



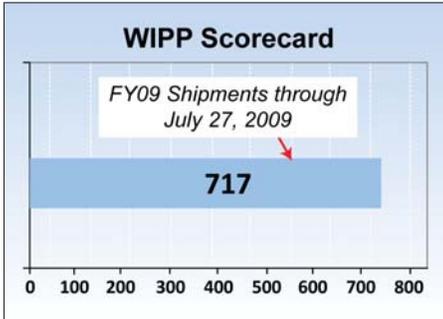
EM UPDATE

Office of Environmental Management



safety ❖ performance ❖ cleanup ❖ closure

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Hanford Shows Its Stuff—Fire, Water and More

Since her confirmation as Assistant Secretary for Environmental Management in May, Dr. Ines Triay has been working on plans to step up outreach efforts to stakeholders, federal workers, contractors, unions, tribal nations and other groups with an interest in EM’s mission.



The tour begins—Karen McGinnis, Director of HAMMER, leads Triay and the rest of the group on its way.

A fast-moving three day visit to the Hanford site in Washington State last week gave her the first opportunity to put those new plans into practice.

With advance planning help from Dave Brockman, Manager of DOE’s Richland Operations Office, and his staff, she managed to break ground for the new \$80 million 200 West Area Pump and Treat facility, get a firsthand look at worker safety training, meet with stakeholders and federal workers and visit three tribal reservations in three different states.

Her first public event took place on Thursday, July 23, when she joined officials from Washington State, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the

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– WELCOME! –

This is the first installment of *EM Update*, the second new communications platform the Office of Environmental Management has launched this year to bring news about its people and programs to everyone with an interest in our mission and how we are carrying it out.

EM Update will come out twice a month and will alternate publication weeks with the *American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) Newsletter* we have been producing monthly since April.

Like the ARRA Newsletter, *EM Update* will be available on the EM Web site: www.em.doe.gov. We will be making continuing improvements to both publications in the months ahead. And we look forward to your comments and feedback helping us out along the way.

Getting Off ‘the High-Risk List’ is Job One

In a speech last week to federal project managers and contractors, Dr. Ines Triay, Assistant Secretary for the Office of Environmental Management, called on them to rebuild the program’s credibility with Congress and outside auditors.

“We need to get off the Government Accountability Office [GAO] high-risk list and we need to recover the credibility of the Environmental Management Program,” she told the more than 130 professionals who gathered in Las Vegas for a three-day workshop on project and contract management.

Triay, who took over leadership of EM in May, told the group that while the program has “extremely dedicated and excellent engineers and scientists . . . somehow we find ourselves on the GAO high-risk list with comments such as ‘until they develop leadership that is committed to high performance they will be subject to waste, fraud and abuse’ .”

“That is unacceptable and should be unacceptable to you,” she said. “Whatever we can fix, we need to have a frank discussion so we can go and fix it.”

Triay told the group that the best way for the Program to rebuild its reputation is by delivering projects on time and within budget.

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Hanford Shows Its Stuff

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AFL-CIO Metal Trades Department to announce that construction is underway on the largest treatment plant for contaminated groundwater ever built at Hanford.

A crowd of some 100 Hanford workers and community members gathered for the event, which was held on the Central Plateau of the Hanford Site.

Joining Triay at the event were Brockman, Jay Manning, Director of Washington State's Department of Ecology, Mike Gearheard, Assistant Deputy Administrator for EPA's Region X, John Lehew, President of CH2M Hill Plateau Remediation Company and Ron Ault, President of AFL-CIO Metal Trades.

The 200 West Area Pump and Treat facility is being built with \$80 million



Digging In: Officials with contractor CH2M HILL, the U.S. Department of Energy, the AFL-CIO, EPA, and Washington State break ground on an \$80 million Recovery Act project at the Hanford Site in Washington State on July 23. A groundwater treatment facility roughly the size of a football field will cover the area they are standing on when completed in 2011. Pictured are (left to right) John Lehew, President, CH2M HILL Plateau Remediation Company, Dave Brockman, Manager, DOE Richland Operations Office, Ines Triay, Assistant Secretary for Environmental Management, Ron Ault, Metal Trades President, AFL-CIO, Mike Gearheard, Assistant Deputy Administrator, EPA, Region X, and Jay Manning, Director, Washington State Department of Ecology.



