

# HANFORD ADVISORY BOARD

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

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US Environmental  
Protection Agency  
Washington State Dept  
of Ecology

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April 4, 2008

James Rispoli  
Assistant Secretary for Environmental Management  
EM-1/Forestral Building  
U.S. Department of Energy  
1000 Independence Avenue  
Washington, D.C. 20585

Re: Site Coordination Technology Group

Dear Mr. Rispoli,

Convened in the early to mid nineties across the Department of Energy (DOE) complex, Site Technology Coordination Groups (STCGs) worked to communicate technology issues among the site projects, providing a forum for communication between other DOE sites, Environmental Management Headquarters and technology providers.

STCGs were an important forum for regulators, contractors, the public, stakeholders, the States and the Tribes, to participate in the evaluation and possible implementation of technologies. At Hanford, we saw collaborative advocacy for technology deployment. The work of the STCGs collectively addressed the goals of accelerating schedule, enhancing safety and reducing the cost for various site projects.

A couple examples of successful advocacy from this forum include the corrosion probe, utilized in reducing caustic conditions in tanks and better corrosion protection of the double-shelled tanks and focus on vadose zone remediation technologies for protection of groundwater and the Columbia River resources.

When the STCGs were eliminated in 2003, the Board saw a loss of momentum and coordination for addressing the identified needs of the Hanford Site. We also lost the only forum for stakeholders to learn about technology needs and discuss technology priorities for the site. Today, because of stakeholder and tribal insistence with congressional direction, we are currently experiencing a renewed momentum for groundwater cleanup and protection of the Columbia River. Still, there are multiple problems identified in that earlier forum which have not been addressed today.

HAB Consensus Advice #204  
Subject: Site Coordination Technology Groups  
Adopted: April 4, 2008  
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The Office of Science and Technology should champion this renewed effort by funding support staff as an integrated part of the Science and Technology Roadmap, issued February 14, 2008. We suggest that the DOE might work collaboratively with the newly formed Office of Communication to focus these dialogues. Quarterly meetings focused on local technology needs at each site, rather than the monthly meetings of the past initiative, would be more cost and resource effective. The Pacific Northwest Site Office should be actively engaged in these meetings.

Quarterly site meetings, coupled with twice-yearly programmatic meetings, on various issues could enhance further cross-fertilization of effort from site to site. The meetings should provide an exchange of needs, technologies and approaches to performance predictions among technical experts, regulators, stakeholders and tribal nations. Advancing the state of knowledge and identifying knowledge gaps by sharing lessons learned and case studies throughout the DOE complex will amplify the success of the Science and Technology Roadmap effort.

The STCG forum was also a conduit for a more extensive technology search and has the potential to strengthen cleanup through implementation of multiple technologies. It also was an excellent opportunity for managers from different programs and contractors from different sites to explore multiple uses of the same technology and to identify obstacles to deploying technologies.

The Site Specific Advisory Board Chair's letter dated December 8, 2006, Recommendation to include Public Participation in Technology Development and Deployment at DOE Sites, also spoke to the concerns we are addressing. In a letter of response dated January 4, 2007, you acknowledged the merits of further discussing how best to achieve the objective of public participation in the development and deployment of new remediation technologies. We have yet to see discussion or implementation of a process to achieve this very important objective.

Advice:

- The Hanford Advisory Board (Board), once again, urges the reinstatement of the Site Technology Coordination Group (STCG) at Hanford (HAB Advice #156).
- The Board also recommends reinstating STCGs at all DOE sites where there is significant cleanup and remediation work in progress.
- The STCGs should be managed under the auspices of the Office of Engineering and Technology as an integrated part of the Science and Technology Roadmap effort.

- The DOE should fund staffing needs for this forum. We believe that the benefits of the STCG efforts will result in cost savings and/or improved remediation performance for Federal cleanup activities.
- Once the STCG is reinstated, DOE should explore methods to provide incentives to its contractors to consider the deployment of relevant new technologies developed by other sites, agencies, universities and the private sector.

Sincerely,



Susan Leckband, Chair  
Hanford Advisory Board

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*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.*

cc: David Brockman, Manager, U.S. Department of Energy Richland  
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