

HANFORD ADVISORY BOARD

A Site Specific Advisory Board, Chartered under the Federal Advisory Committee Act

Advising:

US Dept of Energy
US Environmental
Protection Agency
Washington State
Dept of Ecology

November 6, 2009

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Russell Jim
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Re: Updating the Tri-Party Agreement Community Relations Plan

Public Health

Margery Swint

Dear Ms. Olinger, Mr. Brockman, Ms. Zehm, and Ms. Pirzadeh,

University

Doug Mercer
Gene Schrekhise

Background

Public-at-Large

Norma Jean Germond
Keith Smith
Bob Parazin
Bob Suyama

As described in the introduction to the Hanford Site Tri-Party Agreement (TPA) Public Involvement Community Relations Plan, the document not only “outlines the public participation processes implemented by the Tri-Parties . . . ,” but also serves as “one of the overall public participation plans guiding public involvement at the Hanford Site.” Further, it is suggested that the Community Relations Plan also serves as a guide for the development of “additional project-specific, public participation plans” as needed.

**Regional Environ-
ment/Citizen**

Todd Martin
Greg deBruler
Paige Knight
Gerald Pollet

State of Oregon

Barry Beyeler
Ken Niles

In 2002, Hanford Advisory Board (Board) Chair Todd Martin more specifically noted that “the Plan . . . is a necessary and useful tool for both the public and the Tri-Party Agencies to: 1) explain how and where to get information about Hanford; 2) introduce people who are actively involved in cleanup (including government agencies, tribes, and Board members); 3) plan and give notice for public involvement activities, and 4) provide mechanisms to evaluate and improve the TPA public involvement process.”

Ex-Officio

Confederated Tribes
of the Umatilla
Washington State
Department of Health

EnviroIssues

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HAB Consensus Advice # 225

Subject: Updating the TPA Community Relations Plan

Adopted: November 6, 2009

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The Board urges the Tri-Party Agencies to identify specific actions and commitments in the Community Relations Plan that reflect the intent to seek out and engage the public in meaningful ways upon which they can rely. To more effectively meet these goals, to strengthen the document's overall organization, readability, and usefulness, and to affirm the commitment of the Tri-Party Agencies to actively inform and engage the public, the Board advises the Tri-Party Agencies to edit, update, and revise the Community Relations Plan to address the following recommendations.

Advice

Concerning the **Community Relations Plan Content**, the Board advises the Tri-Party Agencies to:

- Expand the general statement about the desired outcomes of public involvement/public outreach efforts and processes, and the nature of the importance and commitment of the Tri-Party Agencies to those efforts and processes.
- Identify specific actions and commitments in the Community Relations Plan that reflect the intent to seek out and engage the public in meaningful ways.
- Include a strategic public involvement plan as an appendix to the Community Relations Plan that identifies specific actions and commitments to increase participation in decision making.
 - The Tri-Party Agencies should develop the strategic plan in collaboration with the stakeholders to include measurable goals for involvement by identified audiences and stakeholders. The strategic plan should also include objectives, tasks and tools to accomplish those goals for upcoming decisions for a two to three year planning horizon.
 - Include an operational statement outlining the general expectations and performance goals of the strategic plan, and how the plan will be developed.
 - Schedule an annual review and update of the strategic plan and engage stakeholders, the Board and the public in the annual review.
- Cite specific commitments to encourage and support public notice and engagement beyond the minimum legal requirements where possible.
 - Provide an opportunity to hold a public meeting during comment periods when ten or more people request a public meeting.
 - Clearly identify how to request a public meeting on an issue of importance, where such public meetings can be held, and the typical format for such meetings.
 - Clarify the mechanics of public notification.

- Provide a minimum advanced public notice of 45 days when possible prior to public meetings.
- Given that dialogue between decision-makers and those who comment is a fundamental building block for credible, defensible cleanup decisions, describe how comments and responses generated by public meetings will be used by the Tri-Party Agencies and how the Tri-Party Agencies will publish them for the public to access. The Board advises that the Tri-Party Agencies provide their responses to public comment two weeks prior to formal decisions.
- Identify commitments to provide public access to project information and records necessary for effective public involvement.
- Increase and sharpen the various performance goals of the Community Relations Plan.
 - Add specific content supplements: Update the glossary, acronym list, and agency contacts.
 - Provide an annotated list of items and concepts typically misunderstood, such as consent decree, consent order, meeting, hearing, open meeting, and significant interest.
- Insert an appendix item on evaluating public involvement activities. For example, see pages two through five of the Hanford Advisory Board White Paper on public involvement.
- Include a general description and discussion statement on how the science and technology roadmap informs decisions at Hanford.
- Include a description and discussion of the Environmental Protection Agency's Environmental Justice Program as it relates to public involvement at Hanford.

Concerning the **Community Relations Plan structure**, the Board advises the Tri-Party Agencies to:

- Revise the general background information in the Community Relations Plan to focus on organizing the text to emphasize specific topics — Hanford Geography, Hanford Geology, Hanford Demographics, Hanford History, Board History, Board processes and procedures — with an effort to move the reader from entry level information to more specific, more detailed information and resources through appropriate internet links.
- Identify the purpose and audience of the document as well as provide clearer links to the guiding regulatory documents — the TPA, the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act, the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, the Model Toxics Control Act — and the portions of those documents that pertain to public involvement.

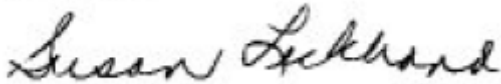
- Reproduce graphs, site drawings, or photos used to illustrate specific topics on the pages where they are referenced. A general site map supplemented with smaller geological or geographic work site maps will help.

Concerning **technical and mechanical aspects of the Community Relations Plan**, the Board advises the Tri-Party Agencies to:

- Emphasize the accurate use of standard American English.
- Reduce inconsistencies in word choice, sentence and paragraph structure that create problems with coherence and unity.
- Employ a more predictable use of sidebars, section/paragraph heads/labels, and the fonts used to signal various content features of the document.
- Identify embedded links to websites, publications, and information sources in a manner that does not detract from one's reading of the document, but alerts the reader to important support material.
- Encourage the application and use of new and evolving communication technologies as they come into use by the general public.

The Board looks forward to continuing to work with the Tri-Party Agencies on the draft Community Relations Plan to better meet the needs of the public, the stakeholders and the Tri-Party Agencies.

Sincerely,



Susan Leckband, Chair
Hanford Advisory Board

This advice represents Board consensus for this specific topic. It should not be taken out of context to extrapolate Board agreement on other subject matters.

cc: Steve Pfaff, Co-Deputy Designated Official, U.S. Department of Energy, Office of River Protection
Doug Shoop, Co-Deputy Designated Official, U.S. Department of Energy, Richland Operations Office
Dennis Faulk, Environmental Protection Agency
Jane Hedges, Washington State Department of Ecology
Catherine Brennan, U.S. Department of Energy Headquarters
The Oregon and Washington Delegations