



U.S. DEPARTMENT
of ENERGY

Environmental Management Site-Specific Advisory Board

Operational Framework

September 2026

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Document Purpose

This document is to provide guidance regarding the operation of the Environmental Management Site-Specific Advisory Board (EM SSAB). This updated guidance supersedes the guidance document “EM SSAB Policies Desk Reference” dated April 2023.

This document is intended to summarize pertinent sections of the requirements of the **Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA)**, 5 United States Code (U.S.C.) Chapter 10; the General Services Administration (GSA) implementing regulations, **41 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 102-3**; the Department of Energy Order entitled Advisory Committee Management Program, **DOE Order 515.1**; and the **EM SSAB charter**. It is not intended to replace these documents. In addition, it provides specific directions for the EM SSAB.

Revision History

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I. Background and Introduction

The Environmental Management Site-Specific Advisory Board (EM SSAB or board), established in June 1994, involves stakeholders directly in Department of Energy (DOE) Environmental Management (EM) cleanup decisions. While only one Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA)-chartered EM SSAB exists, local boards (also known as chapters) operate under the EM SSAB umbrella charter and have been organized at the following sites: Hanford in Washington State, Idaho National Laboratory Site, Los Alamos in Northern New Mexico, Nevada National Security Site, Oak Ridge in Tennessee, Paducah in Kentucky, Portsmouth in Ohio, and Savannah River in South Carolina.

In accordance with its charter, the EM SSAB provides the Assistant Secretary for EM, or the appropriate DOE EM official, with advice and recommendations concerning the EM program. DOE has a multitude of missions that are executed by a variety of offices, some of which take place at the same locations. The scope and operation of the EM SSAB remain the same at locations where the landlord of the site is the Office of Science, the National Nuclear Security Administration, or the Office of Nuclear Energy. The EM SSAB may not provide advice or recommendations to these landlord entities or any other entity besides DOE's Office of EM.

DOE populates the local boards by drawing upon diverse community viewpoints from people who live or work in counties near EM Program activities. The EM SSAB provides DOE and communities with a well-established mechanism to facilitate open communication and provide direct stakeholder involvement in the planning and decision-making processes enabling restoration and revitalization of locations where historic nuclear development and testing activities were conducted.

The EM SSAB satisfies various public participation requirements found in Federal Acts, Federal Facility Agreements and Consent Orders, Consent Decrees, Settlement Agreements, and Memorandums of Understanding.

It is the policy of DOE and EM to conduct its programs in an open and responsive manner, thereby encouraging and providing the opportunity for public participation in its planning and decision-making processes.

Throughout the EM SSAB's history, several local boards have been created and dissolved. Reasons for the boards' dissolution vary: the completion of the EM mission at the local board's respective site, the local board's fulfillment of its mission, or the diminished effectiveness of the local board. These include:

- Fernald Citizens' Advisory Board (Ohio)
- Monticello Site-Specific Advisory Board (Utah)
- Pantex Citizens' Advisory Board (Texas)
- Rocky Flats Citizens' Advisory Board (Colorado)
- Sandia Site-Specific Advisory Board (New Mexico)

II. Purpose/Scope

The EM SSAB is one of the primary mechanisms used to involve citizens more directly in DOE EM cleanup planning.

The EM SSAB's primary purpose is to offer advice and recommendations from a community viewpoint to DOE concerning matters related to EM Office. Further information regarding the board's responsibilities is outlined in its charter.

The EM SSAB helps satisfy public participation requirements outlined in the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA); Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA); six Federal Facility Agreements and Consent Orders (signed by the states of Washington, Idaho, Kentucky, Nevada, South Carolina, and Tennessee; and by the Environmental Protection Agency [EPA], DOE Office of Legacy Management, the National Nuclear Security Administration, and the Department of War); one Consent Decree (Ohio); and one Settlement Agreement (New Mexico).

The EM SSAB's role is solely advisory in nature and has no decision-making ability or authority to implement advice or recommendations.

The EM SSAB functions within a public forum which enables both the public and stakeholders to remain apprised of current and forthcoming restoration and revitalization initiatives.

III. Roles and Responsibilities

The following are key offices and positions and their associated primary responsibilities.

A. DOE's Office of Environmental Management and Assistant Secretary for Environmental Management.

1. Per delegated authority from the Secretary of Energy (S4-DEL-EM1-2019 to the Assistant Secretary for Environmental Management - March 19, 2019), the Assistant Secretary for Environmental Management may appoint and remove board members.
2. Provide the organizational location for the EM SSAB Designated Federal Officer (DFO), a position that is required for management of each Federal advisory board and is appointed by the Secretary of Energy.
3. Appoint Deputy Designated Federal Officers (DDFOs) to be responsible for conducting day-to-day operations of the local site chapters. DDFOs are appointed by the Assistant Secretary for Environmental Management. Multiple DDFOs can be appointed at one time.

