

FINAL MEETING SUMMARY

**HANFORD ADVISORY BOARD
HEALTH, SAFETY AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION COMMITTEE**

*April 19, 2012
Richland, WA*

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This is only a summary of issues and actions in this meeting. It may not represent the fullness of ideas discussed or opinions given, and should not be used as a substitute for actual public involvement or public comment on any particular topic unless specifically identified as such.

Welcome & Introductions

Becky Holland, Health, Safety and Environmental Protection Committee (HSEP) vice-chair welcomed the committee and introductions were made. The committee adopted the March meeting summary. Becky then reviewed the meeting agenda.

Status Briefing on Asbestos

Agency presentation

Pete Garcia, U.S. Department of Energy (DOE)-Richland Operations Office (RL) and Kelly Wooley, CH2M Hill Plateau Remediation Company (CHPRC), provided an update on the employee asbestos concerns (Attachment 1).

Agency perspective

Dennis Faulk, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) gave an update on EPA progress with the asbestos issue. He said EPA responded to the Inspector General warning issued in December by working with DOE to collect all necessary information. The most immediate response from EPA and the Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology) was to issue a stop work order on any alternative methods. DOE signed onto that the following week. Work plans are being revised toward a standard set of language. The greatest action still to be completed is to work with DOE on employee notification, particularly for those workers who are no longer at the Hanford Site.

Committee Questions and Response

Note: This section reflects individual questions, comments, and agency responses, as well as a synthesis where there were similar questions or comments.

Q: What are some of the alternative asbestos removal methods that are no longer being used?

R: Demolition of asbestos in place to mitigate other risks such as working in a confined area. It is often safer to remove the facility around the asbestos and then carefully remove asbestos.

EPA said asbestos usually requires hand removal. Exceptions can be made if there are risks to life or limb. This exception was taken too far and it became the standard. There will be times when asbestos should be demolished in place and the regulations do allow for that. In these cases, it would not be considered an alternate method. There will likely be no circumstances under which it is acceptable to remove transite asbestos mechanically.

C: There must be situations when workers cannot access the asbestos.

R: The law does recognize that and has provisions, but these are not termed alternate methods. The access issue is usually associated with old smelters that have been sitting 40 years and have a high potential for collapse.

C: How many buildings were demolished following the old approach?

R: More than a dozen, but I am unsure of the exact number. It was likely around two dozen.

Q: Were concerns about asbestos raised before the demolitions or afterward?

R: EPA was not aware of the concern until receiving a call from the Inspector General.

Q: What proportion of these demolished buildings were funded through American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funding?

R: Most of them were ARRA funded demolitions.

Q: Was the funding deadline a factor in using the alternate method?

R: The deadline was not likely a significant factor because the approach used had become the more standard operational approach, which was a greater driver than schedule.

Q: Are you aware of any employees who were exposed to asbestos as a result of the alternate recommendations?

R: That information will be available in the report. It is too early to speculate.

C: DOE should use caution against allowing these types of issues to begin in the first place. People often want to complete tasks quickly and will use any excuse for the fastest approach. Concerns about employee safety can even be used as a way to justify more expedient cleanup approaches, which can lead to other issues.

C: There have been a few Problem Evaluation Reports (PERs) at Washington River Protection Solutions (WRPS) written about asbestos. Did DOE also evaluate asbestos at the tank farms?

R: The tank farms were also evaluated.

C: There seem to be differing opinions on training. It seems that one day workers will be allowed to work on a site with asbestos and the next day they will not be permitted to work there. What kind of training do workers need in asbestos areas?

R: Training requirements should be very clear if they are not already. These requirements depend on the type of work occurring so training requirements can be different from one day to the next.

Q: Do you have a sense of the number of employee concerns that were raised?

R: Mission Support Alliance (MSA) was conducting a lot of the work. There were daily concerns and several stop works every day. These stop works could be as simple as having a few questions answered or bringing in an additional piece of equipment. These minor stop works lead to the more official stop works in September that EPA became involved with. EPA stated that the approach was legal so work continued until the new information came out.

Q: Is it true that approximately 200 people signed onto asbestos employee concerns?

