

## **TRANSPORTATION WORKING GROUP (TWG) MEETING**

State of Nevada Grant Sawyer Building  
4th Floor Conference Room 4401  
555 E. Washington Avenue, Las Vegas, NV 89101  
October 20, 2011, at 1 p.m.

TWG Mission – Provide a forum for information exchange for the Site-Wide Environmental Impact Statement (SWEIS) analysis of low-level and mixed low-level radioactive waste transportation to the Nevada National Security Site (NNSA), formerly known as the Nevada Test Site.

Present:

Marta Adams, Nevada Attorney General Office (Video Conferencing)

Kathy Bienenstein, Nevada Site Specific Advisory Board

Nohemi Brewer, National Nuclear Security Administration Nevada Site Office (NNSA/NSO)

Kevin Campbell, State of Nevada Division of Environmental Protection (NDEP)

Linda Cohn, NNSA/NSO

Frank Di Sanza, NNSA/NSO

Sandy Enyeart, Science Applications International Corporation

Sydney Gordon, National Security Technologies, Inc. (NSTec)

Bob Halstead, Nevada Agency for Nuclear Projects

Eric Hawkins, City of North Las Vegas

Vaughn Higbee, Lincoln County (Video Conferencing)

Cash Jaszczak, Nye County Nuclear Waste Repository Project Office

Phil Klevorick, Clark County

Oh-Sang Kwon, City of Las Vegas

Bud Marshall, Nevada Division of Emergency Management

Eric Matus, Nevada State Health Division (Video Conferencing)

Tim Murphy, NDEP

John Penuelas, City of Henderson Traffic Engineer

Kevin Phillips, Caliente/Lincoln County (Video Conferencing)

Jim Przybylski, Transportation Management, NSTec

Cheng Shih, City of Las Vegas

Lynn Shomers, Nevada Department of Transportation

Mike Skougard, Potomac Hudson Engineering

Kelly Snyder, NNSA/NSO

Joe Strolin, NV Agency for Nuclear Projects (Video Conferencing)

Barb Ulmer, Navarro-Intera

Mike West, Potomac Hudson Engineering

## 1. Opening Remarks/Introductions

Frank Di Sanza called the meeting to order at 1 p.m. by welcoming everyone. Meeting attendees introduced themselves and their agencies.

Frank Di Sanza gave an update that in Fiscal Year (FY) 2011 the final volume of waste disposed at the NNSA was 1,766,254 cubic feet (ft<sup>3</sup>) in 2,559 shipments, which was about 40,000 ft<sup>3</sup> under the forecast. The general forecast for FY 2012 is 1.2 million ft<sup>3</sup>, which is about one-half million ft<sup>3</sup> less than FY 2011. One reason for the lower forecast is due to the completion of American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 projects.

The U.S. Department of Energy, NNSA/NSO extended the public comment period for the Draft SWEIS from October 27 to December 2, 2011.

## 2. Panel Discussion

Nohemi Brewer, moderator, introduced the panel:

- Cheng Shih, City of Las Vegas (CLV)
- Phil Klevorick, Clark County (CC)
- Kevin Phillips and Vaughn Higbee, Lincoln County (LC) (Video Conferencing)
- Kathleen Bienenstein, Nevada Site Specific Advisory Board (NSSAB)
- Cash Jaszczak, Nye County (NC)

The purpose of the panel was to share comments and information on the constrained and unconstrained transportation analyses documented in the Draft SWEIS. Each panel member gave their input and comments on three questions (documented below). These comments will be made available to the TWG to utilize to prepare a final document to present to their organizations to make formal comments on the Draft SWEIS. Linda Cohn, Document Manager, noted that any input from today's meeting will not be considered formal comments for the Draft SWEIS.

The questions presented to the panel were as follows:

**Question 1:** Share your organization's concern regarding the transportation analysis in the Draft SWEIS.

**Question 2:** Does your organization support the Constrained Case in the transportation analysis? If not, what change(s) are needed to gain your organization's support?

**Question 3:** Does your organization support the Unconstrained Case in the transportation analysis? If not, what change(s) are needed to gain your organization's support?

