

June 23, 2010

MEMORANDUM TO: Gregory Suber, Chief
Low-Level Waste Branch
Environmental Protection
and Performance Assessment Directorate
Division of Waste Management
and Environmental Protection
Office of Federal and State Materials
and Environmental Management Programs

FROM: Nishka Devaser, Project Manager /RA/
Low-Level Waste Branch
Environmental Protection
and Performance Assessment Directorate
Division of Waste Management
and Environmental Protection
Office of Federal and State Materials
and Environmental Management Programs

SUBJECT: JUNE 3, 2010, BRIEF MEETING SUMMARY: TELECONFERENCE
WITH THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY-SAVANNAH RIVER
SITE TO DISCUSS CORRECTIVE ACTIONS BEING TAKEN ON
DISPOSAL CELL 2B

On June 3, 2010, the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) met with the U.S. Department of Energy-Savannah River (DOE-SR) by telephone to discuss the status of disposal cell 2B. The purpose of the meeting was for the DOE-SR and its contractor, Savannah River Remediation to provide an update of the actions that have been taken to understand and repair the damp spots apparent around disposal cell 2B. A short presentation of the corrective actions was provided to the NRC prior to this call and is available on the NRC's Agencywide Documents Access and Management System (ADAMS), which provides text and image files of NRC's public documents. The accession number for the presentation is ML101660516.

Enclosure: Meeting Summary

CONTACT: Nishka Devaser, FSME/DWMEP
(301) 415-5196

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ML101660509

OFC	DWMEP	DWMEP	DWMEP
NAME	NDevaser	AWalker-Smith	NDevaser
DATE	06/23/10	06/23/10	06/23/10

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SUMMARY OF MEETING: MEETING WITH THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY
REGARDING U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION MONITORING ACTIVITIES AT
THE SAVANNAH RIVER SITE, SALTSTONE FACILITY

In April, shortly after cell 2B was filled with water, damp spots were observed on the cell wall. The hydro-test, which was originally planned to begin 24 hours after the cell was filled, was postponed due to the presence of damp spots on the outside of the cell. A root cause analysis of the damp spots followed, which included removing a portion of the outer layer of shotcrete from the base of the cell at the location of the damp spots and adding a pink fluorescent dye tracer to the cell water. The dye tracer was added to distinguish between water that originated inside the cell and water that may have been trapped in the joints during construction. On May 11, 2010, approximately 10 days after the dye was added to the cell water, pink fluorescent stains were evident at the interface of the cell wall and floor and also at the interface between the cell base and the upper mud mat. In evaluation of the stains, the spots were cleaned and noted to have recharged. U.S. Department of Energy-Savannah River (DOE-SR) and Savannah River Remediation (SRR) are continuing to assess the cause of the damp spots and staining on cell 2B. DOE-SR considered the dye tracer results in 2B to be inclusive because of similarities in color to the local soil and the potential fluorescence of soil treatments surrounding cell 2B. NRC staff subsequently concluded that they do not agree with DOE's interpretation that the staining is ambiguous. There is no credible mechanism that could have displaced the soil to cause the staining. The results of the test demonstrate that the current design, as implemented, is not performing as expected.

At the time of the phone call, SRR was in the preparatory stages of beginning the hydro-test on disposal cell 2A. The NRC staff inquired if SRR planned to include a dye tracer test in cell 2A to which SRR stated that they did not intend to use a dye tracer in testing the cell unless necessary. NRC expressed concerns with this approach because if no appropriate tracer is used, the presence of no damp spots on 2A might provide a false negative due to evaporation preventing the damp spots from being visible. It is expected that the rate of evaporation would be higher now than when the hydro-test of 2B began because of warmer temperatures.

Attachment: Meeting Attendees List

Enclosure

Meeting Attendees:

Larry Camper	U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
George Alexander	U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
David Esh	U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Nishka Devaser	U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Mathews George	U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Christopher McKenney	U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Karen Pinkston	U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Gregory Suber	U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Chun Pang	U.S. Department of Energy
Terrance Spears	U.S. Department of Energy
Pat Suggs	U.S. Department of Energy
Virginia Dickert	Savannah River Remediation
Tom Robinson	Savannah River Remediation
F. Malcolm Smith	Savannah River Remediation