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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. 14, 2022
Eastern Kentucky University
Richmond, Kentucky**

Attendees

CAC: Harry Moberly (online), George Ridings (online), David Stipes, April Webb (for Tammi Hudson) and Craig Williams

CDCAB: Robert Blythe, Steve Bullard, Dr. Candace Coyle, Jim Davis, Joe Elliott (For Col. Brett Ayvazian), Dr. Diane Hatchett, Jeanne Marie Hibberd, Ron Hink, Leslie Kaylor, Tara Long, Bryan Makinen, Darcy Maupin (online), Lt. Col. Tyler McKee, Harry Moberly (online), Stephanie Nelson (for U.S. Sen. Mitch McConnell), George Ridings (online), David Stipes, Judge Executive Reagan Taylor, April Webb (for Tammi Hudson) and Craig Williams

Media Attendees:

The Richmond Register: Blake Vickers
WBON-TV: Lindsey Reed and Gage Hill
WTVQ-TV: Gabe Smith

Meeting Synopsis

The meeting provided information on the following:

- Remarks from the Program Executive Officer
- Blue Grass Chemical Agent-Destruction Pilot Plant (BGCAPP) Project Update and Year-in-Review
- Kentucky Department for Environmental Protection (KDEP) Permitting Updates
- Economic Development Working Group Update

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 Item

Action Item: Investigate if the supercritical water oxidation (SCWO) system has been offered to private sector organizations. Consider the possibility of delaying the start the SCWO disposition process in March 2023, such that if there is no interest from government organizations, it may afford private sector organizations with the opportunity to acquire the SCWO system if interested and allowed by regulations.

Responsible Entity: Michael Abaie, Program Executive Officer, Assembled Chemical Weapons Alternatives (ACWA)

Timeline: By March 1, 2023

Outline of Key Issues and Discussions

Welcome and Introductions – Sarah Marko, Communications Manager, ORO

Marko performed a roll call, welcomed the attendees, provided livestreaming information, and reviewed the meeting agenda.

Opening Remarks – Reagan Taylor and Craig Williams, Co-Chairs, CDCAB

Taylor welcomed everyone and said he hoped they were having a good holiday season.

Williams said he had a card for members of the groups to sign to offer CAC Chair Doug Hindman get-well and holiday wishes as he continues recovering from a health issue.

Key Updates

Remarks from the Program Executive Officer – Michael Abaie, Program Executive Officer, ACWA

Abaie offered season's greetings and wished Hindman a speedy recovery. He said it was a pleasure to be back in Kentucky to get an update on BGCAPP and see its operations. He said he was proud of this team and noted the operation has now destroyed more

than 60% of the original chemical agent stockpiled at the Blue Grass Army Depot (BGAD). Abaie then said the GB nerve agent rocket destruction campaign is progressing very well. He said the condition of some of the rockets presents challenges, but the plant's workforce does a great job of adjusting.

Abaie noted the current month is December and that it could be the last December where he addresses the group from an operational perspective. He said hopefully by this time next year operations will be complete.

Abaie thanked those in the group who have been involved with its work for many years and noted attention is turning to closure. He said he was excited to know the group was starting a Closure Working Group (CWG) with meetings beginning in January 2023. He said he looks forward to working with the group as it plots its path forward. He promised to support the group in what it wants to do going forward for a smooth transition and close out.

Kentucky Chemical Weapons Destruction: 2022 Year in Review Video

Marko then played the *Kentucky Chemical Weapons Destruction: 2022 Year in Review* video recapping the year's accomplishments. The video may be viewed at <https://youtu.be/3ATxf4nj-Rc>.

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.

Coyle also wished everyone happy holidays and noted it was December and the end of another year, hopefully the last December where the plant is still in operations. She said the plant is on-track to meet that objective. She provided a statistical update, saying more than 62% of chemical agent in the original stockpile in Kentucky has been destroyed. She said the GB nerve agent M55 rocket destruction campaign is making great progress, with just a fraction under 30% of the rockets destroyed. She also said the Pueblo Chemical Agent-Destruction Pilot Plant has destroyed more than 91% of its total stockpile and is targeting being finished sometime next summer.

In his update, Hink said the main plant is destroying an average of 140 rockets a day. He said on some days, crews process more than 200 rockets, while on other days, equipment maintenance and other issues cause the plant to not process as many rockets. He called 140 a good number and said administrators will be satisfied if that can be sustained. Hink said the plant is doing really well and workers have developed a good rhythm. He said workers have, through experience, learned to address repairs and other issues. He said slowdowns come when new challenges arise but overall, it is looking good in the plant.

