

# HANFORD ADVISORY BOARD

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

**Advising:**

Dec 6, 2002

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

Roy Schepens, Manager

U.S. Department of Energy, Office of River Protection

P.O. Box 450

Richland, WA 99352

**CHAIR:**

Todd Martin

**CO-VICE CHAIRS:**

Ken Bracken  
Shelley Cimon

Subject: Waste Treatment Plant and Supplemental Technologies

Dear Mr. Schepens,

**BOARD MEMBERS:**

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the Umatilla  
Washington State  
Department of Health

The Department of Energy's Office of River Protection (DOE-ORP) has taken a positive step toward reducing risk and accelerating vitrification by adding a second high level waste (HLW) melter to the Waste Treatment Plant (WTP). The Hanford Advisory Board (Board) has always supported efforts to expedite and accelerate tank waste treatment in order to reduce risk. The Board believes the greatest risk reduction is achieved by vitrifying the most tank waste possible. Thus, "acceleration" efforts should not come at the expense of the overall vitrification capacity of the WTP which currently is two HLW and three low activity waste (LAW) melters. DOE is currently contemplating the delay of installing the third LAW melter to add the second HLW melter.

DOE maintains the footprint of the WTP will allow the future addition of LAW melters. History tells us that attempts to increase vitrification capacity at a later date will cost more than maximizing capacity today. In order to better understand DOE's rationale, the Board asks DOE to provide the cost of adding a second HLW melter; what cost is avoided by deleting a third LAW melter; and the cost of adding the third LAW melter at a later date.

Washington State permitting authorities have indicated that adding vitrification capacity after the plant has been constructed will likely involve a lengthy permitting process. This too, then, will delay and increase the cost of maximum HLW and LAW waste vitrification.

As DOE moves forward with WTP design and construction, contracts should not be based on assumptions or plans that the majority of the LAW will not be vitrified. Decisions to utilize technologies other than vitrification should be made only after engineering and environmental analyses with public input. The recently negotiated Performance-Based Incentives between DOE-ORP & CH2M Hill Hanford Group for identifying and evaluating alternative disposal forms for LAW should be funded only after the WTP is funded at its maximum operational potential.

HAB Consensus Advice #139

Subject: Waste Treatment Plant & Supplemental Technologies

Adopted: December 6, 2002

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Sincerely,



Todd Martin, 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: Jessie Roberson, Assistant Secretary for Environmental Management,  
Department of Energy, HQ  
Keith Klein, Manager Department of Energy, Richland Operations  
John Iani, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 10  
Tom Fitzsimmons, Washington State Department of Ecology  
Wade Ballard, Deputy Designated Federal Official, U.S. Department of  
Energy  
Michael Gearheard, Environmental Protection Agency  
Michael Wilson, Washington State Department of Ecology  
Martha Crosland, U.S. Department of Energy Headquarters  
The Oregon and Washington Congressional Delegations

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Ron Wyden

U.S. Senators (WA)

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Patty Murray

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