



Changes Proposed to Hanfords Tri-Party Agreement Fast Flux Test Facility Transition Milestones

U.S. Department of Energy ● U.S. Environmental Protection Agency ● Washington State Department of Ecology

Background

The FFTF is a 400 megawatt sodium-cooled nuclear reactor that operated from 1982 until 1992 to test advanced fuels and materials in support of the national Liquid Metal Fast Breeder Reactor Program. The plant also produced a variety of medical and industrial isotopes, including tritium, and provided research and testing of components and systems for advanced power systems.

When efforts to identify a long-term mission for the FFTF were unsuccessful, the USDOE began activities in 1993 to transition the plant to a safe, shutdown condition. The FFTF was placed under the Tri-Party Agreement in 1994 and some of the transition milestones have been completed.

In January 1997, former Secretary of Energy, Hazel O'Leary, announced that the FFTF would be maintained in standby condition, pending an evaluation of the reactor for possible use in the agency's tritium production strategy. If the USDOE decides not to include the FFTF in the strategy and to resume shutdown activities, it is the intent of the USDOE that the Office on Nuclear Energy, Science and Technology, will establish and maintain the management and funding responsibility for FFTF starting in Fiscal Year 1999 through shutdown.

To provide additional information for the tritium decision process, economic and technical feasibility reviews of tritium for defense purposes and medical isotope production are being performed under the direction of the USDOE Richland Operations FFTF Standby Project Office. Safety and environmental analyses are also being conducted which could support future National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requirements.

In December 1998, or earlier, USDOE is expected to make a decision on whether or not FFTF operations will be carried as an alternative to be evaluated under an interim tritium production Environmental Impact Statement.

Request for Public Comment

The Tri-Party agencies are requesting your review and comments on proposed changes to Tri-Party Agreement milestones for the Fast Flux Test Facility (FFTF).

The proposed modification deletes existing FFTF transition milestones and targets from the Tri-Party Agreement. This change is proposed because: (1) FFTF is no longer in transition. The FFTF transition program was halted on issuance of the USDOE's decision to place the reactor in a standby (operational) mode during consideration of whether or not FFTF will play a role in the nation's tritium production strategy. This decision was not a Tri-Party Agreement decision. It was made by the Secretary of Energy on behalf of the USDOE. (2) The pending decision as to whether or not FFTF will play a role in the nation's tritium production strategy is an important decision, but is not a decision that will be made by the Tri-Party agencies. This decision is the responsibility of the Secretary of Energy and will be based on a NEPA process. (3) Day to day waste management issues are not addressed through the Tri-Party Agreement. Should these types of environmental compliance issues arise during the interim period of consideration, they will be addressed as part of Ecology's sitewide compliance assurance efforts.

To request a copy of the proposed modifications and reference documents, or to submit comments either written or electronically, contact:

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Proposed Changes

As a consequence to the FFTF standby condition, transition activities have been suspended that would have supported completion of existing Tri-Party Agreement milestones and target dates.

The proposed change to modify the existing Tri-Party Agreement M-81 series milestones and M-20-29A milestone is to reflect the FFTF's current standby condition. The change would allow all activities required during the standby condition to proceed without jeopardizing a potential future mission for the FFTF.

The proposed change would delete the current FFTF transition program from the Tri-Party Agreement scope. Should the Secretary decide that FFTF is to resume shutdown, a subsequent Tri-Party Agreement change and approval by the Tri-Party agencies would be initiated reflecting the Secretary's decision.

How You Can Be Involved

The proposed modifications and associated information may be reviewed at the Public Information Repositories listed below. A copy of the document describing the proposed modifications may be accessed on the Internet at:

www.hanford.gov/tpa/tpahome.htm

Commitment to Public Involvement

The Hanford Advisory Board, regulators, local and state officials in Washington and Oregon, and Tribal nations are among the groups that will continue to receive briefings on the FFTF Standby Project on a requested basis. If USDOE decides to include the FFTF in the tritium production strategy, the agency will consult with the public, complete safety environmental reviews and comply fully with NEPA and other applicable requirements. The agency will consult with the public prior to any final decision to use FFTF for production.

Public Meetings

Hood River, OR	Portland, OR	Seattle	Richland
Hood River Inn Gorge Room 1108 E. Marina Way Public Meeting 7:00-9:30pm February 12, 1998	Oregon State Office Bldg. 1 st Floor Conf. Rm 800 NE Oregon Public Meeting 7:00- 9:30pm January 14, 1998	Seattle Center Northwest Rooms Rainier Room 305 Harrison St. Public Meeting 7:00- 9:30pm January 20, 1998	Federal Bldg. Auditorium 825 Jadwin Ave. Public Meeting 7:00-9:30pm January 22, 1998

Effected Milestones and Target Dates with Proposed Changes			
<i>Milestone</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Due Date</i>	<i>Proposed</i>
M-81-00	Complete FFTF Facility Transition and initiate the surveillance and maintenance phase.	12/31/2001	Delete
M-81-00-T02	Complete transfer of Irradiated Fuel to Dry Cask Storage.	10/31/98	Delete
M-81-00-T03	Complete transfer of unirradiated fuel to the Plutonium Finishing Plant.	10/31/98	Delete
M-81-00-T04	Complete transfer of special fuel to the Idaho National Engineering Laboratory for consolidated storage.	10/31/98	Delete
M-81-00-T05	Complete auxiliary systems deactivation.	3/31/2001	Delete
M-81-02-T01	Submit sodium disposition evaluation report/decision point.	6/30/98	Delete
M-81-03	Submit FFTF End Point Criteria document.	12/31/98	Delete
M-81-04	Complete FFTF Sodium Drain.	3/31/2000	Delete
M-81-04-T01	Complete reactor and heat transport system sodium drain.	4/30/98	Delete
M-81-04-T02	Complete interim decay storage vessel and fuel storage facility sodium drain.	12/31/98	Delete
M-81-05	Submit FFTF Surveillance and	6/30/2001	Delete

	Maintenance Plan.		
M-81-06	Complete polychlorinated biphenyl Transformer disposal.	9/30/2001	Delete
M-20-29A	Submit sodium storage facility and sodium reaction facility closure plan or request for procedural closure as defined in section 6.3.3 of this Tri-Party Agreement to EPA and Ecology.	12/31/99	TBD

Public Information Repository Locations			
Seattle	University of Washington Suzzallo Library Government Publications Room (206) 543-4664 ATTN: Eleanor Chase	Spokane	Gonzaga University Foley Center East 502 Boone (509) 328-4220 Ext. 3844 ATTN: Tim Fuhrman
Portland	Portland State University Branford Price Millar Library Science and Engineering Floor (503) 725-3690 ATTN: Michael Bowman	Richland	USDOE Public Reading Room Consolidated Information Center, Room 101L Washington State University, Tri-Cities (509) 372-7443 ATTN: Terri Traub

For more information, call the Hanford Cleanup toll-free line at 1-800-321-2008, or contact:

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For questions or comments, please send [email](mailto:Ernest_J_Hughes@rl.gov) to Ernest_J_Hughes@rl.gov
URL: <http://www.hanford.gov/tpa/docs/m-81/fftfocus.htm>
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