

WM2012 Conference Panel Report

PANEL SESSION 1: WM2012 Plenary Session

Co-Chairs: Fred Sheil, *Sheil Consulting Ltd.*
James Gallagher, *Gallagher Consulting*

Panel Reporter: James Fiore, *Fiore Consulting*

Panelists:

1. Takao Fujie, *President and Chief Executive Officer of the Japan Nuclear Technology Institute*
2. George E. Dials, *President of B&W Conversion Services, LLC*
3. David Huizenga, *US DOE Senior Advisor for Environmental Management*

The following summary includes excerpts from the Conference's daily newsletter, *Insight*:

Takao Fujie detailed the earthquake and tsunami that struck the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station in March 2011. He provided excellent pictures that showed the full extent of the devastation. He eloquently described the impact to both facilities and how it affected the people. He also provided a timeline which enabled the audience to see exactly how the situation unfolded. There were several riveting pictures that showed the extensive damage caused by hydrogen explosions. Fujie described the damage incurred to the power stations and the recovery challenges that remain. He cited the dedication of the workforce, whose heroic efforts kept the situation from worsening. He then outlined the "Roadmap to Stabilization" with the actions being taken, including the reactor building cover, debris removal and the water shielding wall, as well as mid- and long-term plans. "We will leverage lessons learned from Fukushima to improve safety of nuclear power facilities and regain trust," Fujie said. He gave recognition to the support being provided from the nuclear community. "I expect such cooperation will achieve decontamination of the damaged reactors," he said.

George E. Dials urged the audience, amidst a busy conference schedule, "Let's not ignore the elephant in the room," alluding to "where are we going to put all this stuff?" He noted that delays in developing disposal capability could be delaying the Nuclear Renaissance. He stated that more study is not an effective solution. Dials asked the audience if it were time to consider WIPP II, another disposal facility in the salt formation near the current WIPP site or in one of the many other salt formations across the nation. He then proposed four next steps:

- Create and fund the nuclear waste organization
- Establish regional MRS facilities in volunteer states and communities
- Streamline the licensing and regulatory framework
- Evaluate and select repository sites.

Dials then highlighted sessions this week that will address the challenge of finding a disposal solution for the nation's hazardous waste.

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David Huizenga discussed the mission of the Environmental Management organization. He then spoke to a theme of partnership and collaboration, showcasing EM progress to date and the challenges that await as cleanup continues across the DOE complex. He detailed the EM program priorities and fiscal year 2013 budget. He then spoke about the 4 major goals of EM:

- Improve safety and quality performance
- Reduce the life cycle cost and risks of the nuclear legacy cleanup
- Improvement of project, budget and contract management
- Execute the EM Mission in a sustainable way.

He highlighted that current near-term planning estimates far exceed anticipated available funding. He emphasized that the EM Program is a National Responsibility. Huizenga noted that time is not on our side because costs and risk increase over time. He stressed that we have a responsibility to relieve future generations of this environmental and financial liability. He concluded by highlighting that significant progress has been made in the past several years.

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