

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

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September 7, 2007

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Jay Manning, Director
Washington State Department of Ecology
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Re: S-102 Tank Spill Investigation

Dear Ms. Olinger, Mr. Brockman, Ms. Miller and Mr. Manning,

On July 27, 2007, a spill of High Level Nuclear Waste tank sludge occurred at the S-102 tank resulting in a High Radiation Area and High Contamination Area. The Hanford Advisory Board (Board) appreciates the factual briefing of the event provided by U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) - Office of River Protection (ORP) and CH2M Hill staff, and is pleased that event investigations are on-going.

Some of the preliminary results provided during the briefing concern the Board. It appears that procedures directing notification of off-site personnel are based upon confirmed rather than potential releases. The Board is concerned about this delayed notification of the potential release by over eight hours. The lack of timely notification, which may affect the response and protection of public and worker safety, should be independently reviewed. Important lessons learned from previous incidents appear to have been lost, as some of the procedural and response errors that apparently occurred in this incident had been previously identified as

shortcomings in past incidents. Additionally, some procedure violations may have occurred.

In an effort to help communicate stakeholder's values for the investigation's final product, the Board provides the following advice:

Board Advice

- The Board recommends and supports independent investigation(s) of the leak event that focus on worker and public safety, immediate and long-term emergency response and notification issues, and identification and dissemination of appropriate lessons learned.
- The Board looks forward to the investigation results including the full response and investigation costs. The Board advises DOE-ORP ensure lessons learned are fully communicated and incorporated into operations in a manner that ensures workers now and in the future will benefit from them.
- The Board advises the results of these investigations be communicated to the public concerned with the cleanup.

In closing, the Board looks forward to working with the Tri-Party Agencies on effective public communication and involvement regarding this issue.

Sincerely,



Susan Leckband, Chair
Hanford Advisory Board

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: Elin D. Miller, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 10
Jay Manning, Washington State Department of Ecology
Nick Ceto, Environmental Protection Agency
Jane Hedges, Washington State Department of Ecology
Doug Frost, U.S. Department of Energy Headquarters
The Oregon and Washington Congressional Delegations