Corps Facts

US Army Corps of Engineers®

Subject: Munitions Response Site Prioritization Protocol

The Department of Defense developed the Munitions Response Site Prioritization Protocol after Congress requested DoD establish a method for assigning a relative priority for response actions to defense sites containing military munitions. The protocol is applicable to sites known or suspected to contain unexploded ordnance (UXO), discarded military munitions (DMM), or munitions constituents (MC). The sites may be located at active installations, at Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) installations, or at Formerly Used Defense Sites (FUDS).

The Protocol was established in collaboration with the States, American Indian and Alaskan Native Tribes, and Federal Agencies. The Department of Defense established a workgroup that interviewed persons familiar with or interested in Munitions Response Site prioritization. This process determined the factors to be considered in the prioritization process.

Protocol Overview

The Munitions Response Site Prioritization Protocol was developed in three modules to evaluate the unique hazards posed by UXO, DMM, and MC.

• The Explosive Hazard Evaluation (EHE) Module provides a single approach to evaluate explosive hazards. This module is used when there is a known or suspected presence of an explosive hazard. The module considers data elements relative to three factors — explosive hazard, accessibility and potential effects on people.

• The Chemical Warfare Materiel Hazard Evaluation (CHE) Module evaluates the chemical hazards associated with the physiological effects of chemical warfare materiel. The CHE module is used only when chemical warfare materiel is known or suspected of being present at a Munitions Response Site. This module considers data elements related to three factors — chemical warfare materiel hazard, accessibility and potential effects on people.

• The Health Hazard Evaluation (HHE) Module approach evaluates relative risk to human health and the environment posed by MC and other non-munitions-related incidental contaminants. The module considers three factors — contamination hazard factor, potential effects on people, other living things and the environment, and migration pathway.

Each of the modules is scored from 38 to 100 and is assigned a rating from G (lowest) to A (highest). Besides the ratings, there are three other possible outcomes of scoring for

each module – evaluation pending (insufficient data are available to conduct the scoring), no longer required (a response has already been conducted and completed), or no known or suspected hazard.

Based on the results of scoring the three modules, each Munitions Response Site is assigned one of eight priorities, where Priority 1 indicates the highest potential hazard and Priority 8 indicates the lowest potential hazard. The priorities do not have specific assigned actions. In other words, Priority 1 does not indicate the need for an immediate removal action nor does Priority 8 indicate that no action is required.

Munitions Response Site Sequencing

Sequencing Munitions Response Sites for action is based primarily on the priorities determined using the protocol. In general, a Munitions Response Site that presents a greater relative risk to human health, safety, or the environment will be addressed before a site that presents a lesser relative risk. However, Congress indicated to the Department of Defense that factors such as local land reuse needs, community interest, funding and technology availability also may influence the sequencing of actions.

Who to Call for More Information

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers wants the public to be a part of study efforts as we work hard to ensure the public's safety, the safety of on-site workers, and to protect the environment. For more information about the Munitions Response Site Prioritization Protocol, please visit the Formerly Used Defense Sites Program website at: https://eko.usace.army.mil/usacecop/pub/ecop/what_we_do/fuds or visit the Munitions Response Site Prioritization Protocol site at: https://www.denix.osd.mil/denix/Public/News/OSD/MMRP/mmrp.html.