



U.S. Department of Energy

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Office of River Protection

P.O. Box 450
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JUL 16 2002

02-EMD-053

Mr. Michael A. Wilson, Program Manager
Nuclear Waste Program
State of Washington
Department of Ecology
1315 W. Fourth Avenue
Kennewick, Washington 99336

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EDMC

Dear Mr. Wilson:

HANFORD FEDERAL FACILITY AGREEMENT AND CONSENT ORDER (TRI-PARTY AGREEMENT) MAJOR MILESTONE M-44-00

- References:
1. Ecology letter from J. Lyon to J. E. Rasmussen, ORP, "Hanford Federal Facility Agreement and Consent Order, Document No. 89-10, Rev. 5, (The Tri-Party Agreement), Milestone M-44-00A," dated April 8, 2002. 57087
 2. TPA Change Request M-44-97-03, "Changes to Hanford Federal Facility Agreement and Consent Order Milestone M-44-00, Tank Waste Characterization," dated July 15, 1997. 48511

We are in receipt of your letter (Reference 1) to extend Tri-Party Agreement Major Milestone M-44-00, and your request to enter into discussions. The U.S. Department of Energy, Office of River Protection (ORP) recognizes that the M-44 Milestone series, that is scheduled to be complete on September 30, 2002, has been a highly successful and cooperative effort. This recognition is based on the fact that the characterization sampling and analysis processes have been institutionalized and integrated with work planning and integrated into the ORP project baseline. Other existing Tri-Party Agreement milestones separate from M-44 for retrieval, immobilization, and closure activities, already provide drivers for characterization without reliance on the M-44 milestone series. ORP would recommend that the M-44 Milestone series be completed and closed in accordance with the current schedule. A more detailed analysis of characterization with respect to specific milestones is provided in the Enclosure.

ORP believes the annual meetings on prioritizing work have provided a valuable communication forum for both organizations and we believe they should be continued. We would expect the State of Washington Department of Ecology (Ecology) to participate in the annual prioritization meeting for identification and consensus prioritization of programs needs for sampling and analysis. ORP invites Ecology to participate in the development of all Tank Waste Data Quality Objectives supporting the sampling and analysis of Double-Shell Tanks (DST) and Single-Shell Tanks. We believe tracking the commitment would be appropriate at the project manager meeting level. We also agree to continue on-going reporting of the results of the characterization

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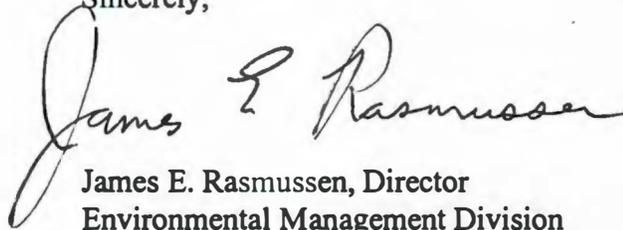
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data through the Tank Characterization Report and the Tank Characterization Technical Sampling Basis and Waste Information Requirements Document, with annual submittals due September 30 of each calendar year until DST closure.

If you have any questions, please contact Woody Russell, Environmental Management Division, (509) 373-5227.

Sincerely,



James E. Rasmussen, Director
Environmental Management Division

EMD:WR

Enclosure

cc w/encls:

D. I. Allen, CHG
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TPA Administrative Record

Background on M-44 Milestone

When the current M-44 Milestone series was originally implemented in 1997 (Reference 2), tank waste characterization was an immature program. The processes by which tank waste characterization information drivers are currently integrated and prioritized, and the infrastructure for maintaining characterization data in the electronic database (Tank Waste Information Network System or TWINS) had not yet been developed. In addition to Tri-Party Agreement Milestone M-44, a recommendation was made near the same time frame by the Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board (DNFSB) to improve the processes by which tank waste characterization needs are evaluated and satisfied. The Tri-Party Agreement M-44 Milestone and DNFSB recommendation 93-5 were both essential and equally responsible for creating the now long-standing and self-sustaining programs that are in place at Hanford for the characterization of tank waste.

