

DOE TEC Rail Topic Group Conference Call
Thursday, March 24, 2005, 11:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m. EST

Conference Call Minutes

Participants:

Co-Chairs: Jay Jones (RW), Alex Thrower (EM)

Members: Jane Beetem (MO Department of Natural Resources), **Kevin Blackwell** (FRA), **Ray English** (Office of Naval Reactors, DOE), **Bob Fronczak** (Association of American Railroads), **Bob Halstead** (Nevada Agency for Nuclear Projects), **Eric Huang** (DOE), **Paul Johnson** (ORNL), **Doug Larson** (Western Interstate Energy Board [WIEB]), **Adam Levin** (Exelon Generation Company), **Jim Reed** (NCSL), **Conrad Smith** (CSG-East), **Steve Sullivan** (American Shortline Railroad Association), **Ruth Weiner** (Sandia National Laboratories)

Contractor Support: Ralph Best (BSC), **Randy Coppage** (BAH), **Ed Davis** (BSC), **Michele Enders** (SAIC), **Lee Finewood** (BAH), and **Ron Ross** (BSC)

Summary:

The conference call began at 11:00 a.m. Eastern time on Thursday, March 24, 2005. Jay Jones started the meeting by welcoming everyone and having the participants on the call introduce themselves. Jay reviewed the status of where the Topic Group left off from the last conference call on February 24th. Since the last conference call, Jay and Ralph took the comments made during the conference call and also those comments received via e-mail after the call and revised the draft agenda for the TEC Rail Topic Group meeting accordingly. The revised agenda was sent via e-mail by Michele Enders to all Topic Group members.

Jay asked the call participants if they had any comments on the process thus far and if there were any questions on where the Topic Group is in terms of its focus for the TEC meeting. The intent of the TEC meeting is not to just have presentations by several people but rather be an interactive session with dialogue among the participants.

The first activity for the TEC meeting will be to focus on the paper. Volunteers will be needed to help write the paper. Others can help review and revise the paper as necessary. The TEC meeting will be an opportunity to discuss the paper in more detail. Jay mentioned that he would like to get input from the SRGs concerning their efforts during the TEC meeting as well as from the trucking and railroad industry.

Conrad Smith: Can we get an update on the Dedicated Train Study?

Kevin Blackwell: The Acting Administrator has not signed off on the study yet. Kevin is hoping by the TEC meeting that it will be signed.

Bob Fronczak: Kevin, Can you say what is in the study?

Kevin Blackwell: Not at liberty to say specifically what is in the study until it is officially released to Congress. The study does not have to go through OMB again, therefore, once the Acting Administrator signs it, it should be a quick turnaround.

Bob Halstead: Is the Topic Group going to directly address DOE's March 2004 contingency plan to operate the transportation system for the first six years of the repository using legal weight trucks on rail casks? This has very substantial implications for routing. Currently, a mostly rail preferred method is on the table. Did the Topic Group make a decision that this would be part of the Topic Group's deliberation for the paper?

Jay Jones: This is an option for the Topic Group to address, however, the focus of paper is on rail because that is what is in the Record of Decision (ROD).

Bob Halstead: The contingency plan is in the ROD.

Jay Jones: The Topic Group could consider the contingency plan as a separate activity to address but it is not going to be a main focus for the paper.

Bob Halstead: It would be useful to have the contingency plan officially recognized. Bob volunteered to work on the writing for this issue.

Jay Jones: On the TEC agenda for the Rail Topic Group, there is a session to discuss other group tasks that the Topic Group would like to address.

Doug Larson: The session for other group tasks on the agenda is a good place for the contingency plan to be addressed. DOE can refresh the Topic Group's memories on DOE's contingency plans.

Conrad Smith: Is the contingency plan in the Federal register?

Bob Halstead: Yes, the contingency plan is in the April 8, 2004 Federal register. Also, DOE has the paper on their web site. Bob will send the web site link.

Jay Jones: What paper is this?

