

**EM SSAB CHAIRS**  
**Bi-Monthly Conference Call**  
**August 15, 2012**

**Participants**

<i>Board</i>	<i>Chairs/Representatives</i>	<i>Site Support Staff</i>
Hanford	Susan Leckband, Steve Hudson	Tiffany Nguyen, Dana Bryson
Idaho	Willie Preacher	Peggy Hinman
Nevada	Kathleen Bienenstein, Donna Hruska	Kelly Snyder, Barb Ulmer
Northern New Mexico	Ralph Phelps, Carlos Valdez	Menice Santistevan
Oak Ridge	Maggie Owen	Dave Adler, Pete Osborne, Melyssa Noe
Paducah		Eric Roberts
Portsmouth	Dick Snyder	Rick Greene, Cindy Lewis
Savannah River	Don Bridges	Bill Taylor, Erica Williams

**DOE-HQ Representatives**

EM-3.2	Catherine Alexander, Melissa Nielson, Michelle Hudson, Elizabeth Maksymonko
EM-60	Connie Flohr

**Opening Remarks**

Ms. Catherine Alexander, Designated Federal Officer for the Environmental Management Site-Specific Advisory Board (EM SSAB), called the meeting to order.

**Budget Update**

Ms. Connie Flohr, EM Budget Director, provided a status update on the proposed Fiscal Year (FY) 2013 budget as well as the process for the FY 2014 budget request as of August 15, 2012. Documents containing information on the FY 2013 budget request may be found at <http://www.em.doe.gov/Pages/budgetdocs.aspx>.

Senator Harry Reid and Speaker of the House John Boehner came to an agreement on the continuing resolution (CR) before the Congressional recess, which included executing a six-month CR. However, the CR was not passed before the recess began so the issue must be taken up when Congress reconvenes. Based on the expected 6-month CR, EM has continued to develop its financial plan and revised its earlier projections which assumed an initial CR of only four months. Under the new scenario, the sites will receive a cash allotment of half of their respective FY 2012 enacted funding level. If the CR is passed, this will be the level that will be carried out for entire six-month period. However, if Congress passes something other than a six-month CR, funding levels will need to be adjusted accordingly.

During the last call, the Chairs were told that EM was planning for an assumed CR funding level of \$5.5 billion; however, the new calculation based on the draft CR would reduce EM's funding level to \$5.3 billion. To prepare for this reduction, Department of Energy Headquarters (DOE-

HQ) has started working with sites to create Fiscal Year Work Plans. Work plans are being developed according to the level of funding the sites will receive under the assumed 6-month CR. The plans will include work scope that will occur during that time period, milestones that the sites will aim to meet, and specific performance metrics that the field and HQ federal workers will utilize and monitor to measure contracts at the CR funding level.

Starting August 15, EM's budget office will begin meeting with each site to walk through work plan requirements, explain funding levels and expectations for the plan, and answer any questions the sites may have. Work plans are due to DOE-HQ around September 1.

Numerous drills have been run at the sites on what impacts would result from a three-month CR, but EM has not looked into the effects of a 6-month CR. After six months, many sites will have spent much of their carry-over funds and will likely be experiencing work force and compliance impacts. The EM budget office is working on a document that will give guidance to field sites in these circumstances and will ask the sites to provide the information to aid in creating this document in the next few weeks.

Dr. Donald Bridges from the Savannah River Site Citizens' Advisory Board (SRS CAB) mentioned that the \$5.3 billion funding level does not seem to be as negative as Ms. Flohr was suggesting.

Ms. Flohr stated that what makes the level more difficult is that there are usually Congressional control points within site funding, and under each point there are multiple project baseline summaries (PBSs). Historically, EM is not held to certain funding levels within these control points. However, in the draft CR from the House, there is a stipulation that will hold EM to functioning within the CR at the same Congressional controls as under a full year appropriation, which will affect the sites significantly. More research is needed to find the extent of potential damage from this process.

Mr. Carlos Valdez from the Northern New Mexico CAB (NNM CAB) asked if the work plans that are due in September apply to funding for 6 months.

Ms. Flohr said that the plans are for the entire 12-month period, based on the funding level of the six-month CR.

Ms. Alexander asked what is driving the new restrictions on how the money is spent.