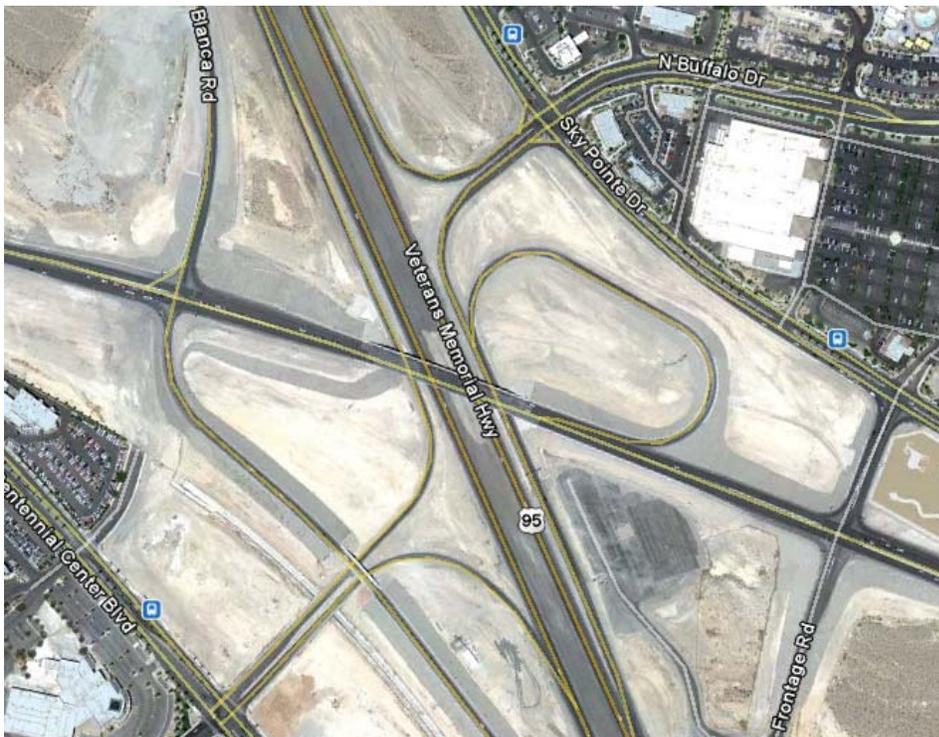
### **Responses for Question #1:**

**(NSSAB)** The Draft Environmental Impact Statement includes an analysis of LLW/MLLW shipping routes, but notes that decisions on routing would not be made as part of this NEPA process. The Site Wide Environmental Impact Statement indicates that the analyses were undertaken to (1) develop a greater understanding of the potential environmental consequences of shipping such waste through and around metropolitan Las Vegas and (2) to inform any highway routing revisions to NNSA's waste acceptance criteria.

The Nevada Site Specific Advisory Board fully understands that routing decisions are not made by the Nevada National Security Site and rest with State authorities. However, by inclusion of routing and impact analyses in the Draft Site Wide Environmental Impact Statement, the Department of

Energy has, at a minimum, suggested to its potential reviewers that the Environmental Impact Statement has some bearing on route selection.

Examining transportation risks as a function of road miles leads to little real difference in the impacts between the cases. The impact evaluations do not reflect the very real differences between transportation through a major metropolitan area with a (currently) poorly developed transportation infrastructure. The evaluations do not reflect potential issues with long-term ongoing highway constructions. For example, ongoing construction defeats any advantage that could be gained by routing wastes through the Las Vegas Valley. Examples include: future modification of the I-15 / U.S. 95 interchange; continuing construction of overpasses; poorly designed interchanges at the I-215 bypasses; and a new bridge planned for the Charleston underpass.



This is the Clark County 215 (it is not an interstate) interchange with U.S. 95. It is preposterous to imagine the drivers of the many shipments of low level waste that occur weekly finding their way through this maze without incident.

