



John Wagoner, Manager
Department of Energy, Richland Operations
PO Box 550 (A7-50)
Richland, WA 99352

February 2, 1996

Dear Mr. Wagoner:

Re: 3161 Workforce Restructuring and the Health, Safety, and Dignity of the Hanford
Workforce/Social Economic Impacts (HAB Consensus Advice #39)

The Hanford Advisory Board has reviewed the cost, socioeconomic and potential mission impacts of the impending downsizing at the Hanford site. The HAB is concerned that the long and seemingly unending work force restructuring being applied at Hanford has stressed and demoralized the workforce to a point of extreme risk to the success of the Hanford Mission. We are concerned for the health, safety and dignity of the workforce as the downsizing continues. The HAB believes the methods and timing of any workforce reductions are critical. Whenever such a reduction of force (ROF) is determined to be necessary at Hanford, affirmative measures should be taken to first minimize the impacts it may cause to the health and safety of Hanford workers and the safety of Hanford's mission.

The long-term cost and mission strategy then should be given the next priority over short-term budget challenges. This is consistent with prior HAB advice: "workforce stability" was recommended in HAB Consensus Advice #4, September 22, 1994 and endorsed as a priority as published in John Wagoner's "9 priorities."

The Hanford Advisory Board, therefore, advises the Department of Energy to offer an enhanced retirement program at Hanford before using other means of workforce reductions. We believe this method of ROF will have the least impact on the health, safety, and dignity of workers. We are certain this approach will also minimize the impact on the economy of the local community.

As natural attrition and the inevitable retirement of critically skilled employees occurs, DOE should aggressively take measures to assure potentially qualified younger employees are groomed to replace those individuals retiring and respond to their essential tasks. An enhanced retirement program, tempered with a provision for allowing a phased departure of the eligible and critically skilled employees to mentor their successors, will lessen the need to recruit new employees in the near future. (This will also build hope and the morale of the current workforce, providing incentive to better achieve Hanford mission objectives.)

A precedent for a follow on enhanced retirement program has already been initiated at the Savannah River site and for DOE employees. We have also been advised that up to six hundred eligible Hanford employees may participate. If we can get a sizeable number of eligible employees to retire, it would substantially reduce the number subjected to an involuntary reduction of force which ultimately will cost as much and possibly more than an enhanced retirement.

The Hanford Advisory Board's Health Safety & Waste Management and Dollars & Sense Committees are also requesting an update of the Department of Energy's implementation of 3161 and an appraisal of the resulting socioeconomic impact on the community.

Thank you for your cooperation. The Board looks forward to your response.

Very truly yours,

Merilyn Reeves, Chair
Hanford Advisory Board

cc: WDOE
EPA
Chuck Clarke, EPA
Mary Riveland, Ecology
Thomas Grumbly, Department of Energy
Cindy Kelly, Designated Federal Official
Linda Lingle, Site Representative
The Oregon and Washington Congressional Delegations

enclosures: Workforce Reduction Analysis
Pension Plan - Plan Number 001

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HAB Consensus Advice #39

Subject: 3161 Workforce Restructuring and the Health, Safety, and Dignity of the Hanford Workforce/Social Economic Impacts

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