



Savannah River Site Watch

Savannah River Site Watch (SRS Watch)

<http://www.srswatch.org/>

For Immediate Release

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**DOE, NNSA (Office of Fissile Materials Disposition) and Shaw AREVA MOX Services Continue Stalling Despite Urgent Need to Release Assessments of Costs of Failed Plutonium Fuel (MOX) Program**

**FOIA Paper Trail on Plutonium Disposition – Leads to the NNSA’s “FOIA Graveyard” in New Mexico:**  
<http://www.srswatch.org/freedom-of-information-act-documents.html>

***Secretary Moniz: Wake Up and Implement Openness, Shut Down FOIA Graveyard***

Columbia, SC – Despite an urgent need for the public to see to see cost estimates of the various options being reviewed for the disposition of surplus weapons plutonium, the Department of Energy (DOE), the DOE’s National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) and Shaw AREVA MOX Services have adopted stalling tactics and are refusing to release their assessments.

Based on recent testimony before Congress and due to a report in February 2014 by the Government Accountability Office (GAO), we know that both DOE and the MOX contractor have prepared cost estimates. As the GAO stated that Shaw AREVA MOX Services estimate of MOX costs was not reliable, it is incumbent on the company to release a new, reliable and independently verified cost assessment.

Secretary of Energy Moniz stated at a hearing on April 9 of the Senate Energy & Water Subcommittee that the DOE’s plutonium disposition assessment would be released. Two weeks have passed and there is no sign of the assessment being released.

“DOE must immediately release its plutonium disposition assessment and open it to public comment,” according to Tom Clements, Director of SRS Watch. “Shaw AREVA MOX Services must stop hiding its cost assessment and release it to the public so we can see if it is reliable,” said Clements. “The matter of costs and technical challenges facing the mismanaged MOX program makes it imperative that cost assessments be released. Continued failure to release high-quality cost estimates will only affirm that a cover-up of costs of the mismanaged MOX program is taking place.”

Clements filed a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request for the DOE’s assessment in late December 2013 and in early November 2013 filed a FOIA request the “terms of reference” for the DOE plutonium disposition study, which had been stipulated in the DOE’s Fiscal Year 2014 budget request.

“DOE’s track record on responding to FOIA requests on the MOX program is worse than abysmal and at this point it is clear that a cover-up is taking place, led by the NNSA’s Office of Fissile Materials Disposition,” said Clements. “FOIA requests on MOX are passed by DOE’s headquarters to the NNSA’s

Office of General Counsel in Albuquerque, which where the requests are sent to be formally ignored. Secretary of Energy Moniz must implement sincere openness and transparency policies aimed at prompt compliance with FOIA regulations and shut down the FOIA graveyard.”

**Notes:**

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