

EMSSAB CHAIRS
Bi-Monthly Conference Call
Wednesday, June 8, 2005
3:00 – 4:00 p.m.

Participants

Chairs/Representatives:

Fernald	No representative present
Hanford	Todd Martin
Idaho	Larry Knight, Karen Corrigan, Lori McNamara
Nevada	Charles Phillips, Marian Lawrence
NNM	Jim Brannon, Ted Taylor, Menice Manzanares
Oak Ridge	Kerry Trammell, Norm Mulvenon, Pat Halsey, Pete Osborne, Spencer Gross
Paducah	Jeannie Brandstetter, Kim Crenshaw
Rocky Flats	Jerry Depoorter, Ken Korkia
Savannah River	Jean Sulc, Gerri Fleming, Dawn Haygood, Nick Delaplaine
DOE representatives:	
EM-30.1	Melissa Nielson, Doug Frost (DFO), Jay Vivari
CI	Betty Nolan

OPENING REMARKS

Ms. Nielson welcomed everyone.

NEW BUSINESS

Chairs Meeting Update

Ms. Corrigan (Idaho) formally invited the chairs to the September meeting in Idaho. She anticipated the following schedule:

- Tuesday, September 20	Travel day
- Wednesday, September 21	Site tour
- Thursday, September 22	Chairs Meeting (full day)
- Friday, September 23	Chairs Meeting (a.m. only)

Formation of Steering Committee for the Idaho Falls Meeting

Ms. Nielson asked for volunteers to form a Steering Committee to work on the agenda.

Volunteers were:

Jerry DePoorter and Ken Korkia, Rocky Flats
Norm Mulvenon, Oak Ridge
Jean Sulc and Dawn Haygood, Savannah River

David Kipping, Larry Knight, and Karen Corrigan, Idaho
Carla Sanda, Nevada
Charlie Phillips, Nevada (will listen in).
Jay Vivari will arrange an initial conference call for the steering committee on
Wednesday, June 15, at 3:00 PM.

Update on Waste Disposition Strategies

Doug Frost introduced Christine Gelles, who is the Director of the Office of Commercial Disposition Options. Ms. Gelles formerly managed a project team on Spent Nuclear Fuel, which commanded interest from the intergovernmental groups and regulators, and was very helpful in sharing information. Today, Ms. Gelles works on issues that have generated the most interest from the SSABs as well as other groups. She works under Frank Marcinowski, who is the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Logistics and Waste Disposition Enhancements. Mr. Marcinowski is responsible for the development and implementation of the National Disposition Strategy.

Ms. Gelles thanked Mr. Frost for his introduction. The Office of Commercial Disposition Options has the responsibility to integrate the waste disposition options at the multiple sites across the complex. Her sister organization is the Office of Federal Disposition Options, headed by Cynthia Anderson. There are many interdependencies between the two offices. For all practical purposes, there is a single organization headed by Frank Marcinowski that manages the National Disposition Strategy.

The Office of Commercial Disposition Options manages the following waste streams: mixed waste, low-level waste, greater than Class C waste and by-product material (the pile at Atlas/Moab and the silo residue from Fernald).

The Office is taking a systems engineering approach. EM has improved its project management by developing life-cycle baselines for each site. Her office is taking the waste management activities within the various baselines and integrating them into one complex-wide national schedule. This is what's referred to as the National Disposition Strategy. This is being done for each waste stream, and includes identifying barriers and obstacles, ways of overcoming the obstacles, economies of scale, etc. They will then roll up the resource requirements at each site to have a complex-wide view of the issue. There will be a work breakdown structure – called a “waste breakdown structure” – that will be the framework for the data system that will update the Central Internet Database that will be made available to the public. They will also use the data to update the National Disposition Map.

Charles Phillips asked if Initiative 297 in Washington will affect their work.

Ms. Gelles responded that Initiative 297 will affect their baseline plan, which currently call for mixed and low-level waste to be disposed at Hanford. If Hanford cannot be used, they are developing alternative plans. Barriers such as Initiative 297, or the lack of a

regulatory permit at another site, or lack of a treatment technology for an orphan waste stream will be coded once they do some risk assessment.

Mr. Phillips asked about alternative disposition routes under consideration.

Ms. Gelles responded that in the case of the Rocky Flats waste the alternative was additional transport, handling, and treatment, which were risks that need to be balanced against the need to maintain the accelerated closure of Rocky Flats. For a site like Idaho that had similar wastes but no accelerated closure issues, that waste is being treated and returned to storage at the facility. Decisions are based on the type of waste, its location, cost issues, and risk issues.

Norm Mulvenon noted that DOE is generating data management. He is more interested in the strategy for final disposition.

