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HANFORD ADVISORY BOARD
Revised Meeting Summary
February 11-12, 1999
Kennewick, Washington

This is only a summary of issues and actions in this meeting. It may not represent the fullness of ideas discussed or opinions given, and should not be used as a substitute for actual public involvement or public comment on any particular topic unless specifically identified as such.

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Note: Attachments are numbered according to the order they are mentioned in the summary. The attachments that were distributed at or before the Hanford Advisory Board are not routinely distributed with this summary. If you need a copy of an attachment, please request it from Donna Sterba at Technical Resources International, 509-943-5319, or Enid Reck at Fluor Daniel Hanford, Inc., 509-376-5856.

Executive Summary

Tank Waste

The Ad Hoc Committee has been focusing efforts on the February go/no-go decision, the completion of the Agreement-in-Principle (AIP), and public involvement issues. The Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology) has responded to Advice #90. Tri-Party Agreement (TPA) milestones have not yet been determined, and Ecology suggested opening public involvement paths to push the agreements ahead.

The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) is putting together a cross-organizational team to review the February decision criteria. The committee expressed frustration that it appears DOE has started making recommendations to DOE Headquarters (DOE-HQ) on the decision criteria before the cross-organizational team is up and running. DOE promised that the team would be constructed in the immediate future and assured the Board that plenty of time remained to collect valuable input from stakeholders.

The Board discussed the Office of River Protection (ORP) and how it fits into the greater context of the entire Hanford site. Members expressed concern that ORP was not well planned, would hurt the cleanup budget, and was hindering development of TPA milestones because its structure was not yet established.

Budget and Performance Fee

The Board received an overview of the status of the budget and performance fee for fiscal year 1999 (FY1999) and FY2000. Key issues of concern showed that the Environmental Restoration (ER) budget is steadily shrinking each year. A compliance gap of $107 million is expected by FY2001 mainly in the ER area. Several Board members and agency representatives attended a meeting with the Congressional appropriations staff in Washington, DC recently. They learned that the site budget for the coming years would be flat, and Congress does not see room for negotiation on that point.

The status for the reprogramming needs for the site was explained to the Board. The reprogramming request was sent to DOE-HQ in December and is now awaiting Congressional approval. The site needs the reprogramming due to unforeseen expenditures on tanks and salt well pumping activities. The exact dollar amounts were not provided to the Board, but it was explained that the request was to transfer funds from construction projects that prepare for privatization to tank waste operations.

The Board expressed concern that DOE should have a contingency plan in case reprogramming is not approved by Congress. Discussion also highlighted the seriousness of the budget crunch in upcoming fiscal years. Budget advice will be drafted at upcoming Dollars and Sense Committee meetings and presented for adoption at the March Board meeting.

Groundwater/Vadose Zone

The Board was updated on the draft project specification long-range plan for the groundwater/vadose zone project. DOE is focusing on assembling the pieces across the site into a framework that is supported by science, peer reviews, and public involvement. A great deal of work is being done to clarify the system assessment capability (SAC) and to define the project at the Hanford site.

Additionally, the Columbia River Comprehensive Impact Assessment (CRCIA) team has continued to meet to act as a watchdog for the project. Board members expressed concern that with the budget issues and great needs across the site, programs need to be defined in a holistic manner.

The Board held an official Sounding Board in which speakers gave the perspective of the group they represent on the Board. Many members felt that the CRCIA template was a worthwhile objective, but that more work was needed to bring it into context with the entire site. DOE was urged to be forthright in dealing with the public on groundwater/vadose zone issues. The Board supported the work done in the program and recommends that it should be funded.

Plutonium Finishing Plant

An informal evening session was held to discuss the Plutonium Finishing Plant (PFP), its mission, and the future path to stabilize plutonium-bearing materials. The Board learned that many key decisions have yet to be made at PFP, including procurement of equipment, classification of waste, and transfer of plutonium between sites. The facility was scheduled for decommissioning in the 1970s and poses a serious health and safety threat to workers and the environment.

The Environmental Restoration and Health, Safety, and Waste Management Committees drafted advice on PFP which was brought before the full Board. Small group discussions were held, and the advice was revised, approved, and sent to the Tri-Party agencies. The following statement expresses the concerns of the Board and the general recommendations for moving ahead on the issue. HAB advice #91 states, "...DOE should resolve the dispute over 'material' versus 'waste.' This issue has blocked progress on developing a set of TPA milestones for PFP. The Board finds it imperative that the TPA agencies enter negotiations and work out a solution that removes obstacles to regulation and ensures independent oversight of RCRA chemical hazards."

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The meeting was called to order by Merilyn Reeves, Chair (Public-at-Large). The meeting was open to the public. Four public comment periods were provided at 11:45 a.m. on Thursday and Friday, at 4:45 p.m. on Thursday, and at 2:45 p.m. on Friday. There was no public comment in any of the periods.

Members present are listed in Attachment 1, as are members of the public and others attending. Board seats not represented were Richard Berglund, Central Washington Building Trades (Hanford Work Force) and Rick Leaumont, Lower Columbia Audubon Society (Local Environmental).

Announcements Made Throughout the Meeting

[Items are listed in chronological order rather than in the order made. Announcements with no dates are listed last.]

- Todd Martin, Hanford Education Action League (HEAL) (Regional Environmental/Citizen), announced that Lynne Stembridge, HEAL's Executive Director, is leaving the organization in March. She has worked with issues at the Hanford site for the past 10 years, and the organization loses a great deal of institutional knowledge with her departure. HEAL's board is making a decision on how to fill her position.
- Merilyn Reeves received a letter from Dr. Glenn Paulson urging the HAB to monitor the result of the recent major test of the cross-site transfer pipeline. Dr. Paulson led the HAB's independent review of DOE's 1993 plans to build more double-shell storage tanks and he continues to monitor progress relating to tank wastes.
- Mike Gearheard, Acting Director, Office of Environmental Cleanup, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), announced that EPA had conducted a multi-media compliance inspection at the site during the summer of 1998. A penalty action has been issued to DOE, and a press release was given to the Board addressing the inspection findings and the resulting fine at Hanford. The action was taken under Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) regulations. The proposed penalty on the site is $367,000. Gordon Rogers, Public-at-Large, commented that some of the drums had been stored inappropriately for three years, and regulators should have taken action much earlier. Pam Brown, City of Richland (Local Government), said she expected to see a fine for co-mingling of waste, but it was not included in the fine. In addition, she recommended finding accountability and ensuring that the fine was given to DOE and not to the contractors. The Health, Safety, and Waste Management Committee will continue to follow these issues carefully. Russell Jim, Yakama Indian Nation (Tribal Government), asked if EPA had conferred with the Yakama Nation about the fine and

consistencies with treaty rights. He will check with his legal counsel and will get back to EPA.

- Merilyn Reeves announced that it has been a year since committees last elected chairs and vice-chairs and that several committees have leadership vacancies. She encouraged committees to hold elections at their March meetings.
- Max Power, Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology), stated that the Board had received a letter from Ecology outlining staff changes within the agency. There are now six project contacts: Cleanup-Jack Donnelly, Transition-Shri Mohan, Waste Management-Moses Jaraysi, 300 Area-Alex Stone, Tank Waste Remediation System (TWRS) Disposal-Suzanne Dahl, and TWRS Storage-Tony Valero. In addition, lead senior experts on sitewide issues have also been designated: Water Quality-Dib Goswami, RCRA Integration for Cleanup-Phil Stats, Technology Deployment/Development-Nancy Uziemblo, and Hazardous Waste Compliance-Steve Moore. The contact for RCRA Permitting is being hired. Ecology feels that this is a better way to interact with the Board and hopes the Board will use these experts on committees. Ecology is hosting an open house on March 3, 1999 at which all the project managers and lead staff will be introduced. In addition, a lead public involvement person has been hired and will start February 22, 1999.
- Max Power, Ecology, stated that applications were being collected for two positions open on the Hanford Advisory Board (HAB). The application deadline for the Public-at-Large seat has passed, and applications are currently being reviewed. The University seat is still open, and it is hoped that more applications will arrive in the coming weeks.
- Pam Brown announced that the Remedial Action Comprehensive Land Use Plan is still not finished.
- Alice Murphy, U.S. Department of Energy (DOE), announced that the annual progress report for Hanford was available at the back of the room.