R: That concern with about 200 signatures triggered the stop work that started all the corrective actions. The issues went beyond concerns over asbestos. The concern brought forward in January came from the chief stewards representing several hundred employees working around buildings that contained asbestos. That stop work is still in effect.

Q: Is this an example of Integrated Safety Management (ISM) failure?

R: It could be considered an ISM failure. There were issues with workers being pulled in from other jobs into areas they were not familiar with. The health physicians technicians (HPTs) were

spread throughout the Hanford Site and sometimes did not have a vehicle to get them to the appropriate area.

DOE said that many workers spoke with safety representatives. They were called around the clock because of overtime shifts and weekend/overnight shifts. One problem was the limited number of workers available to wipe down other workers who had been in asbestos areas.

Q: Was it the 200-300 workers or the Hanford Atomic Metal Trades Council (HAMTC) safety representative who said something had to be done?

R: There were a few stewards that started hearing issues. The stewards began compiling data and complaints because they believed the same problems were being seen over and over again. The big issue was communication. A lot of people thought they had possibly been contaminated or exposed so they began signing the list. A couple of the chief stewards then started coming to HAMTC safety representatives and said a stop work was needed.

C: When we first heard about ARRA, many HSEP members had concerns. It would be nice to compile some lessons learned under ARRA. There will be other times over the life of Hanford cleanup when work is ramped up. Workers have said ARRA funding contributed to many problems on the Hanford Site.

C: It seems like a lot of workers were raising concerns over a long period of time. Did EPA Headquarters prompt action or did DOE respond at an earlier time? Did site management uncover the concerns on their own or was it brought to their attention by an external entity?

R: Ken Gray, MSA, filed a concern last September. Jill Molnaa, CHPRC, was also involved. Ken said over the previous two years there have been numerous times when employees have raised concerns specific to one building. The same concerns were often repeated from one building to the next. These concerns could all be grouped together. Some of the well-trained asbestos workers were concerned that the procedures did not meet the National Emission Standard for Hazardous Air Pollutants (NESHAP). These concerns were sent to EPA Region 10 and were also sent to Washington D.C. There is now mostly Class 2 debris left on the job site and there is some question of if fibers were created. The surface soil had not been cleaned up as of August/September last year. DOE was asked to close the employee concerns and resolve the stop work.

DOE said they believed they were working in accordance with the work plans that had been improved. The EPA Inspector General's involvement demonstrated that the previous approach might not have been the most appropriate way to undertake asbestos removal activities.

EPA added that the Class 1 issue alerted the EPA Inspector General and then many other concerns came to light such as how Class 2 material was being handled. EPA believed the work was in compliance with NESHAP until the concerns were raised by workers. The biggest concern is creating friable material from stable material through worker activities.

Q: What kind of surveillance did DOE have over contractor work previously and how will that change in the future?

R: There are Facility Representatives (Fac Reps) assigned to each project. There are also Industrial Hygienists (IHs) that oversee whether contractors are doing an adequate job. DOE tries to be present on site as much as possible, but there are limitations. A lot of Fac Reps are asbestos workers that can provide oversight.

EPA added that they will supplement oversight on a quality assurance basis. An asbestos inspector is being trained.

C: During some of the ARRA work there was deliberate suppression of safety concerns. A few managers in particular told new workers that they should not raise safety concerns because it took too much money away from the company, resulting in the need for lay-offs. There was an investigation that confirmed these types of activities were occurring. Vigilance is very important. There is a long latency period for asbestos exposure so it can take a long time before anybody knows whether an exposure has been critical or not. There should have been better oversight for work planning with workers being given a greater opportunity to offer insight into the planning phase. It is very frustrating to get to a job site and discover the proper tools and safety equipment are not there. These types of concerns can easily be dealt with through ISM.

R: The issues just mentioned included a lot of actions with DOE-RL system oversight and support. You are correct about a lot of those concerns. There was widespread action to correct the problems.

Q: What level of training do Fac Reps receive compared to those whose job it is to work with asbestos? Do you think computer based training is sufficient for workers that handle asbestos?