Bob Halstead: The paper is the DOE March 2004 Supplement Analysis which is an add-on to the final EIS. This was released a month before the ROD and is therefore incorporated in the April 8, 2004 ROD.

Jay Jones: Jay will go over in more detail about how DOE proposes to move forward with the paper. Jay is anticipating that there will be different iteration cycles. Jay welcomes input from the SRGs, Tribes and representatives of the rail perspective (i.e., Kevin Blackwell, Bob Fronczak and Mr. Sullivan).

Conrad Smith: The Northeast is still intending on providing input on proposed routing selection criteria. The Northeast is in the process of gathering input.

Jay Jones: On the last call, Jay was trying to get input from the SRGs. Currently, Jay has received input from Doug Larson representing the WIEB perspective. Lisa Sattler from CSG-MW mentioned that they will review what the other SRGs are doing. Jay would like the Northeast and SSEB to have something in writing by the TEC meeting. Jay has talked to Phillip Paull and Chris Wells to let them know that the Rail Topic Group is looking to get input from their respective organizations.

Ruth Weiner: Ruth asked Conrad Smith if he has proposed criteria. Ruth would like to try them out using RADTRAN.

Jay Jones: The next TEC meeting will include a discussion of the paper and how to move forward. In addition, Alex Thrower will go over items to review for route identification.

Alex Thrower: Alex would like the discussion of the route identification related items to be an open ended discussion. This discussion will hopefully capture some of the many related issues to route identification.

Jay Jones: The TEC agenda for the Rail Topic Group is a first cut of what Jay, Alex and Ralph thought would be beneficial for the Topic Group to discuss. However, the agenda

is open for discussion and can be changed by the Topic Group. As it stands now, the first half of the TEC agenda will focus on the paper. The second half of the agenda will focus on other tasks that the Topic Group may want to consider pursuing.

Kevin Blackwell: Is the current Topic Group going to address the tasks that were sidelined two years ago when the Topic Group sunrised again? Or is the Topic Group going to start from scratch with a list of tasks to consider?

Jay Jones: Jay may contact Steven Hamp about those tasks that were sidelined.

Kevin Blackwell: Kevin may have the list of tasks from two years ago. Kevin will forward the list to Jay.

Doug Larson: Doug suggested that for the 9:50 am time slot on the agenda that Bob Halstead's point concerning the DOE contingency plan be added as well as the dedicated train study (if it is released).

Conrad Smith: In terms of dedicated trains, Conrad asked, how will route selection be affected by the use of dedicated trains?

Bob Fronczak: Bob does not think route selection will be affected by dedicated trains.

Ruth Weiner: Ruth did some samples between dedicated trains and common carrier. There is very little effect on the route itself. Most of the effect is on time and stops. The tracks themselves do not change.

Bob Halstead: The Nevada Agency has run some web TRAGIS analyses and now has an independent rail modeling component. For the most part, there is not a big difference for route selection whether dedicated trains versus common carrier are used. However, there seems to be a big difference for the shipments out of the Pacific Northwest. If dedicated trains are not used, the shipments out of Washington and Oregon come down through California.

Ruth Weiner: Ruth said she would have to look at the route selection in that area. Ruth does not have Bob's model and does not know how Bob's model operates.

Bob Halstead: Bob said Ruth would see it in relation to the draft EIS of the Caliente Rail Spur.

Ruth Weiner: Ruth asked Bob if his model was readily available, downloadable?

Bob Halstead: No, it's proprietary. The Nevada Agency is preparing for litigation so Bob is unsure if this model would be publicly available. The Nevada Agency is comfortable that they can use web Tragis. They have learned to take rail and highway routes from web TRAGIS runs, save them as shape files, put them in GIS files and then overlay their data. The Nevada Agency feels this process allows for better population analysis and some of the population zone boundary analysis.