Ms. Flohr explained that the restrictions were likely due to the effort to be more fiscally conscious in Congress, but those in Congress may not be aware of how it could negatively affect the sites. Operating under a 6-month CR is preferable to a shorter CR because planning is difficult for the sites under short CRs. However, because the control point issue is built into the CR, EM cannot make funding adjustments as it historically has been able to do, which could affect some sites negatively.

Mr. Eric Roberts from the Paducah CAB asked to what extent the local DOE sites can discuss these CR scenarios with their respective boards.

Ms. Flohr said that they can discuss it to any degree they please, as all the budget issues discussed in the call are public information.

The EM budget office met with the Deputy Resources Board to discuss decisions on the FY 2014 budget. The memorandum from this meeting was due to EM by July 27, however, EM did not receive the Program Decision Memo until August 14, and it has not yet been signed by the Deputy Secretary. The budget request is due to the CFO on August 15, so EM will be working with sites to collaborate on the issue. The budget request is much stronger as a result of this collaboration. After the CFO reviews the FY 2014 budget request, it will be submitted to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). A briefing is scheduled with an OMB examiner on Sept. 13, where Mr. David Huizenga and the examiner will discuss high-level issues, and Ms. Flohr will walk the examiner through funding at each site and changes from 2013 to 2014 budgets.

### **Fall Chairs' Meeting**

Ms. Alexander asked for comments or questions on the draft EM SSAB Chairs' meeting agenda that the planning committee has created.

Ralph Phelps from the NNM CAB asked if it would be appropriate to give more time to the Chairs' Round Robin and a bit less time to Mr. Huizenga's presentation because in the last Chairs' meeting, Mr. Huizenga had wanted to save time to comment on the Round Robin.

Ms. Alexander explained that the different presentations created a time block instead of strict presentation limits, and there is flexibility within the time block.

Mr. Phelps suggested that the Chairs have the opportunity to create more than one presentation slide and be prepared to talk for more than five minutes if the opportunity to do so arises.

Ms. Alexander said that during the Round Robin, all boards will have the opportunity to speak once, and if there is time remaining a second round will commence, which worked well at the last meeting. The main concern is to avoid creating time shortages for the Chairs who present their issues last in the sequence.

Dr. Don Bridges stated that he believed it would be most beneficial to follow the Round Robin for Board Issues and Achievements with the Round Robin focusing on cross-complex issues.

Ms. Melissa Nielson, Director of the Office of Intergovernmental and Community Activities, stated that the agenda was created with the second Round Robin occurring later in the afternoon because it was believed that Mr. Huizenga's presentation would segue into the budget presentation by Ms. Terry Tyborowski, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Program Planning and Budget.

Ms. Susan Leckband from the Hanford Advisory Board (HAB) suggested leaving the agenda order as is and make the most of the time the Board has with Mr. Huizenga and Ms. Tyborowski.

Two proposed recommendations have been offered for consideration at the October Chairs' meeting. The first recommendation was created by Mr. Valdez's drafting group, the topic of which is budget and allocation strategy. The second recommendation was developed by the Idaho National Laboratory CAB (INL CAB) and addresses small business contracting. A suggestion was made to invite a representative from EM's Acquisition and Contracting organization to attend the discussion and answer questions that might arise. Ms. Alexander agreed to arrange the invitation.

Mr. Dick Snyder from the Portsmouth SSAB pointed out that small business opportunities are in the prime contractor's work scope and asked if DOE would pull these responsibilities away from the contractors.

Mr. Willie Preacher from the INL CAB added that small business contracts are not currently being counted, and that the recommendation will aid in assuring the right people are in the position to do the work.

## **Around the Complex**

### Savannah River Site CAB – Don Bridges

- The CAB has been looking into Environmental Justice (EJ) issues, and a board member was attending an EJ conference in Atlanta the week of August 13.
- The CAB is nearing the end of recruitment for 2012 and plans to replace three board members.
- During its last meeting, the CAB deliberated on a draft recommendation that was later picked up by a local newspaper and portrayed to the public as an official stance of the board. Dr. Bridges emphasized the importance of using caution with pre-decisional drafts and marking all documents as drafts before they are discussed and approved by board members.

