

Rocky Flats Citizens Advisory Board Recommendation 94-3

to the Department of Energy

Community Values for Consideration in the Negotiations for the Rocky Flats Cleanup Agreement

Approved August 1994

Introduction

The Rocky Flats Citizens Advisory Board was charged with identifying community values that its members hold relative to the Rocky Flats Cleanup Agreement and to supply those values to the lead negotiators for the U.S. Department of Energy, the Environmental Protection Agency, and the Colorado Department of Health. This product reflects the values of the members of the Citizens Advisory Board and other community members serving on CAB committees. These values were chosen because they represent the views of a broad cross-section of local constituency groups with an interest in the mission of the Citizens Advisory Board. The mission statement is:

"The Rocky Flats Citizens Advisory Board (RFCAB), a nonpartisan, broadly representative, independent advisory board with concerns related to Rocky Flats activities, is dedicated to providing informed recommendations and advice to the agencies (Department of Energy, Colorado Department of Health and the Environmental Protection Agency), government entities and other interested parties on policy and technical issues and decisions related to cleanup, waste management and associated activities. The Board is dedicated to public involvement, awareness and education on Rocky Flats issues."

The following presentation represents a summary of the Citizens Advisory Board's values related to the renegotiation of the Rocky Flats Cleanup Agreement.

Fundamental Values

The Citizens Advisory Board holds the following to be the most important, broad issues that are principal to any activity at Rocky Flats, both now and in the future. These issues are not arranged in any order of importance or priority.

- Protect public/worker health and safety

- Protect the environment
- "Get on with the cleanup" to achieve substantive progress in a timely manner
- Establish management practices that ensure accountability, efficiency, and allocation of funds to high priority items
- Use a systems design approach that keeps endpoints in mind as intermediate decisions are made

Additional Values

The following are more specific values and statements related to the development of a new, comprehensive cleanup agreement for Rocky Flats. They are not listed in any particular order, and are not reflective of any different level of importance or priority.

Timing

- The new cleanup agreement needs to be flexible to allow for schedule fluctuations and introduction of new technologies. Planning for activities and milestones should be for a three year time period. Each year the agreement should be evaluated and renegotiated, if necessary, to reflect the next three years. This annual negotiation should be coordinated with the Strategic Plan and the budget cycle.
- Prioritization as to which activities/milestones should be addressed must first reflect the greatest risks to the environment, and public/worker health and safety. DOE must structure its management and planning programs to reflect full attention to these risks.
- The negotiators must strive to achieve a balance between getting a new agreement in place quickly and taking the necessary time to develop an effective and enduring strategy for achieving cleanup at Rocky Flats.

Decontamination and Decommissioning

- Decontamination and decommissioning activities must be part of the scope of the new agreement. Attention to these activities will eliminate potential sources of contamination and free-up dollars currently spent on maintenance.

Plutonium and other Special Nuclear Materials Storage and Management

- The Citizens Advisory Board acknowledges the potential long term storage and management of plutonium and other special nuclear materials at Rocky Flats, and the urgent need to address the risks posed by these materials in their many forms. Programs for addressing the environmental, safety and health vulnerabilities such as the stabilization of liquids; treatment of residues; and consolidation of materials, if proven to be safer, must be included in the new agreement.

Waste Storage, Treatment, and Disposal

- To ensure that the new cleanup agreement is comprehensive and addresses all environmental concerns at the plant, the disposition of waste materials must be included. This inclusion should reflect wastes already in storage and those that will result from future cleanup activities.

Personnel Management - Training and Retraining

- To accomplish the new cleanup mission at Rocky Flats, the current workforce should be kept and retrained, as necessary, to provide the most skilled and competent workforce possible.

Better Interagency Interaction and Communication

- The regulators and the Department of Energy must formalize in the agreement procedures for fostering openness and communication. The past agreement had procedures for dispute resolution; the new agreement needs procedures for dispute avoidance. A Quality Action Team approach in which representatives of DOE, EPA, and CDH meet regularly should be institutionalized as part of an ongoing negotiation and evaluation process

Issues Stated in a Public Friendly Way

- The cleanup agreement must be easily understandable to the lay public. It should be summarized and condensed. To facilitate continuous public involvement, the bulletin board system developed during these negotiations should be kept on-line permanently.

Work Efficiently and Economically

- The current cleanup agreement has been in effect for four years and millions of dollars have been spent, but little progress has been made towards actual cleanup. Greater emphasis needs to be placed on moving more dirt and generating less paper. The agreement should seek continuous and measurable progress in ending the study phase and beginning the remediation phase.

Use of Technology

- The Citizens Advisory Board urges the use of the most appropriate and best technology possible for cleanup. By adopting a three year planning horizon for the agreement with annual negotiations, the regulators and DOE can foster and encourage the development and use of innovative technologies. Rocky Flats should strive to become a center for environmental research and excellence.

Accountability and Compliance

- By instituting a three year planning horizon, annual negotiations, and ongoing discussions by the Quality Action Team, DOE and the regulators will foster greater accountability and compliance.

The agreement should institutionalize a process for regularly updating the public on compliance issues.

The Rocky Flats Citizens Advisory Board is a community advisory group that reviews and provides recommendations on cleanup plans for Rocky Flats, a former nuclear weapons plant outside of Denver, Colorado.

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