B. Designated Federal Officer. Appointed by the Secretary of Energy, the DFO acts as the primary Federal representative for the EM SSAB, ensuring that compliance obligations are met and that the board's work supports the agency's mission. The DFO must complete DOE FACA 101 (or comparable training) prior to conducting DFO activities. Additionally, the DFO should complete General Services Administration (GSA) FACA 201 training within 12 months of appointment, pending availability. An alternate DFO may be appointed by the Secretary of Energy to serve as the DFO when needed and should complete the same training. The DFO should:

1. Serve as the EM federal advisory board subject matter expert and provide guidance to and oversee EM field and headquarters operations related to EM advisory boards, ensuring that EM SSAB activities comply with FACA, DOE administrative procedures, and any other applicable laws and regulations
2. Maintain EM SSAB records and documentation, including but not limited to, annual reports, recommendations, meeting minutes, and membership information, and provide such information to the public, as applicable
3. Prepare Federal Register notices for all EM SSAB full board public meetings.
4. Ensure conflict of interest guidelines are followed.
5. Prepare, process, and obtain approval of EM SSAB appointment membership packages.
6. Prepare, process, and obtain approval of the EM SSAB charter.
7. Develop and maintain the EM SSAB Operational Framework in consultation with the Office of the General Counsel (GC) for General Law to ensure accordance with FACA and other regulations and requirements. The DFO is responsible for giving final approval.
8. Review local board operating procedures/bylaws in consultation with the DDFO and GC to ensure accordance with FACA and other regulations and requirements. The DFO is responsible for giving final approval.
9. Coordinate the development of and finalize the EM SSAB Annual Comprehensive Review to Congress.
10. As required, coordinate DOE Headquarters (HQ) review of materials to be given to the local boards by DOE employees and contractors.
11. Preside over national meetings of the EM SSAB chairpersons.

C. Office of Environmental Management (EM) Site Offices. Accountable for local board activities and complete applicable DFO responsibilities at the local level through the DDFOs. The field office will:

1. Coordinate with the DFO on EM SSAB operations and activities.
2. Recommend to the DFO a DOE official (or officials) to serve as the DDFO.

3. Ensure the local board membership is fairly balanced through adequate outreach and recruitment efforts for membership.
4. Provide adequate resources to enable the local board to carry out its purpose.
5. On behalf of the Assistant Secretary and/or designated EM official, provide timely responses to local board recommendations. Local offices should strive to provide responses within 90 days of receiving a recommendation.
6. Ensure member appointment nominations are submitted to the DFO for the Assistant Secretary's appointment consideration.
7. Develop and submit draft local board annual work plans to the DFO for review and approval coordination. After EM HQ concurrence is received, the field office manager provides final approval.

D. Deputy Designated Federal Officer (DDFO). The Assistant Secretary for Environmental Management may also designate a DOE field site employee as the DDFO who is responsible for the day-to-day management of a local board. While other federal and contractor staff may assist the DDFO in carrying out the responsibilities described, DDFOs are accountable for board management. DDFOs must complete DOE FACA 101 training (or comparable training) prior to conducting DDFO activities. Additionally, the DDFO must complete GSA FACA 201 training within 12 months of appointment, pending availability. The EM SSAB DFO may perform all DDFO responsibilities, as needed. As it relates to a local chapter of the EM SSAB, the DDFO will:

1. Approve or call for all board meetings.
2. Adjourn board meetings if it is in the public interest.
3. Approve meeting agendas after coordination with HQ.
4. Ensure required records on board costs and membership are maintained, as each field office must keep records that fully disclose the disposition of any board-related funds.
5. Ensure that detailed minutes of meetings contain the required content and are prepared and duly certified by the chairperson within 90 days of the meeting.
6. Ensure conflict of interest guidelines are followed.
7. Arrange for reimbursement of travel expenses in compliance with federal travel regulations.
8. Ensure that full board and subcommittee meetings are held at a reasonable time and in a manner or place reasonably accessible to the public.
9. Attend/participate in any board activity where board business will be conducted. This includes administrative meetings and subcommittee meetings.

10. Provide to the DFO the required information for publishing Federal Register notices within the required timeframe.
11. Ensure information regarding local full board meetings (date/time, location, agenda, etc.) are posted to the board website. Additional advertisements and notifications are encouraged to ensure community awareness of board activities.
12. Develop annual work plans in accordance with *Section V. Work Plans* and approve those work plans on the agency's behalf.
13. Facilitate the opportunity for the board to offer advice and recommendations on work plan items.
14. Facilitate informing the board members of EM activities directly affecting the EM SSAB mission and purpose.
15. Maintain local board operating procedures/bylaws and consult with GC to ensure the procedures/bylaws follow regulations and requirements. Procedures must be reviewed by the DFO who is responsible for giving final approval.
16. Lead board meetings if the chairperson/vice chairperson is not available.
17. Ensure a public-facing website is created and maintained for the local board which includes information such as: the EM SSAB charter; relevant laws, regulations, and guidance; local board member rosters; Federal Register notices; meeting information (such as agendas, meeting materials, and minutes); reports and recommendations; and any other information that would increase the transparency and public understanding of local board functions and activities and assist in fulfilling the requirements under FACA.

E. Support Staff. Support staff may assist the DDFO in board activities, but these positions cannot fulfill the responsibilities assigned to the DFO/DDFO under FACA. Support staff generally facilitate the activities of the local board by providing administrative and operational support for the board. For example, they can assist in, presentation and material preparation, and other day-to-day operational activities.

