

## Meeting Summary

### Restoration Advisory Board (RAB) for the Environmental Restoration and Munitions Response Program

Vieques Island, Puerto Rico

Meeting #18 – October 9, 2008

Lighthouse, Isabel Segunda

#### *Note:*

- This meeting summary is based on informal notes taken at the meeting. They are not intended as a verbatim transcript. All issues discussed may not have been captured. Comments and additional notes can be provided within 30 days of distribution of these minutes and will be added as an attachment.
- See list of acronyms in English and Spanish attached to these minutes (Attachment 1)

#### **Call to Order and Welcoming Remarks**

The meeting began at 6:20 pm.

#### **1. Vieques RAB – where are we and path forward**

Jorge Fernández Porto (RAB Member) addressed the Public, Navy, Contractors, EQB, EPA, and FWS. Mr. Fernández addressed a situation that occurred at two previous RAB meetings (disrespectful behavior to technicians working on the project). Jorge discussed the purpose of the RAB and how it is not to be used as a forum to voice political views and is a place to discuss with the Navy how to make things better in Vieques. Jorge stated the RAB is the only forum where the public can be heard.

Jorge discussed how the RAB should be used as a tool to advance the cleanup process in Vieques by enabling the Navy to hear the concerns of the people. Jorge believes that the RAB has achieved important objectives (expand areas of investigation, developed a relationship with the Navy over time). Jorge hopes that the RAB will continue to work with the Navy on the cleanup process, even with the little power it has, because the RAB is the only opportunity to express concerns. Respect and trust are needed, and when disrespect and mistrust exists, then the RAB shouldn't exist.

Jorge apologized on behalf of the RAB and community for the behavior and disrespect at previous RAB meetings. He urged the community to exercise caution when rendering opinions that are not well thought out. Jorge also asked the Navy to understand the complex situation because the Navy is perceived as having all the power.

- Dan Hood/NAVFAC – the RAB will not be disbanded, and the Navy is committed to treating the community and RAB with respect. The Navy is committed to the clean up of Vieques to the best of our ability.

#### **2. EQB – Update, Burn Plan Site Visit and Public Hearing**

Wilmarie Rivera/EQB – Wilmarie summarized the site visit, public meeting and path forward for the proposed Burn Plan.

Burn Plan Public Hearing – EQB extended the comment period until October 10, 2008. After that the chief examiner has thirty or 45 days to provide his technical response to the board. Then the board will make a final decision. If the questions received by the Board do not relate to the documents, then it will be stated in the response. The Burn Plan is not final until EPA approves it.

- Stacie Notine (RAB Member) – The people are not involved anymore with regards to the Burn Plan. EQB and EPA get to decide the outcome. Wilmarie responded that the comment period was extended and the public could still comment (public involvement). Ms. Rivera recapped the review process and schedule.
- Stacie Notine (RAB Member) – the Navy knows about increased cancer rates and she requested an inventory of what munitions are in the Proposed Burn Plan area. Wilmarie Rivera/EQB – all procedures have been followed and will continue to be followed until the process is complete and a decision has been made.

### **3. EPA Update – TASC and TAG**

Daniel Rodriguez/EPA – As a follow on to the Proposed Burn Plan discussion, Danny explained that EPA/EQB/Navy worked together to develop the Proposed Burn Plan and Air Modeling and further explained the review process.

Danny presented information on the Technical Assistance Services for Communities (TASC) and Technical Assistance Grant (TAG) processes to comply with a request from the last RAB meeting. He explained that there are different options to get funding for document review.

- Jorge Fernandez Porto (RAB Member) asked if one of these programs could be used to request translation of a technical document. Danny Rodriguez/EPA responded explaining that the community member would need to submit a request that states the affected stakeholders live near an NPL site and request help translating a document so this community can evaluate it.

### **4. FWS Update – Road Work**

Matt Connolly/FWS – Roads to La Chiva, Playa Grande, and the lighthouse are complete. The second phase of road work is ready to begin (road to Playa Caracas). FWS is working with the Navy to identify plants and sensitive areas where the site investigation is being conducted.

Seventy new bird species, 3 lizard species, 2 snake species, 2 frog species, and 2 nectar bat species never been registered on your island, Vieques; these species have not been found before. We have much to learn on Vieques. On October 17, 2008, the FWS will conduct a “Bat Activity” where community members will be taken into the field to see bats.

Lirio Marquez D’Acunti (RAB member) – Is a bridge in the works across the canal to Playa Grande Bridge? And a ramp after La Plata? Matt Connolly/FWS explained that funds don’t exist for all of the work.