AGENDA ITEM #1: WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Merilyn Reeves thanked David Black, a Ph.D. student whose dissertation is focused on the HAB's process and public involvement at the site, for the coffee he provided for the Board. Ruth Siguenza, EnviroIssues, introduced Mike Gearheard, Acting Director for the Office of Environmental Cleanup at EPA until a replacement is found for Randy Smith. Ruth also announced that Patrick Sobotta is the new Director of Environmental Restoration and Waste Management of the Nez Perce Tribe effective February 8, 1999.

Merilyn Reeves stated that the goal of the meeting was to focus on strategies and funding for stabilization of the Plutonium Finishing Plant (PFP) materials and to continue to monitor other key HAB issues. The Board has not worked on PFP issues in depth since the explosion in May 1997. Merilyn commented that it seemed appropriate the Board address the topic considering the magnitude of the project and its funding problems.

Merilyn Reeves stated that the facilitation team had been asked to maintain only materials essential to the business of the Board in the packet in an effort to keep its size to a minimum. She suggested that the committees ensure that all necessary information be provided to the Board in as brief a manner as possible to condense the amount of paper hand-outs.

AGENDA ITEM #2: APPROVE DECEMBER MEETING SUMMARY

Merilyn Reeves commented that extensive time was spent at the last meeting approving the November meeting summary. The following statement was included at the top of the December 1999 meeting summary, "***In order to expedite corrections to this draft meeting summary please submit comments or changes to Ruth Siguenza, EnviroIssues, 206-260-5041, prior to the February Board meeting***". Ruth Siguenza explained that she had received about five responses for corrections to the December meeting summary. Most of the changes were minor. The December meeting summary was approved with the minor corrections.

Merilyn Reeves noted that the November meeting summary still needed approval. She asked Norm Buske, Government Accountability Project (GAP) (Hanford Work Force), for comments as he had the greatest concerns with the summary. Norm congratulated the facilitation team on the changes made to the November meeting summary. The highlighted version he received from EnviroIssues clearly indicated the location of the changes. He suggested that substantial changes made in the future be flagged in a similar manner and given to the Board.

Merilyn Reeves asked that Board members discuss their corrections to the meeting summary directly with the facilitation team so that time is not spent during meetings discussing detailed edits. She asked for the record to attach a copy of the meeting summary sent to Norm Buske. In the future, when a question arises about an entire paragraph, it will be highlighted to show corrections or deletions. The November meeting summary was approved.

Merilyn Reeves asked the Board to discuss what it would like the meeting summary to contain. She stated that time spent approving meeting minutes took time away from important issues that the Board should be focusing on. Pam Brown suggested that members work directly with EnviroIssues to settle discrepancies in the meeting summaries in the future. She recommended a summary of the issues was valuable, but not the nitty-gritty details. She is frustrated with the amount of time spent on meeting summaries. Jim Watts, Hanford Atomic Metal Trades Council (Hanford Work Force), added that if a member felt changes were important enough to bring before the Board, he/she should pass the corrections out to the full Board rather than use meeting time. Productive time is lost in discussion of detailed edits. Merilyn suggested that the facilitation team try to summarize the meeting notes. When an official Sounding Board session is held, she asked that the exact wording be captured in the meeting summary. The Board agreed that a summary of the discussion was acceptable for the meeting summary. Merilyn assured the Board that no one was taking the meeting summary for granted and that people were reading it very carefully.

AGENDA ITEM #3a: TANK WASTE -- PROGRAM

Summary from Ad Hoc Committee

Todd Martin stated that the Ad Hoc Committee received a response from DOE at the last committee meeting to Advice # 90. One of the first points made in the advice addressed the February go/no-go position to be made by DOE. The ad hoc committee is concerned about the criteria used by DOE for making this decision, which was supposed to be available by the end of January 1999. Todd explained to the Board that DOE outlined a cross organizational team that would be created to

review and develop these decision criteria. The team would include a representative from the Ad Hoc Committee, Ecology, and other agencies, but the description was vague.

Jeff Luke, Non-Union, Non-Management Employees (Hanford Work Force), commented that if other parties were involved in the team besides DOE, the decision would likely be delayed until late March or early April. The schedule sent to Congress stated that the six month decision would be made in January. It also states that the most important decision factor will be the pricing methodology that BNFL and DOE agree on. Some of the criteria that DOE expected to use in making a decision include deliverables, the optimization studies, and input from the DOE Regulatory Unit. Jeff was informed that the cross organizational team was chartered to provide an assessment for the decision criteria. However, the team has not yet been identified. Jeff is concerned that if the team does not meet soon, there will not be enough time to feed any useful assessment of the criteria to DOE before the six month decision. In addition, DOE has already moved ahead with recommendations to DOE Headquarters (DOE-HQ) regarding the optimization studies. Because these are designated as one of the six month decision criteria, the studies should have been reviewed with the cross organizational team. Todd Martin stated that DOE is still discussing process in regards to making their six month decision. It is an internal decision point and is not contractual.

The second point of the committee's advice recommended that the Agreement in Principle (AIP) for Tri-Party Agreement (TPA) negotiations be finalized within two weeks. DOE promised the AIP in mid-October but has not yet delivered the information. The third part of the advice addressed the analysis of alternative financing which will be addressed in the next year. Currently, there is no structured system for analyzing alternative financing in Richland. The advice also requested that DOE give a long-term funding plan to the committee. The last item in the advice recommended more public involvement. DOE's response stated that this issue was already being addressed.

Todd Martin stated that he sees focus for the committee moving to the following two issues: public involvement and the review of deliverables which address some important technical issues such as vitrification vs. grout and the future sizing of the facility. Some of these deliverables have been provided to the committee, and DOE has already given some recommendations to DOE-HQ based on the deliverables. Adequate budgets are also very questionable. Gerry Pollet, Heart of America Northwest (Regional Environmental/Citizen) commented that it was important for all members to receive copies of the deliverables requested at the ad hoc committee meeting.

Mike Wilson, Ecology, spoke to the committee concerning TWRS TPA Changes and public involvement. He expressed frustration that the AIP was still not completed. He stated that Ecology was looking for TPA milestones to address design, construction, and operation of a plant. Near-term milestones do not benefit the project in the long-run. Ecology is looking for more commitment from DOE. A senior level executive meeting is scheduled for February 24, 1999, and DOE has promised that the AIP will be finished before the meeting so that it can be discussed. Ecology had assumed that TPA negotiations would be the event that would kick off public involvement activities. They are now open to any alternate public involvement paths that the Board recommends.

Board Discussion

Merilyn Reeves asked what the position of BNFL was in regards to the AIP and public involvement issues. Suzanne Dahl, Ecology, responded that DOE, BNFL, and Ecology have met and discussed the AIP and public involvement. One difficulty is that there are many different subjects for public involvement, such as permitting, regulatory unit issues, commitments to semi-annual meetings, and AIP negotiations. They are trying to overlay the many schedules to develop a master public involvement schedule addressing the needs of DOE, Ecology, and BNFL. They will share a draft of the schedule with the Public Involvement Committee in March. Ecology has made a commitment for a late Spring public involvement session about privatization, and would like to speak with members of the Public Involvement and Ad Hoc Committees. Merilyn commented that the entire Board should be given the opportunity to provide input.

Ken Bracken, Benton County (Local Government), expressed frustration that a decision on the AIP has not yet been implemented. The Board suggested to the agencies that they deal with short term issues in order to get some TPA milestones on paper. He stated that the lack of movement on the AIP raises questions about the seriousness of the TPA and what it stands for. Mike Wilson commented, cleanup involves designing, constructing, and operating a plant and short-term agreements will not help forward movement. Suzanne Dahl stated that the cross-site transfer line has been tested and is ready to begin transferring waste in March.

Gerry Pollet remarked that strongly worded warnings have been sent to DOE, but actions do not show that they are serious about addressing these concerns. Bill Taylor, DOE, stated that until a firm price deal can be negotiated with BNFL, progress on the AIP cannot move forward. An AIP has been signed by DOE-HQ, but he does not think that discussions at Ecology would go far due to the content in this document. DOE has created a middle-ground alternative which they feel Ecology would accept, and it is waiting for approval at DOE-HQ.