DOE will provide adequate support services as necessary. Adequate support services may include but are not limited to necessary supplies and equipment, Federal staff support, coordination of meetings and agendas, funding for travel for official board business, and funding for support staff to ensure that board members reach objectives, maintain focus, work as a team, and operate at maximum efficiency.

F. Liaisons. The EM Assistant Secretary or DOE field managers for EM activities may invite other Federal, State, local, or Tribal governments to name one liaison to the local board to provide information and represent their interests in local board related activities. Liaisons may participate in discussions but shall have no voting privileges,

shall not hold local board leadership positions, and shall not be included in the quorum count. Liaison information (organization and the individual serving as their representative) should be provided to the DFO for awareness.

G. EM SSAB Members. The success and effectiveness of the EM SSAB depend largely upon the interest, commitment, involvement, and input from its members. EM SSAB members are expected to:

1. Attend meetings and participate in an open, constructive, and respectful manner.
2. Provide advice and recommendations to the Assistant Secretary for EM and/or DOE EM officials related to activities at field sites and DOE EM complex wide.
3. Review, evaluate, and comment on EM activities, documents, and other materials in accordance with the work plan.
4. Notify the DDFO of any perceived or actual conflict of interest.
5. Represent the interests of their community, and share with their community, publicly available information on board activities to encourage public involvement. These kinds of activities are voluntary and are not a requirement for membership.
6. Members who wish to participate in their capacity as a board member at non-board activities must first consult with the DDFO and/or DFO in advance of the participation. Examples include community events, speaking engagements, and media interactions. Members shall not represent themselves as federal employees or representatives of DOE or the Federal government.

H. Local Board Chairperson. Local boards are led by a chairperson, who must be an appointed board member. The chairperson may be appointed by DOE or elected by the board using local board procedures. If an individual is elected to serve as chairperson for a specified term (e.g., one year), but their membership expires prior to the completion of that term, their position as chairperson will conclude upon the expiration of their membership. The board may elect a vice chairperson, whose responsibilities include supporting the chairperson and fulfilling the role of chairperson during periods of unavailability. If the chairperson and vice chairperson are unavailable to lead a full board meeting, the DDFO is authorized to preside over the meeting to ensure functionality of the board. The board can temporarily operate without a chairperson or vice chairperson. The chairperson is expected to:

1. Preside at all full board meetings.
2. Assist with the development and execution of agendas.
3. Certify full board meeting minutes.
4. Sign board advice, recommendations and other correspondence on behalf of the local board.
5. Be available between meetings for administrative work.
6. Represent the local board during EM SSAB national meetings.
7. Serve as the spokesperson for the local board. The chairperson does not represent DOE. Chairpersons who wish to represent the board in non-board activities must first consult with the DDFO and/or DFO in advance of the participation. Examples include community events, speaking engagements, and media interactions. In this capacity, chairpersons should only represent the board on topics that have been discussed by the full board or have previously made recommendations on.

IV. Membership

Pursuant to delegated authority by the Secretary of Energy, the Assistant Secretary for EM is authorized to appoint and remove EM SSAB members. Membership appointments are not guaranteed, are at the sole discretion of DOE, and may be terminated without notice. Expertise is not required for board membership, as the board's mission is to provide community-based advice and recommendations to DOE on the EM program.

EM SSAB members are appointed to a local chapter of the EM SSAB. Local site chapters have approximately 10-20 members. Members of the EM SSAB local boards serve without compensation. Additional details regarding board membership may be found in the EM SSAB charter.

A. Member Composition. The EM SSAB's total membership consists of approximately 160 members who represent communities near eight DOE EM cleanup locations: Hanford in Washington State, Idaho National Laboratory Site, Los Alamos in New Mexico, Nevada National Security Site, Oak Ridge in Tennessee, Paducah in Kentucky, Portsmouth in Ohio, and Savannah River in South Carolina.

The majority of members shall live or work in counties near EM Program activities and are appointed as community representative members. DOE will strive to appoint the majority of members from the following counties (other nearby counties and viewpoints may be considered, as appropriate).

- Hanford - Benton (WA), Franklin (WA), Grant (WA), Umatilla (OR)
- Idaho – Ada (ID), Bannock (ID), Bingham (ID), Blaine (ID), Bonneville (ID), Butte (ID), Jefferson (ID), Twin Falls (ID)
- Northern New Mexico - Bernalillo (NM), Los Alamos (NM), Rio Arriba (NM), Sandoval (NM), San Miguel (NM), Santa Fe (NM), Taos (NM)
- Nevada - Clark (NV), Esmeralda (NV), Nye (NV)
- Oak Ridge - Anderson (TN), Campbell (TN), Knox (TN), Loudon (TN), Roane (TN)
- Paducah - McCracken (KY), Graves (KY), Ballard (KY), Marshall (KY), Massac (IL)
- Portsmouth - Pike (OH), Scioto (OH), Ross (OH), Jackson (OH)
- Savannah River - Aiken (SC), Allendale (SC), Barnwell (SC), Burke (GA), Columbia (GA), Richmond (GA)

Employees of DOE site/facility Management and Operating (M&O) or Management and Integration (M&I) DOE contractors may be appointed to the board and must receive a written waiver from the DOE Committee Management Officer (CMO). A request for a waiver must include that appointments of the individuals in question will not result in a conflict of interest.

