

TESTIMONY OF CRAIG CONKLIN
CHIEF, NUCLEAR AND CHEMICAL HAZARDS BRANCH
DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY BEFORE THE
HOUSE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON TERRORISM, UNCONVENTIONAL THREATS AND CAPABILITIES
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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Mr. Chairman and members of the Subcommittee, I am Craig Conklin, Chief of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) Nuclear and Chemical Hazards Branch. I am pleased to provide this update on our progress in support of the Chemical Stockpile Emergency Preparedness Program (CSEPP) since my last testimony before this Subcommittee on April 1, 2004.

Once again, we welcome the opportunity to share with the committee CSEPP's continued successes and how this important program is benefiting our Nations' emergency preparedness and homeland security efforts.

I will briefly cover FEMA's roles and responsibilities in CSEPP; the structure and operation of the program; the current status and challenges presented by this complex program; and the continuing efforts to share the lessons learned from this program within DHS.

CHEMICAL STOCKPILE EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS PROGRAM (CSEPP)

The statutory foundation of the CSEPP is Public Law (P.L.) 99-145, wherein Congress directed the Department of Defense (DOD) to dispose of its lethal chemical agents and munitions while providing "maximum protection for the environment, the general public and the personnel involved in the destruction of lethal chemical agents and munitions . . ." Both the U.S. Army and FEMA continue to work towards Congress' goal of maximum protection for the environment, workers, and the general public. FEMA and the Army jointly formed CSEPP to ensure that Congress' intent was followed.

Since 1988, FEMA and the Army have cooperated in enhancing public safety and working towards maximum protection at the Army's chemical stockpile sites. We also have signed three Memoranda of Understanding and one reaffirmation to show our cooperation and resolve

in protecting the public. Currently, FEMA and the Army enjoy a close and productive working relationship at the Federal level, and the Army installations are working effectively with State and local governments.

FEMA'S CSEPP RESPONSIBILITIES

CSEPP is an outstanding example of partnership among the Army, FEMA, States, Tribal Nations, and local jurisdictions. The Federal management structure is uniquely designed to capitalize on each Federal partner's expertise and administrative infrastructure to develop and enhance the emergency preparedness capabilities of the affected Army installations and the participating State, Tribal, and local jurisdictions.

Within CSEPP, FEMA's responsibility and accountability entail all aspects of off-post emergency preparedness, including:

- Administering off-post CSEPP funds;
- Supporting the States in developing response plans;
- Preparing, developing, delivering, and evaluating training;
- Providing technical assistance; and
- Developing programs for evaluating off-site readiness capability.

PROGRAM STRUCTURE

Ten States, 41 counties, and one Tribal Nation surrounding the eight U.S. Army stockpile sites participate in CSEPP. The eight States hosting installations with chemical stockpiles are: Alabama, Arkansas, Colorado, Indiana, Kentucky, Maryland, Oregon, and Utah. Two additional States, Illinois and Washington, also participate in the program because of their borders' proximity to the stockpiles in Indiana and Oregon, respectively. The Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Reservation in Oregon also actively participate in the program.

Thirteen (13) counties are in Immediate Response Zones, the areas closest to where the chemical agents are stored and generally within approximately a ten-mile radius. Twenty-five counties are in Protective Action Zones, beginning at the outer edge of the Immediate Response Zones and extending to a distance of between six and 31 miles. The remaining three counties are

designated as host counties, which lie outside the Immediate Response Zones and Protective Action Zones.

Like FEMA's other emergency preparedness programs, CSEPP is administered through the States. Funds are distributed to the States under Cooperative Agreements, based upon a negotiated work plan between the States and FEMA Regional Offices. Under the agreements, each State identifies needs, develops proposed projects to meet those needs, requests funds, and disburses those funds at the State level and to local governments.

Budgeting for the CSEPP is done according to DOD's Planning Programming, Budgeting, and Execution process (PPBE). The budget for off-post emergency preparedness is based in large part on Life Cycle Cost Estimates (LCCEs) that are prepared by the States in conjunction with FEMA, and updated regularly.

At the Federal level, FEMA and Army Headquarters are responsible for CSEPP policy and program development, while the FEMA Regions and the Army's Chemical Materials Agency manage day-to-day operations. Site-specific issues are dealt with through site-specific Integrated Process Teams. These teams (required by Section 1076 of P.L. 104-201, the Department of Defense Authorization Act for FY1997) serve as the primary local forum for identifying site-specific operational issues, proposing solutions to those issues to the appropriate level decision makers, and implementing programmatic and operational decisions.