Todd Martin stated that the disagreement over discussions on TPA milestones suggested a necessary time for public involvement. In the past, the public has been instrumental in helping the agencies to move forward when discussions are at an impass. Todd commented that there is no TPA overseeing operations. He urged the parties to begin discussions that will lead to an agreement.

Merilyn Reeves asked if TWRS was simply being renamed the Office of River Protection (ORP). John Peschong, DOE, responded that the reporting lines have changed. The ORP manager reports directly to DOE-HQ. Bill Taylor stated that DOE has taken action to determine the relationships between ORP managers and the entire Hanford site. He feels that the program is well thought out and being staffed with experienced personnel. While permanent positions are being filled, the Pacific Northwest National Laboratory (PNNL) is contributing procurement lawyers to write the final contract with BNFL and technical expertise to review the documents from BNFL.

Paige Knight, Hanford Watch and Hanford Action of Oregon (Regional Environmental/Citizen), expressed frustration about the privatization concept. She stated that the lack of leadership in BNFL, Ecology, and DOE will cause loss of support and funding from Congress. She would like to see progress and an acceptance of accountability.

Greg de Bruler, Columbia River United (Regional Environmental/Citizen), is frustrated with the time spent discussing issues such as TWRS and the K Basins while never addressing the reasons for the struggle within the programs. Decisions are based on politics and the site is in danger of losing Congressional support. He suggested that the Board needs to address DOE's management process and recommend a solution. He added that the TPA agencies need to work together to solve the problems. Bill Taylor remarked that the technical parts of the project are on track.

Jeff Luke asked again if DOE intended to establish a cross organizational team to assess the criteria for the February decision point. Bill Taylor answered that the team would be created as Leif Erickson, DOE, had outlined for the ad hoc committee. He stated that the February criteria would not be finalized until March. The optimization studies have been presented in a preliminary manner to DOE-HQ. Jeff responded that because the optimization studies were identified as a decision criteria, the team should have had the opportunity to review them. Roger Stanley, Ecology, agreed with Jeff, and stated that the team should be contacted and begin work immediately on the decision criteria. Bill Taylor stated that the final decision about whether to move forward or not would be made at the end of March and so there was still time for the team to give valuable input. He promised that the team would be constructed by the end of the week.

Alan Dobson, BNFL, stated that the company is required to perform a self-assessment by February 24, 1999. The amount of detail required was underestimated, but it only took a few discussions with DOE to correct the optimization studies. Alan is hopeful that this issue too can be resolved quickly. BNFL has documents available for anyone who would like to see them. He hopes that BNFL has given the impression to the public that they are open and willing to discuss issues. BNFL is distributing brochures explaining their position on many different issues. Alan stated that they are always ready to meet with people and would also be willing to support the Public Involvement Committee.

Board Discussion

Bob Larson, Benton-Franklin Regional Council (Local Government), asked if someone was seriously examining alternative financing. Bill Taylor answered that Pete Furlong, DOE, was preparing a series of scenarios that will be developed further.

Ken Bracken stated he feels that the decision maker for the AIP needs to be defined because the lack of definition in this role is part of the delay. Bill Taylor answered that the DOE decision maker is ultimately the Hanford site manager. Ken also requested that the Board give advice to the agencies concerning public involvement and the completion of the AIP. Todd Martin expressed concern with DOE's inability to make a decision. If DOE cannot make smaller decisions like the six month decision criteria, there doesn't seem to be a possibility of it making a larger decision.

Office of River Protection 90-Day Plan and Response to HAB Advice

Don Woodrich, DOE, gave the Board the 90-Day Plan and Response to HAB Advice #88. Copies of the Integrated Management Plan (IMP) for ORP were sent out January 15, 1999. The plan summarizes the roles, responsibilities, and reporting channels for ORP. Don responded to each of

the nine points contained in the advice. The following list of items shows the board's advice in italics and is followed by Don's response in regular font.

1) *Give the plan to the public prior to privatization.* It seemed inappropriate with the time constraint of 90 days to give the public the plan, but the Secretary of Energy asked the Northwest region for comments to be incorporated in subsequent planning.
2) *Ensure the scope of the plan is holistic.* The workscope for ORP is the same as TWRS and a new scope was not created. ORP will include groundwater/vadose zone work beneath the tanks.
3) *Provide accessibility of decision makers to regional interest groups.* The ORP manager will have the responsibility of beginning to interface with regional groups.
4) *Create TPA milestones.* They will either comply with existing milestones or change them to be more applicable.
5) *DOE integration of two functions of the Project Hanford Management Contract.* This is addressed in the plan.
6) *Delineate the budget authority and decision making for the Integrated Priority List (IPL).* The Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) states that Hanford will get its budget in one large chunk. ORP will not be a separate line item and, like other programs, will give input for its separate budget.
7) *Do not negatively impact integration with other Hanford programs.* Discussion is occurring on how to integrate the ORP with other programs.
8) *Integrate ORP with institutional knowledge.* TWRS is now a part of ORP, and most of the TWRS personnel have been under ORP.
9) *An integrated staff and schedule must be developed.* The ORP needs 29 more people, who are being recruited. The goal is to have all positions filled in the spring. Contractors are being used to ensure work progress in the meantime.

Roger Stanley, Ecology, remarked that an issue of concern for the state is the statutory language that established ORP. It states that ORP has all responsibilities for managing TWRS. However, TPA signatory responsibilities have been handed off to the Hanford site manager. The responsibility of signature authority is confusing right now and is very important to success of the TPA. Doug Sherwood, EPA, noted there is an obvious disconnect between ORP and the TPA. As it is set up, the person responsible for getting the work done has no authority to sign the TPA.

Board Discussion

Paige Knight asked how the hiring of new people without eliminating jobs was going to affect the ORP and ER budget. Don Woodrich, DOE, responded that the scope of the work is similar to TWRS and that only three to four extra people were hired in the establishment of ORP. The selection board met in January 1999 to find a manager for ORP, made an offer, and are waiting for a response.

Merilyn Reeves commented that she was disappointed with the response to the Board's advice. She sees the risk of failure as the most important point and is disappointed that the ORP does not have a legally-binding basis for getting waste out of the tanks.

Bob Larson stated that the ORP manager has not been given contractual authority and is not equal to the site manager. However, the ORP manager has been delegated more duties. The procurement delegation will be given to the ORP manager. The matrix of authority is unclear, and these issues need to be resolved. Betty Tabbutt, Washington League of Women Voters (Regional Environmental/Citizen), expressed frustration that management lines were not remaining consistent and questioned the impact on contracts and cleanup at the site. Russell Jim expressed concern over the lack of process for DOE to provide information to the public. He stated that the contamination at the Hanford site does not negate the treaty rights of the Yakama Nation. DOE's process for information sharing disturbs him.

Todd Martin stated that ORP and it's proposed structure hinders Richland's work, the regulators work, and contractors work. Gerry Pollet added that the timing of the last Dollars & Sense meeting was scheduled so that the committee could receive the plan and would be able to do something meaningful. They were given the executive summary to the report and he felt that it was a joke. The committee was told that the Secretary of Energy would have to resolve all issues which is not practical and will not facilitate cleanup work. He feels that ORP is off to a bad start. Merilyn Reeves also expressed frustration that this plan is not helpful for the site.

Status of Consent Decree for TWRS Interim Stabilization

Roger Stanley, Ecology, updated the Board on the status of the consent decree for TWRS Interim Stabilization. Currently, there is no agreement between the parties, but an announcement is expected at the end of February 1999. With TPA changes, Ecology tries to give 30 days notice to the Hanford Advisory Board (HAB), but may not be able to do that in this case. The draft change request was sent a month ago and the targeted date of release is March 16th.

AGENDA ITEM #4: REFLECTIONS FROM SENIOR DOE MANAGERS

The Board viewed the videotape designed for John Wagoner's farewell. Merilyn Reeves stated that she felt it was important for the Board to hear reflections from key people who were leaving the site. She asked Alice Murphy, DOE, and Charlie Hansen, DOE, to share their thoughts and advice with the Board.

