to initiating Saltstone operations within weeks following issuance of the permit from SCDHEC. Saltstone will begin operational startup by processing Batch 0 feed, an activity which is projected to require 1-2 months to complete. Saltstone will then commence processing Tank 41 DDA feed currently stored in Tank 49 (Batch 1).

2. **Initiate radioactive operations of Actinide Removal Project/Modular Caustic Side Solvent Extraction Unit (ARP/MCU) as soon as possible, but no later than June 1, 2007.**

At this time, we believe September 2007 is the earliest date for start of radioactive operations for ARP/MCU. However, we will seek every opportunity to accelerate the availability of these critical interim disposition facilities. An update will be provided during the presentation requested in Item 3 below.

3. **Provide the Savannah River Site (SRS) CAB by January 22, 2007, a presentation explaining how concurrent operations of the three treatment facilities (DDA, ARP and MCU) will be accomplished. Identify critical elements and plans to ensure their success.**

Concurrent and sequential operations will be explained during the requested presentation.

4. **As soon as possible, initiate the removal of radioactive waste from Tank 50 with a target date for its recovery on or before January 5, 2007.**

As previously communicated, Tank 50 is the source tank for Batch 0 feed to start Saltstone radioactive operations. Immediately thereafter, Tank 50 will receive the Tank 41 DDA material currently stored in Tank 49, and serve as the Point of Compliance (POC) for the DDA, as well as a feed tank for that material to Saltstone. Construction upgrades to Tank 50 to allow it to receive decontaminated salt solution from the ARP/MCU processes have recently been completed. Following DDA processing, Tank 50 will receive decontaminated salt solution from the ARP/MCU processes and again

DEC 12 2006

50 will receive decontaminated salt solution from the ARP/MCU processes and again will serve as a POC and as a feed tank to Saltstone. Tank 50 performs an integral role in the salt processing strategy until 2010.

5. Accelerate the construction of the lag storage for Saltstone feed by two years (2008 instead of 2010).

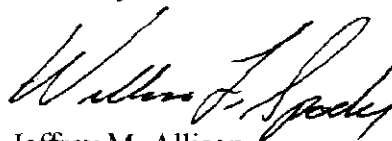
The 2010 need date for the new low-level waste lag storage system is based upon when the Tank 50 function changes from its interim salt processing role to its final salt processing role. In the near-term, Tank 50 provides a POC and feed staging for Saltstone for DDA and ARP/MCU processes. Consistent with the salt processing strategy, in 2010 the Tank 50 function changes to higher-activity waste service and feed staging to support the high processing rates provided by the Salt Waste Processing Facility. DOE believes that resources should be applied to other high priority salt processing projects in the near-term rather than attempting to accelerate lag storage. At this time, there appears to be no advantage to completing this project ahead of its need date.

6. Make a decision on the POC, new performance modeling, and technology deployment by January 22, 2007.

DOE continues to work with the Nuclear Regulatory Commission and SCDHEC to reach agreement on modeling, POC and schedules for completing activities associated with Waste Determinations as directed by the National Defense Authorization Act of 2005. Meetings resumed on November 30, 2006, with all parties and will continue in support of tank closures. The goal is to reach agreement on these issues by the end of January 2007. A presentation to update progress on these issues will be provided in early 2007.

If you have any questions, please contact me or have your staff contact Patricia Suggs at (803) 208-2908.

Sincerely,



Jeffrey M. Allison
Manager

WDPD-07-04