The DNFSB recommendation 93-5 has since been closed, in part, based on the view that the characterization process had been institutionalized. Each of the components that have historically contributed to the success of M-44 has been built into the Tank Farms baseline, and will continue as long as the needs for tank waste characterization remain. These components include:

- Use of a partnering effort between the State of Washington Department of Ecology (Ecology) and the U.S. Department of Energy to maintain a cooperative effort in defining annual characterization requirements and changes to those requirements;
- The annual Sampling and Analyses priority workshops, which Ecology attends, that establishes for identification and consensus prioritization of programs' needs for sampling and analysis;
- Annual submittal to Ecology of draft and final Waste Information Requirements Document (WIRD) for the succeeding fiscal year specifying characterization needs for that fiscal year;
- Submittal to Ecology of quarterly progress reports, and a final annual report each fiscal year, for WIRD Deliverables. The quarterly reports have become the accepted forum for reconciling sampling and schedule changes, with the final progress report providing a balanced analysis of the year's Characterization Program accomplishments and difficulties; and
- Maintenance of the TWINS database, with internet access for Ecology and other users of tank waste characterization data. Continuing to input characterization information into this electronic database within seven days of analytic report issuance.

The U.S. Department of Energy, Office of River Protection believes that each of the components that have made the M-44 Milestone series historically successful will necessarily continue for the foreseeable future as waste retrieval, immobilization, and closure activities to be successful.

Tri-Party Agreement Milestones That Drive Characterization Needs

Milestone or Driver		Characterization Support Required
Consent Decree	Interim Stabilization	This involves removing the pumpable liquid from the Single-Shell Tanks and moving it to the Double-Shell Tanks. This operation requires compatibility analysis of the tank liquid to be moved and of the waste in the receiving tank. Characterization supports this milestone by providing compatibility sampling and analysis.
M-45-00	Complete Closure of All Single-Shell Tanks	Characterization support will be required in support of retrieval and leak detection system designs. Once retrieval operations are completed, characterization of waste residuals will be required to verify retrieval system performance and support tank closure/post-closure plans.
M-45-00A	Complete Negotiation of Near-Term (prior to 9/30/2006) SST Waste Retrieval Activities	Characterization support will be required in support of retrieval and leak detection system designs. Once retrieval operations are completed, characterization of waste residuals will be required to verify retrieval system performance and support tank closure/post-closure plans.
M-45-00C	Complete Renegotiation of Second Phase (9/30/2006 through 9/30/2015) SST Waste Retrieval Activities	Characterization support will be required in support of retrieval and leak detection system designs. Once retrieval operations are completed, characterization of waste residuals will be required to verify retrieval system performance and support tank closure/post-closure plans.
M-23-00 & M-48-00	SST Integrity Assessments DST Integrity Assessments	Characterization data needs to address integrity analysis depending on system or specific tank issues.

Tri-Party Agreement Milestones That Drive Characterization Needs

Milestone or Driver		Characterization Support Required
M-45-00	<p>Complete Closure of All Single-Shell Tanks</p> <p>M-45-11: Complete 244-AR Vault interim stabilization</p>	Characterization of waste residuals will be required to verify interim stabilization plans.
M-45-50, -60	Groundwater/Vadose Zone	Characterization data needs in support of corrective actions.
M-47-00	Complete All Work Necessary to Support the Acquisition and Phase I Operations of Hanford Site High-Level Radioactive Tank Waste Treatment, Storage and Disposal Facilities	Characterization sampling will be required in support of Treatment, Storage and Disposal facility designs, and verification of performance.
M-62-00	<p>Complete Pretreatment Processing and Vitrification of Hanford High Level and Low Activity Tank Wastes</p> <p>M-62-00A: Complete Pretreatment Processing and Vitrification of Hanford HLW and LAW Phase 1 Tank Wastes</p> <p>M-62-07: Certification (ICD-19 and ICD-20)</p>	<p>A new milestone series addresses procurement, construction, and operation of a tank waste treatment complex for the pretreatment and vitrification of tank wastes. Characterization will support this milestone as necessary by providing samples and/or information needed to accomplish the work.</p> <p>Characterization and waste performance data will be required to support the Land Disposal Restrictions delisting petition.</p>
M-90-00	Complete Acquisition of New Facilities, Modification of Existing Facilities, and/or Modification of Planned Facilities as Necessary for Storage of Hanford Site	Characterization information may be required as input to the design and verification of product performance.

Tri-Party Agreement Milestones That Drive Characterization Needs

Milestone or Driver	Characterization Support Required
IHLW and ILAW, and Disposal of ILAW	