Public reaction to shipping wastes to the Nevada National Security Site via the I-15 / U.S. 95 interchange, essentially through downtown Las Vegas is likely to be negative, to the point of engendering public outrage. Because the Nevada National Security Site Draft Site-Wide Environmental Impact Statement is not, and, in fact, cannot be forthcoming about whether or not this route is seriously under consideration, meaningful comments that allow a complete assessment of impacts are not likely to be generated. Consider, for example, the public outcry at the suggestion that high-level radioactive waste destined for Yucca Mountain could potentially have been shipped on this route. Activists started a national campaign to alert citizens to the possibility of radioactive material being shipped on U.S. interstate highways. It is not possible to say whether the reaction to low level waste shipments would have been as severe; it is, however, reasonable to expect that an average citizen would not react differently because the shipments were low level waste. The emotional reaction is to “radioactive,” not to the level of activity.

(NC) Agree with NSSAB comments above; also consider improvements; concern about Expanded Operations volumes through Nye County

(CC) Agree with NSSAB and NC comments above; concern in utilizing spaghetti bowl for shipping waste; concern in the increase number shipments in regards to the impact on emergency responders; concern for any shipments along the I-15/95 Corridor

(CLV) Agree with NSSAB and CC comments above; concern with public perception in regards to any impact on tourism; traffic concerns on the I-15/95 Corridor

(NC) Need long-term planning for transportation routes for the future of the program

(LC) Would be in support of increased shipments through Lincoln County

**Do you have detailed comments on the transportation analyses?**

(CC) no, basically concerned with the frequency, number, and timing of shipments and the increased risks associated with these shipments

(CLV) concern ~ modeling done for transportation analyses may not be the proper modeling as it does not include worst case scenario

(NC) Once the unconstrained/constrained case is resolved within Clark County, it will probably be acceptable to NC as they will have no choice in the matter; an increase in truck shipments will directly impact infrastructure within NC

(NSSAB) No further comment

(CC) Concern~ the inclusion of Greater-Than-Class C (GTCC) needs to be addressed

(CLV) Concern ~ water quality in the instance of a waste spill could reach Lake Mead in several hours; the Draft SWEIS does not address potential radiological contamination of storm drain and water within Lake Mead with a worst case scenario; concern ~ possibility of extended exposure with a rail car sitting in Las Vegas (behind the Clark County Government Building) before being unloaded

(CC) concern ~ in the transportation plan-no idea of timing or frequency of shipments; impacts for intermodal have not been addressed properly and need to be more clearly defined; weight restrictions in Boulder City—how would it affect shippers?; need a better plan to make comment; need to address security issues regard intermodal and stationary shipments

**Responses for Question #2:**

(NSSAB) The Nevada National Security Site Draft Site Wide Environmental Impact Statement does not provide sufficient detail to allow meaningful evaluation of transportation shipping routes, such as the source of and the number of shipments proposed for each alternative transportation route under the constrained (or, for that matter, the unconstrained) option, for each of the three alternative scenarios, or for impacts other than those associated with the shipping itself. If the shipping is to continue on the existing routes, it would be meaningful to know how many additional shipments would travel on Highway 160. Is there to be a tripling of the shipments currently undertaken today?

The number of road miles does not provide a meaningful indication of the impacts of dramatically increasing the truck traffic on a road that is already subject to significant bottlenecks passing through the Pahrump Valley.

If the Department of Energy's interest in public reaction to the transportation route selection is to be meaningful, the analyses must look into public perceptions of the impacts of such significant increases in the number of shipments, the concerns related to environmental justice, and what efforts can be taken to mitigate the impacts. Shipping during times of lower traffic provides some mitigation, but improving the roads could be more meaningful.

**(NC)** Agree with NSSAB comments above

**(CC)** Support constrained case as it exists today; comments are very similar to NSSAB's; concern ~ shipping through high population areas; concern ~ timing, frequency, and size of shipments; DOE needs to have a public outreach to educate the public before going forward and after transportation plan is in place

**(NC)** Provide routing guidance to shippers and give real-time routing information with alternative routes

**(CLV)** In support of constrained case

**(LC)** Support unconstrained case; in favor of increased waste disposal at the NNSS

**(Halstead)** Concern~ transportation of nuclear material and weapons to NNSS

**(CLV)** Concern ~ foreseeable accidents

**(CC and CLV)** The NSO needs to educate the public near shipping routes regarding the basics of waste shipments. This should be done without negatively impacting tourism and commerce.

