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NCBC GULFPORT
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LETTER FROM U S AIR FORCE REGARDING STATUS UPDATE ON HERBICIDE ORANGE
ACTIONS NCBC GULFPORT MS
1/16/1986
U S AIR FORCE HEADQUARTERS



DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES AIR FORCE
WASHINGTON, D.C.
20332-5000

6 JAN 1986

Captain C. M. Maskell
Commanding Officer
Naval Construction Battalion Center
Gulfport, MS 39501

Dear Captain Maskell

I want to provide you a status report on the Air Force's actions regarding the Herbicide Orange (HO) areas at your installation. As you know, we have had several organizations involved in the program. This has been necessary due to the complexity and potential for emotionalism associated with dioxin contamination. My office has overall responsibility for coordinating these diverse efforts. I think that we have progressed to the point where we are on the verge of major decisions concerning future actions. I will share these plans with you. Let me state plainly that the Air Force is still committed to resolving the HO issues at NCBC. But we want to do it right the first time; we are convinced that a methodical and prudent approach will save time and money in the long run. Now to the status.

The status of the surplus equipment adjacent to the contaminated area is of concern. The Environmental Planning Directorate of the Air Force Engineering and Services Center (AFESC/DEV) is responsible for developing a plan to decontaminate the equipment. This plan must address environmental and occupational safety and health concerns. AFESC is working through the Department of Energy's Oak Ridge National Laboratories to expedite contracting for the decontamination project. There is some concern now that regional EPA officials may try to impose very stringent requirements on this project. My office will interface with HQ EPA as necessary, in an attempt to minimize any regulatory requirements which would impede our proposed cleanup effort. We believe that 1986 will see the completion of the equipment decontamination. This will resolve one of the major issues at the former HO storage site.

We are nearing final results, from two separate sampling efforts, on determining the extent and magnitude of dioxin contamination at the site. Results from the AFESC Envirionics Directorate's (AFESC/RDV) effort should be complete by January 86. The USAF Occupational and Environmental Health Laboratory's (OEHL) supplemental sampling project has already been completed. I believe OEHL has provided those results to you by separate letter. The sampling results should provide the data needed to determine if any additional fencing is required. A draft copy of the sampling report which consolidates both the AFESC/RDV and USAF OEHL efforts will be provided to your office once completed. The consolidated report will need to be provided to appropriate federal, state and

REPRODUCED AT GOVERNMENT EXPENSE

local officials. AFESC/DEV will work with you concerning any local community relation's effort you may desire concerning this report. AFESC/DEV will also work with your office to construct any additional fencing which may be required to assure the security of the site. The Air Force will of course fund any required actions.

The final disposition of the contaminated area depends upon both the results of the sampling efforts as well as the success of AFESC/RDV's remedial action technologies being tested on the site. Preliminary results of the field demonstration conducted on the site in June 1985 are promising. Independent verification data is now becoming available and supports earlier data. The draft technology demonstration report will be available approximately March 1986, along with a briefing on its contents by AFESC/RDV if you deem necessary.

Our office, in consultation with AFESC and USAF OEHL, has recently decided to conduct a "high volume" soil incinerator test at NCBC. We solicit your concurrence with this proposal. We are hopeful that such a test burn would decontaminate, to acceptable levels, contamination identified by the soil sampling studies which are now nearing completion. We must keep in mind that this large scale demonstration project may require environmental permits from the EPA prior to program execution. AFESC/RDV will be contacting you shortly to seek your concurrence on any administrative documents required to expedite the regulatory permitting process should it prove necessary. They will also seek your views on any recommended actions for proper community interface associated with this "soil burning" effort.

We appreciate the excellent cooperation and support you have provided for our efforts to resolve this complex dioxin issue. It is our intent to move out of the testing and sampling phase (Phase II in the Air Force Installation Restoration Program) into the clean-up phase (Phase IV in the IRP). We are confident that your continued involvement in this project, coupled with our collective sensitivity for the needs of the community and the environment, will result in a successful cleanup effort. If I can provide additional information or be of any assistance, please contact me.

Sincerely



DONALD A. KANE, Colonel, USAF, BSC
Chief, Environmental Division
Directorate of Engr & Svcs

cc: AFESC/DEV/RDV
AFRCE-ER/ROV
HQ USAF/SGPA
USAF OEHL

August 7, 1980

MEMORANDUM FOR AF/LEE

SUBJECT: Herbicide Orange Storage Site Reclamation

Dir: _____
 Assoc: _____
 Dep Constr: _____
 Exec: _____
 Exec: _____
 SFO: _____
 Sec'y: _____
 SUSP: _____
 ACT: AFESC
 INFO: _____

During the period November-December 1979, briefings indicating that erosion was moving contaminated soil from the Gulfport site to areas off-base were presented to SAF/MI and the Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Navy (MRA&L). The Assistant Secretary of the Air Force directed that immediate measures be taken to preclude further erosion and stressed the requirement for early development of a protocol for research to determine methods for returning the storage area to full and beneficial use. In addition to the Gulfport site, contaminated sites of Eglin AFB and Johnston Island were to be addressed. X

On June 30, 1980, following staff coordination, AF/SG forwarded the research protocol developed by Air Force Systems Command. The protocol envisions a four-year program with an estimated financial requirement of \$985,000. These funds are not presently programmed in the USAF R&D budget. The protocol outlines a broad-based program (six tasks) of research and recommends that the Environics Branch, Engineering and Services Laboratory, HQ AFESC, be designated the responsible lead laboratory for this effort. *