Alice Murphy, DOE, thanked the Board for the three and a half year involvement she has had in their activities. She is taking a new job within DOE in Virginia for family reasons. Alice explained that the Board is seen as a role model, and DOE management is interested in what they are discussing. Past experience has shown that the HAB has the ability to ask the questions that DOE managers sometimes miss because they are too close to the problems and issues. She recommended the Board maintain its role as policy advisors. Alice also encouraged the Board to stay on a professional level, as personal attacks are not productive. The issues she hoped they would continue to track include Spent Nuclear Fuel, PFP, TWRS, Groundwater/Vadose Zone Integration, Environmental Restoration, Safety and Health, FY2001 funding, and cleanup progress. Her position on the Board will be filled by Paul Kruger.

Charlie Hansen, DOE, stated that the Board's continuing focus should be to help the public understand why it is vital that cleanup is funded at Hanford. The DOE management team is

interested in listening to stakeholders, tribes, and regulators, and is attempting to incorporate advice into operations to ensure cleanup. He thanked the HAB for support on the Spent Nuclear Fuel Program. He stated that DOE has made positive steps forward and that the Board has played a large role in this.

Board Discussion

Russell Jim wished Alice Murphy the best in her new opportunity. He stated that this was an example of people being able to move on to a new area after being here for only a short time. The Yakama Nation however is tied to the land with their culture, medicines, and they can not pick up and move. The environmental integrity needs to be returned to the region.

Norm Buske stated that several issues struck him when he watched the video and heard the comments. The points that stuck out to him are the personal vs. professional issues at the site, and the short-term vs. long-term conflicts.

AGENDA ITEM #5: BUDGET AND PERFORMANCE FEE

Alice Murphy, DOE, stated that the funding for FY2000 was $70 million more than for FY99. However, it is still not enough to meet the compliance obligations. For Facilities Stabilization, the funding has risen due to efforts to procure equipment and change the baseline for Spent Nuclear Fuel. In the TWRS account, FY2000 is allocated at $335 million, which is an increase to support the privatization line items supporting infrastructure needs. The Environmental Restoration program funding has decreased to $135 million for FY2000, and the compliance shortfall lies mainly in this area for FY1999. The Waste Management budget received an increase of $7 million to keep progress on track for shipment of waste to the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP). The Waste Encapsulation and Storage Facility (WSEF) funding is allocated at $15 million, slightly above FY1999. The non-Environmental Management funding for FY2000 is at $376 million which is very good compared to the rest of the programs in the department. The lab and research portions of work will be funded adequately for FY2000. The compliance shortfall for FY2000 is projected at $22.8 million for TPA compliance. If Facilities Stabilization is removed and TPA milestone M-32 can be satisfied with the double-shelled tank integrity, the TPA compliance gap will decrease to $16.2 million. Future projections show a shortfall of up to $107 million for FY2001. DOE is planning and trying to make decisions on how to recover some of this work.

Alice Murphy stated that meetings were held on January 21 and January 29, to examine the program priority list and work toward developing an Integrated Priority List (IPL). This list should be complete for the February 25 half day budget workshop, structured with breakout sessions for each program. Public meetings are scheduled in March 1999, and budget advice will be considered at the March HAB meeting. The IPL should be sent to DOE-HQ by April 15, 1999. Public meetings are scheduled for March 9th in Oregon, March 10th in Seattle, and March 11th in Spokane.

Mike Wilson, Ecology, stated that no TPA milestones have been established for design, construction or operation of a tank waste treatment plant. He asked if the 90% confidence schedule would appear in projections for the compliance gap. John Peschong, DOE, stated that the 90% confidence schedule has been specified in the IPL above the line and is fully funded.

John Peschong summarized the TWRS budget allocation for FY1999, the status of the reprogramming request, and the future impacts on the program. The TWRS budget is currently funded at $310 million for FY1999, and the compliance needs are around $366 million. A gap of $56 million is expected for FY1999. Work that will continue to be fully-funded includes safe operation of the tank farms, resolution of safety issues for single-shelled and double-shelled tanks, interim stabilization for single-shelled tanks, the implementation of the DNFSB Final Safety Analysis Report (FSAR), closure of the Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board recommendations, and support of the BNFL contract at the 90% confidence level dates but without acceleration this year. Due to the compliance gap there are several programs that will not receive funding including single-shelled tank program development for removing solids, deactivation of unused facilities, removal of abandoned equipment, resolution of the tank pH issue, characterization safety screening, and resolution of flammable gas and organic safety issues for receiver tanks and catch tanks.

John Peschong updated the Board on the reprogramming needs for the site. Congressional approval is needed to transfer the funds. The site needs this reprogramming because salt well pumping, Tank C-106 and Tank SY-101 required more money than was expected. The construction projects that prepare for privatization are not of top priority, and money can be transferred out of that account. This funding needs to be restored in the account for FY2001 and beyond. Richland sent the request to DOE-HQ in December 1998. It is in the process of being presented to Office of Management and Budget and Congress.

Mike Wilson, Ecology, stated that he and other Board Members learned on their trip to Washington D.C. that the reprogramming package has been badly handled by DOE. The general feeling at DOE-HQ was that the package was not acceptable and some reworking was done before it was actually given to Congress. The congressional appropriations staff felt the package had taken far too long to get to Congress, and there was no excuse for the delay. Although the delegations from Washington and Oregon are supportive, they are frustrated with DOE for the slow response of the reprogramming report. Mike commented that he heard harsh language stating that it was time to "teach DOE a lesson". He would not characterize the status of the reprogramming as a done deal. John Peschong responded that DOE turned the package around in a very short amount of time. The timing was unfortunate in the budget cycle, but DOE could not have done much more than it did.

Doug Sherwood, EPA, gave his perspectives on the budget situation. He is concerned about the scope of the Environmental Restoration (ER) program for several reasons. The number for ER in FY2000 is $135 million. For FY2001, it is also $135 million. The scope of the ER program for FY1999 includes the groundwater/vadose zone project. He stated that originally the project was pitched as an extremely important project that would not have to be funded out of the Hanford site budget. However, this project is being funded through the ER budget. The message the site is receiving is that groundwater/vadose zone work is not a priority to DOE-HQ. It is hurting TPA compliance at the site because the groundwater/vadose zone work is steadily taking money away from the cleanup efforts along the Columbia River. The TPA milestones which are being missed now are ER milestones, and the compliance gap is almost exactly the amount taken by the groundwater/vadose zone project. DOE-HQ has misled EPA in its desire to do groundwater work well. The budgets for FY2000 and FY2001 are not even trying to be TPA compliant, and they are delaying the investigations in the 200 area. The schedule for completion of that work is scheduled

for December 2008. EPA has had this schedule since the beginning of the project and will not change this schedule. Less cleanup is done every year along the river; less soil will be moved in FY2000 and FY2001 than in the last three years. The B reactor museum project and reactor interim safe storage have been important and will take hits in future fiscal years. He does not see many successes in the immediate future which will keep Congress interested in funding Hanford projects.

Mike Wilson, Ecology, stated that the TWRS vitrification plant, and specifically the associated Readiness to Proceed (RTP) activities need to be fully funded. This will be gauged at the 90% confidence schedule with BNFL. The number of huge projects that need to be accomplished in FY2001 time period is disconcerting. This will be a significant point of discussion at the senior executive meeting later this month.

Gerry Pollet briefed the Board on the Dollars and Sense Committee perspectives on key budget issues discussed at their last meeting. He stated that the FY1998 performance fee award was at 72% of potential available fee. The performance fee award for Spent Nuclear Fuel was extremely low, and the total fee award was $32 million. The regulatory non-compliance gap in the budget prioritization shows a serious problem with regulatory compliance. Gerry stated that the Board needs to pay special importance to these issues. The Board needs to have the opportunity for input of the evaluation factors for FY1999. Attention should be paid to ENCOs and commitment to economic diversification in the next several months. Alice Murphy, DOE, replied that compliance issues have been emphasized, especially in regards to TPA milestones. In the TWRS program 37 of the 39 performance agreements were tied to TPA milestones; in Spent Nuclear Fuel, nine of 16; Waste Management seven of 12; and Facilities Stabilization 13 of 22.

