



DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE

HEADQUARTERS 49TH FIGHTER WING (ACC)
HOLLOMAN AIR FORCE BASE, NEW MEXICO

17 MAR 2000

MEMORANDUM FOR NEW MEXICO ENVIRONMENT DEPARTMENT

Ms. Julie A. Jacobs
Ground Water Quality Bureau
1190 St. Francis Drive
Santa Fe NM 87502

MAR 2000
RECEIVED

FROM: 49 CES/CD
550 Tabosa Avenue
Holloman AFB NM 88330-8458

SUBJECT: 7-day Report for Chemical Agent Incident, Mar 00

1. This letter report constitutes the 7-day report required by New Mexico Environment Department regulation WQCC Section 1203. The report is a follow-up to our initial verbal notification to your office on 8 Mar 00.
2. On 9 Feb 00, our Environmental Flight (CEV) was notified of and escorted to a site where two ampoules of unknown liquid were discovered by a military family dependent. The site lay just north of the former main base landfill (IRP site LF-01/SWMU 106). The ampoules were handled as unknown and given to the base Bioenvironmental Engineering office for analysis. Subsequently, the ampoules were transported to Brooks AFB, TX.
3. On 7 Mar 00, base officials were notified via telephone that the ampoules were visually identified as being from a Chemical Agent Identification Set (CAIS). CAISs were produced between the 1930s and 60s for military chemical warfare training purposes, and records show they were present at Holloman AFB (HAFB) during the 1940s and 50s. A chemical analysis was not performed. Base officials immediately ordered the site be cordoned and access restricted.
4. On 8 Mar 00, HAFB convened with all the key players and decided that a chemical analysis was needed to positively identify the chemical agent contained in the ampoules. Key players included the US Army's Program Manager for Non-Stockpile Chemical Materiel (PMNSCM) and the Technical Escort Unit (TEU), both located at Aberdeen Proving Ground, MD. Additional players were the Air Force Institute for Environment, Safety and Occupational Health Risk Analysis (IERA) at Brooks AFB, Southwest Research Institute (SWRI), the US Air Force Air Combat Command (ACC) and HAFB. A site visit from the PMNSCM and TEU was scheduled for 16 Mar 00. The purpose of the visit would be to perform a site survey and provide technical guidance on future actions.
5. Also on 8 Mar, HAFB notified the Ground Water Quality Bureau and the Hazardous & Radioactive Materials Bureau of the discovery and actions taken.

6. On 16 Mar 00, the Army units surveyed the site and briefed HAFB personnel on actions taken. From the information discussed, HAFB concluded that the site should be expanded and a permanent fence erected to better control access. In addition, a geophysical survey would be required to identify any disposal pits in the immediate area that may contain additional CAIS. Funding will be provided by ACC and fieldwork started as soon as possible. The exact timetable had not been determined at the time of this report.

7. As of 16 Mar 00, the two ampoules remain at SWRI. A chemical analysis will be performed prior to 17 Apr 00. The analysis will totally consume the liquid, thus eliminating the need for disposal. ACC and HAFB are coordinating with IERA to ensure the analysis is performed in a timely manner.

8. If you have any questions or require additional information, please contact Mr. Jose Gallegos or Mr. Court Fesmire at (505) 572-5395.


HOWARD E. MOFFITT
Deputy Base Civil Engineer

cc:

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