

Secretary of Energy Advisory Board

Panel on Emerging Technological Alternatives to Incineration

Terms of Reference

Objectives and Scope of Activities:

To evaluate and recommend emerging nonincineration technologies efforts for treatment and disposal of mixed waste on which the Assistant Secretary of Environmental Management's Office of Science and Technology should focus efforts for development, testing, permitting and deployment. The panel will evaluate the technologies according to the criteria set forth in this charter.

Background:

Secretary Bill Richardson established the panel to assess and recommend technological initiatives that the department should pursue to establish alternatives to incineration. The panel was an important component of the Secretary's decision to postpone construction of an incinerator to treat nuclear waste stored at the department's Idaho National Engineering and Environmental Laboratory (INEEL).

Description of the Panel's Duties:

The SEAB Panel on Emerging Technological Alternatives to Incineration will evaluate and recommend emerging nonincineration technologies for treatment and disposal of mixed waste on which the Assistant Secretary of Environmental Management's Office of Science and Technology should focus efforts for development, testing, permitting, and deployment.

The Panel will evaluate technologies to treat low-level, alpha low-level and transuranic wastes containing polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) and hazardous constituents, including the up to 14,000 cubic meters of such wastes that the DOE had planned to incinerate in the Advance Mixed Waste Treatment Facility (AMWTF) at INEEL.

The Panel will also evaluate whether these technologies could be implemented in a manner that would allow the department to comply with all the legal requirements, including those contained in the Settlement Agreement and Consent Order signed by the State of Idaho, DOE, and the Navy in October 1995. That agreement requires the Department to remove 65,000 cubic meters of waste at the INEEL from Idaho by the end of 2018. The evaluation should also address the technical concerns raised by the public about the incinerator DOE has proposed as part of the AMWTF.

As a subcommittee of the Secretary of Energy Advisory Board, the panel's final document will be a report that will be presented in a public forum. A copy of the report will be posted on the web site and made available to the public prior to its presentation to allow the public to prepare questions and comments. Opportunities for public comment will be made throughout the process.

Reporting:

The panel should complete its evaluation and provide recommendations and a report to the Secretary through the SEAB no later than December 15, 2000. Results of the panel's evaluation and recommendations will be shared with the Governors of Idaho and Wyoming and the public.

Estimated Number and Frequency of Meetings:

The panel is expected to meet at least four times before December 15. Meetings will be scheduled as the panel deems necessary to accomplish its duties and purposes.

Membership:

The panel will consist of nine members who have expertise and experience in the management of hazardous wastes and related treatment technologies. DOE has nominated five members. The Governors of Idaho and Wyoming have nominated one each. The panel will also include two representatives nominated by public interest groups.

Chair of the Panel:

The Chair will be selected by the Secretary of Energy in consultation with the Governors of Idaho and Wyoming.

Working Groups:

To facilitate the functioning of the Panel, it may establish working groups on its own initiative. Working groups would undertake fact finding and analysis on behalf of the panel with respect to matters within the charter of the panel. Given the broad range of issues to be considered, the panel may ask working groups to explore certain issues in greater detail. For example, the panel may ask smaller groups of two or three individuals to review various categories of technologies or specific problems in greater detail. Working groups will report back to the full panel.

The Chair (or Co-chairs), in consultation with the department, will appoint members of any working groups established by the panel. Working groups may include members who are not members of the panel in order that the panel may obtain additional expertise. Working groups will meet as the panel deems appropriate.

Duration and Termination Date:

This charter shall expire on December 15, 2000, subject to extension or dissolution by the Secretary of Energy.