

**SOUTH CAROLINA NUCLEAR ADVISORY COUNCIL
MINUTES**

September 15, 2005
Room 209 Gressette Building
Columbia, South Carolina
(Approved December 1, 2005)

Members present: Chairman – Mr. Ben Rusche, The Honorable Robert Perry, Dr. Carolyn Hudson, Dr. Vincent Van Brunt, Mr. Bill Mottel, Dr. David Peterson, and Mr. Steve Byrne

Absent: The Honorable Greg Ryberg

Staff present: Ms. D’Juana Wilson, Mr. Michael Hughes

I. Welcome and Opening Comments

The Governor’s Nuclear Advisory Council convened on September 15, 2005, at 1:30PM. Mr. Ben Rusche, Chairman of the Council, called the meeting to order and welcomed the speakers and guests.

II. Approval of Minutes, June 9, 2005, meeting

Mr. Bill Mottel moved to approve the minutes from the June 9, 2005, meeting. Dr. Carolyn Hudson seconded the motion to approve the minutes. The motion carried unanimously.

III. National Academy of Sciences (NAS) Report Status

Chairman Rusche reported that he and Dr. John Palms, former President of the University of South Carolina, were participants in an external review for the State for the National Academy of Sciences (NAS) Report. David Wilson, SC DHEC, was also involved in the process. Chairman Rusche stated that the actions he took in this matter were personal, not on behalf of the Nuclear Advisory Council. He stated that the initial form of the report was an early draft and the group was not on the same “wave length” as

he was. David Wilson agreed with the comments given by Chairman Rusche. The Chairman stated in his response that progress needs to be made safely and expeditiously with the closure of high-level tanks as opposed to the view in the NAS draft (as he read the draft) that there was time for R&D and there was no need to rush to conclusion

Chairman Rusche said that this version, now published in what appears to be final form, is still an interim report. He said perhaps in another year, as the academy looks at it, a more refined report may be published. He said the purpose has been served and the process is underway, and he will stay in touch with the Academy.

IV. SC Heritage Foundation Official Opening

Mr. Bill Mottel stated that on June 9, 2005, a presentation was given to the Council on the development of the Heritage Center at the Savannah River Site (SRS). He said that on August 11, 2005, at a press conference in Aiken, the legal body of the SRS Heritage Foundation was announced. This is a charitable stand-alone 501 (c)(3) organization. There is currently a nine-member Board of Directors (BOD). The first BOD meeting will be September 28th at the SRS. Mr. Mottel noted that he was pleased to serve on the BOD. He viewed this as a milestone in progress, awareness, and recognition of the capability and national significance of the site. Mr. Walt Joseph echoed Mr. Mottel's comments about the progress that has been made and they look forward to continue success with their efforts.

V. SR-H Canyon/HB Line, Past, Present, Future

Chairman Rusche introduced Mr. Kevin Smith, Assistant Manager for Nuclear Materials Stabilization Projects at SRS. Mr. Smith's presentation was on the Savannah River Site Environmental Management Program – "SR H-Canyon/HB Line, Past,

Present, and Future. “ He gave a brief history and then discussed the present focus of the facility as directed by the National Defense Act. He reported that H Canyon will be at a high state of readiness. He reviewed the potential mission through FY16.

There was a brief discussion following his presentation on the MOX facility and Chairman Rusche asked if Mr. Smith could possibly come back and discuss issues relative to the MOX facility at a later date. Mr. Smith agreed to an early return visit to the Council.

Mr. Bill Mottel commented that H Canyon and HB Line must be kept in a first-class state because of their unique and vital capabilities. He asked that the Council be informed of any problems because it needs to be understood that H Canyon and HB Line are precious jewels.

Mr. Smith briefly discussed NNSA’s responsibility for separating materials for appropriate disposition of waste through the MOX facility and the H Canyon facility. The Council looks forward to a discussion of this at an early meeting.

Please click here for a [copy of Mr. Smith’s presentation to the Council](#).

VI. SRS Salt Waste Treatment Process

Mr. Terrel Spears, Acting Assistant Manager for Waste Disposition Project, US DOE/SRS, gave an update on the Salt Processing Project. He began by reviewing the EM Performance Management Plan Strategy. He stated that the baseline timeframe for this mission is 2006 – 2019. Chairman Rusche asked Mr. Spears to address the relationship of curies with volumetric content. Mr. Spears explained this later in his presentation. Mr. Byrne questioned the estimated target date of 2019 and Mr. Spears confirmed that this is the expected date.

Dr. Vincent Van Brunt wanted to know about tank space and water recycle. He asked how dependent they were on the evaporators and Mr. Spears stated that they are totally dependent on the evaporators.

Mr. Spears then reviewed the progress toward Implementation of the Section 3116 provisions. Section 3116 refers to a particular section of the Defense Authorization Bill approved by Congress in December of 2004. Chairman Rusche asked how the DOE review obtains the approval that Section 3116 requires and how this matter is to be brought to a mutually agreeable conclusion (DOE, NRC, State-DHEC and NAC).