Assistant Secretary for Environmental Management Ines Triay addresses an audience of community members and employees as she announces the start of construction on the largest groundwater treatment system built to date at the Hanford Site in Washington State.

of American Reinvestment and Recovery Act (ARRA) funds and is expected to create some 100 construction jobs between now and late 2011 when it starts operations.

Originally, EM planned to build the facility in two phases. But the availability of Recovery Act funds will allow a larger facility to be built in one phase, bringing the facility to full capacity five years earlier, potentially reducing the time required for cleanup operations and saving an estimated \$25 million in long-term cleanup costs.

“This is exactly the type of project that Congress had in mind when it provided Recovery Act funding,” Triay said in her remarks. “We are ushering in a new era of groundwater treatment at Hanford, and this is a major step forward.”

Groundwater systems across the 586-square-mile Hanford Site are

currently pumping and treating approximately 50 million gallons a month. The new facility will add 85 million gallons a month of treatment capacity, more than doubling the amount of groundwater treated on the site when the facility begins operating.

“This project shows a bias for action,” said Manning. “It’s the type of project the governor and I are looking for.”

The new treatment system will bring together for the first time technologies that will be able to remove nitrates and metals, as well as radioactive and organic contaminants, and return the water to the aquifer cleaned to the Federal Drinking Water Standard.

Containing the contamination to the center of the Hanford Site is a key part of EM’s strategy for protecting the Columbia River that flows through the Site just a few miles away from where the treatment facility will be built.



“We’re holding the line on groundwater contamination in this area and not letting it get to the Columbia River,” said Brockman. “This treatment system will not only remove contamination but also shrink the area of contamination so it won’t move from the center of the Hanford Site to the river.”

After the construction event, Triay moved on to Hanford’s HAMMER [Hazardous Materials Management & Emergency Response] Training Facility, where she spend several hours reviewing its wide-ranging programs and getting a firsthand look at the instruction being given to the roughly 1,000 new Hanford workers hired so far using Recovery Act funds.

During her tour, she saw the signature HAMMER props that enable Hanford workers to train in conditions as close to the actual experience as possible—including confined spaces, search and rescue, waste handling and characterization, and a burning fire prop that combined with the day’s 102-degree weather to mimic the harsh conditions a firefighter might face fighting a summer fire on site.

At one point, in a large warehouse-turned-classroom lined with radiation protection suits, large-scale safety demo props, and an area for practicing decontamination techniques, about 20 men and women listened carefully to their instructor as he covered the final lessons and reminders prior to their exercise.

Unknown to the students, Triay was watching intently from the back of the room. “Of all the things we do when we bring folks into EM, this is by far the most important,” she whispered to Brockman. “They have to understand how much we value their safety.”

Triay’s tour was coordinated and joined by organized labor, a key partner in HAMMER.



A Group That Can Take the Heat: Tour participants gathered after a demonstration of the Flammable Liquids Burn Pad. Standing from left to right: Dave Molnaa, HAMTC President; Tom Schaffer, DOE Site Rep, Metal Trades Department; Jonathan Dowell, DOE-ORP, Engineering and Nuclear Safety [behind Tom Schaffer]; Fred McClure, HAMTC Vice President; Fred Rumsey, HAMTC Trustee [behind Triay]; Ines Triay; Gordon McCleary, International VP, Plasterers & Cement Masons [behind Triay]; Jim Spracklen, DOE-RL, HAMMER Program Manager; and Ron Ault, President of the Metal Trades Division of the AFL-CIO along with other HAMMER officials.