Current Federal employees are ineligible to serve on the EM SSAB.

B. Recruitment and Applying for Membership. FACA requires that membership be fairly balanced in terms of views represented and functions to be performed. To help achieve this, recruitment efforts focus on locations identified in *Section IV. A. Member Composition*. Recruitment outreach is conducted by the field offices of the local chapters after an analysis is completed to identify underrepresented viewpoints. Advertising of advisory board membership opportunities is completed using a variety of methods including, but not limited to, websites, social media, print advertising, direct recruitment, and recommendations from current and former members. Sites must conduct vigorous outreach efforts and be able to demonstrate that they have attempted to recruit members from locations near EM program activities.

Individuals interested in serving on a local board should contact and/or submit their resume to the local DOE field office. Other entities, such as liaisons, may make suggestions as to whom should be considered for membership.

C. Candidate Nomination and Selection. Local offices are responsible for nominating to the DFO the best qualified candidates that will achieve fairly balanced membership. A membership package is developed based on content guidance issued

by the CMO. The DFO coordinates a preliminary review with EM senior management before submitting the membership package for formal review by the CMO, the Office of General Counsel, and the Office of the Secretary of Energy. Additional reviews may also take place. After approval by all relevant offices, letters of invitation to serve as community representative members are extended by the Assistant Secretary for EM.

D. Interim Appointments

1. *Site Appointments.* To ensure fairly balanced membership is not hampered by member resignation, the Assistant Secretary for EM has delegated limited authority to the DOE EM field office manager to replace members who have resigned with time remaining in their membership terms under the following conditions:
 - a) The replacement nominee represents the same viewpoint as the person vacating the appointment or other underrepresented viewpoint.
 - b) The appointment term is only for the remainder of the previous member's term.
 - c) No more than 20% of members can be appointed by any one site in any given calendar year.
 - d) When appointing new members under this delegated authority, DOE field office managers must comply with FACA, GSA and DOE regulations, including appropriate conflict-of-interest restrictions.

The DFO must be consulted prior to all such site appointments, and all relevant information (i.e., name, contact information, biography, and matrix information) must be submitted to the DFO in a timely manner. The DFO and DOE HQ General Counsel must concur with the site appointment.

Site appointment letters must contain the same content as appointment letters issued by the Assistant Secretary and must be signed by the field office manager with the DFO and DDFO on copy.

2. *Temporary Appointment Extensions.* To ensure functionality of the board, the DFO may authorize current members to continue to serve in interim status for up to 90 calendar days after their current term expires if it is deemed necessary for the local board to continue operation and retain a fairly balanced membership. Individuals in interim membership status must continue to abide by all laws and policies applicable to their membership on the board. Serving in interim status does not indicate reappointment approval and interim status can be revoked prior to the 90-day extension.

E. Removal and Resignation of Members. Members serve at the pleasure of the Assistant Secretary for EM; site recommendations for removal must be approved by the Assistant Secretary after concurrence by the DFO.

Members who wish to resign from the board are requested to submit their resignation in writing to the DDFO and the local board chairperson. The DDFO is responsible for notifying the DFO of the resignation.

V. Work Plans

Each local board operates under an annual work plan that ensures the board focuses on topics where there is a need and/or opportunity to influence EM's decision-making through advice and recommendations. Additionally, work plans also provide opportunities for information sharing with the board and the public on EM activities. Work plans are the responsibility of DOE, but it is recommended that the site office collaborate with their board members and liaisons on the plan. Board members and liaisons are allowed to propose additional work plan items to DOE for consideration. Work plan items are dependent upon several factors including, but not limited to, available resources, timeliness, level of board interest, and DOE's need for a recommendation on the topic. The DDFO is responsible for approving the work plan after consultation with the DFO.

There are two types of work plan topics: 1) actionable and 2) informational. Actionable topics are presented to the board with the intent the board will provide advice or recommendations on the topics. Informational topics do not have a request for recommendation tied to them and are meant to increase board and public awareness of the topic. The board can choose to make a recommendation on the topic.

The DDFO is responsible for verifying work plan topics are within the scope of the charter and are clearly defined as actionable or informational. Work plan items do not have to be tied to regulatory actions.

Each year the site should include an actionable work plan topic requesting advice or recommendations on prioritizing tasks for the fiscal year plus two (for example, in FY 2027 the recommendation should be on the task priorities for the FY 2029 budget).

New work plan topics can be added to the work plan outside of the annual development process. Any new topic (actionable or informational) added to the work plan must be approved by the DDFO after consultation with the DFO.

The work plan should also identify planned full board meeting dates for the fiscal year and what topics are expected to be discussed during the meetings.

