



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

REGION II
26 FEDERAL PLAZA
NEW YORK, NEW YORK 10278

March 27, 1992

Dear Members of the Scientific and Technical Committee for the
Reassessment of the Hudson River PCBs Site:

As we approach the next phase of the Hudson River PCB site Reassessment Remedial Investigation/Feasibility Study, I want to assure that the Scientific and Technical Committee (STC) has the opportunity to conduct its deliberations as effectively as possible. To this end EPA has already made some modifications and clarifications to the manner in which the STC functions.

As you will recall, our first step in this effort was to issue a statement on the role of the committee in August, 1991. We believe this was helpful in more explicitly stating EPA's expectations and the roles of the committee members.

The purpose of this letter to you is to describe an additional step in invigorating the STC function.

EPA has selected Dr. William Nicholson of the Mount Sinai Medical Center to facilitate the committee's meetings. Dr. Nicholson has a doctorate in physics, with a minor in physiology, and specializes in risk assessments and epidemiology. EPA believes that Dr. Nicholson will bring a knowledge of scientific principles and a recognition of the importance of exchange of scientific and technological perspectives to the advisory role of the STC. In addition, Dr. Nicholson has had experience in facilitating groups of scientific and technical experts working on specific projects.


Future STC meetings will be conducted in a similar manner as those in the past; however, Dr. Nicholson will now facilitate the meetings. We believe that with Dr. Nicholson as a facilitator the need for a member to serve as chair will be obviated and you as committee members will have a greater opportunity to address the important, substantive issues which brought you to participate. STC recommendations will now be presented by the STC facilitator, in writing, to the chair of the Hudson River PCB Oversight Committee, based on the discussions and written comments of the STC members. These recommendations will include dissenting and/or minority positions. We encourage you to discuss with Dr. Nicholson at the next STC meeting your views on how the committee's deliberations may best be summarized and represented at the Hudson River Oversight Committee meetings.

EPA believes that these actions will enhance the ability of the STC members to contribute to the Reassessment process and eliminate controversy or concern over leadership. It should be restated, though, that the STC is not an independent peer review board, and that EPA remains the final decision maker in this reassessment process.

EPA would like to take this opportunity to thank Dr. Dan Abramowicz for having served as the chair of this committee, duly elected by the committee membership. We look forward to his continuing contribution to the committee's work.

EPA appreciates your continued participation on the STC. If you have any questions or comments, please contact Ann Rychlenski of the External Programs Division at (212) 264-7214. We will contact you shortly to arrange for the next meeting of the committee.

Sincerely yours,



Kathleen C. Callahan, Director
Emergency and Remedial Response Division

cc: Hudson River PCB Oversight Committee Members
Liaison Group Members