

## MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

SUBJECT: Minutes from the Fort Detrick Restoration Advisory Board (RAB) Meeting of May 9, 2001

**1. Index of Minutes**

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## **2. Meeting Opening**

Lieutenant Colonel Jeffery Springer convened the meeting at 7:40 p.m., on Wednesday, May 9, 2001, in Conference Room 3, 810 Schreider Street, Fort Detrick, Maryland.

## **3. Attendance**

### Members Present:

Lieutenant Colonel Jeffery Springer, P.E., Chief, Safety, Environment, and Integrated Planning Office (SEIPO), (Installation Co-Chairman)

Colonel James Greenwood, Commander, U.S. Army Garrison (USAG), and Deputy Installation Commander, Fort Detrick

Mr. Michael Kurtianyk, Macintosh Realtors

Mr. Thomas Meyer, Project Manager, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), Baltimore District

Mr. Douglas Scarbrough, Restoration Oversight Manager, U.S. Army Environmental Center

Ms. Helen Miller-Scott, Community Member

Ms. Nancy Shropshire, SEIPO (Recording Secretary)

### Others Present:

Mr. Jerry Blank, Local Resident

Ms. Sudha Brown, USACE

Mr. Charles Dasey, Public Affairs Office, USAG

Mr. John Fairbank, Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE)

Mr. Joseph Gortva, Environmental Office, SEIPO

Mr. David Iseri, IT Corporation

Mr. John Justice, Universe Technologies, Inc.

Mr. Hubert Kaempf, Local Resident

Mr. Clint Kneten, USACE

Mr. Kenneth Krantz, Local Resident

Mr. Paul Lanthier, Universe Technologies, Inc.

Mr. Gary Pauly, Local Resident

Mr. Kirk Tickner, Project Manager, IT Corporation

### Members Absent:

Mr. Gerald P. Toomey (Community Co-Chairman)

Mr. Charles Billups, Ph.D., Community Member

Mr. Larry Bohn, Frederick County Health Department

Mr. William Effland, Ph.D., Community Member

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Mr. Michael Gresalfi, Community Member

Mr. Paul Offutt, Program Manager, Frederick County Health Department

Mr. Dennis Orenshaw, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA), Region III

Ms. Linda Robinson, Community Member

Mr. Stewart Taylor, Ph.D., P.E., Community Member

Mr. Craig Toussaint, Ph.D., Community Member

Mr. Thomas Wade, Community Member

#### **4. Opening Remarks and Introductions**

Lieutenant Colonel Springer welcomed everyone to the meeting and asked that each attendee introduce himself/herself.

#### **5. Area A Update**

Mr. Thomas Meyer, USACE, provided copies of a handout on the Fort Detrick Remedial Investigation (RI)/Feasibility Study (FS). Mr. Meyer stated that most of this meeting will be about the Area B removal action and that updates on other issues will cover only the most important items. The public notice period for the proposed plan for Area A was March 22-April 21, 2001. We did not receive any comments on the proposed plan, so we will proceed with the decision document. After the commander signs that document, we will be in a position to award the groundwater monitoring portion of the project.

#### **6. Area C Update**

Mr. Meyer stated that we met with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) and the MDE on March 22, 2001. Based on current information, we determined that no ecological populations are at risk due to contamination in the area. Therefore, we can conclude the ecological portion of the studies on this particular site. We must still conclude the human health risk portion and determine whether additional samples are needed from the site. Also, Fort Detrick submitted a proposal to the U.S. Army Medical Command (MEDCOM) for a removal action for the ash area. Since the ash is not hazardous and does not pose a threat, we can save a significant amount of time, money, and effort by using non-environmental restoration money for the removal action. Lieutenant Colonel Springer noted that the MEDCOM indicated its support for the concept for the removal action, but has not located funding for the \$38-40K estimated cost.

#### **7. Area B Update**

##### **A. USEPA Environmental Photographic Interpretation Center (EPIC) Study**

Mr. Meyer stated that the USEPA EPIC Study was completed in March 2001. The report includes current and past aerial photographs of Area B. Mr. Meyer added that he has a paper copy of the report, which is available for viewing following the meeting. The report is also available on CD for electronic

viewing at the Fort Detrick library. We will continue to use this information to review all the sites in Area B to determine whether any additional data is needed before moving to the feasibility study and closing the site down or doing some kind of an action.

**B. Dye Trace Study Work Plan (Final) and Chemical Oxidation Bench-Scale Test Report (Final)**

Mr. Meyer noted that the Dye Trace Study and Chemical Oxidation Bench-Scale Reports were completed in May 2001 and will be briefed at the next RAB meeting, scheduled in July 2001.

**C. Tasks Completed/Planned**

Mr. Meyer stated that tasks completed since the March 14, 2001, RAB meeting include:

- Area B perimeter well sampling (completed in March 2001).
- Quarterly sampling (completed in May 2001, but the test results are pending and will be briefed at the next RAB meeting).
- Sampling of four wells due to specific requests by the homeowners.
- Sampling of 13 wells and one spring located west of Area B.
- In-situ Chemical Oxidation Pilot (Bench-Scale) lab work (draft reports in progress).
- Lead and clay pigeon removal at Skeet Range. We moved 5,200 tons of soil to the active landfill for use as cover for the daily operations. We determined that 119 tons of soil were hazardous and disposed of this soil in the hazardous waste landfill.
- U.S. Geological Survey Spring Stream Gauging. This is one of the pre-tasks for the dye trace study in order to identify sampling/monitoring points.