Ms. Gelles noted that the goal is for DOE to have a baseline plan and schedule that is realistic and executable to treat all the waste streams that DOE has. For DOE facilities that are scheduled to close, such as the TSCA Incinerator in Oak Ridge, which handles radioactive PCB wastes, DOE will preserve that facility for a period of time as well as incentivize commercial vendors to provide a replacement technology.

Mr. Mulvenon asked about DOE's strategy if I-297 is solved or not solved.

Ms. Gelles stated that the strategy is a schedule and a plan to manage, update and improve upon the schedule. The strategy today, since the lawsuit is still pending, will reflect the use of Hanford as a regional disposal facility for low-level and mixed waste. If the government does not prevail in that case, DOE will develop a plan to send the wastes elsewhere, ideally the Nevada Test Site. However, there are regulatory approvals needed for Nevada to receive off-site mixed waste. If this option is not available, DOE will schedule the development of a commercial facility that can accept the higher activity mixed waste.

Ms. Nielson noted that the strategy is akin to a decision tree. If one path is cut off, we are planning for other paths. The resources DOE puts into developing alternative paths is risk and probability based. DOE has gone a long way in addressing the concerns raised by the Chairs at their November 2004 meeting. DOE now has alternatives working.

Ms. Gelles agreed with this assessment. DOE's planning documents state that we must have an alternative treatment option for any waste stream that currently exists.

Ms. Nielson stated that Ms. Gelles and her team will be invited to participate at the next Chairs' meeting in Idaho.

Mr. Phillips asked for a clarification of the term "higher-activity mixed waste."

Ms. Gelles noted that DOE does not manage its waste by the NRC classifications, which is how commercial companies get their licenses. Generally speaking, Class A waste has less than 10 nanocuries per gram, which DOE considers lower-activity. Higher-activity waste is greater than the Class A definition.

Ms. Nielson stated that these updates are valuable and would like to include them in the agenda for future conference calls.

Todd Martin asked when DOE would have a draft product, such as a draft of the baseline, that the Boards can review.

Ms. Gelles stated that a draft template of the schedule and work breakdown structure are available. This draft is conceptual in nature. The goal is to have the draft with specific activities filled in by the end of the fiscal year.

Ms. Nielson stated she would obtain the templates from Ms. Gelles and make them available to the Chairs. Ms. Nielson thanked Ms. Gelles for her report.

National Stakeholders Workshop on Waste Disposition

Ms. Nielson noted that Jean Sulc had sent a letter to Charlie Anderson, the Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary. Mr. Anderson responded on Monday (June 6). The response has been posted on the SSAB Website. Mr. Anderson asked the SSABs to work with Mr. Marcinowski in developing the strategies and wait until the strategies are developed and public comments are received before moving forward with a workshop.

Ms. Sulc noted that if we had more information, such as the updated schedules and strategies being developed by September, the SSABs could make better decisions as to the direction of the workshop.

Mr. Mulvenon promised to send the report of Oak Ridge Board member Luther Gibson, who attended the St. Louis meeting on Waste Disposition.

EM's Relationships with Intergovernmental Organizations

Ms. Sulc asked about the top issues identified by the various intergovernmental groups.

Mr. Frost noted that the issues important to the intergovernmental groups closely track the SSAB's key issues.

The National Governors Association (NGA) is interested in disposition strategies.

Energy Communities Alliance (ECA), comprising local officials from cities around DOE sites, is interested in long-term stewardship, risk-based end states, site transition, and economic development.

National Council of State Legislatures (NCSL), the umbrella organization for STGWWG, has the same issues as the SSABs.

National Association of Attorneys General looks at environmental issues from a legal perspective.

Environmental Council of the States also has similar issues.

Overall, the common interests are waste disposition, end state, and transportation.

LOCAL SSAB ISSUES/UPDATES

Fernald – no representative present

Hanford – Todd Martin

- The HAB is assisting DOE and the regulators on Central Plateau values – in making decisions at our most difficult waste site.
- The Board just concluded its annual leadership retreat, where it made a number of significant changes, including appointing Shelley Cimon to serve as a national liaison for the Board.
- The Hanford CAB is the last Board to have not signed the letter on the future of the SSABs; Mr. Martin expects to sign the letter next week.
- The Board meets next Wednesday and Thursday (June 15-16).

Idaho – Larry Knight

- Issues of long-term importance include disposition of high-level waste and spent fuel, and buried waste.
- Progress is being made at Pit 4 and there is expectation that progress will accelerate.
- The site has been split into two distinct functions: nuclear energy and environmental management. Battelle will handle nuclear energy and the team of Washington Group and CH2M – known as CWI – will handle the environmental management function. The Board has met with the CWI team and is impressed with their enthusiasm and knowledge.

