



Chemical Demilitarization Citizens' Advisory Commission  
Chemical Destruction Community Advisory Board  
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Doug Hindman  
Chair

Reagan Taylor  
Craig Williams  
Co-Chairs

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**Kentucky Chemical Demilitarization Citizens' Advisory Commission (CAC) and  
Chemical Destruction Community Advisory Board (CDCAB) Meeting  
Summary of Action Items and Discussions  
Dec. 8, 2021  
Eastern Kentucky University (EKU)  
with Microsoft Teams Option  
Richmond, Kentucky**

**Attendees**

**CAC:** Doug Hindman, Diane Kerby, Harry Moberly, George Ridings, David Stipes, April Webb (for Tammi Hudson) and Craig Williams

**CDCAB:** Chuck Cash, Dr. Candace Coyle, Jim Davis, Col. Steve Dorris, Dustin Heiser, Jeanne Hibberd, Doug Hindman, Ron Hink, Leslie Kaylor, Diane Kerby, Louise Locke, Tara Long, Brian Makinen, Darcy Maupin, Harry Moberly, Stephanie Nelson (for U.S. Sen. Mitch McConnell), George Ridings, Craig Shockley (for U.S. Rep. Andy Barr), Mica Sims (for U.S. Sen. Rand Paul), David Stipes, Reagan Taylor, April Webb (for Tammi Hudson) Craig Williams and Lt. Col. Ed Williams

**Media Attendees:**

*The Richmond Register:* Taylor Six

*WEKU-FM:* Stu Johnson

*WTVQ-TV:* Hagan Wells

**Meeting Synopsis**

The meeting provided information on the following:

- Remarks from the Program Executive Office, Assembled Chemical Weapons Alternatives (PEO ACWA)
- Blue Grass Chemical Agent-Destruction Pilot Plant (BGCAPP) Project Update
- Kentucky Department for Environmental Protection (KDEP) Permitting Updates
- Economic Impact Working Group (EIWG) Updates

## **Meeting Summary Structure**

This meeting summary is not intended to be a verbatim record of conversations; instead, it will provide an overview of the discussions and action items of government representatives and various members of the CAC and CDCAB. Key action items identified in the meeting and a synopsis of the major questions and comments discussed during the various updates are noted below. Copies of slides and documents presented during the meeting can be obtained from the Blue Grass Chemical Stockpile Outreach Office (ORO) at (859) 626-8944 or bgoutreach@iem.com.

## **Action Items**

**Action Item:** Distribute rocket motor monitoring process flow chart to CAC/CDCAB members.

**Responsible Entity:** Sarah Marko, communications manager, ORO.

**Timeline:** By March 9, 2022.

**Action Item:** Discussion with Process Working Group (PWG) members regarding the formation of a Closure Working Group.

**Responsible Entities:** Craig Williams, co-chair, CDCAB.

**Timeline:** By March 9, 2022.

## **Outline of Key Issues and Discussions**

### ***Welcome and Introductions – Sarah Marko, Communications Manager, ORO***

Marko performed a roll call, welcomed the attendees, provided virtual meeting best practices and reviewed the meeting agenda.

### ***Opening Remarks – Doug Hindman, Chair, CAC, and Reagan Taylor and Craig Williams Co-Chairs, CDCAB.***

Hindman welcomed everyone and said it had been close to two years since the last in-person meeting was held. He welcomed PEO ACWA Program Executive Officer Michael Abaie and thanked the ORO team for putting together the hybrid meeting, as he said it took a lot of technology.

Taylor said it was great to be at the meeting in person and to see everyone, and that it was hard to believe it has been almost two years. He said times have been trying but everyone will prevail.

Williams said he echoed Hindman and Taylor and said he was glad to see Abaie at the meeting, as travel has been more challenging than normal. He said he and Abaie met

and Williams was pleased with Abaie’s continuing mantra on transparency and openness on every aspect of the project. Williams then welcomed Steve Bullard from the Kentucky Commission on Military Affairs (KCMA), with whom he has been closely working on the closure topic. Williams thanked everyone for attending the meeting.

Marko then noted the following action items from the Sept. 8, 2021, CAC/CDCAB meeting:

Action Item	Steps Taken	Date/Status
Approve the 2022 CAC/CDCAB meeting dates.	Dates of March 9, June 8, Sept. 14 and Dec. 14 provided by Marko. No opposition.	Complete.
Provide U.S. Department of Defense (DOD) Office of Local Defense Community Cooperation (OLDCC) application letter for distribution to group.	Provided by Williams and distributed by ORO staff to CAC and CDCAB members Oct. 28.	Complete.
Provide a step-by-step schematic of rocket-motor process post-agent monitoring.	Schematic provided to chairs Nov. 17.	Complete.