CSEPP MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

CSEPP focuses on providing the personnel, equipment, and training necessary to establish a response infrastructure that enables emergency managers to quickly alert the public, manage the response, and communicate with the public, the media, and emergency responders. Equally important is public awareness of what to do in the event of an incident. CSEPP programmatic benchmarks define a level of response functionality necessary to protect the public (benchmark compliance) and provide resources as needed to eliminate preparedness weaknesses.

Fiduciary requirements dictate that FEMA carefully evaluate requests from the States and communities to achieve "maximum protection" capability within the limits of funds provided. As such, our goal is to deliver maximum available resources to the local communities in relation to the level of risk faced by the community.

FEMA's innovative efforts in relating resources to risk reduction have been recognized as an example of sound fiscal management, including receipt of a "Profiles in Innovation" award for Emergency Preparedness Excellence at the 2004 GOVSEC, U.S. Law, & READY! Exposition and Conference.

As of March 31, 2005, approximately \$746 million had been allocated to the States under the annual Cooperative Agreements over the life of the program since 1988. In addition, \$80.1 million more has been applied to FEMA-managed contracts that support the States. The allocation of resources is tracked according to the jurisdiction that spends the funds rather than the jurisdiction that benefits from the service. Therefore, funds spent at the State and county levels do not reflect the true picture of the benefits the counties have received through the program.

For FY2006, FEMA has programmed \$90.1 million into the budget to cover off-post CSEPP-preparedness.

OVERALL MISSION

CSEPP activities are an extension of the FEMA mission "to lead America to prepare for, prevent, respond to, and recover from disasters." CSEPP's mission is to "enhance existing local, installation, tribal, State, and Federal capabilities to protect the health and safety of the public, work force, and environment from the effects of a chemical accident or incident involving the U.S. Army chemical stockpile." Both missions are accomplished in CSEPP through partnerships with other DHS Directorates, the Army, Federal departments and agencies, States, one Tribal Nation, local governments, volunteer organizations, and the private industry.

CURRENT SITUATION

All our CSEPP communities have attained the public safety capabilities reflected by our programmatic benchmarks. FEMA and the Army continue to manage CSEPP through the 12 benchmarks. These benchmarks date back to 1993 and capture the outcome-oriented capabilities necessary to ensure public safety. The Program continues to develop metrics and strategic plans to ensure the environment, workers, and public are protected.

The benchmarks are the primary system by which we manage performance in CSEPP. The eight CSEPP communities evaluate and update their benchmark status. The FEMA Regional CSEPP personnel then report benchmark status to FEMA headquarters. CSEPP has made significant strides in improving benchmark compliance during 2004. In fact, during that year, compliance increased from 95.4 percent at the end of Fiscal Year 2003 to 98.5 percent by the end of Fiscal Year 2004.

CSEPP communities are better prepared to respond to all natural and man-made hazards as a result of their involvement in this Program. The lessons learned through CSEPP and the materials created to prepare the public apply to many other homeland security needs. CSEPP actively works to share its best practices and experience.

NEW INITIATIVES

During the past year, initiatives have begun that relate to reducing both community risk and program costs associated with CSEPP. With the chemical stockpile at Aberdeen Proving Ground now completely destroyed, FEMA is working with Maryland officials to close out that community from the Program. The closeout lessons learned from Aberdeen are being captured by a national working group and will be used to develop policy for closing out other CSEPP sites.

FEMA and the Army have also begun a dialogue with the State CSEPP managers to discuss a reduction in program support in communities with active chemical disposal plants. Successful destruction of chemical agents has already resulted in significant risk reduction. We are committed to working with our Program partners in a collaborative process that will structure program support that is commensurate with actual community risk. FEMA is also committed to using risk-based decision making methodologies in reviewing program requirements. FEMA will continue to ensure that a baseline emergency preparedness capability is maintained until the chemical stockpiles are completely destroyed.

Although the preparedness budget represents only about 6 percent of the overall chemical demilitarization budget, our successes loom large. FEMA and Army personnel are working closely with our State, county and Tribal partners to sustain community preparedness, evaluate

program requirements and continue our planning, training and exercise activities in the most efficient manner possible.