During the tour, she had the opportunity to spend some time chatting with a classroom full of new hires.

Asked what they thought of the training they’d received, the students applauded. One new employee praised HAMMER’s approach of using senior workers as the trainers, noting the strong incentive those trainers have to correctly train their future field partners. “The workers here all have a real passion for safety,” he said. “It’s so clear that the people here take care of each other.”

Ault, President of the Metal Trades Division of the AFL-CIO, praised Triay for her commitment to safety and for her leadership on the nationwide Environmental Management Program cleanup work. “This is a person who

believes to the core of her soul that there is no job worth an injury,” he said. ■

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Getting Off ‘the High-Risk List’ is Top Priority

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EM, which manages large scale cleanup and construction projects at sites around the country that were once part of the nation’s nuclear weapons program, has been classified as a high-risk program by GAO since 1990.

GAO applies the high risk designation government-wide to programs and functions it considers vulnerable to waste, fraud, abuse and mismanagement.

In March, GAO reported to Congress that the U.S. Department of Energy as a whole has substantially met three of the five conditions it has set for removal from its high-risk list.

Triay pointed out that since 2005, EM has delivered 95 percent of its cleanup projects on time and more than 80 percent within budget. “I think that is an excellent record,” she said.

The agency said that DOE had shown leadership and commitment by analyzing the root causes for cost overruns and schedule delays in its large construction projects and had completed a comprehensive corrective action plan.

But it also concluded that DOE needs to do more to strengthen its contract and project management staff and its monitoring and evaluation of whether corrective actions are working. Until EM and the National Nuclear Security Administration [NNSA], which manage many of the Department’s largest construction projects, can “consistently complete projects on time and within budget,” GAO said it will keep them on the high-risk list.

Triay pointed out that since 2005, EM has delivered 95 percent of its cleanup projects on time and more than 80 percent within budget. “I think that is an excellent record,” she said.

But she added, EM’s construction projects have continued to run over budget and behind schedule.

She outlined to the group a series of steps EM is now taking or considering to improve its overall performance.

She said EM is moving away from the “design-build” approach to large projects it has relied on in the past because it has proven too expensive. She said she is seeking new approaches that retain flexibility while allowing for better cost control.

She also discussed the new guidelines EM has issued on what work will be considered a capital project subject to the oversight requirements of DOE’s Order 413.3A, and what work will be considered part of ongoing operations where managers will have more day-to-day flexibility.

The new guidelines, she said, will also help break large projects into smaller, more manageable pieces, or “chunks.”

These new guidelines will be applied to EM’s American Recovery and Reinvestment Act [ARRA] projects and to all its other projects as well.

She also said she was considering using the “Owner’s Representative” approach to help bolster EM’s oversight of ongoing projects. This could mean hiring outside construction management experts to bolster the oversight that is already provided by federal staff.

The bottom line, she said, is the EM program is going to continue to experiment and try new approaches to project management until it finds the

“Every decision that we make in this Program today should be considered an experiment,” Triay said. “If it doesn’t work we are going to try something else. It isn’t important how we get there, but that we get there.”

combination that delivers the schedule and budget performance it is after.

“Every decision that we make in this Program today should be considered an experiment,” Triay said. “If it doesn’t work we are going to try something else. It isn’t important how we get there, but that we get there.”

Other EM speakers at the workshop included Deputy Assistant Secretary Jack Surash and Cynthia Anderson, who oversees EM’s ARRA projects. Anderson discussed the impact they will have on the overall EM Program over the next two years as the ARRA team pursues its goal of creating or preserving 10,000 cleanup jobs around the country.

Surash, who heads EM’s Acquisition and Project Management team, outlined the Corrective Action Management Plan for project and contract management that is now in place at EM.

John Simonds, founder and president of Martin-Simonds Associates, an Albuquerque, NM, management consulting and training firm, was the featured guest speaker at the workshop.