Bob Halstead: Bob asked if the Topic Group was interested in hearing about how the Nevada Agency is looking at routing strategy and trying to understand the current business practices for bullet trains. UPS runs one fast turn around train a week. Basically, the Nevada Agency splits the routing to Caliente into two subsets. One subset being the cross country journey from two midwest marshalling yards. The second subset being the challenge DOE faces with mostly rail, moving 350 to 450 rails casks annually from 20 to 40 different reactors to one or two marshalling yards.

Jay Jones: Jay offered Bob the opportunity to discuss what the Nevada Agency is doing at the next TEC meeting

Bob Halstead: Bob mentioned that the Nevada Agency has not been invited to do a presentation on their routing strategy at TEC.

Jay Jones: Jay will mention to the TEC planners that Bob is interested in presenting his organization's routing strategy.

Kevin Blackwell: Kevin mentioned to Bob that he might want to be careful about using the term bullet train in public for the UPS run through service. This usage does not mean the type of train that has speeds of 200 mph (i.e., bullet trains in Japan).

Ruth Weiner: Ruth asked Kevin about an AAR bulletin that stated that any train that has at least one spent nuclear fuel cask becomes a key train and is limited in speed just the way a dedicated train is limited in speed. Is this correct?

Bob Fronczak: Dedicated trains are not limited in speed. An example of dedicated trains would be coal trains. Key trains do have a 50 mph speed limit.

Kevin Blackwell: The 50 mph speed limit is correct as a maximum speed based upon the track class.

Jay Jones: In reference to Bob Halstead's earlier comments on the draft EIS for the Caliente Rail, there are lot of issues under consideration.

Bob Halstead: Bob asked Jay if the whole scoping of the draft Caliente EIS could be added to the TEC agenda?

Jay Jones: Jay feels this is out of scope for the Topic Group and is best addressed by the DOE Rail folks in Las Vegas.

Ruth Weiner: Ruth asked if Doug Osborne could attend the Tribal meeting.

Jay Jones: Everyone is welcome to attend any meeting. Topic Group members will be able to sit at the table and all non-members will have seating on the perimeter. Discussion will be limited to the members. As time allows, others can participate.

Doug Larson: Doug asked Jay if he was going to have a new iteration of the paper for the TEC meeting?

Jay Jones: Jay was not sure if there would a revised version. If there is a revised version of the paper, it would not be much different.

Ralph Best: Since the Topic Group's last call, there were some good suggestions for changes on the annotated outline. A commitment was made to incorporate those changes. Ralph should be able to make those changes in time for the TEC meeting.

Jay Jones: If the changes are made before TEC, the revised outline will be e-mailed to the Topic Group. Otherwise, copies will be available for members at the TEC meeting.

Jay Jones: Jay mentioned that the National Academies (Kevin Crowley) is conducting their own transportation study augmented by a study on FRR shipments and other routing processes.

Kevin Blackwell: Is this the same study being funded by the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA)? PHMSA provided funding to allow the NAS Radioactive Waste Committee to conduct the study on FRR shipments.

Alex Thrower: Yes, this study was mandated in the 2003 appropriations bill but PHMSA did not have the funding until the current appropriations bill. Michael Conroy at PHMSA is the lead on this study. The scope has been expanded to Nuclear Research Reactors including domestic shipments.

Bob Fronczak: What's the status of the current National Academies study that was supposed to be published now?

Ruth Weiner: Ruth believes that study is still in process.

Bob Halstead: At the TRB meeting in Caliente, Kevin Crowley said that while the schedule is vague right now, NAS is planning on holding one more public meeting.

Jay Jones: Hopefully Kevin Crowley will be at the TEC meeting.

Jay Jones concluded the conference call by welcoming any additional input either by e-mail, phone, etc. before the TEC meeting and is looking forward to a productive meeting in Phoenix.

The next conference call is scheduled for Thursday, April 28, 2005 at 11 am EST.

Action Items Summary:

1. Kevin Blackwell to find list of tasks Topic Group created about 2 years ago and forward to Jay Jones