



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

AUG 18 1995

Dr. Mildred McClain
720 Maupas Avenue
Savannah, Georgia 31401

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

Dear Dr. McClain and Mr. Slay:

SUBJECT: Transuranic (TRU) Waste Management Plan of the Waste Management Environmental Impact Statement

I am pleased to accept the Citizens Advisory Board's fourth recommendation regarding TRU waste management. The recommendation was timely in that it coincided with the public comment period for the Waste Management Environmental Impact Statement which includes TRU waste.

We agree with the emphasis that the Board places on TRU waste treatment and have enclosed our proposed path forward. We will be working with Headquarters, South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control, and Environmental Protection Agency-Region IV to implement treatment at the earliest possible date.

Again, thank you for the Board's recommendations. We look forward to your continued involvement in making the Savannah River Site Waste Management Program successful in meeting the goals of the Site and its stakeholders.

If you have any questions on this response or would like to discuss the matter further, please contact me or William Noll at (803) 725-2219.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Mario P. Fiori".

Mario P. Fiori
Manager

DC-95-0226

Enclosure:
Response to CAB TRU
Recommendation

RESPONSE TO CITIZENS ADVISORY BOARD (CAB)
TRANSURANIC (TRU) WASTE RECOMMENDATION

TRU RECOMMENDATION PARTS #1, 2, and 3

(1) Categorize the Savannah River Site (SRS) High Activity TRU waste as an urgent problem. (2) Expedite the selection of an appropriate organic treatment (e.g., destruction/stabilization) for SRS TRU waste by year's end to help make this selection. The Department of Energy (DOE) should commission an independent "Blue Ribbon" panel of experts to review the treatment and waste form options in a report to DOE and a presentation before the CAB at its November 1995 meeting. (3) Assign the highest priority to obtain funding no later than the Fiscal Year (FY) 1997 budget for capital line-item project to treat TRU wastes and convert them into a stabilized form (e.g., vitrified).

RESPONSE

DOE agrees that the treatment of High Activity TRU Waste is a high priority and is expediting the treatment selection. The Office of Technology Development is funding ongoing activities at various DOE sites for identified waste focus areas such as TRU wastes and organic destruction treatment options. The goal of this research is to have a selected technology completely developed and available for site implementation by November 1997. We are pursuing a Blue Ribbon panel of experts to review the TRU treatment and waste form options. As it is unlikely that the panel will have completed its review prior to November, DOE will provide an update on the panel's status at the next CAB meeting.

DOE has requested TRU waste funding in FY97 for two activities. The first activity is the engineering development for treatment facility. This is a prerequisite to the authorization of a capital line-item. DOE will then pursue a 1998 line-item authorization for a treatment facility. The second activity would be for a direct support contract for waste characterization and certification that support waste segregation for the treatment facility.

TRU RECOMMENDATION PART #4

Further, because of the increased probability of an accident during the scheduled repackaging of the Pu-238/239 wastes on five of the TRU pads, to eliminate the need to handle these wastes twice, the CAB recommends that DOE reconsider its repackaging plan carefully, possibly including a review by Independent Scientific Peer Review Team, to determine if SRS can wait until a treatment option is available without incurring undue risk.

RESPONSE

DOE will commission a review panel comprised of experts in hazardous materials, transuranic materials, and worker and public health and safety issues to both review the TRU Retrieval Project and the overall TRU Waste Program. The report from this review should be available by the November CAB meeting.