available for review in the Department of Energy Public Reading Rooms.

ADDRESSES: Send comments, data, views, or arguments concerning the implementation plan to: Department of Energy, 1000 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20585.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mr. Gene Ives, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Military Application and Stockpile Management, Defense Programs, Department of Energy, 1000 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington DC, 20585.

Issued in Washington, DC, on April 28, 1999.

Mark B. Whitaker, Jr.

Departmental Representative to the Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board.

The Secretary of Energy

Washington, DC 20585

April 22, 1999.

The Honorable John T. Conway,
Chairman, Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board, 625 Indiana Avenue, NW, Suite 700, Washington, DC 20004

Dear Mr. Chairman: We are pleased to forward the Department of Energy implementation plan for addressing the issues raised in the Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board (DNFSB) Recommendation 98–2, ''SAFETY MANAGEMENT AT THE PANTEX PLANT.'' The DNFSB Recommendation 98–2 is consistent with the Department's focus on the Pantex Plant safety management enhancements in the development of the Pantex Plant integrated safety management system as part of the Department's implementation plan for the DNFSB Recommendation 95–2, ''SAFETY MANAGEMENT.''

We understand that the objective of Recommendation 98–2 is to strengthen and simplify the Pantex Plant safety management and work practices. The primary objectives of this implementation plan are to ensure practical and timely implementation of safety improvements and to better allow for tailoring of Seamless Safety-21 principles. The activities delineated in the plan should simplify and standardize activity level safety management practices and processes for all work involving nuclear explosives at the Pantex Plant.

Mr. Gene Ives, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Military Application and Stockpile Management, is the responsible manager for this implementation plan. Mr. Ives can be contacted at 202–586–4879.

Yours sincerely,

Bill Richardson

[FR Doc. 99–11135 Filed 5–3–99; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6450–01–P

DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

Record of Decision for a Multi-Purpose Canister or Comparable System for Idaho National Engineering and Environmental Laboratory Spent Nuclear Fuel

AGENCY: Department of Energy.

ACTION: Record of Decision.

SUMMARY: This Record of Decision announces the Department of Energy's (DOE's) decision to use a multi-purpose canister or comparable system for spent nuclear fuel at the Idaho National Engineering and Environmental Laboratory (INEEL). Except for those fuels that may be processed (e.g., sodium bonded fuel) and a small fraction of spent nuclear fuel (10% or less) that may be suitable for shipment using existing transportation casks, a multi-purpose canister or comparable system will be used for the loading and storage of DOE-owned spent nuclear fuel at the INEEL, and transportation of this spent nuclear fuel for ultimate disposition outside the State of Idaho. This decision is based on analyses contained in two Environmental Impact Statements: the Department of Energy Programmatic Spent Nuclear Fuel Management and Idaho National Engineering Laboratory Environmental Restoration and Waste Management Programs Final Environmental Impact Statement (SNF & INEL EIS), dated April 1995 (DOE/EIS–0203–F); and the Final Environmental Impact Statement for a Container System for the Management of Naval Spent Nuclear Fuel (Container System EIS), dated November 1996 (DOE/EIS–0251), in which DOE participated as a cooperating agency and then adopted (61 FR 59435, October 9, 1996). DOE recently prepared a Supplement Analysis for a Container System for the Management of DOE Spent Nuclear Fuel Located at the INEEL (March 1999) under 10 CFR 1021.314(c), and determined that no further NEPA documentation is needed.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION: For further information on DOE's use of a multi-purpose canister or comparable system for INEEL spent nuclear fuel, or to receive a copy of the Supplement Analysis and Determination, please contact Mr. Ron Ramsey, Mail Stop 1154, U.S. Department of Energy, Idaho Operations Office, 850 Energy Drive, 83401, or phone (208) 526–1545. The SNF & INEL and Container System EISs, the Supplement Analysis and supporting documentation are available for review on request at the Department of Energy Idaho Operations Office located at 850 Energy Drive, Idaho Falls, Idaho. Copies of the SNF & INEL and Container System EISs and the Supplement Analysis also are available for review at the Idaho Falls and Pocatello, Idaho, Public Libraries. The Supplement Analysis and Determination also are available on the INEEL Website at: http://www.inel.gov/environment/em/nepa.html.

