Dated: March 28, 2001.

Patricia L. Toppings,

Alternate OSD Federal Register Liaison Officer, Department of Defense.

[FR Doc. 01–8068 Filed 4–2–01; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 5001–10–M

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

Office of the Secretary

Submission for OMB Review; Comment Request

ACTION: Notice.

The Department of Defense has submitted to OMB for clearance, the following proposal for collection of information under the provisions of the Paperwork Reduction Act (44 U.S.C. Chapter 35).

Title, Form, and OMB Number: Department of Defense Public and Community Service (PACS) Program; DD Form 2581 and 2581–1; OMB Number 0704–0324.

Type of Request: Reinstatement.

Number of Respondents: 1,165.

Responses per Respondent: 1.

Annual Responses: 1,165.

Average Burden per Response: 14 minutes.

Annual Burden Hours: 276

Needs and Uses: Public Law 102–484 requires the Secretary of Defense to maintain a Public and Community Service (PACS) Registry for employers looking to hire separated service members in jobs that fall within the scope of public and community service employment. All organizations and employers who wish to register in the PACS organizational registry must meet the Department of Defense eligibility requirements. In accordance with 10 U.S.C. 1143a(c), the PACS Registry provides separating Service members with information regarding the availability of employers who want to hire them in a PACS organization or job. DD Form 2581, ''Operation Transition Employer Registration'' and DD Form 2581–1, ''Public and Community Service Organization Validation,'' are used in support of the Department of Defense Program for public and community service employment assistance.

Affected Public: Business or other for-profit; not-for-profit institutions; Federal Government; State, Local or Tribal Government.

Frequency: On occasion.

Respondent's Obligation: Required to obtain or retain benefits.

OMB Desk Officer: Mr. Edward C. Springer.

Written comments and recommendations on the proposed information collection should be sent to Mr. Springer at the Office of Management and Budget, Desk Officer for DoD, Room 10236, New Executive Office Building, Washington, DC 20503.

DOD Clearance Officer: Mr. Robert Cushing.

Written requests for copies of the information collection proposal should be sent to Mr. Cushing, WHS/DIOR, 1215 Jefferson Davis Highway, Suite 1204, Arlington, VA 22202–4302.

Dated: March 28, 2001.

Patricia L. Toppings,

Alternate OSD Federal Register Liaison Officer, Department of Defense.

[FR Doc. 01–8069 Filed 4–2–01; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 5001–10–M

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

Office of the Secretary

Defense Science Board

ACTION: Cancellation of Advisory Committee Meeting.

SUMMARY: The Defense Science Board Task Force on Systems Technology for the Future U.S. Strategic Posture meeting scheduled for March 29–30, 2001, has been cancelled.

Dated: March 28, 2001.

L.M. Bynum,

Alternate OSD Federal Register Liaison Officer, Department of Defense.

[FR Doc. 01–8071 Filed 4–2–01; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 5001–10–M

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

Office of the Secretary

Defense Science Board

ACTION: Meeting date change.

SUMMARY: The Defense Science Board Task Force on Intelligence Needs for Homeland Defense closed meeting scheduled for April 24–25, 2001, has been changed to April 23–24–25–26, 2001. The location of the meeting has not changed; the meeting will be held at Strategic Analysis, Inc., 3601 Wilson Boulevard, Suite 600, Arlington, VA.

Dated: March 28, 2001.

L.M. Bynum,

Alternate OSD Federal Register Liaison Officer, Department of Defense.

[FR Doc. 01–8072 Filed 4–2–01; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 5001–10–M

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

[Recommendation 2001–1]

High-Level Waste Management at the Savannah River Site

AGENCY: Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board.

ACTION: Notice, recommendation.

SUMMARY: The Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board has made a recommendation to the Secretary of Energy pursuant to 42 U.S.C. 2286a(a)(5) concerning high-level waste management at the Savannah River Site.

DATES: Comments, data, views, or arguments concerning this recommendation are due on or before May 3, 2001.

ADDRESSES: Send comments, data, views, or arguments concerning this recommendation to: Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board, 625 Indiana Avenue, NW., Suite 700, Washington, DC 20004–2901.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Kenneth M. Pusateri or Andrew L. Thibadeau at the address above or telephone (202) 694–7000.

Dated: March 27, 2001.

John T. Conway,

Chairman.

[Recommendation 2001–1],

High-Level Waste Management at the Savannah River Site

Dated: March 23, 2001.

