



Hanford Advisory Board

Executive Summary
November 5-6, 1998
Richland, Washington

OFFICE OF RIVER PROTECTION

The Board discussed the Office of River Protection (ORP), which was created in FY99 appropriations legislation and is intended to be a small, focused, self-contained office responsible for all of the Tank Waste Remediation System (TWRS) program. Three senior executive positions will be created to lead the ORP, including the ORP manager, a tank farms assistant manager, and a privatization assistant manager. The ORP manager will report directly to EM-1 and will be responsible for hiring the remaining staff; the need for 29 additional staff has been identified by DOE-RL. An executive board will be established to provide additional management attention at the Secretarial level. The ORP is not expected to affect the Tri-Party Agreement. The Washington Department of Ecology (Ecology) supports creation of the ORP and the opportunity it provides to accomplishing environmental goals.

The Board discussed a number of issues and questions surrounding the ORP and agreed to add this to the agenda for the next meeting and to potentially consider input to the 90-day implementation plan being developed by DOE.

K BASINS/SPENT FUEL

The Board heard about the revised Spent Fuel baseline. Improved baseline controls have decreased budgetary needs by \$18 million in the past year and baseline estimates have been aligned with Tri-Party Agreement (TPA) and Defense Nuclear Facility Safety Board milestones. The FY99 budget is \$173 million, which is \$38 million short of the requested \$211 million. The total cost estimate for the work previously discussed under the baseline is \$1.586 billion and incorporation of transition activities increased the total estimate to \$1.7 billion. The project has been extended by 23 months, with the start date for fuel removal occurring 16 months later than originally planned. Progress is being made on construction of the Canister Storage Building, the Cold Vacuum Drying process, fuel retrieval equipment, and the Multi-Canister Overpack load-out system and all construction is scheduled to be completed by the end of FY99. EPA is continuing to work closely with the project on cost control, schedule commitments, and resolution of issues such as sludge treatment and disposition.

TWRS

The Board was briefed on the agreement between the Secretary of Energy and Washington State to enter into a consent decree on single-shell tank stabilization. A joint agency technical team, including DOE, Ecology and contractors, is developing a work schedule that should be completed by mid-December and will be incorporated in the consent decree upon completion of public review. The TPA agencies are also negotiating an approach to integrating groundwater/vadose zone integration activities in the tank farms with the development of closure plans. The Board also received reports on a General Accounting

Office investigation and a House Commerce Committee hearing on Hanford's tank waste program.

The Board discussed and approved the establishment of a Tank Waste Treatment Ad Hoc Committee to address issues in the next 6-24 months relating to TWRS vitrification, including TPA negotiations, 30% design, regulatory submittals, and negotiation of the Phase B2 contract for construction and operation of a vitrification plant. The ad hoc committee will develop a work plan and work with the Executive Committee on funding needs.

ENVIRONMENTAL RESTORATION STATUS

The status of the Environmental Restoration Program was reviewed by the Board. Accomplishments since 1994 include the deletion of the 1100 Area and partial deletion of the North Slope and ALE from the National Priorities List, start of full-scale remediation along the River, the Environmental Restoration Disposal Facility, N Reactor deactivation, C Reactor interim safe storage, and pump and treat systems for five groundwater plumes. HAB advice is needed on future uses for the 200 Areas, including what constitutes a successful cleanup for the 200 Area, acceptable scenarios for groundwater containment and protection, requirements for workers, institutional controls, and implications for technology development. Board advice is also needed on disposal options for difficult wastes, including fuel spacers, failed pumps and equipment, long-length equipment from single-shell tanks, and other highly radioactive materials. Other future issues include what to do with mixed wastes for which there is no effective treatment and technology development relating to the vadose zone.

KEY HAB POLICY ISSUES/ COMMITTEE WORK PLANS

The Board reviewed its activities on key policy issues identified at its workshop in December 1998 and affirmed that it will continue to focus on tank waste vitrification, spent fuel, budgets, managing for results, intersite waste transfers, protection of the River, worker safety, and high-risk facilities in FY99. The Board discussed the need to look more closely at the tribal nation treaty rights and to review cleanup standards, including exposure scenarios, risk assessments, and future land uses.

The Board also reviewed draft work plans for FY99 prepared by each of the committees and identified several additional items for committee consideration.

FY99 BUDGET ALLOCATION

Final numbers for the FY99 budget allocation are not yet available, but the Board learned that EM received all but \$5 million of the \$5.607 billion requested from Congress. DOE-RL's request was \$1.005 billion (18% of the EM request), excluding privatization and its share of national programs. The FY99 budget is now broken into different control points, including closure projects, project completion, and post-2006. An additional \$15 million was allocated for tank farm operations and interim safe storage of the reactors. On the privatization account, DOE-RL was reduced by \$230 million from the DOE-RL request. EPA and Ecology are concerned about DOE-HQ taxes, the vadose zone money from DOE-HQ, shortfalls in the outyears, and the commitment to privatization.

The Smith rider in the FY99 appropriations set a target for PHMC overhead reductions,

required use of the savings for additional cleanup, and called for a Defense Contract Audit Agency (DCAA) review. DOE has been doing all of these things for the past 2-4 years. Last year's PHMC's performance agreements resulted in a \$20 million cost savings. The FY98 baseline for overheads was \$273 million but the actual costs were \$255 million. For FY99, the baseline is \$253 million and there is a performance agreement to pay fee if costs are reduced to \$225-240 million. The Dollars and Sense Committee will continue to monitor the progress on this issue but is pleased with the progress made.

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

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