Board Discussion

Madeleine Brown (Non-Union, Non-Management Employees (Hanford Work Force)) asked what the line item stating "work for others" meant. Alice Murphy replied that the work was done for other federal agencies. The contractors do the work, and it is billed so that full cost is recovered. Pam Brown attended a meeting last week in Washington D.C. discussing the FY2001 budget and the concerns for Hanford. She remarked that the appropriations staff responded that the site would have to deal with the $300-$400 million compliance gap problem, because the site budget would be flat.

Merilyn Reeves asked if there was a more solid figure than the $40 million projected for handling the underground tank near the PFP. John Peschong replied that the tank farms are helping PFP to characterize the underground tank. He stated that TWRS and PFP each own a certain percentage of the tanks. Harold Heacock, Tri-Cities Industrial Development Council (TRIDEC) (Local Business), asked what the TPA milestone shortfall for FY1999 would be. John Peschong stated that all milestones would be met in FY1999, excluding the privatization milestones that have not been negotiated.

Tom Carpenter, GAP (Hanford Work Force), asked about the budget cost for sluicing Tank C-106 and the budget commitments to Tank SY101. John Peschong answered that $85-$90 million has been allocated to Tank C-106. However, this project began four to five years ago, and the $85-$90 million has been spread over that time. Waste in tank SY-101 is mixed, but the overall waste level

in the tank is rising and $11 million is needed to complete additional work. Tank C-106 needed approximately $6 million, and single-shell tank interim stabilization required $3.5 million. A total of $19 million worth of work was completed beyond the original scope of work, creating a greater compliance gap. The Tank AN-105 integrity test showed the wall is thinner than expected, but this has not impacted the budget yet.

Susan Leckband, Non-Union, Non-Management Employees (Hanford Work Force), asked how much confidence DOE had that the reprogramming would be approved and what the impacts are on TPA milestones if the reprogramming does not happen. John Peschong answered that the reprogramming will be approved; the site needs this, and switching money is simpler than obtaining new funds. Some contingency planning has been done, but DOE anticipates this will be approved without a problem. Susan asked if job cuts will occur should the approval be delayed. Alice Murphy stated that notifications of layoff would have to be sent before final approval of reprogramming was given by Congress. The notices are a backup plan in case the reprogramming is not approved, but the site is hoping there will be few layoffs.

Gerry Pollet commented that he would like to see the amounts proposed for reprogramming and how all programs will be affected. John Peschong explained that the three projects which were being taken from are infrastructure that supports privatization, the retrieval that supports privatization, and the tank farm upgrades that support privatization.

Nanci Peters, Yakama Indian Nation (Tribal Government), stated she felt that the budgets were unclear. The Environmental Restoration and Waste Management tribal line item does not appear anywhere in the budget, and she is concerned for funding of the program. She asked for clarifications on the groundwater/vadose zone project, TWRS, and the distribution of additional budget dollars.

Paige Knight asked if the budget number for overhead dropped, and if employees agree that the employees concerns area should have been given an excellent performance mark. Alice replied that the overhead had dropped in FY1998 and performance fee was earned. Susan Leckband answered that the employees trust the employee concern programs but feel that they have no impact on affecting real decisions made at the site. Gerry Pollet stated that doing the fee evaluation without input makes it lack credibility with respect to employee concern evaluations.

AGENDA ITEM #6: GROUNDWATER/VADOSE ZONE

Shelley Cimon, Oregon Hanford Waste Board (State of Oregon), stated that the Environmental Restoration Committee did not have consensus advice to bring before the full Board. She commented that when the draft project specification long range plan was discussed, she expected to hear uncertainty in the program and a lack of consensus on policy decisions for cleanup at the site. These factors are critical to the success of the groundwater/vadose zone program. There are issues of regulatory integration, risk based decisions, integration of a variety of projects that do not have common end points or needs. In December, Doug Sherwood asked the Board to focus on big picture issues including institutional control, base assumptions necessary to make decisions, risk assessments needed for future use, and how to set acceptable scenarios for groundwater containment. Shelley hopes that the board discussions address these issues in the near future. The

enormity of the groundwater/vadose zone project requires many issue managers. Wade Riggsbee, Greg de Bruler, Gordon Rogers, Barbara Harper, Dirk Dunning, and Shelley Cimon are all following issues surrounding groundwater/vadose zone work.

Linda Bauer, DOE , stated that budget challenges for the program are being solved. In struggling to create credibility for the program and ensuring that it progresses, they have identified three areas of focus, including assembling pieces across the site into a framework that is supported by sound science, peer review and public involvement. Mike Graham, BHI, stated that the draft project is currently out for a comment period. It outlines the scope of the project, integration with other projects, life cycle, long range plan, background, and the state of knowledge of science and technology. Public involvement meetings have provided valuable feedback. DOE has received comments which include: the project faces many obstacles, achieving the project objectives is not a widely shared vision at Hanford, progress is slow but discernible, the System Assessment Capability (SAC) needs better definition, the risk assessment element needs work, and the Science and Technology (S&T) plan is acceptable. Sub-panels will be formed to address different areas of the project. Work is being done to integrate the Columbia River Comprehensive Impact Assessment (CRCIA) group with the SAC which needs better definition.

Mike Wilson, Ecology, indicated that he was asked to briefly discuss the Center for Risk Excellence. They are housed at Argonne National Laboratory (ANL) outside of Chicago. The group is looking at developing some supporting documentation for the groundwater/vadose zone project in the area of risk. As the project develops they will be asked to join the Hanford team. Short term goals of this project include characterizing the TWRS vadose zone, getting the SAC on track, and progressing with public and tribal involvement issues.

Doug Sherwood, EPA, restated that the HAB should follow big picture items for future use and cleanup in the 200 Area. He recommended that the Board give its input and advice from a technical and policy standpoint. He stated that funding questions surrounding the Groundwater/Vadose Zone project is still of concern because the money may be coming directly from environmental restoration compliance, and that the public needs to be involved more. Mike Wilson, Ecology, supports streamlining groundwater/vadose zone projects and getting rid of the duplication effort among the programs. Two letters have been written to DOE outlining the importance of tribal and stakeholder involvement in the project. Ecology is currently reviewing the draft specification document. It is concerned that some core work elements are not prioritized or linked to the other programs and wants the expert panel to stay involved. Ecology also feels that the broad objectives of the programs are not clearly defined and work elements not clearly tied to the decision points of the project.

Greg de Bruler told the Board that the CRCIA team met in early February 1999. CRCIA was created four years ago to provide tools and methods for evaluating impacts on the Columbia River. In February 1998, DOE stated that they would use the CRCIA template. The template examines the site as an integrated whole. The current groundwater/vadose zone is a 200 Area project and misses the larger scope of the CRCIA document. Independence is critical to the project as it allows the team to think creatively about cleanup options. The CRCIA team feels that the science and technology plan was created too early because the magnitude of problems on site are not fully understood. He encouraged DOE to interface with the CRCIA team in creating the final plan.

Sounding Board

Ruth Siguenza asked each speaker to give the perspective of the group they represent on the Board. She also asked that if the speaker could provide recommendations about issues the Environmental Restoration Committee should follow. Speakers were asked to limit their remarks to three minutes. The following is a recap of the perspective shared.

Wade Riggsbee, Yakama Indian Nation (Tribal Government), stated that he had scanned the documents, plans, and program for the groundwater/vadose zone. He noticed improvements and progress, but stated that the plans are still fragmented. Wade commented that there was funding being offered by Dr. Moniz for science and technology. He recommended holding the money for ransom until he pays. The project specification needs more detail including definition of products, direction, schedule and matrices tied to key vadose decisions and long range plan integration with other programs. The SAC is a much larger undertaking than the team can get their arms around right now, and it appears that there is still a struggle over the vision. A risk assessment must be added. The scientific needs are well defined, but the science and technology needs should be integrated with the science and technology personnel on site. He added that the river element should be emphasized in the document. It currently appears to be a monitoring program and should be elevated to a characterization program. The peer review team needs independence so they have the freedom to examine issues and make recommendations.

Greg de Bruler, Columbia River United (Regional Environmental/Citizen), stated that the group was concerned about protection actions for the river and how the program will examine the waste on site and the possible paths to the river. The entire site needs to be examined rather than by pieces. Additionally, with budget shortfalls and programs like TWRS struggling to understand the amount of waste under the tanks and its implications, there are many things that are not being brought into the plan. He recommends putting historical data and documentation together so that risk assessments can be done. The focus is in the 200 Area, but there are many other facets to the CRCIA template. He encourages the integration of DOE with the CRCIA team to develop an integrated approach.