The mission of the Savannah River Site (SRS) high-level waste (HLW) system is to safely store and treat HLW while also supporting site initiatives such as the stabilization of remnants of nuclear weapons production. Storage of HLW is provided by 49 tanks, referred to collectively as the Tank Farms, which contain approximately 34 million gallons of HLW. Presently, treatment primarily consists of waste concentration in evaporators and sludge vitrification at the Defense Waste Processing Facility (DWPF). DWPF currently produces more than 225 vitrified waste canisters per year and during its lifetime is expected to produce a total of approximately 6,000 canisters. Recently, the most pressing challenge at the SRS Tank Farms has been managing available tank space.

Average annual waste inflow to the Tank Farms totals approximately 2.5 million gallons, generated primarily from vitrification activities and nuclear material stabilization. The largest portion of the inflow, approximately 1.3 million gallons, is the DWPF return

waste stream (DWPF recycle). Another 500,000 gallons consists of sludge wash water, generated during the preparation of sludge feed to DWPF. Nuclear material stabilization operations at the chemical processing canyons generate approximately 600,000 gallons of annual inflow, and another 100,000 gallons is generated through several miscellaneous operations.

Reducing the volume of waste in the Tank Farms is currently accomplished primarily by concentrating dilute waste through evaporation. The operation of all three Tank Farm evaporators can reduce the required storage volume by more than 2.5 million gallons annually. However, the evaporators have recently experienced significant problems, limiting the two newest and highest-capacity evaporators to little or no operation. The vitrification of sludge at DWPF does not reduce the volume of waste in the Tank Farms because the volume of DWPF recycle and sludge wash water returned to the Tank Farms is significantly greater than the volume of sludge removed. The lack of adequate volume reduction, combined with the waste produced during vitrification operations, has led to a situation in which available tank space has steadily decreased.

Contributing to the tank space problem is an emphasis on the operation of the DWPF at the expense of the overall operability of the Tank Farms. This situation is evident in the HLW Performance-Based Incentives in the contract, which are weighted more than 60 percent toward the production of vitrified waste canisters. Tank space has now been reduced to a critically low level, which threatens to halt DWPF vitrification.

Several options have been identified at SRS which could help alleviate the tank space shortage. These include operation of a salt processing facility, reduction or elimination of the DWPF recycle stream, recovery of former In-Tank Precipitation (ITP) Facility process tanks for HLW operation, and solution of problems that have significantly limited evaporator operation. These options are discussed in more detail below.

Salt Processing

An essential element missing from the current HLW treatment operations is salt processing. Salt processing would remove key radionuclides from HLW liquids and saltcake, allowing the remaining large volumes of water and soluble salts to be disposed of as low-level waste. The design, construction, and operation of a salt processing facility would be required to solve the tank space problems at the Tank Farms. Originally, the contractor attempted to backfit a salt processing capability into three HLW tanks that became the ITP Facility. Conceived as a cost-effective approach toward salt processing, the project was suspended in early 1998 because of safety and operability issues.

Recognizing the urgency of continuing salt processing development, the contractor aggressively examined alternatives and, in 1999, recommended pursuing a modified precipitation process. DOE chose to delay a decision on this recommendation and directed the contractor to study the problem further. Now, more than 3 years after the cancellation of ITP, there is still no decision on the basic technology to be used for salt processing. The salt processing facility is currently delayed until at least 2010. The most recent milestone for this program, issuance of a draft request for proposals to design and build the facility, has been overdue since December 2000, primarily because of funding priorities.

DWPF Recycle

Currently, DWPF produces the largest volume of waste received at the Tank Farms. The combination of the waste generated within DWPF and the large volume of water and corrosion inhibitor added to make the waste acceptable for tank storage produces more than 1 million gallons of DWPF recycle each year. The contractor has long recognized that very large volumes of waste were being sent from DWPF to the Tank Farms, and many planning documents suggest that an evaporator could be installed at DWPF to nearly eliminate the recycle stream. However, DOE has never pursued this activity.

In 1999, a contractor system engineering team again recommended that an evaporator be used to eliminate DWPF recycle, but also requested that DWPF staff consider other means of reducing the recycle volume. Through modification to the facility, the DWPF staff found ways to reduce the recycle volume from more than 2 million gallons per year to the present level of approximately 1.3 million gallons per year.

This great volume savings notwithstanding, the DWPF recycle continues to place a significant strain on the HLW system. DWPF recycle generates the largest volume of waste receipts, and silicates contained in the recycle have been found to cause significant problems with the evaporators.