- Jorge Fernandez Porto (RAB Member) – Inquired about recent storms and tides noting that a potential munitions artifact was found at the BioBay. With heavy winds and tides, the artifacts are going to show up in public places and people don’t know who to call to report possible UXO. Jorge suggested developing a hotline for people to contact the police instead of people “passing the buck”.

- Madeline Rivera/NAVFAC – The artifacts showing up in public areas is an on-going issue of concern. This incident is not the first time, in the case of Vieques; the Navy does not have EOD support on-site. The subcontractors are only covered under the contract and cannot be dispatched to civilian areas (safety, contractual issues). Wilmarie Rivera/EOB indicates that Florida, MayPort Navy EOD telephone numbers is the resource to call. The Navy is working with the PR Police Department to advise them on how to proceed and contact if an item is found in FWS federal lands. . Wilmarie recommended that people call the Vieques Police. The Police then call the Explosives Division in Humaco; the process is not fast.
- Lirio Marquez D'Acunti (RAB member) – Recommends developing and publicizing a protocol that outlines the process community members should follow when possible UXO is found in public areas.
- Danny Rodriguez/EPA – This is not a new issue, and he feels grateful that the Navy is addressing it. The items found have been inert, The contractors on the island are here to clean the area specified in the contract and cannot also address these issues (they can only be responsible for federal areas)
- Madeline Rivera/NAVFAC – A protocol exists with the local PR police, and they know the procedures if the job is beyond what they can do.
- Wilmarie Rivera/EOB – In Culebra if something appears there is no one to respond, so we developed a protocol in case something was found. Two trainings were given for responders and the public.
- Jorge Fernandez Porto (RAB Member) – States the initial step is important so people know what to do because these incidents happen following a storm. Jorge stated concerns about a quick response. If the response is not quick, then there is potential for the item to be washed away and reappear in another area.
- Resident – Asked if the National Guard is a resource when an item is found. Dan Hood/NAVFAC – contacting the National Guard is a good idea, thank you for bringing it up. There are logistical issues with the National Guard and he will see if NAVFAC can look into that. Until something is figured out, the protocol is to contact the local police. Madeline Rivera/NAVFAC- The National Guard is a State run agency; we need to address this properly through the agency representing the state, EOB. Dan Hood/NAVFAC assured the RAB that this issue will be looked into further, but the process is slow.

## **5. Environmental Restoration Program Update (ERP Update)**

John Tomik/CH2M HILL– Presented the status of the Environmental sites on the East and West sides.

- **AOC E**
  - Final Remedial Investigation Report issued in July 2008
  - Feasibility Study sampling conducted in July 2008
    - Additional round of groundwater and free product thickness data
    - Additional soil data below bottom of former UST/piping

- Following data validation, data will be evaluated to determine whether a pilot study is warranted or whether to proceed with preparation of the Feasibility Study Report
- **AOC I**
  - Final Remedial Investigation Report issued in June 2008
  - Feasibility Study sampling conducted in July 2008
    - Additional round of groundwater data
  - Following data validation, data will be evaluated to determine whether a an additional round of sampling is warranted or whether to proceed with preparation of the Feasibility Study Report (FS)
- **AOC H**
  - Public Comment Period on Proposed Plan: January 28 – March 12, 2008
  - Public Meeting: February 7, 2008
  - No Action Record of Decision (ROD) signed by Navy, EPA, and PREQB in September 2008
- **SWMU 4**
  - Additional Remedial Investigation sample collection took place between April and August 2008
  - HHRA interim deliverable submitted for regulatory agency review in October 2008
  - Anticipate submitting Draft Remedial Investigation Report to regulatory agencies in the first calendar quarter of 2009

Tentative ERP Documents for RAB Review

- 1st Calendar Quarter (January – March) 2009
  - Draft Final SI/Expanded SI Work Plan for 7 Consent Order Sites and 15 PI/PAOC Sites (east Vieques)
  - Draft Final No Action Decision Document for 4 Consent Order Sites and 7 Photo Identified/Potential Area of Concern (PI/PAOC) Sites (east Vieques)
- 2nd Calendar Quarter (April – June) 2009
  - Draft Final Feasibility Study Report for Area of Concern (AOC) E (west Vieques)\*
  - Draft Final Feasibility Study Report for AOC I (west Vieques)\*\*
    - \* *pending determination of whether pilot study is warranted*
    - \*\* *pending determination of whether additional round of groundwater sampling is warranted*
- 3rd Calendar Quarter (July – September) 2009
  - Draft Final Remedial Investigation Report for Solid Waste Management Unit (SWMU) 4 (west Vieques)

