

June 8, 2001

Keith Klein, Manager
U.S. Department of Energy, Richland Operations
P.O. Box 550 (A7-50)
Richland, WA 99352

Chuck Findley, Acting Regional Administrator
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 10
1200 Sixth Avenue
Seattle, WA 98101

Tom Fitzsimmons, Director
Washington Department of Ecology
P.O. Box 47600
Olympia, WA 98504-7600

Re: B Reactor Engineering Evaluation and Cost Analysis

Dear Messrs. Klein, Findley, and Fitzsimmons

The 105-B facility was the world's first full-scale production reactor. Because of its historical significance, the facility has been listed in the National Register of Historic Properties. The American Society of Mechanical Engineers declared it a National Historic Mechanical Engineering Landmark, the American Nuclear Society has presented it the Nuclear Historic Landmark Award, and the American Society of Civil Engineers has designated it a National Historic Civil Engineering Landmark.

At present, public access to the reactor is limited but ongoing. Since the late 1980's guided tours have been led through portions of the facility, and interpretive items and displays are exhibited along the tour route.

The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) has legal obligations not only for cleanup of 105-B Reactor but also for meeting historic preservation legal requirements. DOE's strategic plan states "B Reactor will become a museum." That outcome is also consistent with DOE's comprehensive land use plan Environmental Impact Statement.

The Record of Decision on the disposition of Hanford's first eight reactors called for deferred one-piece removal of the reactors' cores after up to 75 years. But the Record of Decision recognized that some portions of the B Reactor may need to be

preserved because of that reactor's historic significance. If B Reactor is maintained as a museum in the long term, the preferred alternative will need to be revisited.

The Hanford Advisory Board recommends that cleanup and remediation at the 105-B facility be accomplished in ways that do not preclude future uses as a museum and/or interpretive center. The Board makes the following specific recommendations:

Engineering Evaluation Cost Analysis - Specific Advice

1. The Tri-Parties should select an alternative that permits the long-term historic preservation of the 105-B facility structure and contents.
2. The Board supports the preferred alternative for the engineering evaluation and cost analysis (EE/CA). The preferred alternative is "Hazards Mitigation for Public Access"--continuing surveillance and maintenance, mitigating hazardous substances, and allowing public access into additional portions of the facility.
3. The Board urges the Tri-Parties to establish milestones to incorporate B Reactor hazard mitigation into the work plan of the Tri-Party Agreement
4. Cleanup funding should pay for hazard mitigation at B Reactor, however funding for museum functions such as interpretation and visitor accommodations should come from other funding sources.
5. DOE must ensure the EE/CA fully addresses and quantifies the reactor's radiological, industrial, and biological risks. In that process DOE should involve the workers who have experience at the reactor.
6. DOE should ensure the cleanup alternatives cover the full range of preservation and interpretation alternatives.
7. The Board recommends DOE promptly open a dialogue with the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service about the relationship of the B Reactor with the Hanford Reach National Monument. Since the Monument planning process is just beginning, these efforts need to be coordinated from their outset.

Future Management and Interpretation Advice

8. The Board urges DOE to integrate decisions about B Reactor's disposition with its long-term stewardship plans.
9. DOE should ensure that a wide range of viewpoints is reflected in interpreting

the B Reactor's story. An appropriate mechanism for doing so should be developed as soon as possible, with full and open public involvement.

10. DOE should make the B Reactor accessible to members of the public of all ages and nationalities, with minimal restrictions.

Very truly yours,

Todd Martin, Chair
Hanford Advisory Board

cc: Carolyn Huntoon, Department of Energy Headquarters
Wade Ballard, Deputy Designated Federal Official
The Oregon and Washington Congressional Delegations
Michael Gearheard, Environmental Protection Agency
Greg Hughes, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Department
Allyson Brooks, State Historic Preservation Officer
Gene Weisskopf, B Reactor Museum Association

This advice represents HAB consensus for this specific topic. It should not be taken out of context to extrapolate Board agreement on other subject matters.