

## **July 19, 2005 SHUG Executive Committee Conference Call:**

Members Present (7):

Paul Butler  
Joanna Krueger  
Mark Lumsden  
Steve Shapiro  
Mike Snow  
Lynn Walker  
Angus Wilkinson

In addition, the following staff members at ORNL were present:

Kelly Beierschmitt  
Steve Nagler  
Jim Roberto  
Greg Smith

The purpose of this conference call is to explain in detail the recent personnel and schedule changes at HFIR.

### **1. Personnel Changes at HFIR**

Jim Roberto:

David Price has returned to Europe after 14 months as Executive Director of HFIR. The reason behind this decision was the personal issue involving his wife who is still employed in Europe. ORNL made her a job offer but she decided to stay in France. Jim stated his thanks to David for doing such a good job during his tenure.

An international search, led by Thom Mason, is being organized to search for a replacement.

In the interim, Kelly Beierschmitt will serve as Executive Director of HFIR. Kelly has significant experience in nuclear operations and project management. His understanding of the DOE regulatory environment and his project management experience should be very helpful in ensuring the cold source project proceeds as scheduled.

Steve Shapiro: When can a replacement for David Price be expected?

Jim Roberto: The position description is written and will go to Science and Nature in approximately the next week. It is expected that the search could easily take 1 year.

Mike Snow: The 1 year estimate may be optimistic – it could easily take longer.

Angus Wilkinson: Are you going to approach people directly as well as advertising?

Jim Roberto: Yes, in fact, this is how we got David Price initially.

Jim Roberto:

The new Executive Director of HFIR will play a large role in shaping the integration of SNS and HFIR and this must be considered during the search.

David Price had two roles during his tenure at ORNL, Executive Director of HFIR and Director of the Center for Neutron Scattering (CNS). Steve Nagler will be the interim Director of CNS.

Steve Nagler will receive management support from Herb Mook on coordinating the science mission of CNS and from Greg Smith on coordinating SNS integration and the user program.

As explained above, David Price's position has been replaced by two people, something that was recommended by the CNS Advisory Committee. It is very unlikely that the new Executive Director will serve both roles.

Paul Butler: As there are a limited number of people in the world who are qualified to fill the role of Executive Director of HFIR, how confident is ORNL management that the right person can be found?

Jim Roberto: It was challenging to find David Price initially and it will be equally challenging to find his replacement. As the merger of SNS and HFIR comes closer, the job may be more attractive to people which could improve the chances of finding the right person.

Angus Wilkinson comments that moving closer to completion on the cold source should also make the position more attractive.

Jim Roberto: The envisioned organizational arrangement for SNS/HFIR consists of a Neutron Science Directorate with Thom Mason at the head. He would then have two deputies, one of which would be the Executive Director of HFIR and the second would be the equivalent position at SNS

## 2. Budget Situation:

Angus Wilkinson: How confident are you that HFIR will not be shut down due to budget constraints?

Jim Roberto: No facility is likely to be shut down in FY 06. FY 06 will be a difficult year for BES facilities. One reason for this is that in FY 05, \$200m were added to the Office of Science budget. However, the baseline used for FY 06 does not include this

\$200m increase. Fortunately, both the House and Senate have added \$200m to the FY 06 budget of which approximately \$100m is earmarked for facilities.

FY 07 is more of a concern as it could be worse than FY 06 and there is some possibility of closed facilities during this period. However, there are certain indications that suggest that FY 07 budget may not be as bad as initially expected. However, if there is no action by Congress, FY 07 could be a very tough year. Congress injecting more money into the FY 06 budget is a good sign for FY 07.

Paul Butler: What should be the role of user groups in budget matters and do they have any influence?

Jim Roberto: The appropriate role is to support the Office of Science and the facilities that they manage. It is better for the whole community to express support for facilities as a whole and not for specific facilities.

The additional \$200m added to the FY 05 budget was clearly helped by the user group support and these efforts must continue in the future.

### 3. Cold Source:

Jim Roberto: There are a number of challenges to completing the cold source project. There have been a number of procurements where the vendor has failed to accomplish the work. Much of this work has either been contracted out again or pulled in house which puts significant strain on available resources.

These procurement issues have caused much of the work to be compressed into a short period of time to the extent where we don't have the resources to get everything done on schedule. As a result of this, there has been a change in the HFIR operating schedule. The current cycle will be the last until December. This is done to focus the organization on the cold source project. The HFIR will then resume operation and run more cycles in the spring (when HFIR was originally scheduled to be down). This maintains the number of cycles but rearranges the order.

The current plan for the cold source project is to have work completed by the end of the calendar year and have all documentation in place for the safety approval by March. The HB4 beam tube will not be installed by the end of the year as this can't take place until the safety approval is completed. A readiness review is needed for the cold source. We are trying to limit the scope of this review. The plan is to put together the committee for the readiness review well in advance and provide them with information in advance as well.

Kelly Beierschmitt: Once the HB4 beam tube is installed, the reactor cannot operate until the safety review is completed and all DOE approvals are in place. The plan is to assemble everything outside the reactor and begin the regulatory process in simulation. This allows us to run the reactor while the regulatory process is taking place. The current

plan is to install the HB4 beam tube in the reactor in the March, April, May timeframe. This strategy reduces the risk of having the reactor shut down for an extended period of time.

Steve Shapiro: As the HFIR is running much better lately, why shut it down at this time?

Jim Roberto: The main reason for this is to free up personnel to work on the cold source.

To be able to start the reactor with liquid Hydrogen, or simply with the HB4 beam tube in place, we need DOE approval. We will only install the beam tube when we have confidence that we will get this approval.

Paul Butler: If the final approval comes in after the beam tube is installed, what are the chances of a DOE delay preventing the reactor from running?

Jim Roberto: If during the ascent to power, something occurs that is not in compliance with the safety basis established during the DOE review process, the HFIR will need to shut down.

Steve Shapiro: Can you run the reactor with the HB4 beam tube installed and the cold source not running?

Jim Roberto: The cold source is required to cool the beam tube. There is some contingency in place to run the cold source with liquid Nitrogen instead of liquid Hydrogen but this mode of operation would require it's own review.

Steve Shapiro: Maybe the new HFIR schedule should be sent to NSSA.

Jim Roberto: There will be a two page layout in the Neutron Pulse newsletter which will address the personnel and schedule changes to HFIR.

Paul Butler: HFIR should be commended for the improved operations recently. We could send out something positive to the user group.

Angus Wilkinson: We could also include something about the BES budget.

Paul Butler: **[Action Item]** Motion to make this a topic for our next meeting.