October Mixed Waste Subgroup Highlights

The Mixed Waste (MW) Subgroup met on October 8, 1996. Joe Waring presented information on the MW Focus Area funding allocations for FY97 that he obtained at the MWFA kickoff meeting he attended in Salt Lake City, October 1-3. The total FY97 budget for MWFA is $46 million, though $5 million may be taken from the budget later in the year. Included in this is $2.5 million for quick wins. Two Hanford studies are funded in the MWFA budget: the $450K macroencapsulation demo and the $2.75 million PNNL plasma arc melter effort. For further information check out the MWFA homepage at "http://wastenot.inel.gov/mwfa/". Few of Hanford needs are addressed. There is some funding for characterization technologies, but mostly for CH-TRU waste, which we don't have a need for, and for thermal treatment studies, which will not benefit Hanford unless they help ATG with their thermal treatment facility. The question was raised as to whether this subgroup should identify technology needs for LLMW treatment where commercial contracts have been let to treat this waste, and it was decided that we would not. This is consistent with the approach taken last year.

Joe Waring stated that the Lab-On-A-Cart proposal was not submitted to the MWFA as a quick-win proposal because after reviewing the criteria it did not seem to fit what the focus area was looking for. The quick-win criteria was treatment oriented rather than characterization. The Lab-On-A-Cart proposal will be given to the program on-site for further funding development.

The majority of the meeting focussed on the determination of technology needs for Hanford MW. A new national format for inputting technology needs to the Focus Areas was reviewed. Last year's MW needs were put into the new format and distributed at the meeting. In addition, Mike Coony updated the inventory amounts. Mike reviewed the changes to these amounts and noted that the projected amount of contaminated long-length equipment from TWRS was reduced. After review of the projected waste amounts it looks like Hanford will not be over the amount of waste that can be sent to WIPP. This is in part due to a recharacterization of the TWRS waste from RH-TRU to RH-LLMW.

Les Fort noted that a recent study showed that only a small part of the long-length equipment in the tanks had TRU contamination. Options are being examined as to how to deal with this equipment. The current baseline is to remove the equipment, grout it, and put into burial ground storage. One option would be to leave all or part of it in the tank. Another would be to cut off the bottom portion with the TRU contamination on it and separate the two pieces into two segments: an RH-TRU and RH-LLMW portion. This would reduce the cost of storage and treatment of the equipment. The RH-TRU portion could be stored or put back into the tank where three to four inches of sludge and junk already line the bottom. There is a need to characterize the long-length equipment in a "hot" environment to determine how much is TRU contaminated. The numbers now in the waste database consider most of the entire length of the equipment as contaminated and are thus in the high range. These numbers will be studied again this year to get a more accurate forecast. In addition to characterization, there is still a problem with treating RH waste on-site.

Ted Anderson, BHI, will investigate to see if EM-40 is forecasting waste to be shipped to EM-30

in a proper technical manner and report back to Mike Coony. For all technology needs the new forms require more information on the current baseline costs and schedules as well as the functional performance requirements of any technology to meet the need. For last year's needs that had both RH-TRU and RH-LLMW, it was decided to separate them into two needs this year as the issues may be different between RH-TRU and RH-LLMW. Also, the technology need dealing with the segregation of RH-TRU waste into TRU and non-TRU may be separated into tank waste and other RH-TRU waste. It was also decided at the meeting that two of the needs from last year, management of Be powder MW and recycle options for pyrophoric materials, are to be dropped from this year's list. Neither was seen as a need this year. All references to M-33 milestones are to be changed to M-91 milestones reflecting the TPA changes. A new technology need for head gas sampling to meet the WIPP-WAC is to be evaluated to see if it should be added to the list this year. Tom Baker, RFSH, is compiling the needs list and will have it ready for the next MW Subgroup meeting.

Gary Ballew distributed a draft report on a subgroup communications plan for review by the subgroup members. All members are to provide Gary comments and he will incorporate them into the next version. The next MW Subgroup meeting is scheduled for November 12 at 1pm in the ETB, Spokane River Room.