His theme was the importance of the “touchy-feely” part of project management. He stressed the informal parts of the process that depend on good interpersonal communication skills. He said people who possess emotional intelligence, such as empathy, are the most successful project managers. ■



Tribal Officials Welcome Triay to Reservations in Three States

The last leg of Dr. Ines Triay’s Hanford Site visit saw her fitting in visits to Indian Reservations in Washington State, Oregon and Idaho to meet with elected officials from the tribes that provide input to Hanford operations including the Yakama Indian Nation, the Nez Perce Tribe and the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation.

At each meeting, Triay shared a meal and exchanged views with tribal leaders and staff in an effort to build better relations between DOE and the tribes.

Triay began her meetings by sharing a salmon dinner with the Yakama on their reservation in Toppenish, Wash., on Thursday evening.

She was accompanied by Richland Operations Office Manager Dave Brockman and Jill Conrad and Kim Ballinger of Hanford’s Tribal Relations staff.

“I’m interested in conducting cleanup in a respectful manner and with the required consultation with the tribes,” she told elected tribal leaders.



Triay (3rd from left) meets with the elected officials and staff of the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation in Mission, Oregon.

That drew a positive response. “We appreciate your willingness to step out on behalf of the United States of America to visit our Reservation and see our land for yourself,” said Mose Squeochs, General Council Chairman and Chair of the Yakama Radioactive/Hazardous Committee.

“We were here for thousands of years, we are here and we will always be here,” Councilwoman Athena Yallup added. The tribal leaders spoke of their concerns about the food, land, water, air and fish and shared stories about the history of their people.

Triay responded by saying, “You certainly have every reason to be zealous about this land – it’s beautiful. I understand your responsibility as leaders

and hope to engage you in a meaningful way as we move forward with cleanup at Hanford.”

“We were here for thousands of years, we are here and we will always be here.”

– Yakama Councilwoman Athena Yallup

The Nez Perce Tribe then hosted Triay at a breakfast meeting Friday in Lapwai, Idaho, where Vice-Chairman Brooklyn Baptiste said that Triay’s visit was a great example of DOE’s commitment to work with the tribes and pressed the need for quality consultation.

Triay told the elected leaders and dozen staff members who work on Hanford tribal issues, that she was available to hear concerns and understood that while there might not always be agree-

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Triay (right) discusses Hanford tribal issues with Nez Perce Environmental Restoration and Waste Management Director Gabriel Bohnee and RL Tribal Affairs Program Manager Jill Conrad in Lapwai, Idaho.



A Tribal Welcome

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ment, she was committed to improving communications.

She also met with about 30 American Indian students involved in the Nez Perce's "Preparation for Academic Excellence" (PACE)—a math and science camp—and urged them to keep working to unravel the secrets of science.

Finally, Triay traveled to Mission, Oregon, where she met with the tribal leaders and staff of the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation over lunch. The tribal leaders presented a list of specific concerns to Triay and Brockman. Councilman Armand Minthorn welcomed the opportunity to express his concerns directly to the Assistant Secretary and Site Manager.

Tribal involvement in Hanford activities is based in part on the DOE



Dr. Triay (middle) met with the Yakama Indian Nation's elected leaders and staff in Toppenish, Washington at the Yakama Nation Cultural Heritage Center.

American Indian & Alaska Native Tribal Government Policy which guides the DOE's interaction with tribes for Hanford Site plans and activities. The policy states, among other things: "the Department will consult with any

American Indian . . . tribal government with regard to any property to which that tribe attaches religious or cultural importance which might be affected by a DOE action." ■

– PEOPLE –

■ **Steve McCracken**, who is currently Assistant Manager for Environmental Management at the Oak Ridge Operations Office, will be retiring after 30 years of Federal service. He will be replaced by **John Eschenberg**, who is currently the Assistant Manager for the Waste Treatment Plant at Hanford.

McCracken started his federal service by joining the Department of Energy in Oak Ridge, Tennessee in 1980 as a civil engineer. He went on to build a distinguished career in which he held several senior management positions including Manager of the Weldon Springs Site in Missouri and Acting Director of EM Operations and Manager of the Ohio Field Office before assuming his current post.