R: Fac Reps that enter asbestos areas go through the same training as the workers that deal with asbestos on a regular basis. Not all Fac Reps go through that level of training. Training does need to meet the requirements, but without having actually gone through the asbestos training I cannot speak to the adequacy.

Q: Was the problem that these alternate methods were approved when they should not have been or that the contractor was not providing adequate oversight?

R: The problem was a combination of the two. The work plan allowed activities to occur that may not have been appropriate after considering all the concerns that were subsequently raised. We should learn from that. There was also oversight during those activities, but that oversight could be improved.

Q: Does DOE or anyone else feel there is a need for medical monitoring for workers who may have been exposed?

R: Workers who are in the asbestos program do go through medical monitoring periodically. Part of the concern that led to the stop work was the question of how to monitor worker exposure. DOE is working on that and coming to an agreement.

C: ARRA was a possible driver that hurt safety. This is an important committee concern and something we might want to offer advice on. It is also concerning that EPA and DOE did not seem to be hearing the concerns brought up by workers. Hanford Site management did appear to listen and the response when EPA did come forward seems to be good, but prevention is always preferable.

C: The coordination of training programs is a concern. What mechanisms are in place to ensure training is happening the way it is designed?

R: The asbestos training is likely similar to beryllium training where all workers on the Hanford Site are considered to be beryllium workers and receive primary computer-based training for beryllium awareness. Workers who work with beryllium receive an additional four hours of training at Hazardous Materials Management and Emergency Response. There is an attempt to differentiate between the needs of the workers.

The committee decided there was not an immediate need for any advice development on the asbestos topic. They will continue to follow the issue and request another briefing in the future.

DOE-ORP Radiological Safety Issues

Issue Manager introduction

Tom Carpenter, Issue Manager (IM) for the radiological safety issue topic, said DOE-Office of River Protection (ORP) conducted an assessment of the Hanford Radiation Control Program (Rad Con) at the tank farms several years ago. DOE issued a report that contained many findings and concerns. Implementation of the program was a problem along with the adequacy of emergency response. WRPS was ordered to complete Corrective Action Plan (CAP). The first CAP was rejected by DOE. WRPS developed a second plan that was approved about a year ago and follow-up was completed in January. DOE does have some lingering concerns, but there has been a great deal of improvement.

Agency presentation

Brian Harkins, DOE-ORP gave a briefing on Rad Con in the tank farms (Attachment 2). He said contractors really have been effectively implementing the CAP and are meeting their commitments.

Committee Questions and Response

Note: This section reflects individual questions, comments, and agency responses, as well as a synthesis where there were similar questions or comments.

C: One of the initial issues was that WRPS established a decentralized Rad Con. A lot of safety decisions were being made by field work supervisors. That is supposed to have changed.

R: That process is not functioning as smoothly as DOE would like. We still sometimes see construction workers making Rad Con decisions themselves. We are also still struggling to make progress on Rad Con with the IHs.

C: Workers have said there is friction with HPTs laying out procedures during the pre-job and then the job does not follow those procedures so there will be a stop work to re-look at required procedures. Some HPTs are saying there is pressure to not follow procedures. Compliance was viewed as an issue if it was going to slow down work. Some people even felt threatened if they insisted on following procedures too closely. The results is that there has been less of a willingness to file concerns or take a stand because of the perception that raising concerns could cost the company money and lead to consequences for the person raising the concern.

R: DOE only knows personally of one instance of that type of concern with Rad Con. If workers really are being pressured to not follow procedures that is clearly wrong and needs to be changed.

C: Are the issues a result of the program not being mature or because of leadership?

R: There is no clear answer. There is a difference between a centralized organization that follows set standards and the programs in the field that do not always agree with the standards. When we identify an issue, if it applies to construction it should be implemented by that construction contractor. There have been recent management changes that will hopefully lead to improvements.

C: DOE has discussed adding hoods in C Farm because of the contamination. Workers feel like that is a knee-jerk reaction to something that is not a real problem. The hoods will become a real issue this summer when it is hot outside. There are other huge issues, such as violations of the Radiological Work Permit and contamination incidents. When workers ask about concerns, they are told that the investigation has not been completed and management is not very informative. The Employee Concerns Program (ECP) is not very effective since many workers do not have any faith in the program.

