



INSPECTOR GENERAL
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
400 ARMY NAVY DRIVE
ARLINGTON, VIRGINIA 22202-2884

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MCAS EL TORO
SSIC #5090.3

JUL 9 1999

Dr. Charles Bennett
224 Jacaranda Place
Fullerton, California 92832

Dear Dr. Bennett:

This is in reply to your letter of May 26, 1999, regarding your concerns with the Installation Restoration Program (IRP) at the Marine Corps Air Station at El Toro. In response to your concerns, we reviewed pertinent documents involving the El Toro IRP process including remedial investigation studies, feasibility studies, proposed remedial action plans, and meeting minutes of the Restoration Advisory Board. We also discussed the El Toro IRP with the Environmental Protection Agency Project Manager and several representatives of the Navy and Marine Corps.

The El Toro IRP is proceeding in accordance with applicable Federal and state environmental guidelines. The remedial actions proposed appear appropriate for the contamination identified and are consistent with current environmental engineering practices. Remedial action alternatives were identified, analyzed, and compared based on available analytical data in the appropriate EPA nine criteria framework. Health assessments have been conducted to evaluate risks to human health and have found no significant risk present for the remedial actions proposed in the draft Remedial Investigation/Feasibility Study Report. The Department's continued coordination with the Federal Environmental Protection Agency and California EPA regulators indicates that the El Toro IRP is progressing according to the congressionally designed framework in the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, Liability Act (CERCLA).

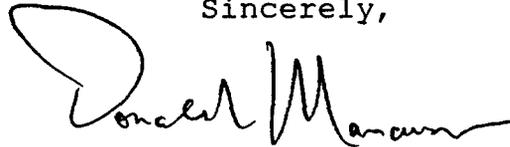
Your letter refers to a "less costly remedy" for the treated water that would "leave the future human health risk in question." We assume the reference is to the alternatives for the ultimate disposition of the treated water: reinjection to the groundwater aquifer or pumping to the proposed Irvine Desalter Project. This Project is presently in negotiations due to issues regarding reuse of the treated water. We understand that the appropriate agencies and stakeholders are involved in that process and working to find a solution.

Neither your letter nor the additional materials that we reviewed identified deviations from applicable Federal regulations in the handling of the El Toro IRP. We also concluded that compliance with the provisions of the Federal Managers' Financial Integrity Act is not at issue because there

are no indications of internal control weaknesses. Therefore we have determined that further inquiries by this office into the El Toro IRP at this time would not be appropriate.

Community involvement is a vital aspect of the environmental cleanup program and we encourage you to continue voicing your concerns to the El Toro IRP managers.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Donald Mancuso". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "D" and a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Donald Mancuso
Acting Inspector General