

Department of Energy

Washington, DC 20585

August 22, 2008

Ms. Susan Leckband, Chair
Hanford Advisory Board
Environissues Hanford Project Office
713 Jadwin Avenue, Suite 4
Richland, Washington 99352

Dear Ms. Leckband:

This letter is in response to Hanford Advisory Board (HAB) consensus advice #199, Costs and Baseline Schedules, and to your letter of February 8, 2008, requesting that the Office of Environmental Management share validated and certified Hanford cleanup baselines with the HAB. In consensus advice #199, the HAB expressed concern that the Office of River Protection's new baselines did not reflect compliance with all of the requirements in the Tri-Party Agreement and was adopted without sufficient regulator, HAB, and stakeholder review. The Department of Energy remains fully committed to Hanford cleanup under the framework of the Tri-Party Agreement (TPA), and we are engaged in negotiations with the Washington State Department of Ecology and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency regarding key cleanup activities under the TPA.

Baselines are an important planning and execution tool that enable our federal project managers to fully utilize limited resources. In order to be effective, they must be based on realistic assumptions, actual work experience, and planned funding levels. Most importantly, these baselines must be valid and credible. The Office of River Protection's Tank Farms Project was extensively reviewed by independent experts who determined the proposed baseline was highly credible and therefore recommended validation.

On May 29, 2008, each site in the EM complex was directed to prepare summary-level project baseline information describing the scope, cost, and schedule of each cleanup project. We intend to share this information with our regulators, stakeholders, and Tribal nations, and encourage detailed discussions regarding this information, including our compliance obligations and environmental priorities. This information is now available for public access through our website at <http://www.em.doe.gov/Pages/ProjectList.aspx>. Staff from the Richland Operations Office and the Office of River Protection will be discussing these summaries with the HAB this summer.

We share your interest in continued progress with Hanford tank waste cleanup project. Your involvement and support are critical to the success of our mission. I encourage the Board to recognize the importance and urgency of developing realistic, credible, and valid baselines that can be used as tools to effectively manage complex projects like Hanford tank waste cleanup. The importance of a

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validated baseline is demonstrated by our recent progress in tank retrievals including completing the retrieval of three single-shell tanks so far this year. With your support, I am confident progress will continue to be made at Hanford.

Please be assured that I am committed to sustaining an open and collaborative relationship with the stakeholder community at Hanford and welcome the HAB's perspective and advice. If you have any questions, please contact Ms. Melissa A. Nielson, Director, Office of Public and Intergovernmental Accountability, at (202) 586-0356.

Sincerely,



Inés R. Triay (Acting for)
Assistant Secretary for
Environmental Management

cc: David Brockman, Manager, Richland Operations Office
Shirley Olinger, Manager, Office of River Protection