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C-NAVY-6-97-0189W

June 10, 1997

Project Number 5278

Mr. James X. Shafer
Remedial Project Manager
Northern Division, Naval Facilities Engineering Command
10 Industrial Highway, Mail Stop 82
Lester, Pennsylvania 19113

Reference: CLEAN Contract No. N62472-90-D-1298
Contract Task Order 218

Subject: RAB Meeting Summary

Dear Mr. Shafer:

Enclosed is a copy of the summary of the May 21, 1997 NETC RAB meeting.

If you have any questions about this matter, please contact me at 508-658-7899.

Very truly yours,

Betsy Horne

Betsy Horne
Community Relations Specialist

BH:ib

Enclosure

c: R. Boucher, NORTHDIV (w/o enc.)
B. Wheeler/D. Sanders, NETC (w/enc.)
L. Chu/G. Bullard, B&RE - Wilmington (w/enc.)
M. Turco, B&RE - Philadephia (w/enc.)
M. Price, B&RE - Philadelphia (w/o enc.)
File 5278 - 3.2 (w/o enc.) /5278 - 9.4 (w/enc.)

NETC RAB LEARNS ABOUT THE HUMAN HEALTH RISK ASSESSMENT PROCESS AND HEARS ABOUT EPA'S TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE GRANT PROGRAM

On Wednesday, May 21, 1997, the NETC Newport Installation Restoration Program Restoration Advisory Board (RAB) heard presentations on two EPA programs: the Human Health Risk Assessment (HHRA) process and the Technical Assistance Grant program.

EPA's human health risk assessors assist EPA site project managers in developing an understanding of health risks and conveying that information to risk managers who make the final decision about what to do about a site. An HHRA is a baseline assessment, which assumes no action will be taken to address site contamination and determines what that means to people who may be exposed to it. An HHRA is comprised of four steps: collect data (identify the hazard); assess the toxicity (determine how bad a chemical is to human health and how much it takes to create a health hazard); assess the exposure (investigate both current and future exposure possibilities); and characterize the risk (establish a reasonable maximum exposure for each exposure medium - soil, groundwater, sediment - for each site-specific exposure pathway, for carcinogenic and noncarcinogenic risks).

For carcinogens, the value is expressed as excess cancer risk caused by exposure to site contamination beyond background risks from natural sources. The excess risk is expressed as a probability of 1 in 10,000. When the excess risk exceeds 1 in 10,000, EPA is required to take action. When the excess risk is below 1 in 10,000, EPA may take action. For noncarcinogens, the value is expressed as a ratio (hazard quotient). If the hazard quotient is greater than 1, EPA must evaluate the site further. If it is less than 1, no action is necessary.

The Technical Assistance Grant (TAG) program funds citizens groups near Superfund sites up to $50,000 over 3 years to hire expertise to interpret site information. The recipient group must produce a 20 percent funding match and adhere to rigorous recordkeeping requirements. The group must solicit neighborhood concerns through mechanisms such as cable TV, weekly newspaper columns, newsletters, fact sheets, and public meetings and bring those concerns to the technical advisor.

The Aquidneck Island Citizens Advisory Board was awarded a TAG in 1995. They hired Berger Associates as their technical advisor to provide another perspective when looking at a site. The advisor is not a watchdog but an interpreter. The Aquidneck Island CAB first became interested in applying for the grant because they hoped to influence the McAllister Point Landfill cap design to save a portion of the view and tie the land into a bicycle path. They felt they needed a technical expert to explore whether there was a better way of doing the job.

RAB members are stakeholders in the site itself. TAG groups represent the community at large.