### **Responses for Question #3:**

**(NSSAB)** The unconstrained case is not evaluated in sufficient detail to allow independent evaluation of the associated impacts. The Nevada National Security Site Waste Acceptance Criteria prohibit transportation through Las Vegas, over Hoover Dam, or over the O'Callahan – Tillman Bridge. If those criteria are meaningful requirements, they should not be changed unilaterally, or without meaningful evaluation of the increased impacts. The impacts assessed ought not be limited solely to potential radiation effects. The public perceptions of impacts are meaningful, and while they are difficult to assess quantitatively, these impacts can be quantified comparatively. This is especially important in a metropolitan area that depends so heavily on tourism. Further, a careful examination of the population characteristics of the residents of the urban corridors most impacted suggest that environmental justice considerations ought to be assessed.

In order for the Nevada Site Specific Advisory Board to be able to support the unconstrained case, there needs to be convincing evidence that all of the impacts of shipping through this corridor have been assessed and mitigated to the extent practicable.

(NC) Agree with NSSAB comments above, not complete; safety concern ~ not completely analyzed; potential for traffic surges for rail-to-truck to be considered

(CC) NO, existing agreements in place; Why reinvent the wheel? Frequency, timing and number of shipments have not been analyzed; rail-to-truck from Lincoln to Clark County—low population but impacts need to be addressed and evaluated; Arden, Apex, and Kingman, Arizona, transloading sites and proposed sites in Laughlin and Boulder City need to be analyzed and studied; increased traffic on Highway 160 needs to be coordinated with Rural Transportation and include first responders; primary concern is security for stationary and parked vehicles

(NC) Where trucks can be parked is not included in analyses; analyses similar to TRU shipments

(LC) Mile of track available as a siting for rail cars within City of Caliente; using rail-to-truck-all emergency management and training would be in place, including security

(CLV) NO, nothing would change their position, #1 concern ~ no waste transportation through metro Las Vegas

(LC) Support unconstrained; rail shipments out of Caliente to truck shipments via dirt route that goes 70 miles through Area 5 (work with Air Force)

(Di Sanza) TWG concern that large volume of LLW cited in the Expanded Use alternative is problematic. Frank thought that he could update the volume estimate and provide the TWG with a table that would contain volumes and probability of occurrence. This type of table would help the TWG member better understand the number of shipments that might travel through a given community. This information would be meaningful to the county and city members, e.g. making infrastructure decisions; rail transportation statistically safer and meets Presidential Order to reduce greenhouse gases

(Halstead) With addition of another intermodal site to unconstrained case, still has same concern with rail shipments going through Las Vegas

(Carson City) Governor Sandoval's position is clearly stated in a letter to Secretary Chu; willing to work with DOE as long as Bypass Bridge, Hoover Dam, and metro Las Vegas routes avoided

(Halstead) Attorney General's concerns as Governor's Office

### **3. Next Meeting ~ November 2nd**

Barbara Byron, California Energy Commission, is not available to travel to Las Vegas to present at a future TWG meeting. Nohemi Brewer and Frank will travel to California next month to meet with Ms. Byron for her written statement in regards to the Draft SWEIS.

The next proposed TWG meeting date is Wednesday, November 2. The date was acceptable to the majority; as long as it is held late morning in order for some participants to attend a local emergency management meeting in the afternoon. Frank initiated a discussion whether another panel discussion would be helpful for the next meeting with different panelists, such as, City of Boulder City and Henderson, and interested state agencies. Bob Halstead volunteered to coordinate the participation of the state agencies.

The Department of Energy (DOE) would like to take a step back and allow the TWG to formulate and document their thoughts to take back to their agencies in order to prepare comments for the Draft SWEIS. Anyone interested in taking a lead and/or to work on a White Paper (or similar document) is asked to contact Frank. Frank reminded attendees that the White Paper drafted in 1996 for the SWEIS by the TWG played an important role in routing decisions.

**4. Open Discussion**

Eric Matus, Technical Advisor for Radiological Hazards for the Nevada State Health Division, noted that he has a concern with increased shipping in the Expanded Operations Alternative, as it is a challenge in keeping first responders adequately trained and ready to respond currently, even with Emergency Preparedness Working Group funding. Mr. Matus commented that DOE should pick up the fair amount of the costs associated with any expansion of scope that will impact emergency response.

The meeting adjourned at 3:30 p.m.