### **Key Updates**

***Remarks from PEO ACWA – Michael Abaie, Program Executive Officer, PEO ACWA***

Abaie said it was good to be with the group in person, as it has been almost two years since the last opportunity. He thanked everyone in attendance and online for their continued involvement. Abaie said he recognizes the program has many stakeholders across the nation as well as in the international community, so it is important to him to provide transparency as Williams mentioned so everyone is on the same page as the program progresses. He said when the pandemic began PEO ACWA worked closely with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), who determined it was best to continue operating instead of shutting the plant down. He said he thought PEO ACWA had done extremely well during this period and BGCAPP had done phenomenally. Abaie recognized the workforce, who he considers the tip of the spear. He said they are the ones to maintain the safety posture and do very well in that regard. Abaie then said program partner Veolia Environmental Services briefed leaders in Port Arthur, Texas, about hydrolysate shipment, and no issues or comments were received. He said PEO

ACWA is continuing to work the supercritical water oxidation (SCWO) system for potential for other uses and work continues on that topic with the U.S. Army Combat Capabilities Development Command Chemical Biological Center in Maryland. He will share more information on that topic as it happens. Abaie said 2022 will be an important year as BGCAPP will complete the VX rocket campaign and initiate the GB rocket campaign. Closure is not imminent but is getting closer and PEO ACWA will be as transparent as possible moving forward. He thanked the Blue Grass Army Depot (BGAD) and Blue Grass Chemical Activity (BGCA) commanders for their continued support, especially during the pandemic. Abaie then thanked Dale Burton from KDEP, who is retiring, and presented him a PEO ACWA coin. He also thanked Bullard for his involvement. Bullard said he reports on the program to government and senior staff every week and said Williams is a great conduit to keep KCMA informed and engaged.

***BGCAPP Project Update – Dr. Candace Coyle, Site Project Manager, BGCAPP, and Ron Hink, Project Manager, Bechtel Parsons Blue Grass***

***Slides of this presentation may be obtained by contacting the ORO at (859) 626-8944 or [bgoutreach@iem.com](mailto:bgoutreach@iem.com).***

Marko began by showing the 2021 Year-in-Review video.

Coyle said it was good to see everyone in person again and noted the video really highlights what has been accomplished during the pandemic, especially with great team members and partners, and said they couldn't do it without KDEP's support. Coyle said they finished all of the projectile destruction this year, which was a huge win for the team, and started destroying VX rockets in July, with just over 39% completion of that campaign at this point. She is seeing the team come together to overcome some challenges in the main plant. They are prototyping the rocket system, learning the system and getting the workforce primed for the GB rocket campaign. Hink noted they are now focused on March 2022 for VX rocket campaign completion as they are taking time to understand the plant and make it run, and things are going better. There are days of triple-digit throughput, and he would like to have that every day, but they are still in optimization. Regarding the recent main-plant emissions test, he said they did four six-hour runs at a peak rate of 13 rockets per hour, which will support what the plant needs to accomplish. Hink said this is preliminary data and the plant is currently limited to 13 rockets per hour until the test review is complete. Coyle said testing during the pandemic is always a challenge, but they were able to do it quickly and it was a very successful run. She said the plant had shipped the first tankers of hydrolysate, now with 18 tankers of GB hydrolysate shipped and approximately 18 left to ship. They are shipping twice a week and are ahead of the permit in shipping the GB hydrolysate out (it was held in storage after the GB projectile campaign ended until permitting was complete). She said 14 tankers of VX hydrolysate had also been shipped. She thanked everyone in the meeting for their support on this topic. Coyle said the first non-contaminated rocket motors were shipped to Anniston, Alabama, Nov. 1 for destruction in the Anniston Static Detonation Chamber (SDC). She noted Anniston has more than enough capacity to hold the motors in storage until their permit is approved for destruction.

Coyle then discussed a vapor emission detected Nov. 22 in an igloo used to store containerized, drained rocket warheads. She commended and thanked BGCA for their work on this event—an immediate response where they turned the filtration system on and placed the igloo under engineering controls. They are now looking for the possible source of the elevated reading and have shrouded five stacks in preparation for monitoring. She said they are keeping KDEP informed, had a good meeting with Abaie, Hink and others on the topic, and are looking at short- and long-term options. Abaie said PEO ACWA will be transparent and provide information to the group, but they need to isolate the issue and find out more first. They are putting a lot of plans together and will resolve as quickly as possible. Coyle said it will be done as slowly and methodically as possible and noted this is the first VX nerve agent elevated reading in a storage igloo. She said since the filter system was turned on, they have had no detection.