For information on DOE's NEPA process, please contact Carol M. Borgstrom, Director, Office of NEPA Policy and Assistance (EH–42), U.S. Department of Energy, 1000 Independence Avenue SW, Washington, DC 20585, or phone (202) 586–4600 or leave a message at 1–800–472–2756.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: In litigation that began in 1991, the State of Idaho asserted that DOE had violated NEPA by not conducting a thorough analysis of environmental impacts associated with spent nuclear fuel storage and transportation. During the litigation, DOE completed the SNF & INEL EIS in April 1995. The litigation was settled when DOE, the U.S. Department of the Navy (Navy), and the State of Idaho executed a Settlement Agreement that was subsequently incorporated into a federal court order [*Consent Order in United States of America* v. *Batt, Civil No. 91–0054–S–ELJ (D.Id.)* dated October 17, 1995] (Idaho Settlement Agreement). Section F.4. of the Idaho Settlement Agreement requires, in part, that DOE and the Navy shall use multi-purpose canisters or comparable systems to prepare spent nuclear fuel for shipment and ultimate disposal outside the State of Idaho, and that the Record of Decision on the NEPA analysis shall be completed by April 30, 1999.

The Navy as lead agency and DOE as a cooperating agency prepared and issued the final Container System EIS in November 1996. The Navy issued a Record of Decision on the Container System EIS on January 8, 1997 (62 FR 1095), selecting a dual-purpose canister system for the management of post-examination naval spent nuclear fuel and special case low-level waste. On May 1, 1997, the Navy issued a second Record of Decision on the Container System EIS (62 FR 23770) that announced that naval spent nuclear fuel that is or will be stored at the Idaho Nuclear Technology Engineering Center (INTEC) (formerly the Idaho Chemical Processing Plant) will be loaded into dual-purpose canisters at the Naval Reactors Facility (NRF). Both INTEC and the NRF are located at INEEL. The second Record of Decision also announced that all dual-purpose

canisters loaded with naval spent nuclear fuel and special case waste will be stored at a site adjacent to the Expended Core Facility at NRF, regardless of whether the contained fuel had previously been stored at INTEC, or had been received at INEEL before or after the dry storage facility at NRF commenced operations. (The second Record of Decision makes no decision that naval special case waste will be shipped to a geologic repository, as will naval spent nuclear fuel.) The Navy's decision to implement the preferred alternative, i.e., to use a dual-purpose canister system for naval spent nuclear fuel, was issued to satisfy the Navy's commitment under Section F.4. of the Idaho Settlement Agreement. Although DOE was a cooperating agency in the preparation of the Container System EIS, subsequently adopted the EIS, and co-signed both Records of Decision issued by the Navy, DOE-owned spent nuclear fuel was not separately analyzed in the Container System EIS, and neither Record of Decision addressed DOE-owned spent nuclear fuel.

The Department's Idaho Operations Office (DOE–ID) prepared a Supplement Analysis for a Container System for the Management of DOE Spent Nuclear Fuel Located at the INEEL (March, 1999) to evaluate the adequacy of both the Container System and SNF & INEL EISs for the proposal to use a multi-purpose canister or comparable system for DOE-owned spent nuclear fuel. The purpose of a Supplement Analysis is to examine whether, in light of new information or changes in the proposed action, an existing EIS should be supplemented, a new EIS should be prepared, or no further NEPA documentation is required.

The Supplement Analysis demonstrated that the potential environmental impacts of using a multi-purpose canister, or comparable system, to load, store and transport DOE-owned spent nuclear fuel located on the INEEL are bounded by or are reasonably comparable to the impacts analyzed in the SNF & INEL and Container System EISs. Accordingly, on March 4,1999, DOE issued the ''Department of Energy Determination and Record of Decision on National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Analysis,'' which concludes that the proposed multi-purpose canister or comparable system for DOE-owned spent nuclear fuel at the INEEL is adequately analyzed in the SNF & INEL and Container System EISs, and that, therefore, no further NEPA documentation is required.

Alternatives Considered

The Container System EIS considered six alternative dry storage container systems for the loading, storage, transport, and possible disposal of post-examination naval spent nuclear fuel and the management of special case waste (i.e., low-level radioactive waste that contains concentrations of certain short- and long-lived isotopes which requires disposal by more stringent measures than land burial). The alternatives included the use of either existing dry storage containers or dry storage containers that could be produced by manufacturers of such equipment.

