



Savannah River Site Watch

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For Immediate Release
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**SRS Watch Releases SRS Nuclear Materials Management Plans for Fiscal Years 2015 & 2016,
DOE's Savannah River Site to Continue Import of Plutonium, Research Reactor Spent Fuel**

***"Plans" - [Linked Here](#) - Obtained Under Freedom of Information Act Request;
See Compilation of SRS Watch's Comments and Observations on the Plans in "Notes" Below***

Columbia, SC – Key planning documents obtained on management of plutonium, uranium and tritium (for nuclear weapons) at the U.S. Department of Energy's Savannah River Site reveal plans for management of nuclear materials at the site for the next 13 years and beyond.

The document confirms that plutonium was received at SRS from Japan, Switzerland and Germany in Fiscal Year 2016, as SRS Watch informed the public before the shipments arrived in special ships via the port of Charleston, SC. (page 12) Additionally, the site plans to receive highly radioactive research reactor spent fuel from domestic reactors, for storage in the L-basin (pool) through 2035. (page 19)

Further, the document confirms that some "special nuclear material" - plutonium in K-Area - is under "inspections and surveillance" by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). It is believed that up to several tons are under such surveillance, which include real-time camera monitoring and occasional visits by IAEA inspectors.

In response to a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request by Savannah River Site Watch (SRS Watch), SRS released the redacted "Nuclear Materials Management Plans" for Fiscal Year 2015 and Fiscal Year 2016, which presents an overview of receipt and processing of nuclear materials at the site.

The "plan" for Fiscal Year 2016, entitled "Savannah River Site Nuclear Materials Management Plan FY 2016-2030," is dated June 23, 2016, and was prepared by DOE's Office of Environmental Management in conjunction with DOE's National Nuclear Security Administration and contractor Savannah River Nuclear Solutions. It is believed that SRS is now working on its Fiscal Year 2017 plan.

"While it is clear that DOE hopes to maintain SRS as a site that receives and processes an array of nuclear materials, that role is clearly diminishing and continues to distract from the all-important clean-up mission at SRS," according to Tom Clements, director of SRS Watch. "More effort must be put into a permanent and near-term halt to the inflow of nuclear materials into SRS and the development of acceptable disposition paths for hard-to-manage materials already at the site," added Clements.

The FY 2016 "plan" outlines receipt and processing of various forms of spent fuel and names five facilities at SRS that are used for processing and packaging of radioactive tritium gas used to boost the explosive power of nuclear weapons. It is the tritium mission at SRS that makes the site a nuclear

weapons facility. The site has been called “The Bomb Plant” due to the preparation of tritium and plutonium for US nuclear weapons.

The document indicates that there is no disposition path for the following materials: weapon-grade plutonium not addressed in a DOE “Record of Decision in March 2016, depleted uranium oxide, Mark-51 targets, Highly Enriched Uranium contaminated with Uranium-233 and heavy water. (page 17) The plan also affirms that the SRS goal of 6 metric tons of surplus weapons plutonium in downblending in the K-Area for disposal as waste in the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant in New Mexico and that spent nuclear fuel from the NRU/NRX reactors in Canada was to be sent to SRS beginning in FY 2015.

The FY 2016 plan affirms that “the most significant issue with respect to the current inventory of SNM [special nuclear material] at SRS is the lack of an assigned disposition path for certain SNF [spent nuclear fuel] and plutonium materials.” (page 19)

SRS Watch anticipates that the plan for FY 2017 will reveal that a final date for receipt of incoming materials, including plutonium from other countries, and that the management burden of hard-to-manage materials will be more rapidly addressed.

Notes:

DOE FOIA response with SRS Nuclear Materials Management Plan for Fiscal year 2015 & 2016:

http://www.srswatch.org/uploads/2/7/5/8/27584045/foia_nuclear_material_management_plan_2015_2016.pdf

<https://tinyurl.com/m3obb26>

SRS Watch comments and observations of FY 2016 SRS Nuclear Materials Management Plan:

http://www.srswatch.org/uploads/2/7/5/8/27584045/comments_on_srs_nuclear_materials_management_plan_2016_march_22_2017.pdf

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at SRS Citizens Advisory Board (SRS CAB) meeting on Tuesday, March 28, Aiken, SC