

**EM SSAB CHAIRS**  
**Bi-Monthly Conference Call**  
**Thursday, August 7, 2008**  
**3:00 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.**

**Participants**

**Chairs/Representatives:**

Idaho	John Bollinger, Lisa Aldrich
Nevada	Walter Wegst, Rosemary Rehfeldt, Kelly Snyder
NNM	J.D. Campbell, Ralph Phelps, Menice Santistevan
Oak Ridge	Lance Mezga, Spencer Gross, Pete Osborne, Pat Halsey, Dave Adler
Paducah	William (Allen) Burnett, Eric Roberts, Kim Crenshaw
Portsmouth	Val Francis, Richard Snyder, Dave Kozlowski
Richland/Hanford	Shelley Cimon, Lori Gamache, Susan Leckband, Kim Ballinger
Savannah River	Ranowul Jzar, Sheron Smith

**DOE representatives:**

EM-13	Doug Frost, Michelle Hudson
EM-5	Jeffrey Bobeck
EM-12	Christine Gelles
CI	Anna McFadden

***OPENING REMARKS***

Doug Frost welcomed participants to the call and reviewed the afternoon's agenda.

**Office of Communications and External Affairs Introduction**

Jeffrey Bobeck, Director for the Office of Communications and External Affairs, provided the participants with an overview of his office's roles and responsibilities.

The Office of Communications and External Affairs has been in the planning stages for nearly two years, and is charged with helping EM to better interface with Congress, the media, and its stakeholders. Mr. Bobeck and his staff are also working to professionalize EM's communications, so that the program can be more consistent and proactive in managing its image and interactions with external organizations.

**Congressional Update**

Anna McFadden from the Office of Congressional and Intergovernmental Affairs reported that Congress is in recess until September and that there will likely be a Continuing Resolution for the first six months of Fiscal Year (FY) 2009.

## **Waste Disposition Strategies Update**

Christine Gelles, Director for the Office of Disposal Operations (EM-12), provided an update on EM's waste disposition activities.

EM-12 finalized the management directive that will continue operation of the Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA) incinerator at Oak Ridge into FY 2009. According to the truncated burn plan, the TSCA incinerator will be able to go into RCRA closure in FY 2009. The burn plan has been shared with the Tennessee Department of Environment and Ecology, and Ms. Gelles' office is also pursuing the development of reliable commercial alternatives in order to accommodate the waste streams currently serviced by the TSCA incinerator.

An incident occurred at the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP) when a drum came in contact with a piece of metal that created a two-inch tear in its exterior shell. The inner liner of the drum remained intact; however, EM suspended activities at WIPP until it could determine the full magnitude of the incident and identify any necessary corrective actions. Workers are currently in the process of over packing that specific drum and working hard to resume normal operations. The incident postponed the first shipment of remote-handled (RH) transuranic (TRU) waste from Argonne National Laboratory, which will be the second site to ship RH TRU waste.

EM-12 staff have continued their efforts to evaluate and review TRU waste data in order to begin incorporating it into the Waste Information Management System (WIMS).

Allen Burnett from the Paducah Citizens Advisory Board (CAB) asked for an update on EM's recycling projects.

Ms. Gelles reported that the comment period has been extended for the draft Environmental Assessment (EA) that analyzes the impact of EM's proposed plan to sell contaminated nickel inventories from Paducah and Oak Ridge. EM has received some interesting and challenging input that it will use to adjust its disposition management plan. The disposition management plan will ultimately be submitted for Secretarial approval. Once the comment period closes, EM-12 will compile the feedback into a briefing for senior management and hopefully be able to issue a draft Request for Proposal in early FY 2009. Furthermore, once EM completes the comment resolution process, it will be able to make the feedback available for public review. Ms. Gelles will consult her team and explore the possibility of sharing the EA comments with the EM SSAB on a separate conference call.

## **Planning Committee for the Fall Chairs Meeting (Washington D.C.)**

Mr. Frost thanked the planning committee for all of its hard work and reviewed the draft EM SSAB Chairs September meeting agenda with the call participants. Each of the local boards was encouraged to submit specific questions and topics for the DOE-Headquarters

presenters. This resulted in a fairly comprehensive list of topics that will help guide the panel discussions and allow the Chairs to take full advantage of the opportunity to meet with EM senior leadership.

Walt Wegst, Vice Chair of the Nevada Test Site Citizens Advisory Board (NTS CAB), suggested that the Chairs reconsider their previous decision to postpone product development until the spring EM SSAB meeting. Given the pending transition, it may be beneficial for the Chairs to develop a product that conveys the importance of the EM SSAB to the new administration.

J.D. Campbell, Chair of the Northern New Mexico Citizens Advisory Board (NNMCAB), commented that the September meeting agenda does not allow much time for product development. He encouraged Mr. Wegst to develop and circulate a draft product for comment prior to the meeting.

Lance Mezga, Chair for the Oak Ridge Site-Specific Advisory Board (ORSSAB), concurred with Mr. Wegst and added that the Chairs should not miss an opportunity to come together and provide input.

Susan Leckband and Shelley Cimon from the Hanford Advisory Board (HAB) volunteered to develop a draft product with Mr. Wegst's assistance. The product would convey the importance of the EM SSAB and the benefit for EM to have continued public involvement when making cleanup decisions.

The final planning committee call is scheduled for August 21 at 3:00 p.m. EST.

### **Around the Complex:**

#### **Northern New Mexico – J.D. Campbell**

- The NNMCAB is trying to determine the status of its previous recommendations and would like to track their implementation. Suggestions as to how other local boards track the status of their recommendations are welcomed.
- A number of NNMCAB members, and specifically the newly appointed NNMCAB members, will tour WIPP in August.