### Hanford Advisory Board – Susan Leckband

- The HAB convened a Committee-of-the-Whole meeting to discuss and develop recommendations regarding the Hanford site-wide RCRA permit. The advice will come forward for full board consideration during the HAB's September 6-7 meeting.
- During the September 6-7 meeting, top managers from two local DOE field offices, Washington State Department of Ecology, and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) will provide an in-depth look back at the current fiscal year, as well as the coming fiscal year. Nominations for Chair of the HAB will also be considered; a new chair will be elected in November.
- The HAB's Executive Issues Committee is working with DOE to identify potential board budget savings. The HAB is attempting to be as frugal as possible without causing a negative effect on the ability give input on cleanup issues.
- The public comment period on the 100 K proposed plan will be taking place soon.

### Idaho National Laboratory EM CAB – Willie Preacher

- The INL CAB is working to address the issue of the Integrated Waste Treatment Unit (IWTU) startup. They are confident they can get the facility functional and upgraded.

- In September, the INL CAB will hold an education and planning session, and develop its work plan for FY 2013. The board is attempting to plan the best they can with the budget that is allotted.

#### Nevada SSAB – Kathy Bienenstein

- The board has completed its membership drive and will be adding several new members to its ranks in October.
- There is a new liaison member from the Nye County Commission, who is representing the entire County of Nye on the board. This is different from other liaisons who represent a particular division of the county.
- The September board meeting will be focused on developing a FY 2013 work plan, and plans to explore working as a Committee-of-the-Whole instead of through multiple smaller subcommittees.
- Donna Hruska was voted to be the new Vice Chair of the Nevada SSAB, and Barb Ulmer is the new facilitator.

#### Northern New Mexico CAB – Ralph Phelps

- More than half of the NNM CAB members attended site tours in July and August. In July, the members traveled to Sandia, where they studied the remediation strategies used at the site. In August, the board traveled to Rocky Flats to look into their work on legacy management. The tours were highly educational and valuable. Sandia site employees were extremely helpful.
- In July, Mr. Phelps briefed the New Mexico State Environmental Department's Radiological and Hazardous Waste Committee on NNM CAB activities and priorities. He received favorable feedback on the board from the committee members.
- The NNM CAB most recently met at the end of July. Interest has been increasing with regard to the potential expansion of the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP) mission. The NNM CAB developed a recommendation for Mr. Huizenga, offering to broaden its work scope to include WIPP activities. Members are currently waiting to hear from Mr. Huizenga on this issue.
- There is an additional NNM CAB meeting scheduled for late August for the members to be briefed on long-term plans for the site and board elections.

#### Oak Ridge SSAB – Maggie Owen

- The board will be holding the 15<sup>th</sup> annual planning meeting on August 18-19. Out of the ORSSAB's 21 members, 16 are in their first year, so the primary focus will be to educate the new members on the work plan topics.
- Six new board members were seated in July; they were given a tour of the Oak Ridge Reservation and participated in a training meeting.
- Oak Ridge's new EM manager, Mark Whitney, stepped into his new position in August; the board looks forward to working with him.

#### Paducah CAB – Eric Roberts

- The CAB recently returned from its annual planning session and is now in the midst of finalizing the FY 2013 work plan. Some key changes over last year's work plan are a result of the flat budgeting. It is now clear that the regulatory milestones set with EPA will not be met with current funding levels. Therefore, the site has been renegotiating

milestones accordingly, and the CAB has been able to weigh in on prioritization in the work plan.

- The CAB is working on a project involving waste disposition options and is energized about upcoming work on future site use.

#### Portsmouth SSAB – Dick Snyder

- The Portsmouth SSAB recently passed a recommendation regarding alternatives for the siting of an on-site waste disposal cell. Passage of the recommendation came after years of information gathering and research with DOE and DOE contractors. Though members have had varying points of view on the issue, the board is proud of the work it has accomplished.
- Members are focused on issues related to reindustrialization and have concluded that on-site disposal with conditions is in the best interest of the community in order to expedite decontamination and decommissioning. This will give the community the best chance to reuse the site for industrial purposes. One of the conditions for this on-site disposal is consolidation of existing landfills and complete remediation of TCE-contaminated plumes.
- Six new members participated in an orientation program, including a site tour.
- The board's annual executive planning session will take place on August 24-25, and will focus on developing the FY 13 work plan.
- The new program manager of the FLUOR-B&W contract is Dennis Carr, who the Portsmouth SSAB has worked with closely for past year.

#### **Closing Remarks**

Ms. Alexander thanked the participants for their time and adjourned the meeting at 4:00 pm EDT.