



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

JUL - 1 2009

Mr. Manuel Bettencourt, Chairperson
Savannah River Site Citizens Advisory Board
47 Hickory Forest Drive
Hilton Head, South Carolina 29929

Dear Mr. Bettencourt:

SUBJECT: Department of Energy – Savannah River Operations Office (DOE-SR)
Response to the Savannah River Site (SRS) Citizens Advisory Board (CAB)
Recommendation #261; #262; #263; and #264, dated 05/19/09

DOE-SR is pleased to receive the subject recommendations. The SRS CAB members are to be commended for their efforts and hard work.

Please find enclosed a copy of our responses to the following recommendations:

- Enclosure 1 - Recommendation Response #261- Budget Process - Improvements
- Enclosure 2 - Recommendation Response #262 – Future Missions
- Enclosure 3 - Recommendation Response #263 – Final Disposition for Spent Nuclear Fuel, Surplus Plutonium, and Vitrified High-Level Waste
- Enclosure 4 - Recommendation Response #264 – SRS Recovery Act Footprint Reduction

Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact me or Patrick McGuire at (803) 208-3927.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jeffrey M. Allison". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Jeffrey M. Allison
Manager

OEA-09-0022

(4) Enclosures:

- Enclosure 1 - Recommendation Response #261- Budget Process - Improvements
- Enclosure 2 - Recommendation Response #262 – Future Missions
- Enclosure 3 - Recommendation Response #263 – Final Disposition for Spent Nuclear Fuel, Surplus Plutonium, and Vitrified High-Level Waste
- Enclosure 4 - Recommendation Response #264 – SRS Recovery Act Footprint Reduction

**Response to CAB Recommendation # 261
SRS Budget Process - Improvements**

1. Provide an update from each of the Environmental Management (EM) Federal Project Directors to specifically aid the CAB in formulating recommendations for the planning year Integrated Priority List (IPL) as part of the annual budget preparation process.

Response

Concur with recommendation. EM Federal Project Directors will keep CAB informed and work with them during the budget preparation process.

2. Inform the CAB of any significant funding differences between the Certified Baseline and the President's budget request, and between the President's request and the congressional appropriation for a particular budget year. Describe project impact (e.g., delayed milestones, changes in performance metrics, etc.).

Response

Concur with recommendation. CAB will be briefed on a regular basis during the process.

3. As current year projects are executed, inform the CAB of any significant funding changes (e.g., funding delays, reprogramming, cost savings or overruns, etc.). Describe project impact (e.g., renegotiation of regulatory milestones, etc.).

Response

Concur with recommendation. CAB will be kept apprised of budget execution status and any funding change including impacts.

4. Include a budget and schedule slide in each project status briefing made to the CAB that references the IPL ranking and Project Baseline Summary (PBS).

Response

Concur with recommendation. DOE will develop a standard budget and schedule slide to be included in each project status briefing made to the CAB that references the IPL ranking and PBS.

5. Provide a briefing to the CAB in July 2009 summarizing the process that is being implemented to ensure the CAB can participate effectively in budget planning, and is routinely informed about project funding status and the impact of budgets and funding on project performance.

Response

Concur with recommendation. Briefing will be provided at the July CAB meeting.

Response to CAB Recommendation # 262 Future Missions

1. Assure that the projects funded by the American Recovery and Reinvesting Act (ARRA) stimulus package be executed such that any required infrastructure modifications have the potential to support future missions.

Response

Each project, including facility Decommissioning and Deactivation (D&D) was reviewed for potential impact on the remaining facilities and the overall vision for the Site to assure it did not negatively impact future operations as we understand them to be at this time.

2. Include reports on infrastructure modifications and the status of jobs (including the number of jobs created, the job skills types required, and the job training to be provided) in all future ARRA-related project briefings to the CAB.

Response

At the July CAB meeting, the DOE Recovery Act Program Manager will address, on a general level, impacted Site systems and jobs. Thereafter, updates will be provided on a regular basis. The general briefings will be supplemented by periodic briefings on individual projects as the appropriate information becomes available. This issue is also addressed in the DOE-SR response to the CAB Recommendation #264.

3. Provide an annual briefing to the CAB on SRS' progress in executing the SRS Strategic Plan. Pay particular attention to those areas not routinely covered in DOE Environmental Management (EM) program briefings (Nuclear materials, Waste Disposition, and Area Completion), that is, Savannah River National Laboratory (SRNL) technology achievements, SRS Corporate Board successes in helping improve SRS missions, and advances in Management Excellence. Schedule the first of these briefings for the September 2009 full CAB meeting.

