

**APPENDIX D**  
**PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT**



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### **PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

Public involvement is critical to the success of the Savannah River Site (SRS) Environmental Dose Reconstruction Project. Dose reconstruction requires a level of commitment to public interaction not encountered in most scientific studies. Scientists performing the research combine technical rigor and credibility with open and responsive communication with interested individuals and groups.

*Radiological Assessments Corporation (RAC)* scientists have been dedicated to encouraging the involvement of key stakeholders in the SRS Dose Reconstruction Phase II study. Researchers have spent many hours interacting with concerned citizens and workers via workshops, meetings, roundtable discussions, and other opportunities. It is our belief that early and effective stakeholder involvement is crucial to the success of the study.

#### **Public Involvement Plan Summary**

The project has been open to the public and conducted in a manner that maximizes effective public interaction. *RAC* has taken responsibility for many aspects of public communication, education, and outreach. Key points of the plan include:

- Proactive interactions with the media (print, radio, television); community organizations; citizens of the surrounding communities; and the SRS Health Effects Subcommittee.
- Conduct of public meetings and workshops in the communities surrounding SRS.
- Public outreach through newsletters, fact sheet, and project reports.

#### **Public Involvement Deliverables**

- A Public Involvement Plan.
- Toll-free telephone number, computer bulletin board, and a published mailing address to receive public input.
- Public meetings, workshops, and press briefings.
- Meetings with Health Effects Subcommittee
- Newsletters.
- Fact Sheets.
- Technical support for the SRS Health Effects Subcommittee.

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### **Philosophy of Public Involvement**

The public involvement task is critical to the success of the project as a whole. In dose reconstruction, we cannot afford to achieve scientific credibility and not achieve public credibility. The project was designated a “public study” during Phase I and this approach continued throughout the course of the work. Scientists on the *RAC* research team have made the presentations, worked with the press, and written the fact sheets and newsletters.

### **Public Involvement Plan**

#### **The Public and Scientific Community: Providing Information and Soliciting Input**

*Radiological Assessments Corporation* has ensured that all phases of the dose reconstruction has been open to the public, and have considered all public concerns while planning and conducting the Phase II research. Key individuals and organizations with whom RAC has worked with throughout the Project include:

- Brian Costner (Energy Research Foundation)
- Mildred McClain (Citizens for Environmental Justice)
- Carolyn Cain (Georgians Against Nuclear Energy)
- Mary Crum (South Carolina Wildlife Federation)
- Debra Hasan (Southern Association of Black Educators)
- Theloneous Jones (The Frontier)
- King Singleton (The Augustan’s)
- Veronica Thomas (Taxpayers Advocacy Support).

*RAC* scientists recognize that a successful public involvement program is the result of careful planning. To build public credibility, a public involvement program must:

- Be initiated early;
- Be constant and consistent;
- Make members of the public a part of the process, involved in decision-making;
- Be forthcoming, responsive and open;

- Develop relationships between project participants and interested parties; and
- Speak to individual and community concerns.

**Public Meetings, Workshops, and Press Briefings.** Phase II public meetings, workshops, and press briefings have been designed both to inform the public and to solicit feedback and suggestions for the work. These meetings were publicized through mailings to individuals on the project mailing list; press releases distributed to newspapers, television and radio stations; announcements in *Dose Reconstruction News*, the quarterly project newsletter; and through published notices in the *Federal Register*. Meeting locations were varied among the communities surrounding SRS in South Carolina and Georgia. Every effort was made to hold these meetings in familiar locations with complimentary parking for the convenience of the public and the press.

Meetings consisted of a project overview for new attendees, a status update on specific aspects of Phase II, and a period for public questions, comments, and suggestions. Visual aids, such as overheads and computer demonstrations, were used during the meetings to enhance the technical presentations. A mailing list sign-up sheet, past issues of project newsletters, and fact sheets were made available to attendees at each of the meetings.

**Fact Sheets.** Fact Sheets were prepared when new information became available or in response to public concerns. They were designed to provide the public with a better understanding of the dose reconstruction process through definitions of commonly used scientific terms and descriptions of key processes or concepts. Electronic copies of fact sheets have been provided to CDC for use on their web site.