Mr. Meyer noted that periodic residential and on-post well and surface water sampling will be continued. The schedule for the dye trace study is being developed, but execution will depend on funding availability. The water treatment system for the Krantz property is on hold, pending installation of city water. The developer indicated that installation should be completed by this winter. Mr. Meyer pointed out that no contamination has ever been detected in the well on this property. Mr. Meyer stated that we plan to do additional interviews with former employees to obtain information on activities and waste disposal in Area B. He asked for contact information on any former employee who might be interested in sharing information.

**D. Residential Well Sampling Results**

Mr. Meyer stated that trichloroethylene (TCE) was previously detected in Well 47D, causing concern about possible contamination of wells west of Area B. As a result, we tested a number of wells and a spring located west of Area B. All test results were non-detect for volatile organic compounds (VOCs). We will select some of those wells for continued monitoring for the dye trace study. Mr. Meyer displayed a map showing the location of all residential wells (approximately 63) that have been sampled. The

majority of wells tested were right around Area B. Four wells were sampled in March 2001 at the request of the landowners, and all test results were non-detect for VOCs.

### **E. Area B Removal Action Update**

Mr. Meyer stated that the pit delineation phase began on April 2, 2001. To date, we have completed approximately 40 exploratory trenches. This phase is to determine the actual size of the pits. We dig from what we think is a clean area over toward the pit areas. When we see waste material, we stop and mark the edge of the pit. Mr. Meyer then showed a six-minute video of Area B, including:

- Containment structure (100' x 200'), built to maximize protection for the public.
- Mobile air handling system, which will be used to locally clean the air when fumes are released as a result of excavation activities.
- Foam generating unit that will be used for fire and vapor suppression. The unit will generate two types of foam—a short duration (72 hours) foam similar to shaving cream and a long duration (10-12 days) foam that goes on like a slimy film and sets up like plastic.
- Unit for spraying a fine mist of Ecosorb when needed to absorb vapors and odors released by excavation.
- A safety decontamination drill. Mr. Meyer pointed out that drills have been performed with local emergency personnel so everyone knows what to do in an emergency. Mr. Kirk Tickner, IT Corporation, explained that the decontamination process includes four steps—a bleach wash, a baking powder decontamination, a soap wash, and then a water rinse.
- Actual pit delineation trenching operation.

Mr. Meyer showed a slide of the original core areas of the pits, based on the decision document. Pit size was estimated to be approximately 20 feet long, 12 feet wide, and 15 feet deep. Mr. Meyer stated that they started the trenching operation with a small backhoe that reaches a depth of about 10 feet, then switched to a larger backhoe that reaches a depth of about 20 feet.

The area of Pit 1 is much wider and longer than expected. The extent of the pit to the west of the containment structure is unknown at this point. Pit 1 has a much higher density of glassware and containers than the other pits. An area of buried ash was also found in this pit.

Pit 2 was not part of the original decision document, but was investigated since it is within the boundaries of the containment structure. Material found in this pit was mostly metal and garbage debris, with no VOCs detected. The object of this removal action is to remove the containers of VOCs that can contaminate groundwater. Therefore, Pit 2 may not be excavated during this particular activity.

Pit 3 was discovered in an area that exhibited soil gas and magnetic anomalies during the study phase. The pit is about twice as long as originally thought. Glassware and VOCs were found in the trenching activity for this pit.

Pit 4 is located in another area of soil gas and magnetic anomalies and extends beyond the location of the current containment structure. This location will be investigated when the containment structure is split and repositioned. An area of this pit appears to contain no glassware, but the soil seems to be highly contaminated and emits VOCs. Based on the objective of the decision document, we may not do anything with this contaminated soil at this time. That will be addressed in the future since the objective of this removal action is to remove the containers from the ground. More information is needed before a final decision can be made on this issue.

Waste materials appear to be distributed in an area that is over seven times larger than originally thought. More pit delineation is needed to find all waste that requires removal and to finalize the freeze wall design. Test trenching will continue until approximately May 31, 2001. The next phase of trenching will start at the beginning of June 2001 and consists of splitting the containment structure and moving the halves over Pits 1 and 4 to continue pit delineation. Installation of the freeze barrier is scheduled for the beginning of July 2001. Waste removal is scheduled to begin in September 2001. Funding requirements will be finalized after completion of the engineering analysis.

As expected, materials encountered during trenching generally consist of laboratory chemical bottles and drums. Red bags of material were found near Pit 1 at a depth of a couple feet and were determined to be unassociated with the chemical waste disposal area. Mr. Gary Pauly pointed out that the FBI currently uses unmarked red plastic bags for their waste—principally biological waste. Mr. Meyer responded that if we find red bags in the excavation area, we will open up the bags and determine what the bags contain. Medical waste can be disposed of in Fort Detrick's licensed medical waste incinerator. Vapors have not been detected outside the containment structure. The vapors have been well controlled within the structure.