R: DOE-ORP has undergone some evolutions to identify improvement actions for the cultural review after the Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board (DNFSB) report 2011-1 was issued. The improvement plan is due to DNFSB by the end of the month. There are nine actions identified that must be completed within a year. DOE ranked these in order of importance. The third item was to improve the ECP program, but we do not yet know the details of how that will be accomplished.

C: Workers used to watch out for each other and correct unsafe behavior, but that is no longer the case. Workers who correct another worker's activities can get in trouble for creating a hostile environment.

R: We should be able to communicate that there are substantial improvements necessary, requiring a lot of work. There has been a lot of attention on the Waste Treatment Plant and Bechtel, but there is also evidence that there is a lot of room for improvement on the DOE-ORP and federal side.

C: The Rad Con program appears to be fairly effective. There is an arm's length relationship with the contractor and the program is probably under-staffed. Most of the Rad Con issues are related to safety culture. DOE appears to be holding contractors accountable when they are not meeting expectations, which is what DOE should be doing. The Hanford Advisory Board (Board or HAB) might not need to provide advice unless it was just to say that DOE should continue with their efforts. Fac Reps are also doing a tremendous job.

HSEP noted that many of the topics raised will be discussed again during the joint safety culture advice meeting next month with the Tank Waste Committee (TWC). No specific advice will likely be written on Rad Con. The committee appreciated Brian speaking with them. This is an important issue that HSEP will continue to follow.

Recent PFP Uptake Event

Agency update

Joe DeMers, DOE-RL and Brenda Pangborn, DOE-RL, gave an update on the recent uptake event at the Plutonium Finishing Plant (PFP). Brenda said non-intrusive work was being done where carpenters were bringing planks into the overhead area using a rolling ladder. Radiological surveys showed no contamination in the area prior to the carpenters bringing wood into the area. After work began, they found a spread of contamination. An investigation was completed into what caused that contamination. During that time PFP was undergoing the first decontamination where radioactive material was removed. When ventilation is removed pipe is cut and a plate is put over the end. One bolt out of eight on the ventilation duct remnant had contamination and that is believed to be the source. The reason the bolt became loose is not entirely clear. The control has been raised for that area so now all workers wear respirators.

Committee Questions and Response

Note: This section reflects individual questions, comments, and agency responses, as well as a synthesis where there were similar questions or comments.

C: There is a possibility the contractor tapped the bolt. Were the bolts not torqued to specifications?

R: We cannot make a determination on what caused the bolt to become loose. Workers do check the torque on bolts. This particular job was done a long time ago so we would have to refer back to the old procedures and specifications.

Q: Was there an uptake?

R: There were nine people with indications of an uptake. Four people had a measureable dose of plutonium. One individual had nasal contamination, which is an indication of an uptake.

The committee decided there does not appear to be any follow-up required for this topic.

Biological Controls Program Update

Juan Rodriguez, MSA, and Elizabeth Bowers, DOE-RL, provided an update to the DOE-RL Biological Control Program (Attachment 3).

Committee Questions and Response

Note: This section reflects individual questions, comments, and agency responses, as well as a synthesis where there were similar questions or comments.

Q: Who handles elk on the road?

R: The elk on 240 are handled by the Department of Transportation.

Q: What kind of surveys and support are available for contaminated animals?

R: MSA and Rad Con take responsibility for contaminated animals.

Q: Is MSA in charge of tumbleweed control? Is there any cooperation between contractors?

R: MSA is primarily responsible for tumbleweeds. Washington Closure Hanford also does some tumbleweed control. Sometimes the fire department provides assistance.

Q: Has anyone in animal control been contacted recently about a structure in the tank farms called Big Top? There is a huge amount of pigeon droppings in addition to mice. Is it customary to leave dead pigeons in an area after a shoot?

R: MSA is responsible for pigeon shoots, but we do retrieve the birds. Sometimes the pigeons do fly away and fall someplace else so it can take longer to retrieve them. If people are entering areas that contain a large amount of pigeon droppings they should work with the IH department. With contaminated facilities, the facility takes ownership. Management should get involved.

