

Waste Management Area C Performance Assessment Draft Advice v. 1

Background

The September 2010 schedule for issuing the Waste Management Area-C (WMA-C) Performance Assessment (PA) was February 2012. This date is important because it marks the start of Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act and U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) Closure Documents which need to be issued by December 31, 2014 to allow the initiation of C-Farm tank closure due for completion by June 30, 2019.

There are several uncertainties in the C-Farm tank closure schedule. The first is the delay of the draft Tank Closure & Waste Management Environmental Impact Statement (TC & WM EIS). The WMA-C PA depends on the conclusions of the TC & WM EIS. With the TC & WM EIS delayed into 2012, the WMA-C PA appears to be delayed into late 2012 or early 2013, almost a year behind schedule. This delay compresses the schedule for the tank closure documents due by December 31, 2014, maybe missing that milestone.

Another uncertainty is the potential for delays in the Waste Incidental to Reprocessing - determination process which involves approvals from the Nuclear Regulatory Commission by December 31, 2014. Another uncertainty is the tank closure process itself. The Hanford Site has no previous experience closing tanks; therefore, it is unrealistic to expect the process to proceed without unanticipated delays.

In view of the current schedule slippage, and the potential for additional delays, the Hanford Advisory Board (Board) believes steps are needed to routinely educate stakeholders of (1) pending delays and (2) the impact on the tank closure schedule.

Advice

- The Board advises that the schedule for the WMA-C Performance Assessment be updated.
- The Board advises that uncertainty bands be applied to the schedules for the closure documents due to be issued on December 31, 2014. The Board advises that DOE routinely communicate the potential mission impacts of key issues and uncertainties to the Board every six months until the completion of tank closure in 2019.