Hink said an agent demonstration test to determine the efficiency of destruction was conducted in November and hydrolysate shipments from the current GB campaign also began in November. Shipments of hydrolysate from previous campaigns have been completed, he said, adding that shipments of non-contaminated rocket motors continue to Anniston, Alabama, for destruction in the Static Detonation Chamber (SDC) unit there. So far, more than 21,000 rocket motors have been sent, he said.

Hink said the main plant has encountered its first leaker rocket, which was not a surprise because operators had expected at least a few rockets would not be appropriate to run through the main plant. It will be overpacked and sent to the SDC 2000, which was built for that purpose. In addition, crews have encountered some agent crystals, which also was expected.

In an update on the SDC 2000, Hink said systems demonstration procedure testing was conducted for the destruction chamber and off-gas treatment system the previous week. He said the Electronic Security System endurance test was completed in November and went exceptionally well. Surrogate testing to determine the efficiency of destruction prior to chemical agent being introduced into the plant was completed in November and a hard lockdown of the facility also started in November. He said the Integrated Operations Demonstration tests to demonstrate workers are trained will be done in early January and then the site will move into production by mid-January.

Coyle noted processing in the SDC 2000 will start out slowly and deliberately as the main plant did with the GB nerve agent rocket campaign in July 2022. The work will start with containerized, drained rocket warheads.

Hink said the teams are prepared because of the experience with the current campaign in the main plant, but the slow approach is warranted because the SDC 2000 and the work it is doing is the first of its kind and challenges are certain to arise.

In an SDC 1200 update, Hink said progress is being made and everything is going well, although some resources have been diverted in a realignment of resources to the SDC 2000 to get it operational. Work at the SDC 1200 continues to include piping and cable tray installation, electrical cable pulls, cable pulls to unit heaters for the thermal oxidizer, installation of fencing at the gas bottle rack storage area and conduit installation to tank instruments and the pump control panel.

Coyle provided an environmental permitting update, saying some of the suspected problematic lots that had been anticipated, when brought into the plant showed a need for alternative processing approaches, which prompted the team to look for other options to destroy munitions deemed unsuitable for the main plant. As a result, two permit modification requests were filed with KDEP.

Coyle then summarized the two Class 2 permit modification requests submitted on Nov. 22. These seek alternative management methods for problematic GB nerve agent M55 rockets in the SDC 2000's Earth-Covered Magazine with additional rocket line equipment

already permitted in the main plant and return of drained chemical agent to the Munitions Demilitarization Building. She said the public comment period runs through Jan. 21, 2023, with a public meeting set Dec. 15 at the ORO. She also said a Temporary Authorization Request was submitted to KDEP to allow for the initial site preparation and systemization related to the permit modification requests.

Coyle briefly described the processes and what they mean for the operation, including better, safer ways to handle rockets that prove to be problematic. The proposal includes using equipment such as the Rocket Non-Destructive Examination, Vertical Rocket Cutting Machine, and Rocket Warhead Containerization System. She also pointed out the technology to potentially drain the problematic warheads has been used for many years and that she once used it earlier in her career. She praised the KDEP staff for being very helpful in working through the process.

Coyle also updated the group on the Notice of Violation received Oct. 5 from KDEP for failure to make a hazardous waste determination of the white, crystallized residue remaining on the decontaminated warhead pallets which were sent for storage until final destruction. Noting no actual chemical agent was detected, she outlined several steps that have been taken to address the issue.

Hink provided an update on closure, which he said is about planning and preparation, with detailed closure plans being developed.

Coyle said the first CWG meeting is set for Jan. 11, 2023, with the first meeting detailing the closure process. The CWG will continue to get updates on BGCAPP operations and progress, she said.

Coyle also provided an update on the study on other potential uses for the SCWO system. She said the Chemical Biological Center (CBC) team continues to engage both government agencies and commercial companies on the availability and use of the SCWO system. In addition, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers have expressed technical interest in SCWO technology for the treatment of polyfluoroalkyl substances-related emerging contaminants, but no responses have been received to questions about possible transfer of the SCWO system. Coyle said the ACWA program intends to inform interested groups that if an agency or company is interested in obtaining the SCWO they should inform ACWA no later than March 2023. If no entity commits to take the equipment, ACWA will begin the Department of Defense disposition process. The SCWO study report, which has been going on for almost two years, is on schedule to be completed by CBC no later than March 2023, she said.

Williams asked whether the SCWO will be available to private-sector entities interested in using it. Abaie said ACWA had been looking at the defense side and some research centers and universities, but he will have to do more research on whether other industries or sectors had been contacted or involved. Williams, along with board member Leslie Kaylor, said they worried an opportunity might be missed based on the March timeframe.