Employee Concerns Program/Problem Evaluation Reporting System Discussion

Employee Concerns Program

Issue Manager introduction

Tom, IM for the ECP topic, said HSEP was given a briefing by Stan Branch, DOE-RL, at the February meeting. ECP was found to be severely in need of improvement through the 1990s. Tom said he has been looking into the ECP for a long time both on the DOE and the contractor side because of the Concerns Council's findings. DOE returns the majority of complaints received through the ECP to the contractor to investigate itself. Workers did not see any resolution to their concerns and there was no quality control. DOE does not validate how employee concerns are captured in the ECPs so concerns are often captured inadequately. Tom said 97% of ECP cases are not validated. Most people do have pretty valid issues, even if they are anecdotal. Workers are generally surprised that when they submit a concern to DOE expecting an independent investigation and that concern is sent to the contractor without consulting with the person who raised the concern. Workers usually go to DOE after they have attempted to work through the contractor and were unable to resolve the issue or were not satisfied with the contractor's response. Additionally, there is no appeal if a worker is unhappy with how their ECP is resolved. A lot of workers have said they do not use the ECP because they do not expect a good result.

Tom said DOE-ORP did have an ECP that was more respected and had a higher substantiation rate. If employee concerns were validated, they would develop a plan in a way that protected employees from being exposed as the person responsible for raising the concern. Employees were involved throughout the process and encouraged to continue giving input on what the investigation revealed. DOE's ECP is now gone as a result of the DNFSB letter stating there are safety culture problems at the Hanford Site. One of the stated improvements is a merged safety program between DOE-ORP and DOE-RL. The merged ECP program does not appear to be working effectively.

Agency perspective

Paula Call, DOE-RL, said she spoke with the head of the DOE-RL ECP ahead of the HSEP meeting. She was told that DOE-RL and DOE-ORP requested DOE-Office of Health Safety and Security (HSS) to do a complete review of the site-wide safety culture. This review is scheduled to take place this spring and a report is expected afterwards that will outline any corrective actions needed in addition to the recommendations based upon the DNFSB report. DOE-RL and DOE-ORP are also planning to do an independent survey of safety culture, of which a component may be the ECP* as well as a benchmarking effort to look at the best management practices of other government agencies and private corporations. DOE-ORP has already developed a safety culture improvement plan in response to the recent DNFSB report that addresses improvements to ECP. DOE can share that information with the Board as soon as it is available to DNSFB, likely by the end of the month. Paula said she would summarize HSEP's conversation and bring it back to DOE management.

Committee Discussion

* Paula initially stated at the meeting that the DOE-ORP employee survey would be focused on employee views of the ECP. She later corrected that statement and said the employee survey would actually focus on safety culture.

Note: This section reflects individual questions and comments as well as a synthesis where there were similar questions or comments.

C: The Hanford Site seems to cycle from contractors being brought in line and everything working well to needing to start all over again whenever there is a change in personnel. Incentives are likely partly to blame as well as ISM and leadership.

C: It is useful to have someone that employees can talk to and feel like that person cares about employee issues. Employees go to ECP as a last resort. At one point there was a liaison between the ECP and the employees. The liaison could help the employee talk to ECP management, which can be very helpful when an employee feels they are being bullied and up against many other issues.

C: DOE-RL is developing procedures to revamp how they deal with issues mentioned about validating worker concerns. Once DOE captures a concern, it is important to work with the employee to ensure the concern is captured correctly. If a concern is not captured adequately, it cannot be addressed adequately. The other piece is giving an employee the choice as to whether their concern is investigated by the contractor or DOE. Employees should be given control over their own concerns.

C: Contractors are able to fire or lay people off with little oversight. It is almost possible to guess the layoff list by the employees who raise concerns. Employees who go to ECP after being fired are told DOE cannot get involved because the person is no longer working at the Hanford Site and DOE does not get involved in labor disputes, even if the person was fired because their ECP was sent to the contractor.