Williams said he commends everyone involved with the BGCAPP project and said the group is sitting here in awe that the BGCAPP destruction mission is almost one-third complete after all these years. Regarding the elevated reading detection, he said there was no certainty it was VX, that it could be an interferent or any number of other things. He said the principal deputy called and thoroughly briefed him and Williams said that was very thoughtful and the way things should occur. He is anxious to see what might be detected but is aware of the possibility no one might even know what it is. He noted years ago the situation would have been very different, with the press here with cameras and people saying to “evacuate the whole state,” which he feels would be ridiculous. Williams said it is nice to see what the program has evolved to communications-wise. Dustin Heiser said when the emission was detected, official communications came into the Madison County Emergency Management Agency and the nine other Chemical Stockpile Emergency Preparedness Program counties, which is a process they practice constantly. He said he felt the engineering controls were done properly, the communications lines were open, and there is a process to this that is always being done.

Hink moved to the SDC 1200 and said it was being converted to its next mission (destruction of drained VX rocket warheads). He said the facility first needs to be decontaminated of mustard agent because one of the first things they will do is remove the old buffer tank and lower a new one into place through the roof. Hink said the new off-gas treatment system and building are going into place and good progress is being made there. They decontaminated and removed the main process filters. Hink said they were a bit surprised by the condition of the filters and put together a condition report, which they shared with Pueblo personnel (he noted they share SDC information frequently to help Pueblo). Coyle noted the large SDC building at the SDC 2000 site and said they continue to work on the Monitoring House and stack, cable trays and pipe racks out there. She said weather did have an effect on this project this week, but it did not prevent work from being performed. Coyle said a lot of progress is going on at that site, which is part of the critical path for the destruction of overpacked rockets. She mentioned they are working to overcome current market challenges, mostly delivery issues. She is working with Hink on schedule opportunities and sees no major setbacks as of now. She said they are working as a team to keep going on this front and will notify

the group if they run into a challenge. Coyle then discussed the closure topic and brought up the action item from the PWG of the release to the group of the End State Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed between BGCAPP and the BGAD commander. She said to Williams, regarding his question about signing non-disclosure agreements (NDA), that the one previously signed was for the technology involved in the program, which does not apply here. She will see about getting another NDA for him for this topic. Coyle then said while the MOU has been put into play, they are also looking at future use of the SCWO and SDC units independently of the mission so as to not take resources away from BGCAPP. She said a decision on the SCWO and SDC units should be made by January 2023, and there are analyses going on for future use of those systems. Abaie said since closure is such an important topic, he recommends standing up a Closure Working Group. He said it is important to start planning now and having the CAC group involved is important. He said since resources are limited, he proposes making the PWG meetings quarterly, after the changeover to GB rockets. Williams said he would discuss it with the PWG and respond to Abaie with acceptance or modification of that proposal. Coyle then said BGAD would like to keep the SDC 2000 magazine, which must be declared clean after BGCAPP's use is finished, the plant parking lot, roads, storm water structures and the Government Furnished Equipment warehouse/firehouse building. There are other items BGAD may retain and a decision is expected on them by January 2023. This could be anything that has not been touched by chemical agent. No decisions have been made yet and she will keep the group updated as things happen. Coyle said the SCWO study started earlier this year is on track and PEO ACWA has approved funding for the 2022 portion, the second and final year of the study. She said discussions have been initiated with personnel from industry, educational institutions and government organizations regarding potential avenues for future use of the SCWO system.

Hink spoke on the plant's safety record and said it still continues to be very good, and the plant's recordable incident rate is comparable to that of office workers. He said to be performing the kind of work done at the plant, with that level of safety, is impressive. Workers have completed more than six million hours, more than two years, without a lost-time injury. On the COVID-19 front, Hink said Bechtel Parsons Blue Grass workers had been about 50% vaccinated and now are at about 80% and are still following pandemic protocols. He said they have not seen much of an impact from COVID-19 to perform the mission safely. Coyle said they made decisions very early on, like pulling people back from being at the site in person and understanding and applying contact tracing. She commended the entire team and said they learned a lot and made a great effort. She also commended the effort made across the site to vaccinate the workforce and thanked the program partners who assisted with that. She said government field office personnel are 95% vaccinated and she applauds the team for that. Abaie said he applauds the team as well, that getting from 50% to 80% vaccinated is great and that rate is not being seen across the country. He commended everyone for working so diligently on this and said they will continue to work to get the vaccinated rates even higher.

