

Hanford Advisory Board
Final Meeting Executive Summary
April 5-6, 2001

BOARD RESTRUCTURING PROPOSAL

The Board considered a restructuring proposal that included the creation of an Issue Management Group for Board agenda-setting involving rotating issue managers; a limit to one leadership position per member or alternate; a two-committee limit per member or alternate (excluding the Public Communications Committee); a regularly-scheduled committee week on the second Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday of the month; and assignment of lead committees for Board work on a variety of issues. Minor changes and clarifications to the advice process were also adopted.

Todd Martin, Chair, (Public-at-Large), shared a draft set of expectations for the various roles associated with the Hanford Advisory Board (HAB). It was decided to have the new leadership group finalize the document for distribution to all members and in the orientation package for new members. It will be presented at the June Board meeting.

SITE-SPECIFIC ADVISORY BOARD ACTIVITIES

Ken Bracken, Benton County (Local Government), is drafting a letter on behalf of all advisory boards on full funding for cleanup to be sent to Secretary Abraham. Because of the timing of the letter, Ken asked the Board to authorize Todd Martin to sign the letter when it is ready using his judgment based on input from the Board at this meeting. The Board agreed. Ken will distribute the final letter to all members. Todd was authorized to sign the letter on behalf of the HAB as long as there are no objections to the final letter from any Board member.

A second letter on long-term stewardship was also considered. This letter is being sent to the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) Headquarters concerning Site-Specific Advisory Board (SSAB) developed stewardship principles. In February 2001, there was an expectation by the SSAB chairs group that Todd Martin would sign the principles on behalf of the HAB. He could not without HAB authorization. The Board authorized Todd to sign the letter on behalf of the HAB. Gordon Rogers objected but did not demand that his objection preclude Todd from signing the letter.

CLEANUP PROGRESS UNDER THE TRI-PARTY AGREEMENT - A MID-YEAR REVIEW

The mission of the U.S. Department of Energy - Office of River Protection (DOE-ORP) includes both tank farm operations and building the vitrification plant. Tank safety issues are being addressed, but there is a difference of opinion on the need for more double shell tanks. Some milestones related to construction of the vitrification plant will

be missed. Other milestones need to be adjusted because of changes in the new contract. A letter has been sent from DOE-ORP to the regulators outlining the discrepancies between the contracts and the Tri-Party Agreement (TPA) and asking for discussions. A baseline is being established to integrate the work and make the necessary changes. This should be done by June. The Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology) is not inclined to change the vitrification plant milestones at this time because of the unknowns. Near-term progress is good, but there is a concern about meeting the 2018 date.

Milestones relative to the K Basins are in flux because of the change in strategy. Agreement has been reached for milestones covering installations of Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) groundwater monitoring wells for 2001. This issue is negotiated on a yearly basis, and the number of wells to be monitored in 2002 and 2003 is still to be negotiated. Negotiations are also under way for milestones relative to the various waste streams coming out of the Plutonium Finishing Plant. A waste management plan covering a long-term strategy for transuranic waste, transuranic mixed waste, and low-level mixed waste has been submitted to the regulators and is not under negotiation.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is looking at reducing the number of site investigations in the 200 Area and using the cost savings for cleanup. EPA would like the Board's help examining scenarios for waste management in the 200 Area and the buffer zone. Decisions have to be made before the Remedial Investigation/Feasibility Study process can be finished, and cleanup levels can be defined. EPA would like to set earlier dates for cleanup along the river for the 100 and 300 Areas. However, an extension will probably be necessary for the 200 Area operable unit remediation. In addition, milestones are needed for the N Reactors. The transuranic waste management plan is in dispute. EPA has received DOE's latest project management plan, but the change package is still outstanding.

BUDGET ADVICE

The Board adopted budget advice addressing a number of issues, including DOE's mandate to request the full funding of the TPA milestones and the need to clearly understand and communicate how funding levels relate to cleanup progress, TPA milestones, and the increasing compliance gap.

PAST BUDGET ADVICE

The Board approved a letter to DOE-Headquarters transmitting past HAB budget advice in an attempt to impact the budget rollout on April 9, 2001.

CONTRACT ADVICE

Board members expressed concern regarding the lack of discussion of the new river corridor contract Request for Proposal with the HAB. Specifically, concerns were raised

that the contract will specify end points different from TPA or regulatory requirements. The Board adopted advice stating that contracts should direct contractors to perform TPA work scope as it exists at the time the contract is executed, not based on hoped-for modifications.

LOW-LEVEL WASTE BURIAL GROUND TRENCHES ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Board members expressed concern about inadequate notification and comment time for the environmental assessment for expansion of the trenches in the low-level waste burial grounds. The U.S. Department of Energy - Richland Operations Office (DOE-RL) said the comment period cannot be extended because of the nesting season of migratory birds and need to proceed with the work soon. Fundamental issues will be addressed as part of the Hanford solid waste environmental impact statement coming out later this year. The Board approved a letter to be sent to DOE-RL requesting an extension of the comment period.

TRI-PARTY AGREEMENT AGENCY RESPONSES TO HAB ADVICE

The HAB received a response from Keith Klein, DOE-RL, outlining several actions DOE is taking to mitigate the layoffs at Fluor Hanford. The issue manager, Jeff Luke, said the response did not address the Board request to identify workers in low priority jobs and give them the opportunity to be reassigned. This issue was referred to committee for further work.