



June 2, 2000

Dick French, Manager
Office of River Protection
2440 Stevens Center
Richland, WA 99352

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

Michael Barrett, Contracting Officer
U.S. Department of Energy-ORP
P.O. Box 450 (H6-60)
Richland, WA 99352

Subject: Making Contractor Information Available to the Public on the Tank Waste Treatment Project

Dear Messrs. French, Klein and Barrett:

The Hanford Advisory Board applauds the Department of Energy's (DOE's) decisive action in response to BNFL's April 24 proposal, and its attempts to keep the tank waste treatment program on schedule. We hope recent activities do not signal a major setback to the program.

As DOE begins the process of selecting a new contractor to continue with the design and eventual construction of these facilities, we believe DOE needs to change its process to allow the public better access to contract and other information of interest. This is important for the public to fully understand the responsibilities, proposals, commitments, and progress of the contractor. This is also an important step to increase public confidence in DOE's ability to successfully manage the treatment of Hanford's tank waste.

Throughout DOE's efforts to privatize the Hanford tank waste treatment project, key information was withheld from the public because it contained some information that was deemed "business sensitive." Over time, this creates a credibility problem. We recognize that some information is legitimately business sensitive and should be protected. However, this "protection" must not prevent other information from being made available to the public in a timely manner.

To remedy this problem, the Hanford Advisory Board recommends that DOE inform prospective bidders that the winning contractor will be required to do the following:

- Upon award of the contract, the winning contractor(s) or DOE shall immediately make publicly available - in hard copy and via Internet access - a detailed non-business sensitive summary of the bid. This summary should be of sufficient length and detail to allow readers to thoroughly

understand the proposal. All portions of the successful proposal which support or are referenced by the contract should be released to the public.

- As work progresses under the contract, key deliverables and reports, such as work schedules, timetables, and shifts in scope or schedule, should be structured so that any business sensitive information is easily segregated and the remaining information is then made publicly available at the time the report or deliverable is submitted to DOE.

We look forward to your response and to periodic progress updates on this matter.

Very truly yours,

/s/Merilyn B. Reeves, Chair
Hanford Advisory Board

cc: Carolyn Huntoon, Department of Energy Headquarters
Chuck Clarke, 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
Dan Silver, 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.

[Hanford Home Page](#) | [HAB](#) | [Advice Index](#)

For questions or comments, please send [email](mailto:Hanford_Advisory_Board@rl.gov) to Hanford_Advisory_Board@rl.gov

HAB Consensus Advice #108

Subject: Making Contractor Information Available to the Public on the Tank Waste Treatment Project