VI. Meetings

There are three types of advisory board meetings: full board, subcommittee, and preparatory/administrative. Advisory board meetings (except preparatory/administrative) shall be open to the public and held at a reasonable time and in a manner or place accessible to the public. Meetings may be conducted in person, virtually, or through a hybrid approach that combines both formats. DOE should consider having virtual meetings as a cost savings measure. Virtual observation of meetings should be available to the public when feasible. The physical or electronic meeting room must be sufficient to accommodate board members, staff, and a reasonable number of interested members of the public. Sites should notify the DFO of all scheduled meetings and any schedule changes.

A. Full Board Meetings. A meeting in which all appointed local board members are expected to attend with the intent that formal board business will be conducted.

1. All full board meetings shall have the advance approval of and be attended by the DFO or DDFO.
2. An open meeting notice must be published in the Federal Register 15 days before the meeting in accordance with FACA. Notices need to be provided to the DFO 38 days in advance to allow time for editing and publication.
3. A quorum of the board is required to be present to approve recommendations to DOE EM. A quorum is defined as a majority (one more than one half) of a board's currently appointed membership.
4. Federal Register notices, agendas, minutes, and support materials related to each full board meeting should be posted on the board's website as soon as they are available.
5. Prior to the meeting, a copy of the agenda and links to the meeting should be provided to the DFO.
6. A brief post-meeting synopsis should be provided to the DFO within one working day of the meeting.

B. Subcommittee Meetings. Subcommittees may be formed for each local site chapter of the EM SSAB with the approval of the DDFO. The objective of subcommittees is to draft advice and recommendations for the board's consideration within the scope of the board. Such subcommittees or work groups may not work independently and must report their draft advice and recommendations to the board for deliberation and discussion. Subcommittees have no authority to make decisions on behalf of the board, nor can they report directly to DOE.

1. The DFO/DDFO must attend or designate a FACA-trained federal or contractor staff member to attend subcommittee meetings.
2. Subcommittees are not required to comply with the notice or public comment provisions of FACA so long as the local full board deliberates any advice or recommendations developed by subcommittees.
3. Subcommittee meetings are open to the public and should be listed on the local board website, but do not require a Federal Register notice or a quorum of the board.
4. At the discretion of the DDFO and in accordance with the board charter, members of the public can participate in subcommittees but cannot serve leadership roles.
5. Meeting notes should be developed to capture the discussion and products developed during the meeting. The notes do not have to be published on the board website but should be made available if requested.

C. Preparatory and Administrative Meetings. FACA allows for two types of meetings that do not require public notice, public comment, or a quorum of the board - preparatory and administrative meetings. These meetings are convened solely to gather information, conduct research, analyze relevant issues and facts in preparation for a full board meeting, to draft position papers for deliberation by the full board, to discuss administrative matters of the board, or to receive administrative information from DOE. Some examples include site tours, educational lectures, member orientation, training, and meeting logistics. The DFO/DDFO must attend or designate a FACA-trained federal or contractor staff member to attend these meetings.

D. Chairs' Meetings. Chairpersons and vice chairpersons of the local boards meet routinely to discuss cross-cutting issues and to develop draft advice and recommendations that have EM complex-wide applicability. Draft advice and recommendations prepared by the chairpersons/vice chairpersons of the local boards are discussed during a national meeting noticed in the Federal Register. If supported by the majority of the chairpersons/vice chairpersons present, the recommendation is then presented to each of the local boards during a Federal Register-noticed local board meeting. If the majority of local boards approve the draft recommendation, it is formally submitted to DOE as an EM SSAB national recommendation. In-person Chairs' meetings are typically held at sites with an EM SSAB local board on a rotational basis.

E. Meeting Cancellation/Postponement. The DFO must be notified if a meeting is to be cancelled or postponed. For meetings which were announced in the Federal Register, a cancellation/postponement notice should be published in the Federal Register, if time allows. For meetings that were listed on the board's website, the

status of the meeting should be updated in a timely manner to reflect the cancellation/postponement. All members and liaisons should be notified and a notice announcing the meeting cancellation/postponement should be posted at the meeting location on the day the meeting was to take place.

VII. Board Advice & Recommendations and DOE Responses

The EM SSAB is chartered to provide advice and recommendations to DOE EM. Therefore, the board is not allowed to provide advice or recommendations to any other entity.

- A.** Any advice or recommendations given to DOE must be discussed and voted on during a full board meeting that was noticed in the Federal Register and allowed time for public comment.
- B.** A quorum of the board must be present during a full board meeting to vote on advice and recommendations. Advice and recommendations may be approved by a simple majority of the members present. A minority report may be added to advice or recommendations.
- C.** Advice or recommendations provided to DOE should clearly be identified as such. Advice and recommendations must be signed by the chairperson or the vice chairperson if the chairperson is unable to sign.
- D.** The board may copy non-DOE entities on the advice or recommendation letter.
- E.** Advice and recommendations should be posted on the local board website within 10 working days of issuance. National EM SSAB advice and recommendations are posted to the national EM SSAB website.
- F.** Draft advice or recommendations may be developed using subcommittees. Subcommittees are not allowed to give advice or recommendations directly to DOE.
- G.** In general, DOE should strive to respond to advice and recommendations within 90 days of receipt. Written responses are encouraged but not required.
- H.** At a minimum, DOE should provide an oral response to advice and recommendations during a full board meeting.
- I.** DOE responses should clearly state if the recommendation was fully accepted, partially accepted, or rejected. This information must be given to the DFO for documentation to be added to the GSA FACA database.
- J.** Copies of advice and recommendations and written responses should be sent to the DFO.