Response

A briefing to the full CAB on SRS' progress in executing the SRS Strategic Plan will be provided in September. This briefing will include the areas of Management Excellence, SRNL achievements and Mission Development efforts. The SRS Strategic Plan will be updated annually and the CAB will continue to be invited to provide input and participate in the process.

4. Formulate an aggressive SRNL Business Plan that addresses how its search for increased funding from sources other than DOE-EM will be achieved, including the DOE Office of Science. Provide a summary of this planning effort in future CAB briefings on the SRS Strategic Plan.

Response

SRNL planning efforts are included in the development of the SRS Strategic Plan. SRNL has committed to developing a Business Plan and as the Plan develops, SRNL will include summary briefings of their progress as part of the SRS Strategic Plan briefings to the CAB.

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Response to CAB Recommendation # 263 – Final Disposition for Spent Nuclear Fuel (SNF), Surplus Plutonium (Pu), and Vitrified High Level Waste (V-HLW)

1. Keep the CAB and the public informed on all decisions, risks and plans relating to the removal or long-term storage of surplus plutonium and nuclear waste at SRS.

Response: DOE-SR will continue to keep the CAB and stakeholders informed of decisions, risks, and plans as they are issued by the Department related to the long-term storage of surplus plutonium and nuclear waste at SRS.

2. In view of continuing political and legal action involving Yucca Mountain, indicate continued support for a “good faith” effort to remove all nuclear waste from SRS as soon as reasonably practical.

Response: DOE-SR will continue with a “good faith” effort to remove all SNF, EM surplus non-pit Pu and V-HLW from SRS as soon as reasonably practical.

3. Make a commitment to involve key stakeholders (such as the State of SC) and the public in relevant planning and decisions involving SNF, Surplus Pu, and V-HLW at SRS. If public meetings or hearings are planned, schedule appropriate sessions in the Aiken/Augusta area.

Response: DOE-SR will continue to involve the CAB members and other key stakeholders in the decision making processes to the extent that we are able. Public meetings will continue to be established in the Aiken/Augusta area as well other surrounding communities.

4. By September 30, 2009, make a definitive statement on plans for the disposal of nuclear waste from the SRS to include:
 - a. Plans and schedule for the DOE Blue Ribbon Panel (or similar panel) to develop a strategy for the disposal of HLW and SNF nation-wide, which includes determination of a specific nuclear waste repository site.
 - b. Projection of a date when a preliminary schedule can be developed for the removal of HLW and SNF from SRS.
 - c. Determination of limits of interim storage of an undefined duration for SNF, Surplus Pu, and V-HLW including existing and planned Glass Waste Storage Buildings.
 - d. Additional studies necessary to evaluate the worthiness of long-term interim storage of SNF, Surplus Pu, and V-HLW at SRS beyond the presently established limits.

- e. Additional studies necessary to safely disposition the SRS, SNF, Surplus Pu, and V-HLW at the final repository.

Response: 4.a through e: The studies mentioned in the recommendation are ongoing and therefore any communication made at this point regarding those studies would be pre-decisional. When the studies are completed, or when the developing plans reach sufficient maturity, we will brief the CAB regarding DOE-SR plans for implementation or the status of those studies to the extent possible.

- f. Periodically inform stakeholders of the status of agreements relating to the utilization of MOX Fuel produced at SRS.

Response: Regarding MOX fuel, DOE-SR will continue to keep the CAB informed regarding disposition of EM surplus non-pit Pu via the MOX facility; however, DOE-SR is not in a position to provide status of agreements involving the utilization of the MOX fuel that is produced. We would be happy to help coordinate a request to the National Nuclear Security Administration for that information.

Response to CAB Recommendation #264 – SRS Recovery Act Footprint Reduction

1. DOE consider allowing a portion of its ARRA (Recovery Act Project) funding to permit expenditures that include additional support when needed to resolve the bottlenecks that may arise, to optimize high-level waste (HLW) treatment and its infrastructure, and to enhance the removal of residuals from HLW Tanks in the liquid waste management program's critical path.

Response: As one of the Department's top priorities, the Liquid Waste Disposition Project receives significant and sufficient funding through the yearly budget appropriations process. We will continue to stay focused on this challenging high-risk activity, even as we move forward implementing our Recovery Act Project.

2. DOE report to the CAB progress on all SRS ARRA programs and expenditures on a regular basis.

Response: A briefing to the CAB will be provided by the DOE Recovery Act Program Manager on a regular basis with a focus on Recovery Act Project progress, jobs creation and retention, infrastructure modifications, and expenditures. The first briefing will be provided at the July 2009 CAB meeting. These briefings will be supplemented with presentations to the CAB Facility Disposition & Site Remediation Committee and the Waste Management Committee on Recovery Act subprojects technical scope, execution, and expenditures. This response is also addressed in the DOE Response to CAB Recommendation #262.