

September 5, 2003

Roy Schepens, Manager
U.S. Department of Energy, Office of River Protection
P.O. Box 450
Richland, WA 99352

Re: Supplemental Technology Testing Downselect Decision

Dear Mr. Schepens,

The Hanford Advisory Board (Board) was recently informed of the Department of Energy-Office of River Protection's (DOE-ORP) timeline for making a decision as to which potential alternative technologies proceed to further, more detailed testing. These supplemental technologies could be used to immobilize the majority of the low-activity tank waste, which could then be disposed of on-site. Because of this, the Board, and Hanford stakeholders in general, have a vital interest in ensuring that decisions concerning which of these technologies will be finally used are made in the most rigorous, objective, and fair fashion.

The Board is very disappointed that the currently proposed schedule leaves no time for Board input prior to the decision being made. **The Board advises:**

- DOE-ORP move this decision date back to December 1, 2003, a change of two months;
- The Washington Department of Ecology move the due date for the M-62-08 milestone to April 4, 2005, in order to allow DOE-ORP the same amount of time in which to conduct the additional testing.

The use of supplemental technologies represents a significant deviation from previously expressed public values which envisioned vitrification of all the tank wastes. These supplemental technologies are being considered to immobilize the majority of the low-activity tank waste. This, and the fact that these immobilized low-activity wastes will be disposed of on-site, requires that the public be involved in an on-going basis in the evaluation and downselect process and that public values be a part of this process.

The Board would also like to provide to DOE-ORP some of its **overarching principles** with regard to tank waste supplemental technologies:

- The performance capabilities of any supplemental waste form must be at least as good as borosilicate glass.

- As a general principle, the wastes to be immobilized by supplemental technologies should be the lowest-risk wastes.
- The minimization of environmental impacts by secondary waste streams, including airborne, liquid, and solid streams, should be a decision criterion.
- The costs for testing of any supplemental technologies must not result in any delays in the start of Waste Treatment Plant operations.
- The testing and decision process should be scrupulously fair, transparent, and as objective as possible.

We look forward to receiving pertinent information such as cost and waste performance data, and to working together to achieve tank waste treatment at Hanford.

Sincerely,

Todd Martin, Chair
Hanford Advisory Board

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.

cc: Keith Klein, Manager, U.S. Department of Energy Richland Operations Office
John Iani, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 10
Tom Fitzsimmons, Washington State Department of Ecology
Marla Marvin, Deputy Designated Federal Official, U.S. Department of Energy
Michael Gearheard, Environmental Protection Agency
Michael Wilson, Washington State Department of Ecology
Martha Crosland, U.S. Department of Energy Headquarters
The Oregon and Washington Congressional Delegations

U.S. Senators (OR)
Gordon H Smith
Ron Wyden

U.S. Senators (WA)

Maria Cantwell
Patty Murray

U.S. Representatives (OR)

Earl Blumenauer
Peter DeFazio
Darlene Hooley
Greg Walden
David Wu

U.S. Representatives (WA)

Brian Baird
Norm Dicks
Jennifer Dunn
Jay Inslee
Richard Hastings
Rick Larsen
Jim McDermott
George Nethercutt
Adam Smith

State Senators (WA)

Pat Hale
Mike Hewitt

State Representatives (WA)

Jerome Delvin
Shirley Hankins