VIII. Voting

A quorum of the appointed members must be present during the discussion and vote to pass advice or recommendations to DOE during a full board meeting. Only appointed members operating within the constraints of their appointment may vote. A member is considered present

and can vote if they are in-person or participating virtually. The EM SSAB operates using Robert's Rules of Order and majority rule when issuing advice or recommendations. The majority are half the appointed members plus one. A minority report may be added to advice or recommendations.

A. Absentee Voting. A member can make a written request to the DDFO and chairperson for the privilege to cast an absentee vote if the member cannot be present during a full board meeting. The chairperson and DDFO must approve and certify that all criteria are met. These criteria ensure that absentee votes are cast with full knowledge of the final advice or recommendation and maintain the integrity of the board's decision-making process. Absentee voting criteria:

1. A quorum of the board must be present at the full board meeting when the vote is cast.
2. The final draft advice or recommendation has been provided to the absentee members prior to the vote.
3. No modifications that alter the meaning or intent of the advice or recommendation are made beyond grammatical changes (e.g., grammar, punctuation, spelling) after the draft has been provided to the absentee member for review.
4. It is disclosed during the meeting and in the meeting minutes that a member has submitted an absentee vote.
5. Documentation of the absentee's vote is included in the meeting minutes as an attachment.

IX. Minutes, Records, and Websites

A. Minutes. Minutes ensure transparency, accountability, and public access to advisory board activities, consistent with FACA's mandate to keep Congress and the public informed of advisory committee operations. There must be minutes produced for all full board meetings. For subcommittee meetings, meeting notes are acceptable.

1. The DFO/DDFO must ensure that minutes are certified for accuracy by the chairperson within 90 calendar days of the meeting to which they relate.
2. Detailed minutes of each full board meeting shall be kept on file and posted to the board website. National/Chairs' EM SSAB meeting minutes are posted to the national EM SSAB website.
3. Minutes should include:
 - a) The time, date, and place (or electronic format) of the advisory committee meeting.
 - b) A list of the people who were present at the meeting, including but are not limited to board members and staff, agency employees, and members of the public who presented oral or written statements.

- c) An accurate description of each matter discussed and the resolution, if any, made by the members regarding such matter.
- d) Copies of each report or other materials received, issued, or approved by the advisory committee at the meeting.
- e) Names of members who may have recused themselves from the meeting or a portion of it and their reason(s) for doing so.

B. Records.

- 1. Board records, such as recommendations, minutes, and agendas, should be accessible by the public.
- 2. Headquarters and field offices must keep records to fully disclose the disposition of any funds utilized to support the board.
- 3. The multi-site structure of the EM SSAB necessitates that fiscal records be developed and maintained at local sites.
- 4. Funds are reported through the GSA FACA database on an annual basis.
- 5. Advice and recommendations made by the EM SSAB as a whole (also known as National or Chairs' recommendations) shall be posted to the national EM SSAB website maintained by EM Headquarters.
- 6. A copy of all board advice and recommendations, DOE written responses, minutes, and work plans must be provided to the DFO.

C. Websites. EM Headquarters will maintain a website for the EM SSAB as a whole. Each site will maintain a local chapter website.

- 1. At a minimum, the national EM SSAB website must include:
 - a) Meeting details for upcoming local and national meetings that were noticed in the Federal Register.
 - b) The EM SSAB charter.
 - c) Advice and recommendations issued by the EM SSAB as a whole (i.e., National/Chairs' recommendations) and written responses.
 - d) National meeting Federal Register notices, agendas, meeting materials, and minutes.
 - e) EM SSAB specific guidance documents.
- 2. At a minimum, local chapter websites must include:
 - a) Meeting details for upcoming local chapter meetings that were noticed in the Federal Register.
 - b) The EM SSAB charter.
 - c) Advice and recommendations issued by the local chapter and written responses.
 - d) Local full board meeting Federal Register notices, agendas, meeting materials, and minutes.

- e) Local chapter guidance documents (such as bylaws).
- f) List of currently appointed members.

X. Local Board Bylaws/Standard Operating Procedures

Field sites may draft and implement local board bylaws/standard operating procedures to assist with day-to-day operations of the local board. Such documents must be reviewed by the DFO and site counsel. Local guidance must not conflict with FACA, 5 U.S.C. Chapter 10; 41 CFR Part 102-3; DOE Order 515.1; the EM SSAB charter, or the EM SSAB Operational Framework (this document). Local guidance documents should be succinct and not duplicate content found in hierarchical documents.

XI. Public Participation

Public participation is encouraged and must be considered when scheduling, preparing for, and conducting full board and subcommittee meetings. Public attendance must be on a first-come, first-served basis up to the reasonable and safe capacity of the meeting room or other medium.

A. Public Comment. A public comment opportunity must be offered during full board and subcommittee meetings. Public comments can be provided as a written or oral statement. There shall be no expectation for members or DOE to respond to public comments during the meeting. The DDFO has the authority to adjourn any meeting and end oral statements when he or she determines it to be in the public interest. In such cases, written statements could be provided after the meeting. For meeting records specific to public comments received, verbatim transcripts are recommended whenever feasible.