Tentative 2009 Field Work Schedule

- 1st and 2nd Calendar Quarters 2009
  - Site Inspection (SI)/Expanded SI for 22 east Vieques Sites (7 Consent Order Sites and 15 PI/PAOC Sites)
  - Removal action for 4 west Vieques Sites (AOC J, R, SWMU 6, and 7)
- 3rd Calendar Quarter 2009
  - Confirmatory sampling for 4 west Vieques Sites (AOC J, AOC R, SWMU 6, and SWMU 7)
  - Supplemental RI sampling for west Vieques AOC R
- **Lirio Marquez D'Acunti (RAB member) – requested a detailed list of the ERP sites with their status as to which sites are proposed for no further action and which sites are proposed for additional investigations. Dan Hood/NAVAC indicated a list of the status of each of the sites will be provided with the meeting minutes ( attachment 2)**

## **6. Munitions Response Program Update**

### Munitions Response Program Overall Objectives:

Conduct Munitions Response Program (MRP) investigations;  
 Characterize Munitions Response Sites (MRS);  
 Conduct Munitions Response Actions at sites that pose unacceptable risks to human health;  
 Final response action objectives will be based on final land use plan

### Contractor update:

- CH2M HILL – Title II Services
- USA Environmental– Removal Action Contractor (Small Business)
  - largest employer with 82 personnel, 62 local residents
- PIKA International– CPC Contractor (8A)
- Approximately 100 Personnel working on site daily
- Approximately 73 personnel or 73 percent of the workforce are local residents

### Time Critical Removal Action – Data through September 26, 2008

- 821 acres surface cleared in the Live Impact Area and Eastern Conservation Area
- Items located requiring detonation or explosive venting:  
 Live Bombs – 487; Inert Bombs – 4840; Live Projos /Mortars – 5102; Inert Projos /Mortars – 4063; Live Rockets – 371; Inert Rockets – 248; Flares–Pyrotechnics – 387;  
 Live ICMs – 8244

Material Processed and Shipped as of September 26, 2008

<u>Operation</u>	<u>LBS</u>	<u>TONS</u>
<u>MD INSPECTION &amp; RECOVERY</u>	<u>4,802,000</u>	<u>2401</u>
<u>RRD INSPECTION &amp; RECOVERY</u>	<u>5,722,000</u>	<u>2861</u>
<u>TOTAL MATERIAL RECOVERED</u>	<u>10,524,000</u>	<u>5262</u>
<u>CHRUSHING (HAMMER MILL)</u>	<u>256,000</u>	<u>128</u>
<u>SHEARING (EXCAVATOR)</u>	<u>950,000</u>	<u>475</u>
<u>PETROGEN TORCH (CUTTING)</u>	<u>52,000</u>	<u>26</u>
<u>THERMAL PROCESSING</u>	<u>1,600,000</u>	<u>800</u>
<u>TOTAL MATERIAL SHIPPED OFF ISLAND</u>	<u>3,514,000</u>	<u>1757</u>
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Recovery and Processing of Munitions Debris (MD) and Range Related Debris (RRD) Update

- Most processing operations suspended. Off island shipping were suspended. We are focusing on recovery and segregating into the appropriate stream/processing operation
- Processing will continue when sufficient material for that particular operation is collected; and off island shipment will continue when sufficient material has been processed and certified
- Shipment of Range Related Debris (RRD) is expected to resume in mid-October 2008

## Expanded Range Assessment and Phase II Site Inspection

### Purpose and Objectives:

- Supplement previous information regarding the types and quantities of Munitions and Explosives of Concern (MEC) believed to be present at the Munitions Response Sites (MRSs) investigated
- Characterize sites to confirm MRSs
- Identify types and locations of target areas
- Identify potential MRSs where no future Munitions Removal Actions are necessary, additional site information/investigation will be required before recommending no further action)
- Identify MRSs that will require further investigation in order to arrive at a response action decision
- Identify high risk MRSs that may require immediate action due to explosive safety issues

Approximately 350 acres within the EMA and SIA will be investigated

The Munitions Response Sites will be inspected using the transect approach with 5 to 10 percent of the MRS being inspected. Specific Areas of Interest and Concern will be 100 percent inspected

### MEC Related Items Identified During ERA II

(MOST ITEMS WERE PARTIAL NOT FULL UP LIVE ITEMS)

Category	SIA/Quantity	EMA/Quantity
Bombs	222	36
Flares and Pyrotechnics	142	12
Grenades	6	1
Projectiles	1054	51
Rockets	140	6
Miscellaneous Components	178	5

### Sub-Surface Pilot Program

- A program was conducted to assist us in determining the most appropriate approach for any future Sub-Surface Removal Actions. During this program, we hoped to determine:
  - What is the proper excavation equipment for the various soil conditions on-site?

