

Joint Meeting of the Radioactive Materials Transportation Committee and the Transuranic Waste Transportation Working Group

Paris Las Vegas Hotel
Las Vegas, Nevada
May 21, 2025

Meeting Summary

The Southern States Energy Board's (SSEB) Joint Meeting of the Radioactive Materials Transportation Committee and the Transuranic Waste Transportation Working Group took place on May 21, 2025. The event was held at the Paris Las Vegas Hotel in Las Vegas, Nevada in conjunction with the 2025 National Transportation Stakeholders Forum (NTSF) Annual Meeting.

Mr. Christopher Wells, Director of Nuclear Programs for the Southern States Energy Board, welcomed the group, communicated a few administrative matters and provided general logistical announcements. Additionally, Mr. Wells informed members the meeting would be brief because program updates had been delivered to the entire audience during the NTSF Closing Plenary Session. More specifically, he noted the gathering would consist of only five formal PowerPoint presentations in addition to two freelance speakers and possible quick visits from federal agency partners to address programmatic questions and/or concerning issues. Following these comments, Mr. Wells introduced Mr. David Johnson of Tennessee who was serving as the Chairman of the Radioactive Materials Transportation Committee. Afterwards, Mr. Johnson formally called the meeting to order by commencing with the introduction of all meeting participants. Following introductions, he began calling forth the presenters as listed on the meeting agenda.

Mr. Tim Yackey, Emergency Medical Services WIPP Program Coordinator at the New Mexico Department of Health was the first speaker to address the Committees. Mr. Yackey discussed how his agency delivers radiation emergency medical response training to hospitals in New Mexico to support WIPP shipments. He noted proactive steps taken to create interest in training such as hands-on activities instead of PowerPoint presentations and issuing continuing education credits for participating medical personnel. He also noted the assembly of equipment utilizing simple techniques such as inserting batteries keeps students engaged and increases their awareness of operation of the devices.

The second individual to speak at the gathering was Mr. James Mason, Institutional Affairs Manager with the Department of Energy Carlsbad Field Office. Mr. Mason provided the program update during the NTSF Closing Plenary Session and thus only had a few topics to discuss with the group. He informed them of Andy Walker's retirement and his (Mr. Mason) interim incorporation of Transportation Manager and TRANSCOM Manger duties. WIPP has also experienced a reduction in training personnel and currently employs only one full-time trainer. The new ROADTREX (WIPP-focused small scale rodeo style format of training for emergency responders) will alleviate the training burden until additional personnel are hired and also will meet the needs of states unable to commit time and resources to hosting a full-scale WIPPTREX.

The next speaker to talk to the group was Mr. Mike Valenzano, Director of Transportation Projects for NAC International. He began by discussing NAC's historical origins and current mission. Mr. Valenzano displayed slides with photographs of NAC's decommissioning experience, dry cask technologies, and transportation activities involving spent nuclear fuel shipments. He spoke directly to NAC's support of NNSA's Material Management and Minimization program whose mission is to repatriate weapons-usable nuclear material from around the world. Mr. Valenzano provided the dimensions and specifications for the usage of their Optimus brand of spent fuel transportation casks which are certified in the U.S. as well as Canada. Furthermore, he talked about the MAGNATRAN cask which has the capability to transport high burnup fuel and the Volunteer Packaging which boasts high-capacity packaging for road transport. He informed the Committees of NAC's expansion of services by acquiring and incorporating into their structure health physics, radiological services and manufacturing businesses. He provided a brief update of NAC's involvement with the proposed interim storage facility in Texas known as Interim Storage Partners and the legal challenges associated with the project. In closing, he noted a collaboration with Deep Isolation for borehole disposal and participation in several shipments from reactor sites to national laboratories.