#### **Idaho – John Bollinger**

- The Idaho National Laboratory (INL) CAB has continued to orient its new members.
- In addition to their May and July meetings, board members toured the INL site's technical areas as well as its historical and archaeological areas. The historical portion of the tour also included a presentation by one of the INL CAB's members who is a representative of the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes.
- The INL CAB recently reached consensus approval of its recommendation regarding the Engineering Evaluation/Cost Analysis for accelerated retrieval processes.
- In order not to conflict with the EM SSAB Chairs meeting in September, the INL CAB has combined and rescheduled its fall meetings for October. During the October

meeting, the CAB will complete its annual assessment, form a work plan for FY 2009, and review its subcommittee membership.

### **Nevada – Walt Wegst**

- The NTS CAB has recently welcomed a number of new members and nearly doubled in size.
- The NTS CAB has established a new Outreach Committee that will explore methods for providing information and educational opportunities to the public. Suggestions from the other local boards regarding community outreach are welcome.

### **Oak Ridge – Lance Mezga**

- The ORSSAB will hold its annual planning retreat in August and will elect new officers.
- The ORSSAB has also welcomed three new members and hopes to add a fourth in the near future.
- Two members of the ORSSAB will attend the Rad Waste Summit in Las Vegas, NV in September.
- In order to increase board members' and the community's knowledge about the EM program, the ORSSAB has held a series of workshops focusing on specific EM-related issues. In July, the ORSSAB hosted a successful workshop geared toward better understanding the risks associated with clean-up and D&D activities. The July workshop was recorded for future training uses and can be made available to interested EM SSAB members and local boards.
- Since the last Chairs call, the ORSSAB has submitted two new recommendations to DOE. One recommendation addressed historic preservation activities at the K-25 North Tower, and the other encouraged DOE to make WIMS more user-friendly for stakeholders.
- The ORSSAB's Outreach Committee recently provided presentations and briefings to the Community Reuse Organization of Tennessee and the East Tennessee Economic Council. The Outreach Committee is very active in the community in order to help educate the public and keep them up to date on ORSSAB and EM operations.

### **Paducah – Allen Burnett**

- URS and DOE have issued a remedial investigation report regarding burial grounds at the Paducah site. Regulators will determine which burial grounds can be capped and which need to be excavated.
- In September, DOE will hold a public meeting to address waste disposal option evaluations, and specifically, the establishment of a CERCLA cell.
- Five contaminated piles have been located in the West Kentucky Wildlife Management Area that will need to be relocated to the Paducah site landfill.
- The Paducah CAB will hold its annual retreat on September 5-6.
- The Paducah CAB has recently received one new membership application and expects to receive a few more in the near future.
- During its last meeting, the Paducah CAB approved four new recommendations. The first two pertain to the aforementioned public meeting and CERCLA cell issue, the

third addresses the draft EA for nickel disposition, and the fourth is a general recommendation regarding recycling reclamation and reuse of waste that will be generated during the Paducah Gaseous Diffusion Plant D&D.

### **Portsmouth – Richard Snyder**

- Portsmouth's 20-member EM SSAB has been established and will hold its first official meeting on September 4.
  - Members are currently in the process of creating a work plan, establishing committees, identifying DOE liaisons and DOE/contractor contacts, and learning about the EM program.
- Mr. Snyder and Val Francis have been elected co-chairs and plan to attend the EM SSAB Chairs meeting in Washington D.C.
- Key issues for the Portsmouth Gaseous Diffusion Site include onsite disposal options, D&D, future land use, and community education and outreach.

### **Richland – Susan Leckband**

- The HAB's committees will meet in August to hold leadership elections.
- The next full board meeting will be held on September 4-5, in Seattle, WA. This meeting will coincide with a meeting of the HAB's Public Involvement Committee, as well as the Tri-Party Agreement (TPA) Quarterly meeting.
- The HAB is looking forward to a public workshop on baselines hosted by DOE. Both the Office of River Protection and the Richland Operations Office will participate and provide some detailed information regarding baselines.
- Two of Hanford's three major contract changeovers have been implemented, with transitions scheduled to be completed by October 1. The third major contract has yet to be awarded. The HAB will continue to follow this implementation process and monitor the site's ability to successfully meet its milestones throughout the transitions.
- The HAB is very pleased with the collaboration that occurred between DOE and regulators at the recent PW-1, 3, 6 workshop.
- In support of the historic B-Reactor's preservation, a new roof has been constructed to protect its condition and make the site safer.
- DOE will hold four State of the Site meetings throughout the region in October. These events are best described as town hall meetings, hosted by DOE, EPA, and the Washington State Department of Ecology.

### **Savannah River – Ranowul Jzar**

- SRS is expected to release a Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement on plutonium disposition by the end of September.
- The SRS CAB recently held a successful meeting at the Center for Hydrogen Research, where members had the opportunity to view hydrogen cars and learn about new technologies on the horizon.
- The transition between SRS M&O contractors has been successful. The site's new M&O contractor is Savannah River Nuclear Solutions.
- SRS CAB members had the opportunity to attend a full day workshop on performance assessments. The workshop was hosted by Marty Letourneau from the EM Office of Compliance and SRS personnel. EM plans to hold this workshop at other sites

throughout the complex. It is a very good event for the lay audience and is highly recommended by the SRS CAB.

### **Closing Remarks**

Mr. Frost thanked the participants for their time and agreed to provide the chairs with an updated listing of numbers and contacts for each local board.

Lastly, participants were reminded of a few administrative issues:

- Hotel reservations for the September Chairs meeting must be made by August 18.
- The EM SSAB Top-Three Issues and Accomplishments are due by August 20.