Hink said the site is losing people at a fairly challenging rate, as workers are retiring and chemical demilitarization personnel are nearing the ends of their careers. He said

backfilling attrition is a challenge and they are working hard to get new employees on board, noting the consequence of the pandemic is that getting people hired in and trained is a challenge. He said it is rewarding work, but they need to stimulate interest in the project. He asked that group members pass around that BGCAPP could use applicants. Hink noted the project demographic data is in the meeting packet. He then said the open-positions list is growing and the project continues to hire. They have an upcoming virtual career fair—he thinks they are getting better at those but feels it is hard to get the same interest from prospective applicants when they can't meet face-to-face.

Coyle showed a timeline of 2021 milestones and said a lot has been done at the site, even with the pandemic. She said she did not want to undersell the team by saying COVID-19 was a player that made them look like they did a better job than they did, that these are phenomenal accomplishments despite a pandemic, and this remarkable team did a lot of great things this year. She said this could not have been done without the support of everyone in the meeting and PEO ACWA headquarters. She thanked Abaie and Nick Stamatakis for everything they have done in support of the plant.

Williams thanked Abaie and his team, PEO ACWA Public Affairs Chief Kathy DeWeese and everyone else involved in the outreach efforts in Port Arthur (regarding hydrolysate shipment). He said it was important that was done so that they have the same level of confidence that the community does here. He then noted the off-gas treatment system referenced for the SDC 1200 is an upgraded version, to provide an additional level of comfort for the emissions coming from the SDC units.

Heiser asked if the current governmental continuing resolution will affect the project timeline and if Coyle has the support she needs. Coyle said funding should be received this week.

Harry Moberly asked about the policy for required workforce vaccinations. Abaie said it is changing as federal courts review mandates and PEO ACWA is working closely with the joint venture companies to see that they all have policies in place regarding this topic. Moberly asked if a testing policy was put in place for the unvaccinated. Hink said they are prepared to put a program into place. Abaie said the contractors have to be compliant with PEO ACWA contracts. The joint venture companies have policies issued for people who work in their areas, but they have to be compliant with PEO ACWA policies, and he is making sure the companies meet the requirements. This is challenging, as PEO ACWA is receiving multiple updates several times a day. He noted an effort to incentivize the workforce to get vaccinated and said he thinks this is probably why the vaccinated percentage jumped. Abaie said if a significant number of people are lost from vaccination mandates it could affect treaty timelines, and he is trying hard to mitigate this. Coyle said they are still imposing all CDC requirements at the site and following the protocols they recommend. Further discussion on the COVID-19 topic ensued.

Moberly then said the group has been “sort of rebuffed” regarding the future-use discussion and hopes closure will address this. He said he thinks the new working group suggestion makes sense. He does not think it is acceptable after all these years of excellent transparency that the community be shut out of any discussions regarding

future use. Abaie acknowledged this and said PEO ACWA would do its best to ensure the other stakeholders come to the table and hopes the monthly meetings will ensure more information.

### ***KDEP Permitting Update – Dale Burton, BGAD Section, KDEP***

Burton began by saying, as always, this has been a very busy three months for KDEP and began with the approvals from the last quarter. He said the most important ones were the two Class 3 modifications to allow hydrolysate shipment to Texas and to add up to 29 igloos for non-contaminated rocket motors. KDEP also approved the final closure of the mustard sampling facility and the final test report for VX projectiles, and issued a modification to PEO ACWA to add an additional three igloos to the storage permit. He said as BGCA empties igloos of the chemical munitions, they are gradually turned over to the PEO ACWA permit for storage of the containerized, drained rocket warheads, which is an ongoing occurrence. They also approved the Multi-Pathway Human Health Risk Assessment for the SDC units, the Munitions Washout System decontamination plan and a Temporary Authorization Request to increase the limit for Waste Transfer Station storage, as rocket shipping and firing tubes and other items need to be staged there while being reviewed. Burton noted 17 permit modifications have been made since the last meeting. KDEP also provided comments on a Class 2 modification for the open burn/open detonation and Controlled Detonation Chamber for the depot, the alternative technologies report on open burn/open detonation for the depot and the changeover plan for the Explosive Destruction Technology to process VX. He said there are currently a lot of items under review and noted the resubmittal of the SDC applications for actual permits, which is close to being approved and they are drafting the permits. This may be ready for public notice in January if all goes well. He said they are reviewing the Class 2 modification for the GB rocket campaign and a resubmittal of the Controlled Detonation Chamber Class 2 modification request, as BGAD is considering using the chamber for the destruction of BGCAPP rocket motors. KDEP also approved the demonstration test plan for GB rockets and said there will be a demonstration emissions test for that campaign. They are also looking at the VX to GB rocket changeover plan and lots of other minor modifications. He said there were regulation changes to add some waste codes for the SDC nerve agent campaigns as well as closure and demolition wastes that became effective this past summer. Burton then said KDEP continues to have discussion of changeover, decommissioning, closure and demolition issues with the joint venture and with PEO ACWA, and these discussions need to continue. There are a lot of issues that come up in the process and a lot of them are not black and white, as in how to approach characterizing those wastes and ensuring everything continues in as protective a manner as possible. He said they have had extended discussion of issues recently related to the recent VX detection in the igloo, and they concur it is really important to determine the source of those emissions because it does have significant implications for monitoring, standard operating procedure and permitting changes, depending on what the root cause tells them about the detection of VX in those igloos.