Fact Sheet Topics	Volume
Source Term Estimates: Types of releases; and Source term estimates (2/96)	No. 1
Radiation in our Environment: Natural sources; Manmade sources; Current breakdown of average doses received in 1 year; and Typical radiation exposures (3/96)	No. 2
Environmental Exposure Pathways: Environmental pathways; Food chain; Exposure assessment; and Food pathway factors (5/96)	No. 3
Glossary of Dose Reconstruction Terms (10/96)	No. 4
Accessing and Declassifying Historical Records: Access to historical records; Classification of records; Declassification of historical records; Public access to project records; Categories of classified information; Levels of classified information; Why some secrets remain; and Public participation (12/96)	No. 5
Tritium & SRS Offsite Releases - An Update: Tritium production and releases at SRS; The relative hazard of tritium; Tritium releases seen via monitoring records; and Monitoring tritium releases to water (2/97)	No. 6
Plutonium at the Savannah River Site: History of the Savannah River Site; Studying SRS operations; Characteristics of plutonium; Health studies; and Dose and risk from plutonium (3/97)	No. 7

**Newsletters.** The purpose of the project newsletter, *Dose Reconstruction News*, has been to address questions and concerns and to summarize discussions from public meetings. Newsletters were distributed via the SRS project mailing list. Electronic copies of the Newsletters have been provided to CDC for use on the web site.

Newsletter Topics	Volume
Phase II of SRS Dose Reconstruction Projects Begins: Estimating past releases; Identifying release pathways; How will so much information be stored; Evaluating environmental information; Clarifying ranges for uncertainty; and So many chemicals - A method to evaluate SRS chemical releases (2/96)	Vol. I, No. 1
A Piece of the Grand Design - SRS Demographic Database and Geographic Information System: Demographic database; Categories of information; Geographic information system; Collecting data; and Release estimates expected to differ (3/96)	Vol. I, No. 2
Evaluating SRS Environmental Monitoring, Data: Where and when are effluent and environmental monitoring data collected?; How will the environmental monitoring data be gathered in Phase II of the Project?; What types of data support the dose reconstruction project?; Why are environmental monitoring data so important?; What are some of the difficulties of using environmental monitoring data?; and How will the data be evaluated? (7/96)	Vol. I, No. 3
Estimates of Releases from the Savannah River Site: Release categories; Examining releases that are most important; Best estimates sought; Time histories will be prepared; Uncertainties to be estimated; Methods of estimating releases; Searches for original records; and Comparisons with environmental data (10/96)	Vol. I, No. 4
Selecting the Savannah River Site Study Area: Available information and accuracy of estimates; Measurements in the body; Measurements in the environment; Measurements at the points of release; Doses decrease with distance; and Recommended study area (2/97)	Vol. II, No. 1
Public Involvement at the Savannah River Site: Public Meetings, Workshops, and Press Briefings; Newsletters; Fact Sheets; Working With the Savannah River Site Health Effects Subcommittee; Education and Outreach Activities; Project Mailing List; Citizen Input and Evaluation (5/97)	Vol. II, No. 2
Estimating the Atmospheric Tritium Source Term at SRS: A Progress Report: Equipment; Diagram of Stack Tritium Monitor; Preliminary Atmospheric Tritium Source Term for 1955-1964; Atmospheric Tritium Releases from SRS in the Early Years (in curies); Measurement Uncertainties (7/97)	Vol. II, No. 3
Using Information About Savannah River Site Power and Production Levels To Fill Data Gaps: Introduction; Searching for Production Data; A Brief History of Operations; R Reactor Power Levels; P Reactor Power Levels; L Reactor Power Levels; K Reactor Power Levels; C Reactor Power Levels; The Canyons – Fuel Reprocessing; F Canyon U to Dissolver; H Canyon U to Dissolver; U235 Tubes to H Dissolver; SRS Tritium Estimated Production; Conclusions (12/97)	Vol. II, No. 4

**Project Mailing List.** The Project mailing list was used for the distribution of meeting announcements, newsletters, and notice of the issuance of Phase II reports. It includes names collected from sign-up sheets used at public meetings held during Phases I and II of the SRS project, and of individuals and organizations requesting information on the study. Those wishing to be added to the newsletter distribution list or to request past newsletter issues were able to contact *Radiological Assessments Corporation*, 417 Till Road, Neeses, SC 29107 (800-637-4766).

**Education and Outreach Activities.** During Phase I and Phase II of the Project, RAC scientists have established working relationships with instructors at several colleges and universities in the SRS region, including the University of South Carolina in Aiken, Savannah State College in Savannah, The University of South Carolina in Columbia, the Medical University of South Carolina in Charleston, South Carolina State University in Orangeburg, and Emory University in Atlanta. Scientists have supported university requests for project information by: 1) public or university presentations at or near these institutions; 2) establishing the Phase I database at the DOE reading room at USC Aiken and at Savannah State College; 3) mailing diskette copies of the database to a number of schools, organizations, and individuals; and 4) supporting a student tour of research facilities at SRS.