Because of differences in configurations among naval spent nuclear fuel assemblies, all alternatives required containers to have internal baskets designed for specific naval spent nuclear fuel types. For the purposes of transportation analyses, the SNF & INEL EIS assumed the use of existing transportation casks licensed by the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission for transportation of bare (i.e., non-canisterized) fuel assemblies. The SNF & INEL EIS analyzed truck and rail alternatives for transportation from the INEEL to a repository, but did not analyze the use of specific alternative types of containers, such as dual-purpose (i.e., storage and transportation) or multi-purpose (i.e., storage, transportation and disposal) canisters.

A brief description of the six alternatives analyzed in the Container System EIS follows:

(1) *No-Action Alternative*—Use of existing technology to handle, store, and subsequently transport naval spent nuclear fuel to a geologic repository or a centralized interim storage site using the Navy M–140 transportation cask.

(2) *Current Technology/ Supplemented by High Capacity Rail Alternative*—This alternative uses the same storage methods and M–140 transportation cask described in the no-action alternative, but with redesigned internal structures for the M–140 cask to accommodate a larger amount of naval spent nuclear fuel per cask, thus reducing the total number of shipments required.

(3) *Transportable Storage Cask Alternative*—This alternative uses an existing, commercially available transportable storage cask for storage at the INEEL as well as for transportation to a repository or centralized interim storage site.

(4) *Dual-Purpose Canister Alternative*—This alternative uses an existing, commercially available canister and overpack system for storage at the INEEL and shipment of naval spent nuclear fuel to a geologic repository or centralized interim storage site.

(5) *Multi-Purpose Canister Alternative*—This alternative uses about 300 large (125-ton) multi-purpose canisters for storage, transportation, and disposal of naval spent nuclear fuel, without repackaging or further handling of individual spent nuclear fuel assemblies.

(6) *Small Multi-Purpose Canister Alternative*—This alternative uses about 500 smaller (75-ton) multi-purpose canisters, rather than large multi-purpose canisters.

The Container System EIS evaluated each of the alternatives against a set of criteria to select a preferred alternative. The analysis found that the environmental and public health impacts would be small and would differ little among alternatives for: the manufacture of any of the dry storage container systems; the operations of handling, storage, transportation and unloading at a repository; and the construction of facilities. With respect to the environmental and public health impacts, all the alternatives are considered comparable and indistinguishable and equally environmentally preferable. In its Record of Decision, the Navy decided that dual-purpose canisters represented the best system for naval fuel when compared to the other alternatives in terms of cost, operational efficiency, industry trends, regulatory acceptance and environmental and public health impacts. The Container System EIS established that dual-purpose and multi-purpose canister systems are comparable, with the possible exception that a multi-purpose canister can also be used for disposal.

Decision

DOE has decided to use a multi-purpose canister or comparable system (e.g., dual-purpose canister system or other system as described and analyzed in the context of the Container System EIS) for the management of DOE-owned spent nuclear fuel at the INEEL, based on cost, operational efficiency, regulatory acceptance, and environmental and public health considerations. Except for those fuels that may be processed (e.g., sodium bonded fuel) and a small fraction of spent nuclear fuel (10% or less) that may be suitable for shipment using existing transportation casks, a multi-purpose canister system (or comparable system) will be used for the loading and storage of DOE-owned spent nuclear fuel at the INEEL, and for transportation

of this spent nuclear fuel for ultimate disposition outside the State of Idaho. This decision does not commit DOE to a single course of action or the use of a particular spent nuclear fuel container system if improvements in design are made in the future and are selected pursuant to future NEPA review and coordination with the State of Idaho.

Mitigation

DOE has not identified the need for mitigation measures beyond the strictly controlled conduct of operations associated with the management of DOE-owned spent nuclear fuel at INEEL that is integral to the selected alternative. DOE has directives and regulations for the conduct of spent nuclear fuel management operations. All government spent nuclear fuel shipments must comply with DOE and U.S. Department of Transportation regulations, and DOE has adopted stringent controls for minimizing occupational and public radiation exposure. The policy of these programs is to reduce radiation exposure to as low as reasonably achievable. Singly and collectively, these measures avoid, reduce, or eliminate any potentially adverse environmental impacts from spent nuclear fuel management activities, including those associated with containerization.

Approval

Issued in Washington, D.C. this 27th day of April 1999.

James M. Owendoff,

Acting Assistant Secretary for Environmental Management.

[FR Doc. 99–11063 Filed 5–3–99; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6450–01–P

DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

Environmental Management Site-Specific Advisory Board, Oak Ridge Reservation

AGENCY: Department of Energy.