Burton then said this will be his last CAC/CDCAB meeting, as he is retiring Jan. 1. He said he has really enjoyed working on this project and will continue to follow it as a private citizen. Hink and Coyle expressed their thanks and admiration for the work Burton has

done over the years for the program. Bullard asked about Burton's succession plan and if his team brings the same level of expertise. Burton said the team is in the works, he has an interim replacement and KDEP is looking at hiring a couple people. They may have another couple people retiring in the next couple years, as well. Williams and Hindman expressed their thanks for Burton's involvement and professionalism.

### ***EIWG Update – Craig Williams, Co-Chair, CDCAB***

Williams reminded the group of the award of the grant applied for by the OLDCC and said he has had meetings with city and county leaders as well as economic development experts in the area. They will form a small technical advisory group to the Bluegrass Area Development District (BGADD) to assure everyone is in concert with various milestones to be met and the elements within those milestones in a joint approval process between cities, county, CAC, EIWG, and others. The group currently consists of him, Madison County Judge-Executive Reagan Taylor, Berea Mayor Bruce Fraley, Richmond Industrial Development Corporation (RIDC) Executive Director David Stipes, Jill Williams from Taylor's office, and an assistant to the BGADD director. They are also soliciting a position to be the second-in-command under BGADD Director David Duttlinger, with economic development and federal grant process experience, and would like someone local to fill the position. Williams noted Bechtel National and Bechtel Enterprises continue to provide support in identifying industries that might want to locate in Madison County. He said they are not allowed to talk about what those industries are but assured the group they will meet the highest standard of public safety and environmental protection as well as being companies that can provide a living wage to people in this area. He expressed his appreciation to Bullard and his assistant Stacey Shane, as well as others, for making the DOD aware of the support that this community and the state has for the group in getting this grant so they can be prepared to offset as much of the economic downturn as possible at the end of the BGCAPP project. Williams said BGCAPP and BGCA each sent a survey to their workforce to determine their future plans and about 50% of each workforce responded. He said hypothetically, it looks like about 50-65% of the workforce plans to remain in the area, and of that, maybe 75% will be looking for something to do. He said that is a significant number of people and he provided that information to BGADD. They are fine-tuning the focus on that. Williams said everyone who was approached for a letter of support for getting the grant provided a letter, including U.S. Rep. Andy Barr, U.S. Sen. Rand Paul, government offices and the KCMA. He said they are very busy with this effort and he thinks it will result in a very good plan. Bullard said if Williams would like to draft a report to the entire KCMA he would be happy to post it to the group and site.

### ***Closing Remarks – Doug Hindman, Chair, CAC; Craig Williams, Co-Chair, CDCAB; and Michael Abaie, Program Executive Officer, PEO ACWA***

Hindman thanked the outreach team for putting on the hybrid meeting.

Williams thanked the BGAD and BGCA commanders and said he met with the BGCA commander last week. He also had a conversation with a BGAD representative and are working through details of the best future use of items. He said the transparency and

communications from those organizations have been good as well and he appreciates that.

Abaie said he thought this had been a very good meeting and he appreciates the hard work from Marko and her team. He said he hopes the program continues to enjoy great success and achieves the treaty commitment in 2023. Williams said the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) had their states parties meeting about two weeks ago and invited him to send a video, which he did, and they showed it. He said it reflected the progress here and the cooperative nature of what is being done. Abaie said the OPCW Executive Council is coming to BGCAPP mid-March and he would like a meeting between them and CAC/CDCAB members.

***Next CAC and CDCAB Meeting***

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, March 9, 2022, at 1:30 p.m. The meeting format has yet to be determined.

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