John Eschenberg has been with DOE for 15 years and served at three field offices and Headquarters for the National Nuclear Security Administration before starting his current assignment with the Office of River Protection at Hanford. He holds a bachelor's degree in Science and Management.

■ **Guy Girard** has been named the Acting Assistant Manager for the Waste Treatment Plant project. He transferred to ORP earlier this year from Idaho, where he most recently managed the Sodium Bearing Waste Treatment Project. He is an experienced project manager and engineer and has served in various technical and management positions at Idaho, Savannah River, DOE Headquarters, the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard, and as a technical advisor

to a member of Congress. His bachelor's degree is in Mechanical Engineering.

■ **Richard Craun** will replace **Guy Girard** at Idaho as the Integrated Waste Treatment Unit Construction Federal Project Director and Sodium Bearing Waste Senior Technical Advisor. He has more than 33 years of nuclear facilities engineering, project management, construction and quality assurance experience. Most recently he has been with DOE's Office of Civilian Radioactive Waste Management. His bachelor's degree is in Mechanical Engineering.

Recent management changes at Headquarters will be covered in the next issue of EM Update.



– NEWS FROM AROUND THE COMPLEX –

■ Savannah River's Million Gallon Milestone

Savannah River Remediation (SRR) workers processed over one million gallons of hazardous waste between January and June, mostly from underground waste storage tanks at the Savannah River Site (SRS) Saltstone facility. The facility achieved the milestone earlier this month and continues to safely stabilize and dispose of low-activity salt and incidental process waste at a record pace.

“The liquid waste program employees are demonstrating real progress in the safe removal and permanent disposition of this low-activity salt waste, which supports DOE’s ultimate priority to permanently close our tank farm system and reduce risk,” said Terrel Spears, Assistant Manager for Waste Disposition Project, DOE-Savannah River Operations Office.

SRS is the only site within the DOE complex that processes and permanently disposes salt waste removed from waste tanks. The one million gallons of waste removed from the site’s tank farm system has been placed into permanent disposal form. Although the Saltstone facility has been disposing of other low level waste streams for some time, it first began handling the salt waste stream in January 2009.

■ VPP Star for Bechtel BWXT Idaho and the Advanced Mixed Waste Treatment Project

The U.S. Department of Energy has recognized Bechtel BWXT [Babcock Wilcox International Technologies] Idaho and the Idaho Site’s Advanced

Mixed Waste Treatment Project (AMWTP) as a Star site in its Voluntary Protection Program (VPP). The designation was recognized in a July 28 ceremony at the Idaho Site where the VPP Star flag was awarded by DOE Idaho Operations Office Deputy Manager Rick Provencher to Bechtel BWXT Idaho President and General Manager Jeff Mousseau.



DOE Idaho Operations Office Deputy Manager Rick Provencher hands the VPP flag to Bechtel BWXT Idaho President and General Manager Jeff Mousseau, as AMWTP Employee Safety & Improvement Team Co-Chair Tracy Anderson holds the VPP certificate.

Approval as a VPP Star site is DOE’s official recognition of the outstanding efforts of employers and workers who have achieved exemplary occupational safety and health records.

The action “comes after an extensive review of the project’s safety practices, the knowledge employees have about safety procedures, and our determination that this truly is a site where management and employees have a comprehensive safety and health management program,” said Provencher.

Nearly 900 employees and subcontractors work at AMWTP, carrying out its mission to retrieve, charac-

terize, process, package and ship historically managed stored transuranic nuclear waste to permanent disposal sites outside Idaho. The safe work environment has contributed to AMWTP safely shipping more radioactive waste than any other site in the DOE complex during the past four years.

