



**Department of Energy**  
Richland Operations Office  
P.O. Box 550  
Richland, Washington 99352

10-HAB-0013

OCT 04 2010

Ms. Susan L. Leckband, Chair  
Hanford Advisory Board  
Enviroissues Hanford Project Office  
713 Jadwin, Suite 4  
Richland, Washington 99352

Dear Ms. Leckband:

HANFORD ADVISORY BOARD (HAB) ADVICE #230, "HANFORD LONG-TERM STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM PLAN," DATED APRIL 9, 2010

This letter is in response to the HAB's subject advice letter (enclosure 1). The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) appreciates the HAB's continued interest and willingness to share their insights on this program.

DOE received more than 100 feedback items on the Plan. They ranged from simple editorial changes to more substantive comments, regarding topics such as the transfer of land to the DOE Office of Legacy Management, the incorporation of Natural Resource Damage Assessment (NRDA) requirements, and the Comprehensive Land Use Plan. Based on this feedback, we added additional explanation and clarifying language to the plan. DOE also received comments that are outside the scope of this plan, regarding issues such as alternate cleanup end states and funding alternatives. Those comments were provided to the appropriate DOE project office.

Responses are organized by the HAB's advice categories.

#### **Site Ownership**

**Advice:** The Plan should address the possibility that federal ownership and/or control of the Site in perpetuity may not be realistic. The Board advises that the Plan and related decision documents offer, in addition to the assumption of perpetual federal ownership, scenarios that assume a loss of federal control/ownership. The viability of the Plan should be evaluated under these scenarios.

**Response:** DOE anticipates that the Hanford Site will remain under Federal management and control for the foreseeable future. The Long-Term Stewardship (LTS) Program Plan is a living document, and will be updated as the LTS Program matures through the experience that will be gained through implementing LTS program activities over time. Updates will also be made as requirements are defined in future cleanup decision documents such as Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act (CERCLA) Records of Decision.

### **Federal Management of Long Term Stewardship Property and Mobile Hazards**

**Advice:** The LTS Plan should address DOE responsibility, obligations and plans to respond to contamination that, over time, may migrate beyond the Site boundaries. This discussion should also include the response for credible natural or man-made events or processes. Any previous agreements or future plans to coordinate with local and state governments regarding monitoring and emergency response procedures should be discussed.

**Response:** The Plan has been revised to clarify that DOE retains liability as the potential responsible party, as required under CERCLA. The Plan addresses contingency planning in Section 4.7. LTS activities include responding to natural or made-made events and emergency situations. Examples include the unexpected deterioration of a physical control that could impact human health and the environment, extreme weather conditions, and the identification of previously undiscovered contamination. Site contingency plans and procedures will remain in effect after remedial cleanup actions are completed.

**Advice:** The Plan should clarify actions that will be taken to address changes in the Site mission, including an expanded role as an interim or long-term storage site for the Waste Treatment Plant produced glass logs and the spent nuclear fuel currently in storage at the Canister Storage Building.

**Response:** The DOE remains committed to meeting its obligations to manage and ultimately dispose of spent nuclear fuel and high-level radioactive waste. The Administration recently convened a "blue ribbon" panel of experts to evaluate alternative approaches for meeting these obligations. The panel will provide the opportunity for a dialogue on how best to address this challenging issue.

**Advice:** The Plan should clarify the process of transitioning land between managing agencies between DOE offices and site contractors. This process should be fully explained and illustrated in the Plan.

**Response:** The revised LTS plan clarifies the transition process from the cleanup program to the LTS Program as well as a discussion on the relationship between the DOE Richland Operations Office LTS Program and the DOE Office of Legacy Management.

**Advice:** The Plan should clarify actions that will be taken and the capability it will have to address the discovery of further or previously unidentified contamination after remediation activities have been completed and the area turned over to the LTS Program. These actions would include potential future record of decision (ROD) amendments to return areas to an active remediation status.

**Response:** The revised LTS Program Plan includes additional text on the steps that DOE will take should previously unknown contamination be discovered. They include addressing emergency and immediate safety needs, notifying appropriate entities, conducting an initial investigation, and developing and implementing the appropriate regulatory response actions.

**Advice:** The Plan should fully explain the implications of Natural Resource Damage Assessments decisions to LTS operations and remedy cost.

**Response:** The revised Program Plan clarifies that the NRDA process may include the identification of long-term monitoring and maintenance requirements. Although the NRDA process is separate from the LTS Program, the Program will be responsible for any required monitoring and maintenance that may result from final restoration activities.

### **Funding of Long-Term Stewardship Obligations**

**Advice:** The Plan should thoroughly detail all stewardship-related costs, and develop specific procedures for a real cost accounting (e.g. cumulative non-discounted cost) in addition to the Net Present Value (NPV) approach. DOE is required by Office of Management and Budget to perform an NPV analysis of the costs of LTS. The effect of this NPV method is that stewardship actions beyond thirty years will appear to cost nothing. This approach is clearly inconsistent with our vision of reducing or eliminating costs to future generations. Given the extremely long periods involved with LTS and the annual nature of the Congressional budget process, an improved method which accurately describes the real costs of LTS should be adopted for use in the remedy selection process.