Norm Buske, GAP (Hanford Work Force), stated that he worked on the Columbia River between 1983 and 1991 on a variety of scientific studies involving groundwater emerging into the river. In 1987, a model was constructed showing the migration pathway of radionuclides to the river. The largest groundwater feature at Hanford will not fit into the model that is being used. DOE invited Norm to submit a proposal which he will put together. Norm said that the disconnect with the model DOE is using involves the pathway under the 200 Area, and the high importance of the vadose zone under the tanks. Radionuclides from this area flow directly into a major pathway to the river. The best information states that radionuclides move at a rate of 1.5 to 3 years. This pathway discharges in a cobble area of the shore and contains contaminants. The area has large shoreline springs that are cultural resources. He sees the problem being that this issue can not be put into a model, and that DOE must gain an understanding of the issue in order to move forward.

Paige Knight, Hanford Watch and Hanford Action of Oregon (Regional Environmental/Citizen), stated that she has followed the groundwater/vadose zone issue for many years. When her group met with the vadose zone representatives in a small setting they learned a great deal. Some of the

meeting was frustrating because the document is large and most people have not yet received it. She stated that her group is interested in making sure that the projects at Hanford are integrated because of concern for the river. The region is nothing if the river becomes badly contaminated. The group is interested in knowing the truth about the issues and how the studies are being conducted. They do not want to play a budget game of making tradeoffs for various programs. They also heard that CRCIA is not a workable template right now, but the group respects the effort that went into the template and would like it used to its fullest.

Gerry Pollet, Heart of America Northwest (Regional Environmental/Citizen), asked the Board to look at what has been produced and to examine the goal that the public desires. It wants clear goals to prevent the spread of contamination from vadose zone to groundwater, from groundwater to the river and from burial grounds to the vadose zone in order to protect the state's resources. The public has asked for a river protection plan, but DOE has never responded to this request. This program is robbing funding from the real action for cleanup and jeopardizing funding support for Hanford cleanup. The models and the process money are replacing tangible work. In addition, the document fails to identify the cumulative impact of burial grounds on the vadose zone and groundwater. This is being ignored for political reasons because DOE does not want to have a RCRA investigation opened. The process is undermined by political purposes, including land use and cleanup standards. Public involvement should be occurring. He requested a river protection plan and that FY2000 funding be spent on action, not models. Gerry stated that the project should finish characterization and understanding work by FY2001 and begin actual work.

Ken Niles, Oregon Office of Energy (State of Oregon), stated that when the groundwater/vadose zone project began, Oregon was cautiously optimistic about the ability for this type of an effort to succeed. Even with the difficulties in maintaining continuity between all the meetings, he believes it can work. He stated that the team has made a sincere effort to involve stakeholders. He is concerned about funding and choices of the direction money should be allocated as it becomes scarcer. He still supports the work of the CRCIA team, but feels the template is not complete yet. This is a key issue at Hanford, and there is interest and dispute about the best course of action. DOE and Bechtel have a perfect opportunity to prove that stakeholder's input and comments can influence the decision making process by demonstrating a willingness to make changes in the program based on public input.

Gordon Rogers, Public-at-Large, stated that he represented those who live in the Hanford area and pay taxes. The Hanford risks need to be lessened so that public health is not in jeopardy. This type of assessment project can be helpful in understanding the best use of the government money. He is leery of any model predicting how things will progress at Hanford over the next millennia. Gordon remarked that humans have always attempted to mitigate the problem and get it under control, and he sees that as the process for years to come. A technical reassessment of some of the historical discharges from Hanford during its production phase, and the data regarding the impacts of those changes could be useful. The work underway looking at the health risks to low exposure doses of radiation shows interesting results. The project scientists should refine the modeling and put changes learned from the studies into the model.

Harold Heacock, TRIDEC (Local Business), stated that the Bechtel and DOE team has done a good job in attacking a difficult issue and putting together a useful document. He agreed that the

Columbia River, the life-blood of the Pacific Northwest, must be protected. He feels the groundwater/vadose zone program must focus on threats to the river and the public. He sees the main concern as the 200 Area tanks and the groundwater plumes in the 100 Area. This program competes for funding with other high priority site requirements, and there is not enough money to do everything. The vadose zone project only requires 1-12% of the overall Hanford budget and that this program should be funded. He congratulated DOE on the effort they have made to bring the public into the program, and he stressed that a balance of views was important in creating the program.

Merilyn Reeves, Public-at-Large, stated that the issue have been difficult to tackle because of the many issue managers with varying opinions. There are now tradeoffs in the plan, and the Board needs to decide what the committee should address. Merilyn commented that Mike Wilson's statement asking "what do we need to know and when do we need to know it" was important to remember. She does not like depending on models for future impacts. She stated that the Board should go back to some of the values that we initially developed in order to help direct the program. She is not comfortable with the Center for Risk Excellence, and has heard that lots of money was spent for their work. Its process bypassed the large contingent of interests that have been involved with Hanford for many years. She would like the ER committee to look at the Center for Risk Excellence carefully and to examine its role at the site. We need to look forward into what our Board wants to do on this issue. We should not be critical of DOE and the processes they use when we are not sure of the method we will use to evaluate this topic. Merilyn felt that the following questions were important to address: What is our relationship to CRCIA? What is our responsibility to this plan? What advice do we want to give in regard to the money that will have to be spent in the future?

Dirk Dunning, Oregon Office of Energy (State of Oregon), seconded Merilyn's feeling about the Center for Risk Excellence. He stated he agrees with Doug Sherwood that the funding for groundwater/vadose zone program in the ER account should be reduced because it is competing and taking money from ER. Dirk is also skeptical of models. He strongly supports the CRCIA and believes the GW/VZ integration project is not base on the CRCIA despite DOE claims to the contrary.

Betty Tabbutt asked if Ralph Patt would speak to the Board on groundwater/vadose zone work. Ralph Pratt, former Board member and currently a member of the Expert Panel, stated that the document is being reviewed and comments will be given to DOE. The Panel is looking at many issues concerning groundwater and future implications to the river. They are striving to have input from stakeholders and tribes. There are also several sub-panels set up to look at different aspects of the project like risk issues, modeling, and data quality objectives.

AGENDA ITEMS #7 AND #8: PLUTONIUM FINISHING PLANT

Shelley Cimon introduced the draft advice on the Plutonium Finishing Plant (PFP) jointly drafted by the Environmental Restoration Committee and the Health, Safety, and Waste Management Committee. All were invited to the evening informational session on the PFP. Shelley stated that the advice would be discussed the following morning in small groups.

An informational session on PFP was held Thursday evening for Board members and the public. Representatives from PFP, DOE, and the DNFSB spoke about the facility, its mission, and its future. The PFP was designed and built in 1948 and 1949. The end of the weapons production and the shift in mission to stabilization and cleanup of process residue occurred in 1990. In 1996, DOE called for deactivation of the PFP. The facility contains 17.8 metric tons of bulk plutonium-bearing materials. This is a highly toxic material that poses hazards to workers, and if released, the community and the environment. There are multiple safety and monitoring systems at PFP to address worker safety issues. The waste within the plant comes in many forms including buttons, polycubes, oxides, pellets, powders, scraps, and contaminated equipment. Environmental hazards and exposure risks to plutonium are great concerns, as well as national security issues.

Packaging of plutonium into a form that can be shipped to a different facility is a top priority at PFP. Plutonium can become airborne easily and so working with the material is difficult and hazardous. Gloveboxes under negative pressure are used in the PRF Canyon where the various forms of plutonium are put into containers. The current containers are like a metal soup can, but these containers are failing, and alternative methods are being researched. The ideal package would be several layers thick and made of stainless steel. The model being researched uses a screw top which can be tightly closed to prevent plutonium leakage and will provide for 50-years of safe storage. In 1980, a tin can ruptured, and 10 grams of plutonium escaped into the working area. Two operators inhaled the plutonium and four received skin contamination. The total amount needed to clean the area was $640,000. The facility also contains many chemicals in solution that are stored in tanks. The tank which exploded May 1997, had not been regularly monitored, and the chemicals in the tank had evaporated causing the tank to explode. No one was injured in the incident, but it highlighted the necessity to understand the materials stored in the tanks at the PFP facility.