Mr. Spears reported that the NRC intends to write a technical report to document the proposal. DOE noted that they may have areas that are not completely clear now, but they will document progress in future reports. Chairman Rusche urged them to proceed boldly, but advisedly.

Dr. Vincent Van Brunt asked if some level of confidence can be achieved with NRC in implementing the strategy. David Wilson, SC DHEC, stated that efforts have been tremendous and they are disappointed with the progress. He said that getting the support of headquarters is equally as important as getting support of the site.

Mr. Spears then reviewed the site activities to prepare for Salt Processing, which are:

- Salt tanks preparations;
- Saltstone facility modifications;
- Actinide removal process (ARP);
- Modular caustic side solvent extraction Unit (MCU); and
- Salt Waste Processing Facility (SWPF)

He discussed the details of each activity and then reported on the National Academy of Science (NAS) Interim Report. He said that this report was issued August 5, 2005, and there were four recommendations. The recommendations are:

- De-couple waste removal activities from tank closure activities where warranted;
- Consider alternatives to DDA (deliquification, dissolution, adjustment) to alleviate tank space issues;
- Consider how radionuclides affect site-specific risk when making waste disposal decisions; and
- Fund additional research and development.

DOE agrees with the NAS recommendations and will provide additional information to the NAS on tank closure, salt processing alternatives, and tank space management.

The final report is to be published January 2006.

Mr. Spears then discussed the issues associated with the Salt Waste Treatment Process and a brief discussion followed.

In conclusion, he reported that the successful implementation of the interim salt processing strategy is key to ensuring continued sludge vitrification operations and waste removal operations leading to timely closure of waste tanks. SRS's salt waste treatment and disposal program is moving forward. DOE is working closely with the NRC to finalize the Section 3116 Determination for salt. SRS is proceeding with the development of the treatment processes needed for salt waste processing. He said the technical and programmatic issues have slowed the pace, but, are being proactively addressed and resolved.

Dr. Vincent Van Brunt asked if there were any technical issues in association with Tank 48 and Mr. Spears reported that there are, but, would like to discuss these issues in more depth at a later time. Mr. Mottel thanked Mr. Spears for a time consuming

discussion and suggested a more detailed workshop review by a subcommittee of the NAC would be of great value. Chairman Rusche agreed.

For a copy of Mr. Spears' presentation, [please click here](#).

VII. Unitech

Mr. Michael Fuller, Manager, Health Physics and Engineering, Unitech, reported to the Council on the decommissioning of the laundry facility in Columbia, South Carolina. The company launders protective clothing for nuclear power plants. They have decommissioned (8) other facilities, namely, facilities located in Jeannette, PA; New Kensington, PA; Charleston, SC; Bremerton, WA; Pleasanton, CA; Osceola, IA; Portsmouth, VA; and Vicksburg, MS. The Columbia facility was located at 811 S. Edisto Avenue. He began by reviewing the history of the plant, which dates back to 1971. [Please click here](#) for a copy of Mr. Fuller's presentation which shows pictures of the plant and outlines the step-by-step process of the decommissioning of the plant. Mr. Fuller said that the Final Status Survey has been submitted and they are awaiting the license termination from DHEC. In the future, the site will be sold to the City of Columbia. The company is now in Barnwell, South Carolina. There they do laundry for the Savannah River Site and the Oak Ridge facility under a DHEC license.

VIII. Barnwell Re-Licensing Update

Mr. David Wilson, SC DHEC, reported that the current license remains in effect by DHEC extension pending final decision by the Administrative Law Judge.

IX. Governor's Support of NuStart Process in South Carolina

Chairman Rusche noted that since the last meeting, there has been an activity in the state regarding the potential appropriateness and value of some activity at a site in the

state possibly being considered by NuStart. NuStart is a consortium utilities and reactor vendors that are considering participating in this round of testing licensing processes that could eventually lead to a power reactor in the state. Mr. Rusche asked Mr. Ernie Chaput, Economic Development Partnership, Aiken, South Carolina, to address the Council on this matter. Mr. Chaput updated the Council on the Request for Proposal. He reported that Nu Start has identified six candidate sites. Savannah River Site is the only government site on the list. The others are utility owned. He said that basically, they are asking the state for a proposal for a site suitable for locating a reactor using untested NRC procedures. He reported that since the June meeting the NuStart proposal was sent in on August 15, 2005. The proposal included the concept of an energy park, which would use a portion of the SRS land for non-traditional DOE activities. He briefly reviewed those activities. He said that Nu Start is in the process of evaluating proposals and originally hoped to have the site selection process complete by the end of September. Efforts have been slowed down due to the disaster in Louisiana. He thanked everyone for their help in putting the proposal together. He said they are very optimistic and will continue to keep the Council informed.*

X. Comments and Questions from Audience

There being no further business Mr. Rusche adjourned the meeting at 3:33 PM.

* Soon after the Council meeting, on September 22, 2005, NuStart announced they had selected sites in Alabama and Mississippi.