



MEETING MINUTES

Transportation/Waste Committee

November 27, 2007

CAB Members Present: Ted Oom, Chair; David Hermann; Robert Johnson; Walter Wegst

Liaisons Present: David Swanson, Nye County

Department of Energy (DOE): Kelly Snyder, DDFO; Frank DiSanza, Waste Management Federal Project Director

Support Staff: Rosemary Rehfeldt, Navarro Research and Engineering, Inc., Lee Stevens, Navarro Research and Engineering, Inc

- The meeting was held as a conference-call. The meeting's objective focused on a statement created by Ted Oom, for recommendation to DOE. The statement reads as follows:
 - ♦ "In reference to waste transportation routes to the Nevada Test Site (NTS), the Community Advisory Board for Nevada Test Site Programs, Transportation/Waste Committee, is requesting that the DOE Nevada Site Office make a request to the Department of Transportation to recalculate and potentially modify its computer models to determine the best route(s) going to the NTS from Interstate 40, and coming off of the NTS to Interstate 40, using current factors in its calculations."
 - "Factors that have changed considerably along the current plan of using Route 160 are increased population, increased traffic, as well as the additional of schools, hospitals, and retail businesses. The CAB also requests that the DOT project changes in these factors to the near-term future, five to ten years."
- Ted Oom began the meeting with a question to DOE on waste transportation routes, asking for an updated study by the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT). The Committee would like to know what the DOT's criteria are for selecting routes.
- Frank DiSanza stated that DOT utilizes computer models and requires specific "preferred" routes for the transport of Highway Route Control Quantities (HRCQ) only. None of the low level waste shipments to the NTS meet the activity criteria to be considered HRCQ. DOT requires the carrier of a shipment of non-HRCQ radioactive material to select their routes based upon the following criteria:
 - ♦ Routes that minimize radiological risk
 - ♦ Consider available information on accident rates, transit time, population density and activities, and the time of day and the day of week during which transportation occurs to determine radiological risk.However, DOE did create its own models to study the routes for the NTS.

- Mr. DiSanza also stated that it is not the U.S. Department of Transportation, but the Nevada Department of Transportation (NDOT) that recommends preferred routes for HRCQ. A statewide Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) looked at alternative routing through the Las Vegas Valley. There was no significant radiation risk identified. The risks of transporting waste shipments through highly-populated areas are different than rural county risks. The DOE discussed transportation routes with the NDOT and took the State's suggestion to avoid driving through Las Vegas. For that decision, surrounding rural counties have been compensated by receiving Emergency Preparedness Grants.
- Mr. DiSanza added that mixed waste shipments will end at 2010 year-end.
- Additionally, Mr. DiSanza noted that when waste shipments first began coming to the NTS, DOE gave the State of Nevada the option to identify preferred routes per the Highway Route Control Quantities regulations. The State determined that they would not identify preferred routes at that time.
- The Committee asked if there were routes other than Route 160. Mr. DiSanza stated that there were. The Nipton Highway (NV-164) intersects with Interstate 15, where carriers can go south toward Baker California, on CA-127, then pick up NV-373 to Lathrop Wells, or north to Las Vegas and use NV-160.
- DOE advises waste generators that they needed to balance between the two routes. The primary concern from the generators is that California has chosen a certain number of days that they request no shipments be made on CA-127 due to heavy Death Valley tourist traffic. Therefore, generators tend to avoid this route as a general rule.
- Everyone agreed that route NV-160 has "grown up" over the past 10 years. As sections of the route have become a super-highway, accident rates have dropped. However, population along the route has increased and conducting another transportation study may be something to consider in the future.
- Dave Swanson said that complicating factors in dealing with low-level and mixed low-level waste shipments to the NTS are future potential shipments to Yucca Mountain, Greater than Class C shipments, and uranium processing. This will create a tremendous increase in truck traffic going through communities. Has DOE considered this? What kinds of upgrades and/or highway improvements need to be made?
- Robert Johnson asked that the motion be re-worded. If the DOT is not the organization to conduct a study, who is? Frank DiSanza said it would be DOE Environmental Management. Since it has been 10 years, it may be a good idea to take another look at it, though it has not been budgeted for.
- Ted Oom asked what the criteria would be for making a route selection. Frank DiSanza replied that the information comes from Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations, Title 49, Code of Federal Regulations Section 397.101. The State of Nevada said it is the carrier's responsibility to identify routes. The generators are not responsive to this request; that's why DOE looked at it as part of the EIS.

- Mr. DiSanza suggested that DOE EM can run computer models, looking at traffic and population along Las Vegas Boulevard, Interstate 15, CA-127, and NV-160. In the past, DOE considered the possibility of highway improvements and bypasses, but costs were outrageous – when compared to risk.
- Dave Swanson said that radiation doses are so minor that it is not worth taking the dose into consideration.
- Walt Wegst stated that he's worked in the arena of low-level waste for most of his career and he doubts that radiation dose can even be measured by standing along the highway when a truck drove by. To put this in perspective, if someone stood next to a truck sitting at a truck stop for eight hours, one might get a measurable dose.
- Ted Oom mentioned a Desert Research Institute transportation study that measured no radiation 95% of the time, with a few anomalies at higher doses.
- Dave Swanson said that the overall impact is miniscule. However, from an emergency response standpoint – in case of an accident involving low-level waste and other types of radioactive shipments – Nye County is not equipped to handle such an incident.
- Walt Wegst supports the Committee's motion and urges DOE to make DOE-sponsored emergency response training available to pertinent counties.
- Frank DiSanza stated that Nye County has been conducting such training, using Emergency Preparedness Grant money.
- Robert Johnson, Walt Wegst, and Ted Oom all stated that they support a motion for DOE to look at transportation routes again, with NV-160 being the most important. Mr. DiSanza said that computer models use the most recent U.S. Census information, therefore the population statistics available are from 2000.
- A recommendation letter to DOE will be drafted, reviewed by the Committee, and presented to the Full Board in January 2008.