Taylor asked if the SCWO would stay in place or be moved. Abaie said the answer would depend on what group might be willing to take over the equipment. Williams said the technology might provide an opportunity in the private sector and the community has an interest in both the economic and environmental impacts.

In a safety update, Hink said the plant's record remains well below industry and national standards. Among other things, he said the project's recordable incident rate for the last 12 months as of October 2022 was 0.31; as of Oct. 31, 2022, the project has completed 9,524,607 hours and 1,144 days without a lost-time accident; and the workforce continues to follow current Centers for Disease Control and Prevention COVID-19 guidelines. He said the 798 COVID-19 cases the project has recorded since the start of the pandemic have not significantly impacted operations. He said managers continue to closely monitor both COVID and flu case numbers and how those numbers impact local hospital patient loads and their ability to meet BGCAPP's needs in the unlikely case of an emergency.

Hink said BGCAPP continues to have a significant impact on the region's economy with \$197 million spent with Kentucky companies, \$115 million spent in Madison and surrounding counties, 1,476 people employed with 56% of those hired locally, and a \$1.214 billion local payroll to date. He said the project is close to being fully staffed. He also said attrition always occurs and they always are looking for employees. He went through a list of job categories each joint-venture company often needs. He also pointed out job recruitment fairs and events scheduled for the next four months.

Robert Blythe asked how many of the challenges that had been mentioned earlier in the meeting were foreseeable and the impact they will have on the end goal target date. Abaie noted more than a third of the plant's operations have been revised based on previous experience and the existing knowledge base. He said some challenges were not anticipated. He said it would have been impossible to anticipate every anomaly that may have happened during 50 years of storage but having a system that is adaptable and flexible has minimized impacts on operations. Hink added BGCAPP has a trained workforce filled with disciplined problem-solvers who identify new problems, strive to understand those problems, step back and work together to develop plans to solve the problems, and then implement those plans.

KDEP Permitting Updates – Olivia Beasley, BGAD Section, KDEP

The handout referenced during this presentation may be obtained by contacting the ORO at (859) 626-8944 or bgoutreach@iem.com.

Beasley covered some highlights from a handout included in the meeting packet. She said the KDEP team has processed 15 permit modifications since the last CAC/CDCAB meeting and has three Class 2 permit modification requests under review.

Williams asked if any of the modifications altered any of the risk assessments. Beasley said they have not.

Economic Development Working Group Update – Craig Williams, Co-Chair, CDCAB

Williams recounted details of an October meeting with the Kentucky Cabinet for Economic Development, which he described as very productive. He said everyone involved, including the state cabinet secretary, are fully supportive of local and state efforts to mitigate an economic downturn when BGCAPP begins to phase down employment. Those efforts include ways to take advantage of the unique opportunity of having a highly trained labor pool, many of whom have high security clearances. Another meeting with state leaders is scheduled for late January. He said he feels like the community has in place the team necessary to move forward with a substantive plan to try to take advantage of the opportunity.

Williams noted the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2023 had been approved by the U.S. House of Representatives and included modified language for the Secretary of Defense to conduct a feasibility study on potential mission, plant or industrial feasibility at the BGCAPP site and BGAD following the demolition and remediation of the facility. He said the remediation impacts future uses and potential industrial options of military and civilian value inside and outside the base boundaries.

In response to a question, Williams also said he is wrapping up details and membership of the CWG and will finalize that the first week in January in preparation for the Jan. 11 meeting.

Closing Remarks – Reagan Taylor and Craig Williams, Co-Chairs, CDCAB; and Michael Abaie, Program Executive Officer, ACWA

Taylor wished everyone a merry Christmas and happy holidays.

Abaie wished everyone happy holidays, thanked the community for its support and said he looks forward to briefing on significant progress in the future.

Williams also wished everyone happy holidays, thanked Abaie for coming to Kentucky for the update, and thanked Lt. Col. Tyler McKee, commander of the Blue Grass Chemical Activity, for his frequent meetings with and updates to Williams. And finally, he said he wanted to thank KDEP and that his confidence is high in the work it is doing. Noting the question Blythe asked earlier, Williams said his confidence also is high the ACWA team has addressed a number of challenges in a responsible way and has openly communicated about its work. He said that as more challenges come up, the community's confidence should remain high. He concluded by saying that after 35 years of his involvement with the chemical demilitarization program, he can see the end.

Next CAC and CDCAB Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, March 1, 2023, at 1:30 p.m.