**Response:** One of the responsibilities of the LTS Program is to request adequate funding for LTS activities (discussed in the Plan). Costs associated with the various cleanup remedies are identified and evaluated as part of the CERCLA cleanup process and not part of LTS. Chapter 4 has been revised to include more information on the process for estimating LTS costs, including actual costs based on future cleanup program estimates.

**Advice:** The Plan should review other methods to fund LTS actions over the period of performance, i.e., alternatives to annual Congressional appropriations. The Board would like assurance that LTS responsibilities of federal and state agencies will be adequately funded in the future.

**Response:** DOE will continue to request funds to support its long-term obligations in accordance with its statutory and regulatory requirements. DOE activities are funded by Congress through its annual appropriation process.

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**Advice:** If significant levels of plutonium contamination are present in areas under LTS, the Plan should reflect the need and the associated costs for active security or continuous human presence on the Site. (The Plan primarily discusses routine passive surveillance and maintenance.) Importantly, the Board reasserts its vision that all hazards be removed.

**Response:** The revised LTS Plan reflects the need for safeguards and security to be evaluated as part of the LTS Program activities so that adequate funding is identified, if required.

#### **Remedy Reviews: New Information and Technologies**

**Advice:** The Plan should ensure new information and technologies that could improve the remedy be periodically assessed, possibly as part of the five-year review process. The Plan should discuss how it would support these technology developments, identification and implementation activities.

**Response:** As a dynamic, active, and flexible program, the Program is set up to address issues as they arise and incorporate lessons learned. The performance of LTS activities will be continually evaluated to look for ways to improve (see Section 4.15 of the LTS Program Plan), including ways to implement new technologies.

**Advice:** The Plan should describe the process for adopting newly developed remedial and monitoring technologies into existing RODs, especially those that involve returning to an active restoration phase.

**Response:** RL will address continuous process improvement by identifying issues as they arise and using lessons learned. Improvements will be identified through efforts such as continued benchmarking with other sites and the evaluation of advances in science and technology for their potential to increase efficiency and effectiveness.

**Advice:** The Plan should describe the processes for estimating the reliability of institutional controls and adopting new mechanisms in a manner analogous to failure analyses for engineered controls. The Plan should ensure incorporation of these processes into existing RODs and inform successive remedy revisions.

**Response:** The LTS Program will conduct surveillance and maintenance of the selected cleanup remedies and institutional controls to ensure continued protection of human health and the environment. As part of its surveillance and maintenance activities, DOE evaluates the effectiveness of institutional controls and takes corrective actions to address any deficiencies that may be identified, in accordance with the cleanup decision documents.

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### **Information/Knowledge Management**

**Advice:** The Board advises accelerated development of the Hanford Long-Term Stewardship Information Management Plan (LTS IM Plan). The Plan recognizes that a viable information management program is a critical component of the LTS Program. The LTS IM Plan should:

- Actively involve tribes and stakeholders in its scope and development.
- Seek opportunities to pool resources and integrate with existing legacy waste information management programs. These efforts should reflect an awareness of potential benefits/costs of collaborative strategies.
- Identify and pursue strategies that take advantage of significant historical facilities that could perpetuate public memory of past production, remediation, and future stewardship of the Site. The National Park Service study to establish a Manhattan Project National Historic Park is such an opportunity.

**Response:** The revised LTS Program Plan includes additional information on the approach that will be taken to information management, including incorporating LTS information management into the overall Hanford Site Information Management Program. This program will ensure that the appropriate records are retained for future generations. The LTS Program Plan includes a transition checklist (which is built off of the Office of Legacy Management Site Transition Framework) that will be one of the tools used to identify the information that must be retained for LTS purposes. DOE is committed to continued collaboration with the Tribal Nations, HAB, and stakeholders in the development of the LTS Program, especially the information management component and the potential use of historical facilities for the preservation of Hanford information.

**Advice:** In order to ensure that LTS information is not lost to future generations, DOE should continue the moratorium on record destruction and develop a plan to preserve historical records.

**Response:** The decision for the Hanford Site moratorium on destruction of records is outside the scope of the LTS Program, however, as stated previously in this letter, the LTS program does include a mechanism for identifying and maintaining information that is relevant to the LTS program.

Again, we appreciate the Board's interest and advice on the Hanford LTS Program Plan. The LTS Program Plan was updated and published after consideration of the feedback received on the draft plan. Enclosed (enclosure 2) is the final Hanford Long-Term Stewardship Plan and is also available at [http://www.hanford.gov/files.cfm/Final\\_LTS\\_Program\\_Plan.pdf](http://www.hanford.gov/files.cfm/Final_LTS_Program_Plan.pdf).

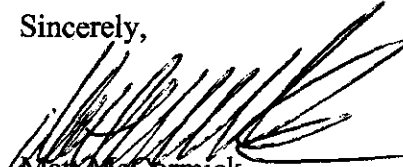
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If you have any questions, please contact Paula Call or Boyd Hathaway at (509) 376-2048 and (509) 376-7340, respectively.

Sincerely,



Matt McCormick  
Manager

OCE:PKC

Enclosures:

1. HAB Advice #230
2. Hanford Long-Term Stewardship Program Plan

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