A chemical reaction occurred on April 24, 2001. There was a small explosion that sounded similar to a shotgun shell going off and displaced about 18 inches of soil. Mr. Meyer showed a brief video of this chemical reaction. A safety stand-down followed the chemical reaction. We got all workers out of the containment structure and had them medically checked out. Everyone was fine, and we reviewed all safety protocols. The chemical responsible was not identified. However, a blast shield was added to the excavator for increased safety. No public risk was identified. Mr. Tickner pointed out that even though we did not expect a chemical reaction during the trenching process, we were totally prepared to handle it.

COL James Greenwood asked Mr. Tickner to address the issue about oxygen levels causing stand-downs. Mr. Tickner stated that the containment structure is very tightly sealed so nothing gets out. The equipment inside the structure uses oxygen and gives off gases, similar to a car running inside a garage. Carbon monoxide builds up and the oxygen level goes down. One solution is to put a scrubber, similar to a catalytic converter, on the excavator in order to clean the exhaust. When the full phase of excavation begins, the air-handling unit will continually pull air out of the building and remove gases and vapors. The workdays were shortened to five hours in the structure, and work will be performed on Saturday. A scrubber was ordered and will be installed on the excavator upon receipt.

In response to a question, Mr. Tickner explained that LEL is an acronym for lower explosive limit. During exploratory drilling for freeze wall installation, there was probably light contamination in soil that gave off vapors. At some point, the vapors will build up to the point where a spark will cause them to explode. At 10 percent, operation is stopped in order to secure the vapors and prevent an explosion.

Originally no biological sampling was planned. However, based on historical concerns that have been discussed about Area B, we decided to use this opportunity to sample and prove that biologicals are not a concern. The screening is being performed by an Army lab at Aberdeen Proving Ground that is independent of Fort Detrick and by an additional private lab. The screening consists of testing for Anthrax. To date, 14 samples have been analyzed inside the excavation area and 16 throughout Area B. All samples tested negative.

## **8. Electromagnetic Survey**

Mr. Joseph Gortva, Environmental Office, SEIPO, stated that on April 16, 2001, the Department of Energy Oakridge National Laboratory conducted a survey of Fort Detrick to determine subsurface anomalies and geological features. Mr. Gortva showed two slides to show the two methods used. One method was to suspend a sphere from a helicopter that was flying over the area. The sphere sent out very low wattage radio waves, similar to those of a walkie-talkie, directly toward the ground. The radio signals that bounced back up were recorded and used to map the geological features underneath the surface of the ground. This method could only be used over Area B due to dangers related to suspending a 100-foot cable from a helicopter over houses and power lines. The second method was a passive system to locate magnetic anomalies underneath the ground—primarily to locate any burial sites. The estimated completion date for the reports is July or August 2001.

## **9. Date/Agenda Items for Next Meeting**

RAB meetings are held bimonthly on the second Wednesday of the month. The next meeting will be Wednesday, July 11, 2001, at 7:30 p.m., at Fort Detrick.

### Agenda items for the next meeting:

- Dye Trace Study Work Plan (Final)
- Chemical Oxidation Bench-Scale Test Report (Final)
- Area B Quarterly Sampling Test Results
- Area B Removal Action Update
- Public/Press Visit to Excavation Site
- Area C Removal Action—Funding Availability
- Area A Proposed Plan/Decision Document

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## 10. Meeting Summary

In the absence of a community co-chairman, Lieutenant Colonel Springer asked Ms. Helen Miller-Scott, as the member of longest standing, for her comments to summarize the meeting. Ms. Miller-Scott stated that it is nice to finally see real action—not talk or paperwork. She asked whether it would be helpful to request old photographs of Fort Detrick—perhaps by getting an article in the Frederick Magazine to solicit photographs. Lieutenant Colonel Springer agreed that is a good idea and stated that he and Mr. Charles Dasey will do what they can to implement that. COL Greenwood agreed and stated that there is a large untapped source of information and knowledge about Area B that would help us. The encouraging part about Area B is that the mechanisms and processes are in place and ready to react to emergencies, as shown by the event on April 24, 2001. The project has grown because the area of waste is larger than expected, and the cost may go up—creating another hurdle to deal with. COL Greenwood stated that we have already contacted the MEDCOM about the additional cost and are aggressively pursuing this issue, to avoid running out of dollars in the middle of the project. He expressed his appreciation for the interest and involvement by the RAB. He thanked everyone for coming to the meeting.

## 11. Meeting Closing

The meeting was adjourned at 9:30 p.m.

Reviewed by:

Jeffery C. Springer, P.E.  
Lieutenant Colonel, U.S. Army  
Co-Chairman

Approved/Disapproved

James R. Greenwood  
Colonel, U.S. Army  
Deputy Installation Commander

Enclosure  
Fort Detrick RI/FS

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Each RAB Member (w/o enclosure)  
Each Meeting Attendee (w/o enclosure)