The next presenter to confer with the group was Ms. Shannon Morgan, the Program Manager of Domestic Transportation for the Oak Ridge National Laboratory (ORNL). She talked about the Transportation Security Unified Stakeholders Group (TSUSG). Ms. Morgan noted about 2,000 shipments of radioisotopes (Category 1 & 2)—are shipped by land, air, and sea all over the United States during an average year. The TSUSG focuses on the mutual collaboration between government and industry. Currently, it has 184 voluntary members from across government, law enforcement, private industry, and professional associations. Members examine potential transport security issues from all aspects of shipping radioactive material. The goal is to make North America safer by not only delivering needed supplies to medical facilities and research labs, but also in preventing this material from falling into the wrong hands. More specifically, TSUSG identifies topics of interest and forms committees to addresses those priorities which ultimately results in a deliverable

(best practices, training, report template, etc.). The next TSUSG Annual Meeting will take place on September 9-11, 2025, in Denver, Colorado.

“The Community Environmental Monitoring Program: Including the Public in Offsite Monitoring” topic was delivered by Ms. Beverly Parker (CEMP Manager) for the Desert Research Institute. Ms. Parker began with a brief history of nuclear testing conducted by the United States. She detailed how the origin of the program in Nevada was to address public perception and provide additional credibility and trust by allowing citizens, or essentially your neighbors to conduct air sampling and groundwater monitoring for radiation in communities near testing facilities. Members of the communities were trained in the use of instrumentation to collect data from 28 different monitoring stations. The results of the data are available for public consumption. Lastly, she expressed how the program has fostered increased communication and how a myriad of outreach activities continues to strengthen overall awareness.

Mr. Travis Myers and Mr. Mike Grenfell representing the Idaho Environmental Coalition (IEC) gave a presentation entitled “Processing Transuranic Waste for the Idaho Cleanup Project (ICP)”. They presented a broad roadmap of activities being undertaken at the Idaho National Laboratory, one of which was the completion of legacy TRU waste shipments to WIPP. They discussed one of the 2014 accidents at WIPP involving a release due to incompatible materials in the mine. To address this issue, the IEC developed an ultrasonic technology (UT) to verify the integrity of the drums destined for WIPP. Utilizing robotics and specialized software, UT is able to perform non-destructive testing and evaluation of drums. As of April 2025, 693 drums have been processed through UT. They also discussed other processing capabilities at IEC such as the super compactor used for size reduction. In conclusion, they outlined the transportation plan between ICP and other sites for the protocols used when making shipments.

The next individual to speak to the gathering was Ms. Franchone Oshinowo of Edlow International. Ms. Oshinowo discussed Edlow’s storied history of orchestrating domestic and international spent fuel shipments. She noted the safety statistics of such campaigns and stated a transportation cask manufactured in 1959 is still utilized today. She talked about the global landscape for the use and production of HALEU fuel. She also noted how tariffs have impacted shipping costs. Finally, Ms. Oshinowo shared additional experiences such as having to arrange the air transport of spent fuel in South America in order to arrive at port without traversing territory heavily controlled by the drug cartels.

The final topic for the SSEB Radioactive Materials Transportation Committees Meeting was the Transportation Emergency Preparedness Program (TEPP) Update given by Celeste Cusack of TRG Incorporated. She informed the Committees she would provide an overview of the TEPP mission, FY25 training taken place to date, FY25 activities scheduled for the near future, training program revisions, improvement projects and available website resources. She displayed a slide specifically with the projected training and exercise activities in

the southern region which had been conducted for FY25. She also showed the remaining activities scheduled for the fiscal year pending available funding. Ms. Cusack transitioned to the TEPP Improvement Projects and noted their collaboration with other agencies. One major activity was the creation of the “Law Enforcement Officer Decontamination Dressdown Training Video” which made its debut during the TEPP Ad Hoc Working Group the previous day. Finally, she spoke of TEPP’s involvement with a May 2025 ROADTREX in Thomson, Georgia before she concluded with the description of the TEPP website resources.

The remaining portion of the meeting consisted of a round table discussion to highlight the activities of all states in attendance. After all states had provided an update, Mr. Wells reported on the status of activities at SSEB.

The final order of business at the meeting was the announcement of the location and date of the next meeting of the Radioactive Materials Transportation Committee and the Transuranic Waste Transportation Working Group. Since the group continues to meet in conjunction with the NTSF for their Spring meeting, it was reported they would convene for the winter gathering in the December timeframe. Potential locations included Jacksonville (FL) or New Orleans (LA).

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