Adjusting to the changing program requirements, FEMA has reduced CSEPP staffing at our headquarters in Washington, DC, and in several FEMA Regions. In addition, several Integrated Process Teams that have successfully completed their missions were disbanded and other workgroups were consolidated to better address the current status of the Program. This past year, a study was conducted to develop recommendations on the effective use of Program-wide Integrated Process Teams. Effective teams will remain and continue to provide a collaborative process for developing policy recommendations or developing specific products. We are proud of the accomplishments of our IPTs and are committed to ensuring that teams focus on current program requirements and that they are provided the tools necessary to operate effectively. Staffing needs will also continue to be evaluated to ensure that FEMA and State and local staffing is appropriate to fulfill our preparedness mission.

Last year, DHS introduced the National Incident Management System (NIMS) to standardize national emergency response command structures. States are required to be NIMS-compliant by the end of Fiscal Year 2005. Building on established Federal, State, and local partnerships, FEMA is actively working to integrate NIMS with CSEPP.

CHALLENGES

As the disposal schedule is extended, the cost of CSEPP increases. The cost escalation can be significant because many major infrastructure systems such as interoperable communications, outdoor sirens, and automation systems have a finite life span and may require replacement during the Program's life cycle. These system replacements were not originally budgeted because stockpile destruction was planned before system obsolescence.

Two appropriations issues also create challenges for Program management. The loss of two-year availability for Operations and Maintenance (O&M) funding and the imposition of fenced appropriations for on-post preparedness funding, removes the needed time period for our State and local partners to implement projects and the flexibility to employ Federal funds where they provide the most public protection.

CONTINUED SUCCESSES

The partnership between the Army and FEMA is very strong and getting stronger. Our two organizations have worked well together resulting in numerous accomplishments. Building on those successes, we are working on other initiatives that are designed to enhance public protection, to streamline budgeting and administrative tasks. Since my last testimony, the program has achieved many notable successes.

EXERCISES

FEMA and the Army, along with their State and local partners, have conducted eight (8) Community CSEPP Exercises and published and updated the CSEPP Exercise Policy Document within the past year. It should be noted that the DHS/Office for Domestic Preparedness' Homeland Security Exercise Evaluation Program (HSEEP) uses an exercise methodology adapted from the CSEPP Exercise Program. CSEPP and HSEEP use similar terminology and exercise outcomes in order to reduce confusion in the communities and increase interoperability of evaluators among the two national exercise programs.

TRAINING

CSEPP training is offered on a continual basis to the communities surrounding the chemical storage sites. CSEPP training has been made available to non-CSEPP communities via the CSEPP Training site at <http://emc.ornl.gov/CSEPPweb/FEMACSEPPHome.html>. To date, over 500,000 down loads of training materials have been recorded. CSEPP training has been recognized as an important component in protecting emergency responders and the general public outside of CSEPP. The CSEPP "Residential Shelter-in-Place" video/DVD has been recommended as a resource to all new home buyers in "Protecting Your Family and Home", a publication developed by the Homeowners Alliance and DHS.

PUBLIC OUTREACH

CSEPP continues a public outreach program that informs residents of the necessary actions they would need to take in the unlikely event of a chemical incident. Outreach includes school-based programs, community events, and advertisements using radio, television and newspapers.

Through the proactive work of our network of public information officers (PIOs), we continue to reach out to the CSEPP communities. For example, our Utah PIOs were responsible for much of the behind-the-scenes support when the commander of Deseret Chemical Depot addressed the Tooele County Chamber of Commerce. About 50 local business owners and public officials attended this event.

In Alabama, Arkansas, Washington/Oregon and Indiana, CSEPP-funded media campaigns are bringing the CSEPP message to the public. To capitalize on intrinsic interest, the campaigns are timed so as to coincide with high-profile events. For example, the Arkansas PIO contingent has tied the start of its campaign's second-year phase with the start of stockpile incineration at the Pine Bluff site.

The impressive work of our outreach team is not going unnoticed. Just last month the Army recognized the Washington/Oregon PIO contingent with the Chief of Public Affairs' Special Award of Excellence. The group was cited for its support of the start-up of the Umatilla Chemical Agent Disposal Facility.

CONCLUSION

CSEPP has significantly enhanced the ability of State, Tribal and local officials to respond to a chemical incident at the Army's installations. However, FEMA will not rest on these accomplishments, no matter how significant they may be. Until all agent and weapon systems are destroyed, FEMA will continue to work with our State, tribal, and county partners to ensure they are prepared to respond to an event if one was to occur. Our efforts to improve public safety will not cease until all the chemical weapons stockpiles are destroyed.

We all look forward to that day when the last chemical weapon and warfare agent is destroyed. In closing, I want to thank the members of the Subcommittee for their past support of CSEPP and I appreciate the opportunity to testify before you today. I would be pleased to answer any questions you may have.