1. **Written Statements.** Individuals or entities may submit a written public comment to the DFO/DDFO. The written comment must include a clear statement that identifies it as public comment. Written comments received prior to or after the meeting will be shared with board members and included in the meeting minutes if submitted during the timeframe designated in the Federal Register meeting notice. If no time is designated, the timeframe shall be 48 hours prior to and after the meeting. Public comments received outside of this timeframe will be provided to the members and will be included in the next full board meeting minutes.

Oral Statements. A minimum of 15 minutes must be allotted at full board and subcommittee meetings for oral statements. The entire 15 minutes does

not have to be observed if there are no members of the public who wish to make oral comments. A statement must be included in the Federal Register notice for full board meetings announcing how comments from the public will be accepted during the meeting. Guidelines for how public comments will be handled must be made available to meeting attendees prior to the public comment period and reviewed at the start of each meeting to ensure all participants are informed. It is recommended that people are allowed at least two minutes to make their statement to ensure time is available for all who wish to speak. Those wishing to speak longer are encouraged to provide the remaining portion of their statement in writing.

B. Public Notifications

1. Full board meeting notices must appear in the Federal Register at least 15 calendar days prior to full board meetings.
2. Federal Register notices should include the location where meeting minutes will be made available to the public and information on the public comment period.
3. Meeting information is published on the board website to attract public attendance. Additional advertising of board activities in the community should be considered.
4. If a meeting is postponed or cancelled, a Federal Register notice announcing the change should be published, if time allows. Additionally, the local DOE offices must announce the cancellation on their local board website and try to post signage at the location where the meeting was set to take place.

XII. Annual Comprehensive Review

DOE is required each year to provide to the GSA Committee Management Secretariat (through the DOE CMO) an Annual Comprehensive Review (formerly known as the Annual Report) on the activities of the EM SSAB during the preceding fiscal year. The CMO will issue instructions to the DFO regarding reporting requirements, procedures, and submission dates. The DFO, and subsequently the DDFO, is responsible for accurately and completely compiling the requested information by the due date. EM Headquarters populates the GSA FACA database with such things as meetings noticed in the Federal Register, membership rosters, advice and recommendations, and expenditures. Each local board must submit its data to the DFO within one month of the close of each fiscal year, or when requested.

XIII. Conflict of Interest

EM SSAB members are appointed as representatives of their community and are not Federal employees and, therefore, are not subject to the criminal conflicts of interest statutes or the standards of conduct regulations. In the absence of applicable statutes or regulations governing their conduct, representative members should act with integrity so as to not misuse their positions on the board for their own personal benefit or the benefit of others with whom they interact outside their service on the board.

Board members should be aware of and abide by the following general conflicts of interest regulations.

- Members will refrain from any use of their membership that is, or gives the appearance of being, motivated by the desire for private gain.
- Members will not use, either directly or indirectly, any inside information obtained as a result of advisory board service for private gain.
- Members will not use their positions in any way to coerce, or give the appearance of coercing, another person to provide a financial benefit to the member or any person with whom he or she has family, business, or financial ties.

Members should advise the DDFO of a potential or actual conflict of interest in advance of any board discussion on the subject. Meeting minutes must contain the names of any members who recused themselves from the meeting, the reason for the recusal, and a statement that they did not participate in the matter from which they were recused or that they were not present during the discussion.

XIV. Funding

Funding to facilitate local board operations is the responsibility of DOE field offices. Operations should be conducted in the most cost-effective manner without minimizing the board's ability to satisfy its purpose. After the annual work plan is approved by the DDFO, the field offices should provide sufficient funding to carry out the work plan.

Funds used to support the EM SSAB are reported via the Annual Comprehensive Review. Reporting guidance is issued by the CMO and provided to the sites by the DFO on an annual basis. The DDFO will report to the DFO the funds spent to operate their local board.

XV. Member Compensation and Travel Expenses

The EM SSAB charter and appointment letters state that board members serve without compensation. Members may be reimbursed in accordance with the Federal Travel Regulations for authorized travel and per diem expenses incurred while participating in board activities.

- A.** Board members travel under the legal designation of Invitational Travelers. To qualify for overnight lodging or meals/incidental expense (M&IE) per diem, the meeting location must be outside the local commuting area which is defined by DOE as a 50-mile radius from the traveler's residence.
- B.** Travel arrangements cannot be made without written approval from the DDFO or appropriate federal employee.
- C.** Members will be reimbursed using direct deposit as there is not a viable method for issuing checks or cash.
- D.** Airfare is limited to the regular, round trip, coach-class fare or, when available, Government contract airlines between the member's residence or regular place of business and the meeting location. Train travel is authorized when it is advantageous to the Federal government. A member may also travel to and from the meeting in his/her private vehicle, and DOE will reimburse the member at the mileage allowance rate and for fees.
- E.** DOE will reimburse members for lodging, meals, and incidental subsistence expenses associated with site approved travel for meetings using a per diem allowance (i.e., daily payment instead of reimbursement for actual expenses).
- F.** In addition, DDFOs are responsible for determining, after consultation with appropriate offices and/or individuals at their field sites, whether it is appropriate to fund official travel for non-members to specific EM SSAB-related activities, and, if so, how it should be funded.
- G.** Funding and compensation for travel is considered part of the annual budget allocation for the local board and should be reported in the Annual Comprehensive Review.

