

May 2009 Semi-Annual Report to Congress Quick Facts

Background: The Department of Defense (DoD) Chemical Demilitarization Program Semi-Annual Report to Congress for May 2009

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE SEMI-ANNUAL REPORT?

The semi-annual report to Congress presents information describing DoD's progress toward destruction of the U.S. stockpile of chemical agents and munitions. This particular report provides the results of a DoD review from assessments that identified options to accelerate destruction of the remaining chemical weapons stockpile, and the current path forward resulting from that review. In addition, this report provides the assessment results regarding on-site and off-site treatment and disposal of secondary wastes, including hydrolysates.

WHY IS THIS REPORT BEING PROVIDED TO CONGRESS?

The semi-annual report updating Congress on the progress of the Chemical Demilitarization Program is required by public law 110-116 and 110-181.

WHEN IS IT EXPECTED TO BE DELIVERED?

The anticipated delivery date to Congress is on or about May 13, 2009.

WHAT AGENCIES ARE EXECUTING THE CHEMICAL DEMILITARIZATION PROGRAM?

The U.S. Army Chemical Materials Agency (CMA) is responsible for the destruction of 90 percent of the U.S. stockpile located at seven locations: Johnston Atoll; Aberdeen, Maryland; Anniston, Alabama; Tooele, Utah; Pine Bluff, Arkansas; Newport, Indiana; and Umatilla, Oregon. Destruction operations at Johnston Atoll; Aberdeen, Maryland; and Newport, Indiana were completed in 2000, 2006 and 2008, respectively. In accordance with public law, the Assembled Chemical Weapons Alternatives Program is responsible for destroying the remaining 10 percent of the original chemical weapons stockpile located at Pueblo, Colorado, and Blue Grass, Kentucky. Destruction facilities at these two locations are currently under construction.

WHAT BACKGROUND DOES THE PREVIOUS (JUNE 2008) REPORT TO CONGRESS PROVIDE?

In 2008, the DoD conducted assessments to define alternatives to destroy the remaining chemical weapons stockpile by the 2012 Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) deadline, but not later than the 2017 congressional deadline. The June 2008 report identified three options to destroy the remaining chemical weapons stockpile. The options were to: 1) provide performance incentives to ensure destruction is complete by 2012 at CMA sites; 2) transport portions of the stockpile to operational chemical weapons destruction facility locations; and 3) accelerate the ACWA Program sites' destruction schedules. Further, the June 2008 review concluded that there were no realistic options available to destroy the complete U.S. stockpile by the CWC deadline of April 2012. To achieve the congressional destruction mandate of 2017, only transporting portions of the stockpile to currently operating destruction facilities showed any reasonable probability of success, and this option is precluded by law.

WHAT COURSE OF ACTION DOES THE MAY 2009 REPORT PROPOSE?

The DoD's proposed plan is to seek additional resources to: 1) aim toward CMA completing destruction operations of all the U.S. chemical stockpile under their purview (90 percent of the U.S. stockpile) by 2012 utilizing performance incentives and risk mitigation actions; and 2) accelerate the ACWA Program schedule toward completing destruction of an additional eight percent of the U.S. stockpile at Pueblo in 2017 and the remaining two percent of the U.S. stockpile at Blue Grass in 2021, resulting in an acceleration in destruction of three years at Pueblo and two years at Blue Grass. On-site treatment and disposal of hydrolysate at Pueblo and Blue Grass will continue, unless technical difficulties arise.