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For Immediate Release

DOE'S SRS STRONG IN COMPLIANCE, CONTINUES LOW RADIATION IMPACT, ACCORDING TO 2006 ENVIRONMENTAL REPORT

AIKEN, S.C. (Oct. 2, 2007) – SRS again was exemplary in environmental compliance during 2006, and its operations continued to result in minimal radiation impact to the off-site public, according to the *SRS Environmental Report for 2006*. The 150-page annual report and accompanying CD are being released to the public this week.

“We are pleased that the report confirms the Department’s commitment to environmental compliance and safety and health best practices at this DOE site,” said Jeff Allison, DOE’s Savannah River Operations Office manager. “This report shows that the Site’s radioactive and chemical discharges to air and water were below regulatory standards for environmental protection and public health protection during 2006. It also shows that the Site’s air and water quality met appropriate standards, and the radiation dose caused by SRS discharges was smaller than natural background doses or safety-based dose standards.”

SRS environmental reports have been produced for more than 50 years. Copies are distributed to government officials, universities, public libraries, environmental and civic groups, news media, SRS employees and various interested individuals.

Based on its strong showing in a number of major audits, the site operated for the entire 12-month period covered by the environmental report with only two Notices of Violation (NOVs) from its primary regulator—the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control—and none from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Neither of the two NOVs received in 2006 resulted in a penalty or fine.

The report notes that the largest radiation dose a maximally exposed individual (MEI) could have received from SRS operations in 2006—except sportsmen who hunt on site (22 millirem) and fish at the mouths of SRS streams (0.52 millirem)—was estimated to be 0.20 millirem, far less than 1 percent of the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) all-pathway dose standard of 100 millirem per year. (A millirem is a standard unit of measure for radiation exposure.)

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The WSRC Team:

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This calculated MEI dose also is extremely small compared with the natural average dose of about 300 millirem per year to people in the United States. Although the 2006 all-pathway dose is greater than the 2005 dose of 0.13 millirem, the increase is attributed primarily to greater diffuse and fugitive releases of unspecified alpha- and beta-emitters generated by the one-time General Separations Area Consolidated Unit project. Because the project was completed in 2006, its source term will not be a factor in future dose calculations.

Environmental monitoring is conducted extensively within a 2,000-square-mile network extending 25 miles from SRS, with some monitoring performed as far as 100 miles from the site. The area includes neighboring cities, towns, and counties in Georgia and South Carolina. Thousands of samples of air, rainwater, surface water, drinking water, groundwater, food products, wildlife, soil, sediment, and vegetation are collected by SRS and state authorities and analyzed for the presence of radioactive and nonradioactive contaminants.

“I’m pleased that this reports reflects the tremendous amount of clean-up work ongoing at the Savannah River Site,” said Leo Sain, President of the Washington Savannah River Company, the site’s operating contractor. “We operate a very far-reaching monitoring program, and we provide our stakeholders with a documented record of our environmental stewardship. We continue to show that we can carry out our missions with little impact to the environment.”

SRS’s compliance with environmental regulations and with DOE orders related to environmental protection also provides assurance that on-site processes do not adversely impact human health or the environment. For example, the site had a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) compliance rate of 99.9 percent in 2006, which matched its 2005 performance and continued a trend of improvement by bettering the 99.8 percent rate of 2004 and the 99.7 percent rate of 2003. The NPDES program protects streams, reservoirs, and other wetlands by limiting the release of nonradiological pollution into surface waters. Discharge limits are set for each facility to ensure that SRS operations do not negatively impact aquatic life or degrade water quality.

The report is available in hard-copy format and on a CD located inside the back cover of the report. The CD also includes extensive data tables referenced in the report—as well as annual reports from a number of other site organizations. The environmental report also can be accessed on the World Wide Web at the following address: <http://www.srs.gov/general/pubs/ERsum/index.html>

(more)

Page 3
Environmental Report

To receive a copy of the 2006 report and CD, call or write:

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