



00-WMD-062

[Advice # 102](#) From: Keith A. Klein

Ms. Marilyn B. Reeves, Chair
Hanford Advisory Board
723 The Parkway, Suite 200: B1 -41
Richland, Washington 99352

Dear Ms. Reeves:

RESPONSE TO HANFORD ADVISORY BOARD (HAB) ON POSSIBLE TRANSFER OF LOW-LEVEL (LLW) AND MIXED LOW-LEVEL WASTE (MLLW) TO HANFORD

In reference to your letter to me, same subject as above, dated February 4, 2000, a concern was raised that the then-pending Record of Decision (ROD) for the U.S. Department of Energy, (DOE) Richland Operations Office (RL), Waste Management Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (WM PEIS) would identify Hanford as one of the preferred disposal sites for LLW and MLLW. As the issues concerning the importation of these wastes to Hanford have generated considerable stakeholder concern, the HAB advice urged an adequate opportunity be provided for public education and involvement.

We believe such opportunity has now been given. In response to public comments, DOE believes it provided adequate opportunity for public education and involvement during the process of reaching the decisions that are presented in the ROD, which was issued shortly after your letter. DOE provided a 150-day public comment period for the WM PEIS and received more than 1,500 comments. The final WM PEIS responded to these, including those received from the HAB and interested Hanford stakeholders. In addition, since publication of the final WM PEIS, DOE has continued to share information and discuss the decisions in various public forums. The then-pending decision was among the topics discussed in the Intersite Discussions convened by the League of Women Voters in the Summer of 1998 and in a LLW Seminar sponsored by the Nevada Citizens' Advisory Board in August 1998, both of which were attended by members of the HAB. Further, DOE issued a September 1998 Information Package on Pending LLW and MLLW Disposal Decisions which was provided to all site-specific advisory boards, including the HAB.

In a separate letter, the HAB also advised that no offsite wastes be disposed of in LLW burial grounds on the Hanford Site until regulators determine whether waste previously disposed of there has been accurately characterized as LLW and not MLLW. This issue is considered site specific and was beyond the scope of the WM PEIS ROD. However, this issue has been previously addressed by RL in its response to HAB letter #103 dated February 4, 2000. The RL response is contained in letter 00-WMD-058 dated March 28, 2000.

RL recognizes the stakeholder interest in national equity for the disposal of nuclear materials in general, and disposal at Hanford in particular. As decisions are made concerning specific waste management issues at Hanford, RL will continue to seek stakeholder and regulatory agency input. In particular, the

Hanford Site Solid (Radioactive and Hazardous) Waste Program Environmental Impact Statement (SW EIS), currently under development, will be made available for public comment prior to issuance of a Record of Decision. RL previously announced its Intent to Prepare the SW EIS in the Federal Register (62 FR 55615) on October 27, 1997. Public scoping meetings have been conducted and the HAB briefed as the NEPA review progresses. Since then, the full HAB has been briefed by three senior RL managers on the subject and the Health, Safety, and Waste Management Committee has been periodically updated with the most recent update being provided on May 10, 2000. RL will continue to make available all information concerning the importation of waste to the Hanford Site. In particular, the complete draft and final Hanford Site SW EIS with supporting appendices, as well as a Technical Information Document, which contains the specific technical and engineering information upon which the environmental analyses were based, will be made available for public comment.

Recent discussions have been initiated between the Governor of the State of Washington and the DOE concerning this issue. On May 10, 2000, following a meeting with Washington State Governor Gary Locke and Attorney General Christine Gregoire, Secretary of Energy Bill Richardson volunteered to unilaterally commit to no shipments of waste to Hanford from new sources while DOE works to resolve contract issues concerning the high-level tank waste clean-up mission. Also, the state and DOE will continue to discuss longer-term commitments regarding the shipment of waste into the state. It is anticipated that these agreements will be formalized in writing by June 2000. It is hoped that the further discussions will lead to an agreement that is acceptable to the DOE and addresses the concerns of the state, local, and Tribal governments and the local stakeholders.

RL shares your commitment to ensuring that Hanford cleanup is performed in an expeditious, safe, technically sound, and equitable manner. We will continue to engage the HAB as we move forward with our waste management activities. This and previously issued HAB advice on this subject will be considered prior to any final decisions concerning the importation of waste from offsite sources. If, at any time, you wish to discuss this matter further, this issue can be placed as a discussion item on the agenda of either the Health Safety and Waste Management Committee monthly meeting or the full HAB meeting, and RL will provide an update on the current status of the SW EIS or related decisions, as appropriate.

If you have questions, please contact me, or your staff may contact Todd Shrader, Waste Management Division, on (509) 376-2725.

Sincerely,

Keith A. Klein
Manager

WMD:TAS

cc: C. L. Huntoon, EM-1
A. L. Dressen, EnviroIssues
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D. Silver, Ecology

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For questions or comments, please send [email](mailto:Hanford_Advisory_Board@rl.gov) to Hanford_Advisory_Board@rl.gov

Response to HAB Advice #102 (February 3-4, 2000)

*Subject: HAB Consensus Advice on Possible Transfer of Low-Level & Mixed Low-Level Waste to Hanford
Letter from Keith Klein, dated June 12, 2000*

URL: <http://www.hanford.gov/boards/hab/response/102.htm>

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