



Program Manager Assembled
Chemical Weapons Alternatives

ACWA QUARTERLY BRIEF

A Partnership for Safe Chemical Weapons Destruction

March 2008



HOT TOPICS

Public Law 110-116 Assessment Continues. ACWA continues to examine realistic approaches for speeding up the destruction of the Colorado and Kentucky chemical weapons stockpiles. Once these approaches are validated, their costs and technical risks identified, and Defense Department officials discuss them with Congress, additional information will be forthcoming on how the current destruction schedules might be revised. Section 8119(a) of Public Law 110-116 mandates completing destruction of the chemical weapons stockpiles in accordance with the deadline established by the Chemical Weapons Convention (April 27, 2012), but in no circumstances later than Dec. 31, 2017.

Update on Transportation of Hydrolysate. ACWA continues to explore the option of off-site shipment of hydrolysate (caustic wastewater) as a means of accelerating destruction schedules, reducing taxpayer costs and eliminating sooner the risk to the communities of continued stockpile storage. While a draft House Resolution would prohibit the transport of hydrolysate from the Pueblo Chemical Depot, Colo., or the Blue Grass Army Depot, Ky., this may limit options considered in expediting the destruction of the chemical weapons stockpiles stored at these depots.

Blue Grass Design Under Review. In March, ACWA received notification from the Department of Defense Explosive Safety Board (DDESB) that it will formally reject the munitions demilitarization building structure design portion of the site safety plan for the Blue Grass facility. This rejection resulted from insufficient supporting data for an alternative design used for the total explosive containment sections of the building. Bechtel Parsons Blue Grass submitted this alternative design as a result of construction problems experienced with rebar reinforcement and concrete pours at other chemical demilitarization facilities. Together with ACWA, Bechtel Parsons Blue Grass is working with the Army Corps of Engineers and the Army Technical Center for Explosive Safety to supply additional data in order to better evaluate the design. If DDESB agrees the data is adequate, a final plan package will be submitted for approval. If DDESB concurrence with the proposed design cannot be obtained in a timely manner, then a redesign of the explosive containment room will be executed.

PILOT PLANT UPDATES

Blue Grass Chemical Agent-Destruction Pilot Plant

- **Safety:** 2.6 million job hours without a lost-time injury.
- **Acquisition:** Kentucky businesses have won nearly \$30 million in project subcontracts, representing 60% of the total subcontracts awarded to date.
- **Plant Design:** More than 82% complete with design packages for the three main processing buildings currently under government review.
- **Construction:** With the road network, fencing and lighting complete, more than 100 local workers are installing underground utilities and beginning the erection of the personnel support building, the maintenance building and a badging facility.
- **Next Steps:** Pouring the foundation of the control support building and installing a 138Kv electrical substation.

Pueblo Chemical Agent-Destruction Pilot Plant

- **Safety:** 2.95 million job hours without a lost-time injury.
- **Acquisition:** Bechtel Pueblo has awarded \$106.5 million in subcontracts with more than \$68 million (67%) going to Colorado businesses.
- **Construction:** Recently completed projects include the multipurpose building foundation and all basic site infrastructure. Ongoing projects include installation of natural gas supply lines and vertical construction of the multipurpose building.
- **Next Steps:** Award balance of Stage 3 construction; obtain temporary state authorization for start of enhanced reconfiguration building construction; and obtain public comment on the draft Stage 3 environmental permit.

NEXT 120 DAYS AT ACWA

Operation *Swift Solution* will eliminate three corroding steel containers at the Blue Grass Army Depot that contain a mixture of the nerve agent GB, decontamination solution and other breakdown materials. To support this effort, in March a team from the U.S. Army Edgewood Chemical Biological Center performed a full-scale test using the Chemical Agent Transfer System at Aberdeen Proving Ground, Md., resulting in successful agent neutralization. Work continues on a temporary permit authorization to ensure safe and environmentally responsible operations. Pending approvals from the Kentucky Department for Environmental Protection, destruction operations are slated to begin this summer.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

The Program Manager Assembled Chemical Weapons Alternatives, known as ACWA, is responsible for the safe destruction of chemical weapons stockpiles at the U.S. Army Pueblo Chemical Depot in Colorado and the Blue Grass Army Depot in Kentucky.

Monthly status updates on chemical weapons destruction in Colorado and Kentucky can be found at www.pmacwa.army.mil.

For additional information, please contact the ACWA Communications and Congressional Affairs office at (410) 436-3398.