C: There was one instance several years ago where a contractor prepared a report in response to an ECP and sent that report to the employee who raised the concern. The report concluded that the contractor spoke with 28 people and were unable to validate the concern. Several weeks later the employee received the same report with DOE letterhead. DOE presented the report as if the agency had conducted the investigation themselves. A law firm was subsequently brought in and the concern was validated.

C: Someone with no stake in the outcome should be examining the issues. Employee concerns groups are going to at least tilt toward the company and away from the employee. There should be a robust program that listens to employees and resolves their concerns. When concerns are not resolved employees go to the media, court or other outside agencies. This is not good for the employee or the Hanford Site.

C: Programs need to be able to survive management changes and be institutionalized. There should also be some sort of reward or small incentive for employees that bring up concerns. People should be praised just as much for bringing up a non-issue as for bringing up a substantial issue.

C: Currently there is only risk for bringing up a concern and no incentive. Even if concerns are validated, employees are marked. They are not popular with managers and can even have coworkers turn against them. It is gratifying to hear that DOE-ORP and DOE-RL are asking DOE-HSS to assist and that there will be benchmarking.

C: The Board might want to offer some advice before the DOE-HSS review begins this spring to outline what our issues are. Keith Smith has compiled a list of some past advice the Board has offered. He will provide this to Jessica Ruehrwein, EnviroIssues, who will send it to the entire committee. The same issues keep repeating. This past advice could be reiterated in a new piece of Board advice.

C: There should be direct action and people should be held accountable if an employee comes to their supervisor or management with a concern and that employee is retaliated against. DOE tells employees that allege reprisal to go through the usual channels, but the usual channels are broken. Also, these channels are interrelated. Managers talk with each other so everyone knows when issues are not resolved and who brings up concerns.

C: There is another model used by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC). Whenever an allegation comes to their attention, they investigate for themselves whether there has been a violation that requires corrective action. The NRC also investigates allegations of reprisal. There might be legitimate reasons a contractor took action against an employee, but there also might be a perception that the employee was removed because they brought up safety concerns. Perceptions should be managed to help people understand the reality. Contractors must address concerns that are validated within a specified timeframe. In serious cases, the NRC will suspend operating licenses or remove employees that are serial concern suppressors.

Q: It is important to understand the definition of “independent.” Will the review be done by DOE or by an outside organization?

R: DOE will get back to HSEP with an answer.

C: Policies and procedures are usually developed at the management level from a management perspective. The labor force should be involved in creating the process and developing program features. The contractor programs are basically a flow-down of DOE programs. Excluding employees is not a good approach.

C: The term hostile work environment is used all the time and it is not well defined among workers. It is widely and loosely used. Disagreements among employees are sometimes considered hostile work environments. Employees have been terminated with the justification that they were creating a hostile work environment.

R: There is a legal definition for the term “hostile work environment”. The term most often applies to management and does not generally include employees. A hostile work environment includes behavior or behaviors so offensive and egregious that any reasonable person would not stay in that job. The hostile work definition arises from discrimination classes.

HSEP decided to draft potential advice points on ECP that could be part of the safety culture advice to be developed at the joint May HSEP/TWC meeting. The Board can watch how the advice plays out in the report and review what comes out of the independent investigation. Tom and Becky will work on developing points.

Problem Evaluation Reporting System

Issue Manager introduction

Tom, IM for the PER topic, said HSEP received a presentation by DOE at the February meeting. PERs are in place to capture a variety of issues identified by workers. Workers are expected to file PERs to capture anything out of the ordinary. This program is only at WRPS, although Bechtel does have something similar. The PER system for the tank farms has been under scrutiny and was found to be inadequate by DOE-HSS and DNFSB. HSEP has looked at PERs in the past and urged that the PER system be fixed, but there has never been Board advice. WRPS recognized problems with the system on its own and has undertaken reforms. There are steps to improve PERs that are receiving buy-in from workers and management, but there are still a lot of problems. Ease of use is a major concern. PERs are not always adequately captured and concerns are sometimes merged. PERs are categorized according to the severity of the concern. Many people have said they are unable to determine the categorization system and DOE has been criticized for downgrading the significance level of PERs. During the February HSEP briefing, HSEP was told that it takes an average of 150 days to resolve a PER. There are a huge number of unresolved PERs. Employees are supposed to be able to be involved or not with their PER, but employees who indicate they would like to be involved often say they are not involved. The Board might not want to issue advice on PERs, but it is a very important program in the river corridor. There are concerns that people are disciplined or marked for writing too many PERs, which should be addressed.