Former ITP Process Tanks

Approximately 3 million gallons of tank space could be added by returning Tanks 48, 49, and 50 from the former ITP Facility to HLW service. During the development of the ITP process, these modern, fully compliant tanks were dedicated exclusively to ITP service. The contractor has planned to recover Tanks 49 and 50 for some time, but progress has been slow. The contractor is working to return Tank 49 to HLW service this year. However, restoration of Tank 50 is not being aggressively pursued, and the tank is not scheduled to be available until the end of 2002. There are currently no plans for near-term recovery of Tank 48, which contains tetraphenylborate precipitates generated during ITP process testing. Although recovery of Tank 48 poses significant technical issues, restoration of Tank 50 is limited primarily by the resources applied to the effort.

Evaporator Operation

The three HLW evaporators (2F, 2H, and 3H) have the combined capacity to recover more than 2.5 million gallons of tank space per year and are needed to provide sufficient tank space to support Tank Farm operation until a salt processing facility becomes operational. However, the actual productivity of the evaporators has been severely limited by waste compatibility issues and degradation of equipment.

Waste Compatibility Issues—In late 1999, the contractor discovered unexpected solids accumulating in the 2H evaporator pot. These solids are believed to be generated by silicates in DWPF recycle reacting with aluminum in canyon wastes. The deposits contain enriched uranium and present a potential criticality hazard. The 2H evaporator has been shut down since January 2000 while this issue is being resolved.

The contractor is working to remove these deposits and restart the 2H evaporator by July 2001. In the meantime, DWPF recycle waste, as well as other wastes high in silicon content, are prohibited from the 2F and 3H evaporator systems until the mechanism of the deposition has been understood and a solution devised.

Tritium is found in many of the HLW tanks and continues to enter the Tank Farms as the result of spent nuclear fuel processing at the SRS canyon facilities. The concentration of tritium varies from tank to tank. Tritium passes through the system during HLW pretreatment and evaporation, eventually being released at the Effluent Treatment Facility. Evaporator operations are limited on

occasion by the need to coordinate Tank Farm activities and monitor the tritium levels to prevent the release of tritium from the system in excess of release limits. Like the silicate problem, the need to segregate tritiated waste streams adversely affects the ability to use tank space efficiently.

Equipment Issues—Several emergent equipment issues have also limited the ability of evaporators to concentrate waste. In 1999 and 2000, startup of the 3H evaporator was delayed for months because of problems with a valve in the system. In November 2000, the contractor discovered that all five of the cooling coils for the tank that receives concentrate from this evaporator were leaking. Because of temperature limits in this tank, the 3H evaporator, which is the newest and highest-capacity evaporator, is now limited to only a few days of operation each month.

Because of the problems with the 2H and 3H evaporators, operation of the 2F evaporator is now providing most of the space gains for the HLW system. The 2F evaporator pot has been in service for more than 10 years and has exceeded its designed service life. Failure of this pot would further reduce the ability to regain space in the Tank Farms. Additionally, the contractor's plan for handling space issues during the next few years relies heavily on the ability to perform many inter-area transfers (i.e., between F- and H-Areas). Significant failures of equipment or systems associated with the inter-area transfer system would also impact the Tank Farm system.

Many of the significant equipment issues identified with the Tank Farms were unexpected. However, given the age of the HLW system at SRS, it is likely that additional significant issues will be identified in future years.

High-Level Waste Tank 6

In late 2000, the contractor evaluated various short-term alternatives for addressing the lack of tank space threatening to shut down DWPF operations. The alternative chosen started with a transfer of 330,000 gallons of DWPF recycle to Tank 6, a 1950s-vintage Type I tank. Although 5 of the 12 original Type I tanks had already leaked, the prior service of Tank 6 and primary tank wall inspections indicated that the tank was sound. Before the transfer to Tank 6, the contractor made preparations to pump liquid from the tank annulus back into the primary tank in the event of a large leak. In January 2001, shortly after the transfer to Tank 6, the contractor discovered approximately 90 gallons of liquid in the tank annulus and, upon further video inspection, found 6 leak sites on the primary tank wall.

After the primary tank wall, the next barrier to the release of waste is the 5-foot-tall annulus pan in which the primary tank sits. The annulus pan was not designed for the long-term storage of waste and cannot be adequately inspected. Therefore, the condition of the pan is not well known, and it cannot be relied upon as a long-term containment for liquid waste. If the annulus were to leak waste to the environment, it would likely take several years to detect the leak through the use of external monitoring wells.

