

February 2, 2001

Keith Klein, Manager
U.S. Department of Energy, Richland Operations
P.O. Box 550 (A7-50)
Richland, WA 99352

Subject: Fluor Hanford Worker Layoffs

Dear Mr. Klein,

The Hanford Advisory Board believes that worker morale is an integral part of the clean-up effort. Pursuant to that value, at the HAB's February 1 and 2 meeting, the Board discussed the recent announcement from Fluor Hanford regarding worker layoffs to be announced in April.

The Board would like to reaffirm the advice that was adopted February 22, 1996 concerning Workforce Restructuring and the Health, Safety, and Dignity of the Hanford Workforce/Social Economic Impacts (Advice #39). In part, that advice reads:

“The HAB is concerned that the long and seemingly unending work force restructuring being applied at Hanford has stressed and demoralized the workforce to a point of extreme risk to the success of the Hanford Mission. We are concerned for the health, safety and dignity of the workforce as the downsizing continues. The HAB believes the methods and timing of any workforce reductions are critical. Whenever such a reduction of force (ROF) is determined to be necessary at Hanford, affirmative measures should be taken to first minimize the impacts it may cause to the health and safety of Hanford workers and the safety of Hanford's mission.”

Based on available information regarding the Department of Energy's (DOE) contract extension with Fluor, it is the Board's understanding that Fluor is intending to layoff up to 300 workers who are assigned to work tasks deemed low priority. As you will read in the attached summary of the Board's discussion, Board members believe that DOE-RL should urge Fluor to 1) immediately identify the work that has been identified as low priority under the contract extension and 2) give workers assigned to low priority work the opportunity to transfer to high priority projects as skills and training allow.

We urge you to consider worker health, safety, and morale in all decisions undertaken for the Hanford Site.

Sincerely,

Todd Martin
Chair

cc: Carolyn Huntoon, Department of Energy Headquarters
Martha Crosland, U.S. Department of Energy Headquarters
Chuck Findley, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 10
Tom Fitzsimmons, Washington Department of Ecology
Wade Ballard, Deputy Designated Federal Official
The Oregon and Washington Congressional Delegations
Michael Gearheard, Environmental Protection Agency, Region 10
Michael Wilson, Washington Department of Ecology

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