XVI. Board Termination

The EM SSAB charter provides that the board terminates two years from the most recent charter filing date and may not meet or take any action if the charter is not renewed biennially. Criteria for terminating a board and subsequent necessary actions are contained in FACA and DOE Order 515.1.

Local chapters of the EM SSAB can be terminated by the Assistant Secretary for EM. Termination of a local chapter shall take place if the EM mission is completed at the site in which the local board focuses on, DOE determines no additional advice or recommendations are needed, it is in the public interest, or there is a lack of interest/viable applicants in the community to serve on the board.

A transition plan should be prepared by the DDFO in consultation with the DFO that identifies the reason for the sunseting of the board, a timeline for the disestablishment, and a communication plan. The plan should be approved by the field office manager at the local board's site and submitted to the Assistant Secretary for approval. When possible, advanced notice should be given to members and other interested stakeholders before sunseting occurs.

XVII. Acronyms & Definitions

CERCLA Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act

CFR Code of Federal Regulations

CMO Committee Management Officer

DDFO Deputy Designated Federal Officer

DFO Designated Federal Officer

DOE U.S. Department of Energy

EM Office of Environmental Management

EM-1 Assistant Secretary for the Office of Environmental Management

EM SSAB Environmental Management Site-Specific Advisory Board

EPA Environmental Protection Agency

FACA Federal Advisory Committee Act

FR Federal Register

GC General Counsel

GSA General Services Administration

HQ Headquarters

M&I Management and Integration

M&O Management and Operating

M&IE Meals/Incidental Expenses

NE Office of Nuclear Energy

NNSA National Nuclear Security Administration

RCRA Resource Conservation and Recovery Act

SC Office of Science

USC United States Code

Advisory Committee: Any committee, board, commission, council, conference, panel, task force, or other similar group, or any subcommittee or other subgroup thereof which is established by statute, established or utilized by the President, or established or utilized by one or more agencies, in the interest of obtaining advice or recommendations for the President or one or more agencies or officers of the Federal Government.

DOE Committee Management Officer: The person appointed by the Secretary of Energy to exercise control and supervision over the establishment, procedures, and accomplishments of advisory committees established by DOE.

DOE Field Office: Any DOE area, field, and site offices, and/or business centers located outside the Washington, D.C. area.

DOE Order 515.1: Advisory Committee Management Program: Provides detailed DOE requirements, responsibilities, processes, and procedures for the establishment, operation, and management of advisory committees.

EM SSAB Chairs: The chairpersons of all local boards that operate under the EM SSAB charter.

EM SSAB Charter: The governing document for the EM SSAB, including all local boards, which is renewed biannually and approved by the CMO.

Full Board: Having to do with all appointed members of a local board.

GSA FACA Database: A shared online system used by U.S. federal agencies to manage roughly 1,000 advisory committees. It helps Congress perform oversight, allows the public and media to track committee activities, and provides public access to charters, costs, meetings, and membership details.

Quorum: A majority (one more than one half) of a board's currently appointed membership.

Subcommittee: Any subset, task force, panel, or other similar group made up of appointed members of the board that gathers to discuss board-related topics or to conduct board business. A subcommittee reports to the full board.

XVIII. Applicable Laws, Regulations, Orders and Policies

Statutes:

Federal Advisory Committee Act, 5 U.S.C. §§ 1001–1014 (originally enacted as Pub. L. No. 92-463, 86 Stat. 770 (1972) and formerly codified at 5 U.S.C. Ch.10).

<https://www.gsa.gov/policy-regulations/policy/faca-overview/legislation-and-regulations/federal-advisory-committee-act>

Regulations:

Federal Advisory Committee Management, 41 CFR Part 102-3. See also (major rule updates): 66 Fed. Reg. 37728 (2001); 89 Fed. Reg. 27684 (2024), and 90 FR 58417 (Dec. 16, 2025).

<https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-41/subtitle-C/chapter-102/subchapter-A/part-102-3>

Specific Agency Regulations:

Office of Management, U.S. Department of Energy (DOE), DOE Order 515.1, *Advisory Committee Management Program* (approved January 16, 2025).

<https://www.energy.gov/documents/advisory-committee-management-program>

Charter:

Office of Environmental Management, U.S. Department of Energy, Environmental Management Site-Specific Advisory Board Charter (filed March 31, 2026).

<https://www.energy.gov/sites/default/files/2026-04/DOE%201889%20EM%20SSAB%20Charter%203.31.2026.pdf>

XIX. Delegations

Re-delegation Order No. 00-002.03B: Department of Energy Re-delegation Order No. S4-DEL-EM1-2019 to the Assistant Secretary for Environmental Management (March 19, 2019).

<https://www.energy.gov/sites/default/files/2026-05/S4-DEL-EM1-2019.pdf>