DOE and the contractor have thus far proposed transferring only that portion of waste in Tank 6 above the three highest, most visibly active, leak sites. The waste level would remain above the other three leak sites. DOE and the contractor prefer this course of action because it would have the least impact on the operation of DWPF, in that it would minimize waste transfers from Tank 6 into tanks that would otherwise receive DWPF recycle or sludge wash water. However, this course of action represents a reduction in the margin of safety in the containment of liquid HLW. Furthermore, because of the elevated tritium content in the waste, the contractor plans to continue storage in Tank 6, and avoid transfers to other tanks and evaporators until additional space becomes available in Tank 8 in approximately two years.

The use of Tank 6 to alleviate pressing storage problems is an example of the need to fall back on doubtful engineering solutions for short-term mitigation of problems at SRS. Lack of sound engineering inevitably narrows desirable options.

Recommendation

In the Board's view, DOE has not proceeded with due diligence to address the worsening condition of the SRS Tank Farms. Continued delays in achieving long-term solutions increase the pressure to accept conditions that reduce the safety margin and increase operational complexity. The continuing reliance on old HLW tanks whose design would be unacceptable today, on support systems that have exceeded their design life, and on tanks known to have numerous cracks, has been required to manage the Tank Farms and to make partial progress toward the ultimate goal of immobilization of HLW. However, the Board is not convinced that continued storage of readily removable HLW liquid above known leak sites is necessary to achieve this goal. Accordingly, the Board recommends the following actions:

1. Initiate actions to remove transferable HLW liquid from Tank 6 to a level below all known leak sites.

2. Reassess the schedule and priority for selecting a technology for a salt processing capability, and vigorously accelerate the schedule leading to operation of a salt processing facility.

3. Develop and implement an integrated plan for HLW tank space management that emphasizes continued safe operation of the Tank Farms throughout its life cycle. This plan should include enough margin to accommodate contingencies and reduce overall programmatic risk. The plan should also restore operating margin to the Tank Farms by including action to:

a. reduce or eliminate the DWPF recycle stream,

b. recover former ITP tanks for Tank Farm operations,

c. assess the desirability of adding an additional HLW evaporator to support Tank Farm operations,

d. assess the feasibility of constructing new HLW tanks, and

e. resolve waste compatibility and equipment degradation problems to allow unconstrained operation of the three existing evaporators.

4. Reassess contractor incentives to ensure that near-term production at DWPF is not overemphasized at the expense of safety margin in the Tank Farms.

Actions provided by this recommendation are known to the contractor and DOE. In fact, all of these actions either have been or are being pursued to some degree. However, the unfocused manner in which they are being pursued is evident in the continued year-to-year delays. Meanwhile, problems caused by these delays are being resolved in part through reductions in margins of safety.

Given the time-sensitive nature of the actions identified by this Recommendation, the Board suggests that the Secretary of Energy avail himself of the authority under the Atomic Energy Act to ''implement any such Recommendation (or part of any such Recommendation) before, on, or after the date on which the Secretary of Energy transmits the implementation plan to the Board under this subsection.'' See 42 U.S.C. 2286d(e).

John T. Conway,
Chairman.

Appendix—Transmittal Letter to the Secretary of Energy

March 23, 2001.

The Honorable Spencer Abraham,
Secretary of Energy, 1000 Independence Avenue, SW., Washington, DC 20585–1000.

Dear Secretary Abraham: The Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board (Board) has been following closely the Department of Energy's (DOE) response to recently discovered leaks in Tank 6, a high-level waste (HLW) storage tank at the Savannah River Site (SRS). While this issue must be addressed on a specific basis, it is only a symptom of a much larger problem—the critical shortage of tank space in the HLW system—that threatens to delay stabilization of nuclear materials at SRS and may result in suspending vitrification of HLW at the Defense Waste Processing Facility (DWPF). Furthermore, this problem has led to a reduced margin of safety and a short-sighted emphasis on solving immediate problems at the expense of investing in comprehensive efforts to enhance the safety and flexibility of the HLW system.

