



Hanford Advisory Board

Revised Meeting Summary

September 4-5, 1997
Richland, Washington

This is only a summary of issues and actions in this meeting. It may not represent the fullness of ideas discussed or opinions given, and should not be used as a substitute for actual public involvement or public comment on any particular topic unless specifically identified as such.

Executive Summary

Summary of the Boards Meeting

- Announcements Made Throughout the Meeting
- Welcome and Introductions
- Approve July Meeting Summary
- Funding Issues and Workout Meeting
- ERDF Expansion
- Public Comment
- Focus on 2006, Accelerated Cleanup Plan
- Tank Waste Remediation System
- TWRS Vadose Zone Characterization
- PHMC Performance Evaluation
- Public Comment
- Updates
- Progress on Upcoming Meetings
- Revised M-34 Change Package-Spent Fuel Program
- Corrective Actions Related to Accident at Plutonium Reclamation Facility
- Public Comment

Note: Attachments are numbered according to the order they are mentioned in the summary. The attachments that were distributed at or before the Hanford Advisory Board meetings are not routinely distributed with this summary. If you need a copy of an attachment, please request it from Colette Casey or Donna Sterba at Technical Resources International, 509-943-1804 or Enid Reck at Fluor Daniel Hanford, Inc., 509-376-5856.

Executive Summary

Funding Issues and Workout Meeting

Budget updates for FY98 and FY99 were presented and initiatives from a DOE managers workout meeting in Salt Lake City in July were summarized. The focus was on achieving compliance and cleanup in a reduced funding environment. Concerns were raised that work deferrals were being touted as efficiencies. The NAB also discussed a new approach to delivering a message on the importance of Tri-Party Agreement (TPA) compliance.

ERDF Expansion

The Environmental Restoration and Disposal Facility will reach its capacity in August 1999. A proposal has been made to develop two additional disposal cells at the facility. Also discussed were more efficient ways to treat the waste at ERDF versus at the operable unit. Board members expressed concern that ERDF may be seen by other sites as a viable disposal solution for their waste. The Board adopted advice to reinforce the commitment that ERDF waste is for Hanford waste only and recommend that DOE consider the full costs of waste disposal when comparing alternative waste disposal technologies. It is Consensus Advice #75.

Public Comment

Norb Drouhard, downwind farmer, asked the Board to remember that there are Hanford Downwinders who need to be represented on the Board. He expressed concern over nuclear production and stressed the need for nuclear disarmament.

Bernice Mitchell expressed concern over non-responsiveness to her phone calls to DOE management. She also expressed concern over privatization and oversight issues.

Focus on 2006, Accelerated Cleanup Plan

Representatives from DOE-Headquarters joined the Board meeting via telephone and the plan to obtain public comment on the Focus on 2006 Plan was outlined. Concern was expressed by regulators and Board members that the funding levels in the Focus on 2006 Plan prevent the site from full compliance with the TPA. Additional concerns were expressed over the vagueness in the Plan regarding inter-site waste transfers. The Contractors Integration Report for the DOE complex was discussed. Board members approved a formal letter requesting the opportunity to comment on the Contractors Integration Report, as it recommends transfer of waste from other sites to Hanford. The letter also transmitted a summary of previous advice on the Focus on 2006 Plan.

Tank Waste Remediation System

Budget impacts on the TWRS program as a result of funding shortfalls have identified potential work deferrals and a strong need for improved efficiencies. The current compliance scope for FY98 is projected at \$376 million while current funding is \$308 million. To address the shortfall, DOE is proposing to refocus the TWRS program on preparations for retrieval and immobilization of tank waste. Board members expressed concern once again that work scope deferrals were being portrayed as efficiencies.

TWRS Vadose Zone Characterization

The status of vadose zone activities was discussed. DOE is extending a borehole in the SX Farm to determine the depth of contamination in the vadose zone. Many concerns were expressed by Board members, including drilling another borehole when adequate characterization and modeling are not taking place, and inadequate funding for this high priority issue. An Ecology employee and a DOE subcontractor employee presented their concerns on the vadose zone characterization program.

PHMC Performance Evaluation

The Project Hanford Management Contract (PHMC) is undergoing its first performance review cycle.

Contractor fees were explained in detail as were PHMC philosophies. Members of the Dollars and Sense Committee outlined issues with the contract that were discussed with Al Alm, including contractor layering and associated indirect and overhead costs, environmental, safety and health, cost savings initiatives, outsourcing, and enterprise companies. The Board approved a letter transmitting these concerns. The Committee will prepare draft advice for the November Board meeting.

Public Comment

Bill Clarkson expressed concerns about the employment stability of enterprise company employees and TRIDECs ability to recruit businesses that can use the skills of the area. He noted that temporary staffing is being provided by outside companies.

Bernice Mitchell commented that Hanford has lost its focus on cleanup. She does not believe that the HAB Public-At-Large members represent the public and asked why TRIDEC has a seat on the Board. She called for a review of the 3161 money and asked to be placed on the Board to represent the black constituency.

Updates

The TPA M-44 (tank characterization) and M-45 (Tank 106-C sluicing) change requests are currently in the dispute resolution process. At issue is whether the proposed changes are safety driven or financially driven. DOE is confident that the disputes will be resolved.

Upcoming Meetings

The first Openness workshop will be held October 8 in Richland. The regional pilot workshops will be held October 20-23 in Portland, Richland, Spokane, and Seattle. Oregon Focus Groups will take place September 17 and 18 in Pendleton and Portland. These are by invitation but are open to the public. The Health of the Site meeting is on schedule for December 3-4. The Hazardous Materials Management and Emergency Response (HAMMER) Project will be conducting a Dedication and Training Technology & Education Exposition on September 24-26.

Revised M-34 Change Package Spent Fuel Program

The spent fuel program is now projecting a delay in the start of fuel retrieval to July 1999. The 14-month delay is to resolve safety, quality assurance and design issues affecting process equipment testing and to provide more time for personnel training.

Corrective Actions Related to Accident at Plutonium Reclamation Facility

A PHMC/DOE review team presented information on the latest findings from the investigation into the explosion at the Plutonium Reclamation Facility. Corrective actions, including those focusing on emergency notification to local governments began immediately. An employee advocate position has been created to focus solely on workers exposed during accidents to ensure proper emergency and medical procedures are followed. Secretary Peña has implemented complex-wide improvements, not only in emergency preparedness, but also in the overall monitoring of chemicals at DOE sites. Several Board members expressed the need for an independent investigation.

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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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