The effort to stabilize the plutonium involves baking the material in small quantities to remove the moisture. The facility has developed an Integrated Management Plan (IMP) which integrates many tasks and processes. DOE and its contractors are reviewing documentation, defining requirements and ensuring that the plan will work in operation. Workers are excited about the restart of the PFP and look forward to moving forward with stabilization, packaging, and shipping plutonium to the Savannah River and Oak Ridge sites.

Another serious area of concern for the PFP is Tank 241-Z-361. This tank was used as a settling tank for 20 years and now contains a large amount of uncharacterized plutonium-contaminated waste. The metal liner on the inside of the tank has been corroded, and immediate action is needed to characterize the tank. A vapor sample will be taken from the tank in February, and core samples are scheduled for June 1999. After the results are analyzed, a plan can be constructed. The turn around time for the samples will be pushed so that a decision can be made as quickly as possible. This is not currently figured in the budget and needs to be addressed as soon as a budget is determined for the tank.

Board Discussion

Gerry Pollet questioned the lack of monitoring of chemicals in the tank which exploded. He stated that, according to the regulators, these tanks should have been checked so that the accident would

never have occurred. The last time the tank was checked was 1994, and monitoring was stopped in 1996. He expressed concern over the nitrate solutions stored currently in the facility. He asked that these tanks be monitored more closely and that PFP comply with RCRA standards. He recommended that a compliance timeline be developed for the PFP.

Pam Brown expressed concern over the schedule for the PFP process for stabilizing plutonium. Because the plutonium is baked in such small quantities, processing will take many years. She asked how the process could be accelerated. PFP representatives responded that they were adding furnaces to the facility and hoped to finish stabilization work by December 2004.

Madeleine Brown commented that she felt Vision 2006 for the PFP stinks. The slide they had presented with nothing but a slab of concrete for the vision was not motivating, and at the very least, the vision should contain some sagebrush. She felt that it is important for workers to have a clear and positive goal to work toward at the PFP.

Doug Huston, Oregon Office of Energy (State of Oregon), recapped the evening PFP session for the Board. The talk discussed the history, hazards, and the path forward for the facility. A DNFSB representative was also there and talked about the relationship of DNFSB to PFP and recommendation 94-1. Doug summarized Gerry Pollet's concern that solutions at the facility were stored illegally in respect to RCRA requirements. Of the $104 million budget at PFP, $80 million goes to maintaining the facility. No technical challenges to proceeding with stabilization have been identified. There was some discussion of the status of TPA milestone development. Another issue raised was where the material would go if it did not meet WIPP standards. The Board was also updated on the testing of Tank 241-Z-361. Construction of the Savannah River facility that was scheduled to receive Hanford plutonium has been delayed for two to three years.

Mike Wilson, Ecology, commented on the piece of the draft advice addressing TPA milestones needed to be created between Ecology and DOE. In his opinion, DOE wants milestones which will validate their schedules, perhaps gaining a regulatory driver for obtaining budget for PFP. He expressed frustration that PFP keeps holding the position that the solutions which contain low levels of plutonium are not classified as waste. He stated that until they could agree on whether they were dealing with a "product" or a "waste", he did not see much hope for progress on TPA milestones. In regards to the budget, DOE needs to look to accounts separate from cleanup to pay for the guards at the PFP. Ecology supports characterization of Tank 241-Z-361.

Doug Sherwood, EPA, noted there has been no attempt to determine if the proposed schedule and work is sound between all parties. Also, a decision on whether DNFSB milestones or TPA milestones will be addressed in the plan should be made. DOE has not attempted to resolve the issue with the regulatory agencies of whether the material is classified as waste or product. Doug is also concerned with performance issues. A PUSH machine Hanford is considering for a $35 million purchase, is not working at Rocky Flats. He agrees that Tank 241-Z-361 needs to be characterized immediately. EPA is involved in this project and would like to see things move ahead.

Dan Ogg, DNFSB, added his perspectives on PFP and DNFSB Recommendation 94-1. There were intense negotiations concerning the schedule putting pressure on DOE to make the DNFSB

milestones meaningful, aggressive, and technically justifiable. There are ten milestones in 1999 and ten milestones that extend over the entire stabilization process at PFP. Dan commented that the large number of milestones this year is related to choosing a technology for the processing and stabilization efforts. These methods will be defined and implementation action taken within the year. The milestones were signed by the Secretary of Energy. Progress at the site will continue to be monitored by DNFSB.

Board Discussion

George Kyriazis, City of Kennewick (Local Government), mentioned that one of the drivers to cleaning up PFP is the mortgage on the facility. He is concerned with the $60 million mortgage cost, and there is no plan showing how to reduce this figure once the facility is cleaned up. Madeleine Brown stated that there are no plans or budget for dealing with Tank 241-Z-361 at PFP, and the severity of the problem is not documented yet.

Merilyn Reeves asked Dan Ogg, DNFSB, if he had any information relating to the risks of solvents stored at PFP. Dan replied that the 4300 liters of plutonium nitrate solutions are at the top of DNFSB's priority list due to risk to the workers. He stated that he did not think there was potential for another explosion because the solutions were packaged in small quantities, were regularly monitored, and were kept in a ventilated spot. If these materials were combined, or the liquids spilled and spread quickly, they could pose a serious safety threat to workers and, thus, they are of top concern.

Norm Buske asked if the milestones for January 1999 were met. Dan Ogg, DNFSB, answered that they were. Ken Bracken asked for a response from DOE to the issues raised by Mike Wilson and Doug Sherwood. Pete Knollmeyer, DOE, stated that the waste is classified as "special nuclear material" and that it is under safeguard by the U.S. government. He stated that RCRA inspections do not apply at PFP. The high risk to workers in the vault when checking on packaged plutonium makes inspections of the material on a regular basis risky. Workers and the public are being protected by putting the material under safeguard controls and the International Atomic Energy Agency controls. The DOE decision of whether or not to call the material waste or product will be decided at DOE-HQ. Pete realizes that TPA discussions broke down over this decision but stated that the regulators are invited to any meetings at PFP. Pete remarked that the back-end of the PUSH machine actually was working at Rocky Flats, and this is the portion of the machine PFP is considering purchasing. DOE-HQ made the decision to transfer the responsibility for guards at the site from the defense budget to environmental management. The money was transferred over to the environmental management budget, so that it hasn't affected funding to other programs.

Paige Knight asked if the inability to negotiate TPA milestones related to the waste vs. materials classification issue. Pete Knollmeyer, DOE, answered that the decision on how to classify the material was a DOE-HQ decision and that it definitely was holding negotiations up. However, if RCRA labels were put on the waste containers they would have to go to a RCRA storage facility, greatly complicating the problems associated with transferring waste. Pete commented that until a location was determined for the material, he believed negotiations to be at a halt.

Gerry Pollet stated that the waste in the PFP facility in cans, bags, and equipment was laced with dangerous plutonium wastes that should be regulated by RCRA standards. The stabilization process needs to be overseen by Ecology and permitted so that emissions are regulated and the best technology is used. The decision was made December 1993, that the plutonium would not be used as a product for weapons. Gerry emphasized that DOE had one year from that date to comply with RCRA, but has not done this yet. The facility is non-compliant, and Ecology inspectors were denied access to the plant after the 1997 explosion. Gerry expressed frustration that the managers at PFP refuse to take responsibility for a chemical that exploded when they had not inspected the solution for many months. DOE had 90 days to remove unused chemicals and has never acted. There are many dangerous materials at PFP, and the focus should be on RCRA regulation of the solutions and mixed wastes. In addition, he stated that a process for meeting compliance milestones and emptying the tanks should be developed.