ACTION: Notice of open meeting.

SUMMARY: This notice announces a meeting of the Environmental Management Site-Specific Advisory Board (EM SSAB), Oak Ridge. Federal Advisory Committee Act (Pub. L. No. 92–463, 86 Stat. 770) requires that public notice of these meetings be announced in the **Federal Register**.

DATES: Wednesday, May 12, 1999: 6:00–9:30 p.m. Board Meeting.

ADDRESSES: Garden Plaza, 215 S. Illinois Avenue, Oak Ridge, TN 37830.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Marianne Heiskell, Federal Coordinator/Ex-Officio Officer, Department of Energy Oak Ridge Operations Office, P.O. Box 2001, EM–90, Oak Ridge, TN 37831, (423) 576–0314.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Purpose of the Board: The purpose of the Board is to make recommendations to DOE in the areas of environmental restoration, waste management, and related activities.

Tentative Agenda

1. Presentation—James D. Werner, U.S. Department of Energy, Headquarters—Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (PEIS) Lawsuit Settlement Database
2. Special Report on the Canyons in Los Alamos County
3. Committee Reports
4. Other Board business will be conducted as necessary

Public Participation: The meeting is open to the public. Written statements may be filed with the Committee either before or after the meeting. Individuals who wish to make oral statements to the Committee either before or after the meeting. Individuals who wish to make oral statements pertaining to agenda items should contact Kevin Rohrer at the address or telephone number listed above. Requests must be received 5 days prior to the meeting and reasonable provision will be made to include the presentation in the agenda. The Designated Federal Officer is empowered to conduct the meeting in a fashion that will facilitate the orderly conduct of business. Each individual wishing to make public comment will be provided a maximum of 5 minutes to present their comments at the beginning of the meeting. This notice is being published less than 15 days before the date of the meeting due to programmatic issues that needed to be resolved.

Minutes: The minutes of this meeting will be available for public review and copying at the Freedom of Information Public Reading Room, 1E–190, Forrestal Building, 1000 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20585 between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m., Monday-Friday, except Federal holidays. Minutes will also be available by writing Kevin Rohrer at the address listed above.

Issued at Washington, DC on April 28, 1999.

Rachel M. Samuel,

Deputy Advisory Committee Management Officer.

[FR Doc. 99–11136 Filed 5–3–99; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6450–01–P

DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

Environmental Management Site-Specific Advisory Board, Paducah

AGENCY: Department of Energy.

ACTION: Notice of Open Meeting.

SUMMARY: This notice announces a meeting of the Environmental Management Site-Specific Advisory Board (EM SSAB), Paducah. Federal Advisory Committee Act (Pub. L. 92–463, 86 Stat. 770) requires that public notice of these meetings be announced in the **Federal Register**.

DATES: Thursday, May 13, 1999: 5:30 p.m.–10:00 p.m.

ADDRESSES: Paducah Information Age Park Resource Center, 2000 McCracken Boulevard, Paducah, Kentucky.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: John D. Sheppard, Site Specific Advisory Board Coordinator, Department of Energy Paducah Site Office, Post Office Box 1410, MS–103, Paducah, Kentucky 42001, (502) 441–6804.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Purpose of the Board: The purpose of the Board is to make recommendations to DOE in the areas of environmental restoration and waste management activities.

Tentative Agenda:

5:30 p.m.—Call to Order/Discussion
6:00 p.m.—Approve Meeting Minutes
6:05 p.m.—Public Comment/Questions
6:30 p.m.—Presentations
7:15 p.m.—Sub Committee Reports
8:15 p.m.—Administrative Issues
8:30 p.m.—Adjourn

Copies of the final agenda will be available at the meeting.

Public Participation: The meeting is open to the public. Written statements may be filed with the Committee either before or after the meeting. Individuals who wish to make oral statements pertaining to agenda items should contact John D. Sheppard at the address or telephone number listed above. Requests must be received 5 days prior to the meeting and reasonable provision will be made to include the presentation in the agenda. The Deputy Designated Federal Officer is empowered to conduct the meeting in a fashion that will facilitate the orderly conduct of business. Each individual wishing to make public comment will be provided a maximum of 5 minutes to present their comments as the first item of the meeting agenda. This notice is being published less than 15 days before the date of the meeting due to programmatic issues that needed to be resolved.

Minutes: The minutes of this meeting will be available for public review and