

FROM: St. A. H.

KMcConnell

**SUMMARY NOTES FROM JOINT NUCLEAR WASTE BOARD/NUCLEAR WASTE
ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING
APRIL 7, 1988**

MEMBERS PRESENT

Warren Bishop, Chair
Phyllis Clausen
Curtis Eschels, EFSEC
Representative Shirley Hankins
Nancy Hovis
Russell Jim
Ken Miller
Representative Louise Miller
Phil Moeller, Senate Energy and Utilities Committee
Representative Dick Nelson
Sam Reed
Robert Rose
Representative Nancy Rust
Betty Shreve
Gus Simpson
Michael Spranger
Senator Lois Stratton
Terry Strong, DSHS
Dick Watson, Energy Office
Senator Al Williams

Introductory Remarks

Chairman Bishop introduced the special joint session of the Board and Advisory Council for presentation of USDOE's Record of Decision (ROD) on the final environmental impact statement of disposal of Hanford defense wastes. He stated that the ROD had not yet been released but that the meeting would proceed as though it were. Chairman Bishop introduced Steve Stein from Battelle and Rick Wojtasek from Westinghouse.

USDOE Record of Decision

Mr. Stein stated that USDOE had wanted to release the ROD in February, but that a few critical signatures were still needed. He expected it to reflect the preferred alternative of the EIS. USDOE will be willing to answer specific questions of the Board once the ROD is released, he said.

He briefly summarized the preferred alternative. In response to Chairman Bishop's question, he said that there is no difference between the ROD and the EIS regarding the preferred alternative.

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Max Power requested an explanation of how USDOE will arrive at a specific means to deal with disposal from single shell tanks. Mr. Wojtasek said that the final EIS promised a supplementary EIS on the means of disposal. USDOE will analyze the chemical and radioactive nature of waste, study barriers, study enhanced waste form technologies, and study enhanced retrieval technologies. USDOE is currently working in conjunction with Department of Ecology regarding RCRA.

Terry Husseman asked what new information (such as specific budgets and schedules) is included in the ROD. Mr. Wojtasek said that USDOE is working on an implementation plan to be released after the ROD. It refers to the Hanford Waste Management Plan of December 1987 (HWMP) which reflects the preferred alternative. Mr. Stein further stated that there is a specific plan for vitrification as well as an annual budget by item in Chapter 3 of the 1987 HWMP; the latter is still the official USDOE budget schedule, he said.

In response to Chairman Bishop's question, Mr. Wojtasek said that there are no additional data in the ROD to support a request to Congress for funding.

Curt Eschels asked what had been committed for the vitrification plant. Mr. Wojtasek said that hot start-up was scheduled for 1999. Construction would cost \$920 million with a total plant cost of \$1.2 billion. Cost teams from USDOE headquarters have validated the schedules and cost estimates.

Mr. Eschels asked a series of questions regarding the possibility of accelerating the schedule. The USDOE representatives stated that the schedule can be accelerated because of the fact that a similar plant had already been built in South Carolina, but that the rate of acceleration is still under study. A two-year acceleration is feasible. It will be necessary to coordinate construction and operation. That is, construction must be linked to the rate of pre-treatment of source material. Because of the high fixed cost of the plant, it is critical not to have it sit idle. The waste handling facilities of B Plant are two years from start-up. It will be demonstration-operational in December 1992. The feed material will be Purex residue, tank material, and cesium-separation residue. Waste must be characterized in order to design the waste treatment plant, but USDOE is reluctant to accelerate waste characterization.

In response to questions regarding schedule, Mr. Wojtasek said that the schedule is complex and requires coordination. For example, to remove material from single-shell tanks requires space available in double-shell tanks. The key to this is the grout program for double-shell tanks.

Representative Nelson stated that prior to the N Reactor decision there was a belief that it would be difficult to get money for clean-up if there were no defense program to hold hostage. He asked, in view of the N-Reactors current status, what will determine the rate of clean-up? Mr. Wojtasek stated that Washington has lost a leverage point. Moreover, there are sites (such as South Carolina and Oak Ridge) with even more pressing concerns.

Mr. Eschels asked whether money which would have gone to rebuild the N Reactor could instead be devoted to clean-up. Mr. Wojtasek stated that the funds will go to USDOE headquarters to be reprogrammed.

In response to a question, Mr. Wojtasek reviewed the schedule for waste characterization.

In response to Mr. Husseman's question, Mr. Wojtasek explained the scope of the new "environmental restoration" budget item.

Mr. Husseman asked about the budget amount for environmental restoration. Mr. Wojtasek stated that it is \$14.6 million for this year and \$16.2 million for next year. Mr. Stein said that the amount could grow to as much as \$100 million per year.

Mr. Husseman asked whether AQ tank farm funds could be devoted to the vitrification plant. Representative Hankins requested the amount of this year's budget. Mr. Wojtasek said that it was \$210 million. Rep. Hankins asked who at USDOE headquarters should be contacted and the process for reprogramming of the funds.

Mr. Stein said that the state should put pressure on the defense waste budget as a whole and not on one particular item. If the latter course is followed, headquarters may reassign the funds as requested but at the expense of other necessary activity at Hanford. He advised the Board and Advisory Council to seek a bigger pie, not a bigger slice.

Representative Nelson asked whether persons working on production or BWIP are transferrable to waste management. Mr. Wojtasek replied that seventy persons have transferred thus far from BWIP to waste management. He further stated that there is a center in Richland to match workers to jobs.

Representative Nelson asked whether the EIS mentions the long-term use of the Hanford site. Mr. Stein said that there will always be residual waste there and that the EIS did not look into new land uses. Representative Nelson asked if a future supplemental EIS could do this, feeling that potential future uses should shape the clean-up strategy. Mr. Stein promised to carry this advice back to be considered in the supplemental EIS.

Mr. Eschels asked when TRU shipments will start. Mr. Wojtasek said that they would begin in 1989 if TRUPAC is ready and agreements with state are in shape.