Betty Tabbutt questioned the budget figure of only $20 million moved to the Environmental Management budget from the defense budget. She stated that the Board was informed it took $80 million to keep PFP safe and operational. She stated that perhaps the total $80 million should have been moved over because Congress is expecting cleanup, and most of the available money is needed for maintenance of the facility. Pam Brown commented that DOE has not made a final decision on where the plutonium will be taken. There have been discussions of vitrification and then transfer to Savannah River for storage, and Pam wondered what DOE had decided. Pete Knollmeyer, DOE, answered that the remaining questions dealt with timing issues and not the transfer of waste. Additionally, the storage facilities need to be built. Pam asked what the local governments and residents need to know in order to respond to an emergency including a terrorist act, at the PFP. Pete answered that the safety analysis document is publicly available. The security personnel examine theft and radiological sabotage to create an analysis of what would be done. However, that plan is classified. Norm Buske stated that the openness comment in the advice did not agree with the information just discussed, and the public involvement group should discuss the openness issue.

Friday morning, the Board discussed PFP issues and the draft advice in small groups. Ruth Siguenza outlined the procedure for the morning session where small groups would discuss the draft advice. Groups would be formed based on the following categories: budget, public involvement, technology, and regulatory compliance and health and safety. Each member would choose a group in which to participate.

Susan Leckband summarized the discussion in the public involvement group. The group suggested several changes in the wording of the advice. They felt that the video produced from the PFP after the explosion was a worker issue rather than a public issue, and that this should be noted in the advice. The group also developed a paragraph which addressed public involvement issues in more detail. They wanted to show that the PFP was a part of the entire site and not a separate entity. They asked DOE to develop a process informing the public of risks associated with the PFP facility. The group stressed the importance of DOE being open about the risks at PFP. The discussion highlighted the fact that the public has distrust in the information they have been provided in the past, and that DOE needs to address this issue. The public needs an educational process and the Board should track this process. Betty Tabbutt added that DOE should learn from the public involvement experiences at the K-Basins where it was identified that the public did not understand enough of the uncertainties in the project.

Madeleine Brown reported the findings from the regulatory compliance and health/safety group. She stated that there were two prevailing themes: Regulation of plutonium-bearing material and concern of safety for the workers. Answers are needed to address regulatory issues that may halt progress, and whether or not a RCRA thermal treatment facility is needed. Another issue was the immediate and long-term risks to the public. The group felt the classification of waste vs. materials should be addressed in the advice. DOE needs to be held accountable, and the Tri-Party agencies must come together to ensure that the plutonium is managed safely. The explosion provides evidence that the facility is not being managed as well as it should. The push to finish work cannot compromise worker safety. Madeleine stated that the radiological, chemical, and industrial risks must all be respected. Also, there is risk to communities, and they deserve information on how to respond to an emergency at PFP.

Doug Huston summarized the technical group's discussion. The group recommended that DOE review technologies with regulator involvement. Any technologies that are considered at PFP should have regulatory approval from the beginning. DOE should also maximize the use of existing technologies and not attempt to create new methods. The most important issue is to get the waste into a stable form which can be stored. Doug stated that an important reason for the advice is that highly toxic, mobile, hazardous material is located in an old facility that was scheduled for decommissioning in the 1970s. The material needs to be moved. The group also recommended that the advice should have more work from the committee level.

George Kyriazis reported the discussion from the budget group. It was suggested that the Board should follow several issues: 1) funding for PUSH vs. alternative equipment, 2) consideration of life cycle costs in out years, 3) contingency, 4) identification of breakthrough thinking, 5) reducing mortgage costs, 6) the priority of PFP in relation to other programs (urgency and risks), and 7) documentation of the funding trails, namely identification of the trail for defense money coming to the environmental management budget. The group suggested some additions to the draft advice to address the issues they discussed.

Board Discussion

Charles Kilbury, City of Pasco (Local Government), stated that there was a lack of communication with local communities. He recommended including the necessity of communicating with stakeholders in the advice. Dick Belsey, Physicians for Social Responsibility (Local/Regional Public Health), asked who the advice was directed toward, and what the Board had done in the past concerning the PFP, and why the advice needed to be written immediately. Louise Dressen, EnviroIssues, stated that there has been no formal advice given by the Board in the past.

Gerry Pollet remarked that the lack of forthrightness by the DOE managers at PFP was awful. In his opinion, asking DOE to provide an educational process is expecting failure. He continued that a reason for regulatory oversight is to create legally-mandated information access and the opportunity for state, tribal, and public input to decisions. The public demanded in the 1990s that DOE designate the material at PFP as waste, and this decision is still pending. DOE was forced to prepare an EIS, and since that time no good information has surfaced. Betty Tabbutt stated that the public involvement group discussed the issue concerning the public's need to hear about the impass

with the regulators and the impact it may have on worker and public safety. The educational process should also involve the regulators.

Dick Belsey stated that the PFP facility is not a standard canyon. Safety hazards and other expenses necessary to minimize the chance of an accident is attributable to the structure of the facility. He commented that the structure should enter into the risk calculation.

After deliberation and revision of the draft advice the Board adopted the advice for transmittal to the Tri-Party Agreement agencies.

AGENDA ITEM #9: SITE-SPECIFIC ADVISORY BOARDS MEETING

Merilyn Reeves stated that the HAB is expected to participate in two upcoming national meetings. The first will be held at the Savannah River site; where Merilyn will attend. Most of the issues on the agenda are not new. Merilyn asked that the Board advise her on topics they see important to raise.

She stated that one key issue to be addressed was Environmental Management Integration. She would like to have more discussion on transferring waste. Joe Richards mentioned an article about public participation out of the Federal Facilities Environmental Journal written by Jim Owendoff. He was frustrated with DOE's idea of public participation and felt that it created a good discussion point for Merilyn at the upcoming SSAB meeting.

The second meeting is a transportation workshop to be held at Fernald. Merilyn Reeves stated that the Nevada workshop attended by several Board members was productive and that important information was addressed. The problem was that DOE tried to get consensus from all of the Boards relating to the waste management Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (PEIS). The Fernald workshop is patterned after this workshop, and Hanford was invited to send up to five representatives. Ken Niles could add his transportation expertise at the workshop, and Merilyn hopes that he will attend. The agenda is not yet determined, it could deal with transportation or it could focus on issues involving the materials to be transferred. Merilyn has expressed concern to DOE-HQ that the national meetings are seen by DOE as a means to gain consensus that leads to agency decision making.

Ken Niles stated that he hopes to get the transportation workshop agenda clarified at the SSAB meeting, as either a transportation focus or a focus on distribution of waste. The issues have very different requirements. Max Power, Ecology, commented that at the end of the Savannah River meeting, the facilitators would meet to discuss the workshop. Nanci Peters commented that the tribes would like Merilyn to listen for routes that would impact tribal reservations and emergency preparedness and response along those routes. Merilyn commented that she was not sure that DOE had actually heard the messages given at the Nevada workshop. It may be worthwhile to mention that DOE should look again at these comments for the transportation workshop. Ken Niles stated that it might be valuable to have an informational session for the full HAB to discuss transportation issues on the March agenda.

AGENDA ITEM #10: UPDATES

Doug Sherwood, EPA, provided an update on the EPA remedy review board for the K-Basins. Presentations were made on the TPA milestones and the path forward for the K-basin progress on January 11, 1999. The presentation contained an overview of cleanup and stressed the importance of cleaning along the river. This was the most costly project ever reviewed by the agency. The main message that came from the Remedy Review Board was to look closely at the life cycle cost of the sludge project. If the sludge is put in tanks it may cost more to vitrify in the future, and other potential solutions should be examined carefully. The Remedy Review Board is a national review board put together with a senior project manager, plus representatives from each headquarters organizations that deals with remedies and alternative cleanup solutions.

Merilyn Reeves asked what the Washington Advisory Council was and how they were involved with groundwater/vadose zone work. Doug Sherwood stated that it is another expert panel for the groundwater vadose zone project mandated by DOE-HQ. The group will examine Hanford groundwater vadose zone issues as well as complex wide issues. It could influence the Hanford budget, but that is unconfirmed. Merilyn asked that the Environmental Restoration Committee check into the group.

Merilyn Reeves reminded the Board that there would be consensus advice on the Fiscal Year 2001 budget for consideration at the March meeting. The draft advice will be available shortly after that March 4th. There will also be draft consensus advice coming from the Public Involvement Committee relating to TPA agency response to public comments. This advice should be available soon.

Attachments

1. Attendees

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