- Are our field data collection units programmed to support the different type of data needed during a Sub-Surface Removal?
  - An expected production rate for excavations in the various geology on the site
  - Study the impact water intrusion may have on excavations on the beaches
  - Obtain a rough estimate of the depth most anomalies are resolved
- Jorge Fernandez Porto (RAB Member) wants to understand the different colors on the progress map. Tim Garretson/CH2M HILL –The colors represent different phases of the work process. When the grids are green, the area has been through the entire process of surface clearing the munitions.
  - Stacie Notine (RAB Member) – Talking about the ICM/Submunitions/Cluster bombs. How could the technicians clear so many submunitions in other areas of the land, but now the Navy is saying that they should commence burning to get the rest cleared? Tim Garretson/CH2M HILL – Procedures are set for clearing submunition areas. Previously, the technicians were able to clear an area with their magnetometer so the team can remove the vegetation because there were not very many sub munitions. However, now in the specific submunition areas that are on the map, the vegetation is too dense and the magnetometer is constantly ringing because of a lot of metal. It is not safe for the technicians to work blindly. Some of the burn plan areas have been made smaller because the technicians have continued to work in some areas and can safely avoid the submunitions (move around it). It is unsafe in the specified area, because of how twisted and dense the vegetation is. John Tomik/CH2M HILL – Adds that the proposed burn area has been reduced already for the proposed burn plan because the technicians were able to work safely in some areas.
  - Stacie Notine (RAB Member) – Is erosion taken into consideration after the areas are considered 'clean'? –Tim Garretson/ CH2M HILL-TCRA– means time critical removal action, it is an interim action. The final action will determine how erosion will be addressed.
  - Dan Hood/NAVFAC brought in independent contractors to review the erosion issue. The TCRA is not the final response to the cleanup; erosion studies are on-going for areas that were surface cleared over a year ago. We need to know how the erosion is affecting the site.
  - Stacie Notine (RAB Member) – Question 1– Asks about the QC process during the removal of the scrap metal. Tim Garretson/CH2M HILL – Two independent companies (example CH2M HILL QC and PIKA QC) provide two separate inspections of the scrap metal. Question 2 – What ships are used/who is the buyer? You keep the proceeds from the income. Tim Garretson/CH2M HILL – After scrap is certified to be shipped, it goes into a sealed container and is shipped off the island. Which company takes it depends on which recycling facility the contractor can get the best price. The proceed from the recycling is re-invested back into the project to process more scrap metal
  - Dan Hood/NAVFAC – once released to the scrap contractor, it goes in as scrap metal then probably all across the world.

- Jorge Fernandez Porto (RAB Member) – Steel, iron... where are these metals separated? Tim Garretson/CH2M HILL – Aluminum is separated from steel, copper exists in very minor quantities (not separated). A lot of aluminum exists, high grade aluminum.
- Dan Hood/NAVFAC – Range related debris (RRD) will begin shipping next week. NAVFAC has given permission to ship it off (what is left of cars, tanks). PIKA has an agreement with Port Authority to ship one load a week. Mosquito Pier not up to code had to make smaller truck loads; we are allowed one ferry one time a week.
- Stacie Notine (RAB Member) – Aluma? Is that the company? Dan Hood/NAVFAC – Aluma has a cargo ferry, but they are not working now.
- Stacie Notine (RAB Member) – EBAM was mentioned in the first document, and it discusses BGI shipping? Tim Garretson/CH2M HILL /Dan Hood/NAVFAC/John Tomik/NAVFAC – We don't have a recollection of what document that one is.
- Dan Hood/NAVFAC – PIKA does the negotiating with the shipping company, we are using the same company that hauls groceries to the grocery store because they have more experience moving material through town.
- Lirio Marquez D'Acunti (RAB member) – Where is the subsurface pilot in LIA? Tim Garretson– Part in the EMA some in the LIA. We tried to get a broad overview, we have a good idea and identified things to think about before we start actual subsurface work.
- Dan Hood/NAVFAC – Purpose is to figure out what tools we will need (backhoe, track hoe, shovel), and how to deal with water intrusion. The Navy (contractors) is currently making progress, and has a lot to learn on how to dig in the rocky roads.