■ Nevada Test Site Clear of Legacy TRU Waste

The Nevada Test Site (NTS) shipped its last load of legacy transuranic waste to the Advanced Mixed Waste Treatment Project (AMWTP) in Idaho on June 9, making it the 15th EM site to be cleaned of all legacy TRU waste since the March 1999 opening of the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP) in New Mexico.

An agreement with the state of Idaho allows DOE to accept wastes at AMWTP for treatment, as long as that waste is treated within six months of receipt and shipped out of Idaho for disposal within six months of treatment.

WIPP coordinated the transportation logistics, which involved 17 shipments from NTS to Idaho. The shipments used the same resources, safety protocols and satellite tracking that are called upon for shipping TRU waste to WIPP.

At the AMWTP, the waste will be more extensively characterized and certified for disposal. TRU waste that meets WIPP requirements will be shipped to WIPP for disposal. Waste that is determined to be low-level and not eligible for disposal at WIPP, will be sent to an appropriately-permitted facility for disposition.

– NEWS FROM AROUND THE COMPLEX (cont'd) –

■ Portsmouth Gathers Soil Samples to Support Groundwater Cleanup

Workers at the U.S. Department of Energy's (DOE) Portsmouth Gaseous Diffusion Plant in southern Ohio completed taking soil borings from 90 locations earlier this month to further characterize a groundwater plume area containing high concentrations of trichloroethylene (TCE), an industrial cleaning solvent previously used at the site.

The soil samples are being collected to support the design of interim measures at the groundwater plume, located underneath the former X-701B Holding Pond area on the east side of the uranium enrichment plant. The plant ceased operations in 2001.



Soil core samples are collected from a groundwater plume area at the Portsmouth Gaseous Diffusion Plant.

On June 15, 2009, the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency approved DOE's sampling and analysis plan for design of interim measures at the groundwater plume in accordance with requirements of the Ohio Consent Decree.

Groundwater corrective actions have been ongoing at the plume over the

past several years, involving collection and treatment, monitoring, and in-situ chemical oxidation. Current data indicate that saturated soil near the lower shale layer, approximately 30 feet beneath the ground surface, serves as a continuing source of residual TCE leaching to groundwater.

DOE plans to work closely with regulator and use results from the soil investigation to design an interim measure using soil oxidation treatment to accelerate TCE groundwater remediation at the plume.

■ Paducah Prepares to Boil Off Contaminants from Groundwater

Construction of a system to remove the degreaser TCE from the largest source of off-site groundwater contamination at DOE's Paducah Site in Kentucky is entering its final stages.

The portions of the C-400 Interim Remedial Action that are complete include a network of buried electrodes that will heat the subsurface to a depth of 100 feet, monitoring wells, and a structure to house an aboveground water treatment system. Installation of equipment to power the system and treat water and vapors is continuing.

When installation is complete, the treatment system located adjacent to the plant's C-400 Cleaning Building will use electrical resistance to heat the subsurface to the boiling point of TCE and vacuum pumps will extract the vapors for treatment and safe disposal. System testing will begin after construction is completed with operations to follow successful testing.

■ More Public Tours at SRS This Fall

When the Savannah River Site (SRS) opened its gate for public tours under a pilot program in March, it learned that there was plenty of interest in getting a look inside. Online registration filled 300 tour seats in less than 24 hours.

Based on the success of that pilot program, SRS has decided to open its gates to the general public again this fall. It is planning to hold eight tours starting in September and to add a few new features to them

"Feedback from the pilot program told us the public wanted more so we've lengthened the tour agenda and included a stop at the Savannah River Ecology Laboratory," said Jeff Allison, manager of DOE's Savannah River Operations Office.

"We're also including drive-by tours of both Dunbarton and Ellenton, former towns that were relocated when the government began constructing SRS in the early 1950s."

Tours will last about four hours and will begin and end at the Aiken County Center for Hydrogen Research campus near the site.

For more information or to register for a tour, visit www.srs.gov and click on "About SRS" for the SRS Tour Program or use the direct link to <http://www5.hanford.gov/srstours/>.