

DRAFT

10 Year Strategic Plan Development:

- 1) DOE should hold 10 year Strategic Vision public meetings every year, at each site, in order to share the next iteration of programmatic goals, including discussions of successes, roadblocks, course changes, new scopes of cleanup and recognition of potential uncertainties. Public tutorial meetings should be held two weeks in advance of the beginning of any formal Public Comment period in order to build a common knowledge base.
- 2) EM Sites have the commonality of specific, near-term, three to five year, plans. These specific site plans should all trigger public involvement campaigns, outlining yearly updates on their next respective, goals. Site near-term plans should be aligned with 10 year Strategic Plan goals such that near-term plans can be used iteratively to benchmark programmatic progress.
- 3) Regarding the Strategic Vision, in addition to reducing jargon and allowing for a quicker means of identifying or getting to information pertinent to a specific site, the document needs a better explanation of how the priorities are established. What criteria are used with regard to public health, environmental risks, local economies, cost to complete, land transfers, etc.? Not details for each site, but an overall explanation of the process. This might help people understand why some sites have larger budgets or seem to be more active. Local SSABs are probably knowledgeable about planning for their sites, but each board should have some education on national priorities.

Communication:

- 1) DOE should put forth a concerted effort to define terminology so that FACA Boards and the public understand what is being considered and asked for, from them, within the decision matrix to be discussed. DOE needs to clearly communicate the boundaries of what is being considered. Additionally, DOE should articulate, in what manner, public policy advice can be successfully received by DOE-EM in order to see it incorporated into DOE's pending decisions. Lastly, DOE must convey how they will respond to public comments.
- 2) Utilize the strength of the SSAB Board's experiences and longevity by having them help to facilitate public meeting design, timing and locations. DOE-EM SSABs are now long-standing. They are formed from broad representation of the communities they represent and as such have the ability to help DOE regionalize presentations.
- 3) Evaluation of SSAB effectiveness should be based on several factors. This should include development of, but not limited to, guidance on when and what types of recommendations are needed. Although less objective, evaluative assessments from community stakeholders, DOE, DOE contractors, regulatory personnel and the SSAB's themselves should be incorporated.
- 4) Activities at some sites are long term and have reached the stage where little change is seen during the tenure of a typical SSAB member. Hence, the need for major decisions and recommendations is less or non-existent. Maintaining SSAB member interest is difficult. In this situation, DOE should consider ways to involve the SSABs in less consequential decisions and public outreach. DOE should

also consider what types of education might provide a better background for recommendations, decisions, community outreach that will occur in the future.

5) Written communication produced by DOE and the SSABs that is intended for the general public should be reviewed by site Public Affairs to verify that the use of jargon or uncommon terminology is understandable to a non-technical audience.

Public Involvement:

1) DOE should embrace the tenet that institutional knowledge and transparency in all aspects of the cleanup program is an essential component of building informed, useful and supportive public policy advice from the SSAB Boards, Tribes and the public. By engaging the public early and often, DOE can utilize the SSAB Boards and their operating structures such that they help prepare future generations of Board members and the public for informed engagement.

2) DOE should support STEM program development for local schools and colleges with curriculum development. Efforts should include supporting development of trained people for trade-focused careers.

3) DOE should actively provide opportunities for informational engagement and coordinate with the EM SSAB meeting schedule to the extent possible.

4) DOE should hold public tutorial meetings in order to share DOE interactions with regulatory bodies and formally convened scientific panels. Building a collective, scientific basis for remediation pathway development that incorporates informed public policy recommendations should be the goal.

5) SSAB membership should be consistent in reflecting community educational levels, proximity, racial and cultural diversity, and income levels. An exact mirror of the community is not necessarily beneficial. Interest and commitment are most important. Including actual stakeholders affected by public health or environmental risks or community economic and political factors is more important than simply looking at the community demographics. Also, having people that can contribute to SSAB decisions because of experience, education, and connections in the community is important. One criterion that should be emphasized is a member's willingness and ability to communicate with the general public.

6) Introductory training for new board members appears to be inconsistent. Site tours and in-person instruction should be required. These should be supplemented by online or other virtual resources. In addition to DOE and/or contractor personnel, current SSAB members should be involved in the tours and training. Introductory training can be spread out over time, but should be separate from SSAB meetings. A more formal schedule of when new SSAB members are added should be established to allow for a better introductory training schedule and to reduce the need for continual repetition of information that has already been addressed by longer term SSAB members.

7) Because of COVID, virtual meetings have become routine. Although these meetings allow for participation of people geographically distant or with health issues, they are not as effective regarding communication within and between SSAB, DOE, regulatory personnel, DOE contractors, and the general public. Virtual meetings allow for a lessened commitment among participants. SSAB in-person meetings should be prioritized, with hybrid meetings as needed.

Risk Communication:

- 1) DOE should address the Boards and the public on how risk assessments affect prioritization and decision making.
- 2) Training should be provided to Board members on communications surrounding high-profile or sensitive issues.