Researchers use the Phase I database to support education and outreach activities because it is a unique research tool for college staff and students. It represents the first comprehensive historical records review of a major weapons facility, with all documents declassified and available for offsite use. Data from the Phase I database have been input into an expanded, Phase II document database, containing additional information on records reviewed since the completion of Phase I. The Phase II database is discussed in Appendix H of this report, and will be available to interested parties upon request to the CDC.

**Citizen Input and Evaluation.** Following public workshops or meetings, RAC evaluated results, summarized the material presented, and considered comments and criticisms offered by attendees. The information obtained via these meetings allowed scientists to rate the effectiveness of the meetings and make adjustments as Phase II progressed. To request information on the project or talk with one of the scientists, citizens were able to contact *Radiological Assessments Corporation*, 417 Till Road, Neeses, SC 29107 (800-637-4766). (Appendix Reference)

### **Supporting CDC Project Staff at Public Meetings**

One or more members of the RAC research staff attended each public meeting. RAC supported CDC Staff by being prepared to knowledgeably deal with the study's status, progress, and problems. RAC scheduled meetings associated with each draft or final report related to either radiological or chemical dose reconstruction at SRS during Phase II.

### **Working With the Savannah River Site Health Effects Subcommittee (SRSHES)**

RAC has kept the Savannah River Site Health Effects Subcommittee informed as to the study's status, progress, and problems. The Subcommittee has been given the opportunity to review and comment on draft report materials produced during Phase II. When feasible, meetings with these members were combined with the public meetings or workshops discussed above. If not, separate meetings were held to ensure that the Subcommittee members were kept informed

and able to contribute to the study. *RAC* has provided copies of draft and final plans, reports, newsletters, and fact sheets to the CDC. In conjunction with many presentations at the HES meetings, *RAC* has provided handout copies, and copies of key research materials during those meetings. *RAC* has also provided assistance to HES members making presentations of their own at related meetings. *RAC* also set aside a section of the FTP server for use by the Subcommittee.

### **Preparing For Public Meetings, Workshops, And Press Briefings**

*RAC* realizes the importance of proper preparation for all parties involved in the meetings. Leadership, both before and during the meeting, is essential. *RAC* staff was comfortable in roles as presenters and facilitators, and professional support staff. *RAC* was responsible for or assisted in planning and executing public meetings and workshops, with full participation of CDC staff. Meetings were held in communities in the vicinity of the Savannah River Site (Aiken, Barnwell, Beaufort, Columbia, Savannah, Hilton Head, Augusta) to provide convenient opportunities for interactions with all interested parties. *RAC* made arrangements as required by the CDC for public meetings.

**Site selection and contract negotiation.** When requested by the CDC, *RAC* selected meeting locations which best meet the goals and objectives of the overall program.

**Meeting room setup and audiovisual support.** When requested by the CDC, *RAC* arranged for all necessary meeting room setups and audiovisual support. A table was placed at the entrance of the room for displaying reports, fact sheets, and newsletters. Overhead projectors, slide projectors, LCD panels, electric pointers, screens, flip charts, and microphones were ordered as needed.

**Travel assistance.** *RAC* was available to assist with travel arrangements as needed for invited speakers.

**Meeting announcements and media interviews.** Meeting announcements were prepared for timely distribution to the project mailing list, media list (newspapers, TV, radio, regional newsletters), and *Federal Register*. *RAC* worked with CDC to respond to requests for media interviews resulting from public meeting announcements.

### **Receiving Public Comments**

*RAC* established several systems for receiving public comments as part of the citizen input and involvement effort.

- A toll-free telephone number (800-637-4766)
- Computer bulletin board
- FTP server
- Mailing address (*Radiological Assessments Corporation*, 417 Till Rd., Neeses, SC 29107)
- Opportunities for verbal and written comment at public workshops/meetings

*RAC* has provided copies of draft and final plans, reports, newsletters, and fact sheets to members of the public upon request, as well as presentation handouts at all public and HES meetings. Newsletters and fact sheets containing summaries of plans and reports were sent to those on the project mailing list.



**REFERENCES**

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- Workshop on Community, Tribal and Labor Involvement in Public Health Service Activities at DOE Facilities, February 25-27, 1994, Norcross, Georgia.
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- Symposium on Health Research and Needs to Ensure Environmental Justice. February 10-12 1994 Executive Summary and Proceedings and Recommendations, Arlington, Virginia.