While the entire series of tasks outlined have not been fully evaluated by SAF/MI and SAF/MIO, the Air Force has made public commitments to determine the efficiency of interim control measures taken at Gulfport and to continue sampling at both the Gulfport and Johnston Island sites. It is therefore prudent, considering climatic/seasonal variations, that additional sampling be conducted expeditiously (appropriate samples identified in Tasks 3 and 4, attached protocol). R&D portion

I concur with the recommendation that AFESC be designated the lead laboratory and request they arrange for sample collection (and preservation for subsequent analysis) at both the Gulfport and Johnston Island sites before October 1, 1980. I am aware that AFESC has not had an opportunity to budget for this FY 80 effort. I am therefore, by copy of this letter,

work will be accomplished by the original source.

requesting that the USAF OEHL transfer \$6,000 of FY 80 funds identified for Herbicide Orange efforts to AFESC to cover FY 80 sample collection and preservation expenses. In like manner, funds currently in the USAF OEHL FY 81 budget for Herbicide Orange work in the amount of \$36,000 will also be transferred to AFESC as initial funding for analysis of previously collected and preserved samples and subsequent year sampling/analysis contracts.

*initial work
on 10/15/80
C. Stern
com 21*



Our evaluation of the remaining tasks outlined in the proposed protocol is continuing. I will keep you advised of our decisions regarding these site restoration efforts.

Carlos Stern

CARLOS STERN, Ph.D.
Deputy for
Environment & Safety

Attachment

- cc: SAF/MI/MID
- AF/SD
- AF/SGES
- AFCS/SGB
- AME/SG
- USAF OEHL/CC



DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES AIR FORCE
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20330

12 SEP 1980

MEMORANDUM FOR SAF/MIQ

SUBJECT: Herbicide Orange Site Reclamation (Your Memo,
7 Aug 80) - INFORMATION MEMORANDUM

I agree with your assessment that the Air Force must fulfill its commitment to returning Gulfport (NCBC) and other sites contaminated with Herbicide Orange to full and beneficial use. This also includes documenting the levels of contamination and insuring that the toxic components are not transported off site.

The Environics Division of the Engineering and Services Laboratory, HQ AFESC, is eminently qualified to handle the complex integration of environmental chemistry and control technology required to address this problem. It should be noted, however, that the Engineering and Services Laboratory is dedicated to a research mission and not routine field assistance tasks. The monitoring associated with Task 3, Site Residue Monitoring, and Task 4, Analysis of TCDD in Soil and Biologicals, requested in your Memo of 7 Aug, better fits in the Occupational and Environmental Health Laboratory (OEHL) unless it is undertaken as part of an overall research program in dioxin environmental chemistry and control. If after completing your evaluation of the protocol you wish to initiate research on the other Tasks, we will route your request through AF/RD and AFSC/DL for proper program direction and funding in FY 81 and beyond. The proposed Tasks exceed current programmed resources in our environmental quality research program.

In anticipation of a formal research need from your office, I have directed the Engineering and Services Laboratory to insure samples from Gulfport and Johnston Island are collected according to established protocols and to work with Eglin AFB and OEHL personnel in setting up a program at Eglin AFB. This will insure the Air Force fulfills its obligation to document the existing contamination and satisfy the public that it is contained and controlled.



WILLIAM D. GILBERT
Major General, USAF
Director of Engineering & Services

October 21, 1980

MEMORANDUM FOR AF/LEE

SUBJECT: Reclamation of Herbicide Orange Contaminated Sites

References:

- a. SAF/MIQ letter, Herbicide Orange Storage Site Reclamation - Gulfport, Mississippi, December 10, 1979 (Atch 1)
- b. AF/SG letter, Herbicide Orange Storage Site Reclamation - Naval Construction Battalion Center (NCBC), Gulfport, Mississippi, June 25, 1980 (Atch 2)
- c. SAF/MIQ letter, Herbicide Orange Storage Site Reclamation, August 7, 1980 (Atch 3)
- d. AF/LEE letter, Herbicide Orange Site Reclamation, September 12, 1980 (Atch 4)

There currently exist three sites of primary interest with some degree of residual contamination resulting from past Herbicide Orange activity: the NCBC storage yard, the Johnston Island storage area, and the Hardstand 7 area, Eglin AFB, Florida. Our ultimate goal must be to ensure that these sites are returned to a state of being suitable for full and beneficial use and compatible with national environmental and public health goals.

Earlier, I requested AF/SG to recommend research necessary to determine possible methods for restoration of these sites (Reference a). In a coordinated AF/SG, AF/RD and AF/LE response (Reference b) a pure research effort was outlined. However, I am not convinced that such an absence of knowledge exists and, in fact, enough knowledge may already be available to proceed directly to a site restoration effort. With either approach, characterization of the contamination must be determined as a starting point and thus my request for initial sampling (Reference c).

As stated, I am not convinced that our state of knowledge will not permit a more direct approach to these site restoration requirements. Therefore, request the Air Force Engineering and Services Center be tasked to assume overall management status, review the proposed research protocol and make recommendations relative to a more direct site restoration approach. In addition, please coordinate with AF/RD and provide a funding profile for the program recommended. I would appreciate a brief, periodic status report of your progress.



CARLOS STERN, Ph.D.

Deputy for
Environment & Safety