Nevada – Charles Phillips

- The Board's Underground Test Area Committee is developing a detailed white paper on well monitoring.
- The Board will conduct its semi-annual work plan retreat in late June, followed by an admin committee meeting to approve the work plan. The retreat will be at the Nevada Test Site Historical Museum and will include a tour of the museum.

- The Board will conduct a public meeting at Armagosa Valley in July. The Underground Test Area Committee will provide a presentation to stakeholders on the Board's recommendations for the location of monitoring wells. The Transportation Waste Committee will brief the public on TRU waste.
- The Board has learned that the transfer of the Nevada SSAB has been postponed until Fiscal Year 2007.

Northern New Mexico – Jim Brannon

- The Board is paying particular attention to the consent order on the protection of groundwater at Los Alamos.
- The Board just concluded a successful public forum which was televised three times in May on the final plan for disposition and closure of a major portion of NDA Area G, which is the low-level waste site and landfill. The forum attracted 135-150 people. Panels included representatives from the state of New Mexico, DOE, University of California, EPA, Pueblo de Ildefonso, and the activist group Concerned Citizens for Nuclear Safety. The forum received very good press.
- The forum will generate a number of recommendations for DOE on waste management and groundwater protection.

Oak Ridge – Kerry Trammell

- The Board has had two recommendations. One is the upper East Fork Poplar Creek contaminated soils and the Y-12 scrap yard. The Board also provided a recommendation on the TSCA incinerator relating to a public health assessment.
- The Board's Stewardship Committee is working on a recommendation to work with Anderson and Roane Counties, which are adjacent to the Oak Ridge Reservation, to standardize language concerning notices of contamination in anticipation of future land transfers.
- The Board's annual retreat will be held in August. Work plans are being developed.
- The Board is also planning a 10th anniversary celebration in September.
- Board by-laws have been revised and will be voted on shortly.
- Public outreach has included publication of the quarterly newsletter and information booths at the Secret City Festival and the Y-12 Safety Expo. The Board has also updated its exhibit at the Museum of Science and Energy.

Ms. Nielson asked Mr. Trammell to send DOE a copy of the revised by-laws.

Mr. Trammell agreed.

Paducah – Jeannie Brandstetter

- The Board is conducting a membership drive.
- The Board's speakers' bureau is up and running.
- The Board is at 13 members and hoping to add a few more.

Rocky Flats – Jerry DePoorter

- The Board is suggesting that LM hold a public forum on its approach to its local stakeholder organization (LSO). The Rocky Flats Coalition of Local Governments which is going to transition into the LSO is planning to select 3-4 non-elected members to the LSO. The process is turning very political and is not favorable toward public participation.
- On October 31, cleanup will be completed at Rocky Flats, one year ahead of schedule. The Board is pleased with this significant accomplishment.
- On June 15 the Board is touring the site. There is not much left to see. Building 371, the last remaining large structure, is in the process of coming down.
- Karen Lutz, the Federal Coordinator for the Rocky Flats SSAB, is moving to Hanford and will be assisting the Hanford CAB.

Savannah River – Jean Sulc

- National Academy of Science representatives visited Savannah River a second time in early May to follow up on technical issues, looking at performance assessment of tank waste disposition analysis and space management.
- The NRC is currently reviewing the draft Waste Disposition plan to determine if some of the waste derived from the processing can be treated as low-level waste and disposed of at the site. Anticipating that the NRC will be on schedule, then the startup of the initial salt processing will be in January 2006, delayed from October 2005.
- The Site is taking advantage of the WIPP shipment window, shipping six shipments of TRU waste per week.
- The Board is very interested in the Waste Disposition Strategy and schedule.
- The Board held a training session that focused on effective management and participation in meetings.
- The Board will have its “process retreat” in October, looking at Board operations and structure.

ISSUES FOR DISCUSSION

Ms. Sulc asked about the status of the nomination of Jim Rispoli to be the new Assistant Secretary for Environmental Management.

Ms. Nielson responded that Mr. Rispoli is on the Hill meeting with members of Congress. His nomination is moving forward.

Betty Nolan added that there are three nominations in process: David Hill for General Counsel, Jill Sigal for Congressional and Intergovernmental, and Mr. Rispoli. The nominees are doing courtesy calls on the Hill. The three will have a single hearing before the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee. No date has been set. In addition,

Mr. Rispoli will appear informally before the Senate Armed Services Committee. This has not been scheduled.

CONCLUSION

Mr. Vivari reaffirmed that DOE HQ would be sending out the waste disposition template materials.

Ms. Nielson thanked everyone for participating.