

Munitions and Explosives of Concern Hazard Assessment Meeting Notes for May 29, 30, and June 1, 2007. Crystal City, Virginia.

The following notes reflect the discussions held by the members of the technical work group (TWG) for resolution of comments on the Public Comment draft of the MEC HA Guidance document. Those discussions were held on May 29 and 30, 2007, and were followed by a face to face meeting with Mr. J.C. King to discuss specific Department of the Army comments, responses, and path forward ideas.

Attendees included the following TWG members.

Doug Maddox, EPA
Doug Murray, Navy
Kevin Oates, EPA
Bill Veith, USACE
Laura Wrench, VERSAR
Dick Wright, Noblis

The TWG undertook a line by line review of the comments submitted by DoD on the public comment draft guidance document. Comments from other organizations and individuals were also discussed. Prior to the 2-day meeting, draft responses were developed by members of the TWG. The emphasis for the May 29th & 30th meeting was to discuss public comments, revise draft responses or develop new draft responses, identify key issues for the full TWG discussion, make edits as appropriate to the text of the draft guidance, prepare for discussions with Mr. J.C. King on June 1st, and establish a schedule for next steps.

Distribution of revised draft responses and edits to the draft MEC HA guidance text to the full TWG is scheduled for the week of June 11th. A meeting of the full TWG is planned for the week of July 16th in Washington, DC. The goal of that meeting will be to come to group consensus on the final response to comments and associated revisions to the MEC HA guidance document. In addition, a schedule for final editing and distribution for concurrence by the sponsoring organizations will be developed. The final responses to comments will be posted on the MEC HA TWG website once consensus by the TWG is reached.

Key issues discussed on May 29th and 30th include the following.

1. DoD perception that the MEC HA technical framework is “biased” against the use of land use controls.
2. The Prioritization Protocol can serve the same function as the MEC HA.

3. The use of specific CERCLA terminology (i.e. removal actions, remedial actions, cleanup, etc.) when referring to specific phases in the CERCLA process versus using the generic terms of CERCLA response or Munitions response.

4. The use of the term MEC determined to be present in place of known or suspected to be present.

5. Clarifying text to ensure that it is clear that the MEC HA is designed for application at munitions response sites (MRS) which by definition do not include operational ranges.

6. Evaluation of scoring examples provided by commentors.

Key issues discussed with Mr. J.C. King, as well as the resolution of those issues is described below.

1. Chemical Munitions. The MEC HA should acknowledge that chemical warfare materiel (CWM) can exist at mixed sites with both high explosive rounds and CWM rounds. The TWG agreed. It was also agreed that the MEC HA will incorporate language for CWM that is similar to the language in the MEC HA Guidance for munitions constituents. That is, the text will acknowledge there are existing methods for calculating downwind impacts for the release of CWM. Also, that the presence of CWM may pose a greater danger than high explosives. This will need to be addressed on site-specific basis. Lastly it was agreed that incorporating CWM into the scoring table was not necessary.

2. Input Factors. It was agreed that the description of the Input Factors in Chapter Four will include a one or two sentence discussion on how the MEC HA Input Factors relate to specific Munitions Response Site Prioritization Protocol inputs. This will be done to show more clearly the linkage between the two, as well as the difference. This is intended to reduce any potential confusion when a project team is using both tools at a site.

3. The use of the term “known or suspected” versus “determined” when referring to the presence of MEC. It was agreed that at the point in the response process where the MEC HA has been designed to be applied, there should be information confirming the presence of MEC. The TWG cited examples where at the conclusion of an EE/CA, the presence of MEC HA was not confirmed, and a removal action for MEC was undertaken. It was agreed that the text should indicate that the MEC HA is applied on what is known about site conditions. It will also acknowledge that there will be times when assumptions may need to be made and documented. The Automated Workbook in Appendix A already contains data fields to document the source(s) of information, as well as any assumptions that were made when applying an Input Factor.

4. Use of Terminology. Some DoD commentors asked that terms like cleanup be replaced with terms like munitions response. It was agreed that the correct CERCLA

terminology will be used throughout the MEC HA. The TWG will also consider adding a text box that describes the range of activities that fall under the umbrella of CERCLA Response Actions, and the umbrella of Munitions Response. They are very similar. The MEC HA uses specific terms when describing specific steps in the overall response process. It was agreed that using the specific terms is appropriate.

5. The MEC HA includes a bias against Land Use Controls. Mr. King indicated he does not believe this to be the case. The TWG agrees.

6. The MRSPP can be used to undertake the same analyses as the MEC HA. It was discussed that the two tools were developed for different purposes. The tools do look at a number of similar aspects – and this was a conscious effort on the part of the TWG – but the MEC HA allows for analysis on the effects of MEC cleanup, land use controls, or combinations of both to help with site-specific evaluations and decision making. No acknowledgement in the text for use of the MRSPP to serve the same function as the MEC HA is required.