



## Department of Energy

Washington, DC 20585

August 15, 2003

Mr. Wade Waters, Chair  
Savannah River Citizens' Advisory Board

Dear Mr. Waters:

In response to your letter of July 29, 2003 regarding implementation of the guidance for the Office of Environmental Management (EM) Site Specific Advisory Boards (SSABs), dated July 7, 2003, I want to assure you that the Department views the SSABs crucial to accomplishing our cleanup mission.

The EM SSAB Charter's provisions require the Department of Energy (the Department) to provide the resources sufficient to conduct EM SSAB business. That support remains undiminished and the guidance calls for no reduction in funding. My objective is to insure that the SSABs' independence is maintained in their relationship with the Department. Accordingly, my memorandum is intended to increase the visibility and accountability of resources provided to support SSAB activities, and not intended to impact the effectiveness of the SSAB or other stakeholder activities-

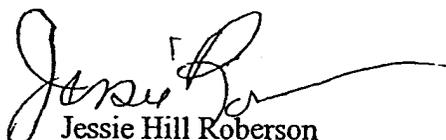
Further, the guidance did not make any statements regarding elimination of information flow or exchange with the site contractors. We want to insure that the integrity of the SSABs is preserved, as well as the credibility of their work product. Only by insuring this independence will the optimum value be provided to the community while rendering an efficient cleanup operation for the American taxpayer. I believe we can accomplish both and we must continue to strive to enhance our performance in attaining that goal.

The SSABs represent a strong commitment by the Department to continue its relationship with communities surrounding the sites by considering community concerns and values in the Department's decision-making processes. It is our duty to manage these Boards responsibly, and ensure that they are structured and operate in a manner that maximizes their objectivity and successes.



If you have any further questions, please call me at (202) 586-7709 or Jeffrey Allison, Manager, Savannah River Operations Office, at (803) 725-2405.

Sincerely,

  
Jessie Hill Roberson  
Assistant Secretary for  
Environmental Management

cc:

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