Committee Discussion

Note: This section reflects individual questions and comments as well as a synthesis where there were similar questions or comments.

C: There were systems prior to the PER system that were not computerized. Problem reporting has come a long way, but there are still issues that have never been addressed. In some instances workers will directly address a problem instead of writing out a PER and waiting for it to move through the system. The PER system is difficult to use and it can be hard to find PERs even when you know the specific concern you are searching for.

The Board has never given advice on PERs. Tom and Keith will draft some points and start considering how to put those into advice. Advice points on the PER system could be part of the larger safety culture advice. PERs are administered by contractors and Board advice is directed toward DOE and the other Tri-Party Agreement agencies. Board advice would need to focus on how DOE deals with the contractor. This issue will be discussed again during a potential June HSEP meeting.

Committee Business

The committee reviewed the meetings topics table and identified several issues to follow-up on over the next six months.

Tom said the chemical vapors topic will be very important to have on the agenda in the coming months. Many of the concerns that have been raised are being validated. Chemical vapors from the tanks are complex and hard to capture or measure effectively. There have been a few rare medical cases of workers being affected by the chemical vapors. CHPRC developed a chemical vapor program that Hanford Challenge did not like. The Hanford Concerns Council was asked to put together some independent experts that all parties could agree to in order to develop a plan that would be effective. CHPRC put together a new program and a new team from the Hanford Concerns Council investigated how to fix the plan. WRPS subsequently took over and accepted the whole program. WRPS said workers should be surveyed more effectively; there should be better IH programs and better equipment and procedures. There have been management changes since the chemical vapors program has been implemented. There are some concerns about workers farther away from the tanks since stacks have been lifted. People are saying that the strongest commitment made is to have an IH technician present during any tank procedure.

The committee identified a number of questions about chemical vapors that they would like answered. There are concerns about how chemical vapors are being monitored, workers' awareness about the ability to monitor vapors, if the program continues to be as rigorous as when first implemented and whether IH technicians are required for waste disturbing activities.

HSEP would like information on side-wide infrastructure and the DOE-RL maintenance policy, which seems to be run everything to failure. Ray Corey, DOE-RL, has offered to provide a briefing to HSEP on the topic. There are major concerns relating to electrical procedures that could lead to a fatality.

Jessica suggested holding a joint HSEP/TWC call in order to frame the agenda for the joint two day meeting in May. She also noted that there might be a change to the June committee week schedule because of limited agency availability and public meeting schedule.

Attachments

Attachment 1: Employees Asbestos Concerns Update

Attachment 2: Radiation Control in Tank Farms discussion with HAB

Attachment 3: RL Biological Control Program Update

Attendees

Board Members and Alternates

Tom Carpenter	Rebecca Holland	Keith Smith
Sam Dechter	Steve Hudson (phone)	
Laura Hanses	Liz Mattson	

Others

Brian Hawkins, DOE-ORP	Erika Holmes, Ecology (phone)	Kimberly Tebrugge, CH2MHill
Elizabeth Bowers, DOE-RL	Dennis Faulk, EPA	Dave Chojnacki, CHPRC
Paula Call, DOE-RL		Sonja Johnson, CHPRC
Joe DeMers, DOE-RL		Jill Molnna, CHPRC
Pete Garcia, DOE-RL		Kelly Wooley, CHPRC
Brenda Pangborn, DOE-RL		Nicole Addington, EnviroIssues
		Susan Hayman, EnviroIssues
		Jessica Ruehrwein, EnviroIssues
		Ken Gray, MSA
		John Jeskey, MSA
		Juan Rodriguez, MSA
		Wayne Schofield, MSA
		Barb Wise, MSA
		Shannon Cram, Public
		Angela Day, Public (phone)
		Annetee Carey, Tri-City Harold (phone)