As a result, the Board, on March 23, 2001, unanimously approved Recommendation 2001–1, High-Level Waste Management at the Savannah River Site, which is enclosed for your consideration. After your receipt of this recommendation and as required by 42 U.S.C. 2286d(a), the Board will promptly make it available to the public in DOE's regional public reading rooms. The Board has confirmed with DOE that the recommendation contains no information that is classified or otherwise restricted. Providing this recommendation does not include information restricted by DOE under the Atomic Energy Act of 1954, 42 U.S.C. 2161–68, as amended, please arrange to have it promptly placed on file in your regional public reading rooms. The Board will also publish this recommendation in the **Federal Register**.

Sincerely,

John T. Conway,
Chairman.

[FR Doc. 01–8064 Filed 4–2–01; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3670–01–U

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Notice of Proposed Information Collection Requests

AGENCY: Department of Education.

SUMMARY: The Acting Leader, Regulatory Information Management Group, Office of the Chief Information Officer, invites comments on the proposed information collection requests as required by the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995.

DATES: Interested persons are invited to submit comments on or before June 4, 2001.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Section 3506 of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. Chapter 35) requires that the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) provide interested Federal agencies and the public an early opportunity to comment on information collection requests. OMB may amend or waive the requirement for public consultation to the extent that public participation in the approval process would defeat the purpose of the information collection, violate State or Federal law, or substantially interfere with any agency's ability to perform its statutory obligations. The Acting Leader, Regulatory Information Management Group, Office of the Chief Information Officer, publishes that notice containing proposed information collection requests prior to submission of these requests to OMB. Each proposed information collection, grouped by office, contains the following: (1) Type of review requested, e.g. new, revision, extension, existing or reinstatement; (2) Title; (3) Summary of the collection; (4) Description of the need for, and proposed use of, the information; (5) Respondents and frequency of collection; and (6) Reporting and/or Recordkeeping burden. OMB invites public comment. The Department of Education is especially interested in public comment addressing the following issues: (1) Is this collection necessary to the proper functions of the Department; (2) will this information be processed and used in a timely manner; (3) is the estimate of burden accurate; (4) how might the Department enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (5) how might the Department minimize the burden of this collection on the respondents, including through the use of information technology.

Dated: March 28, 2001.

Joe Schubart,

Acting Leader, Regulatory Information Management, Office of the Chief Information Officer.

Office of the Undersecretary

Type of Review: New.

Title: Evaluation of Title I Accountability Systems and School Improvement Efforts.

Frequency: Annually.

Affected Public: State, Local, or Tribal Gov't, SEAs or LEAs; Federal Government.

Reporting and Recordkeeping Hour Burden:

Responses: 5,140.

Burden Hours: 2,570.

Abstract: The purpose of the Evaluation of Title I Accountability Systems and School Improvement Efforts (TASSIE) is to examine and evaluate Title I accountability systems and school improvement efforts in a nationally representative sample of districts and schools. This project addresses both the implementation and effectiveness of accountability practices in 2,200 districts and 740 schools. The TASSIE will provide data on the extent of alignment between Title I accountability systems and states' and districts' own accountability systems, the assistance and incentives provided to school identified as in need of improvement, and will assess the impact of these policies and practices on schools, teachers, and students.

Requests for copies of the proposed information collection request may be accessed from *http://edicsweb.ed.gov,* or should be addressed to Vivian Reese, Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW., Room 4050, Regional Office Building 3, Washington, DC 20202–4651. Requests may also be electronically mailed to the internet address OCIO_IMG_Issues@ed.gov or faxed to 202–708–9346. Please specify the complete title of the information collection when making your request. Comments regarding burden and/or the collection activity requirements should be directed to Jacqueline Montague at (202) 708–5359 or via her internet address Jackie_Montague@ed.gov. Individuals who use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD) may call the Federal Information Relay Service (FIRS) at 1–800–877–8339.

[FR Doc. 01–8083 Filed 4–2–01; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4000–01–P

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Notice of Proposed Information Collection Requests

AGENCY: Department of Education.

ACTION: Notice of Proposed Information Collection Requests.

SUMMARY: The Acting Leader, Regulatory Information Management, Office of the Chief Information Officer, invites comments on the proposed information collection requests as required by the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995.

DATES: An emergency review has been requested in accordance with the Act (44 U.S.C. Chapter 3507 (j)), since public harm is reasonably likely to result if normal clearance procedures are followed. Approval by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) has been requested by March 30, 2001. A regular clearance process is also beginning. Interested persons are invited to submit comments on or before June 4, 2001.

ADDRESSES: Written comments regarding the emergency review should be addressed to the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs,