



Formerly Used Defense Site Projects

Program Manager 256-895-1238

U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS

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During the past two centuries, the Department of Defense has used land throughout the United States to both train Soldiers, Airmen, Sailors and Marines, and test new weapons to ensure the nation's military readiness. As training and testing needs changed, DOD obtained property or returned it to private or public uses.

Today, DOD is responsible for the environmental restoration of properties that were formerly owned by, leased to or otherwise possessed by the United States and under the jurisdiction of the Secretary of Defense prior to October 1986. Such properties are known as Formerly Used Defense Sites or FUDS. The U.S. Army is DOD's lead agent for the FUDS Program. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers executes the FUDS Program on behalf of the U.S. Army and DOD. The U.S. Army and DOD are dedicated to protecting human health and the environment by investigating and, if required, cleaning up potential contamination or munitions that may remain on these properties from past DOD activities. FUDS properties range in size from less than an acre to tens of thousands of acres, and can be located in industrial areas, residential developments and public areas.

Program Development

In 1986, Congress established the Defense Environmental Restoration Program (DERP) in Section 211 of the Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act (SARA). Section 211 of SARA was codified in Title 10 of the U.S. Code (USC), Section 2701. The program goals of FUDS and the DERP are: identify, investigate and clean up hazardous contaminants; correct the environmental damage, such as detection and disposal of unexploded ordnance; demolish and remove unsafe buildings and structures.

DERP has three program categories: Installation Restoration Program; Military Munitions Response Program (MMRP); and the Building Demolition/Debris Removal Program. Work under the FUDS Program is performed under each of these three program categories. Authority for executing the FUDS Program has been delegated to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers by DOD through Headquarters, Department of the Army. The estimated MMRP work at FUDS will comprise a much larger cost than the remaining work under the other two program categories.

Design Center

The U.S. Army Engineering and Support Center, Huntsville is one of five Military Munition Design Centers for MMRP, for both conventional and chemical warfare materiel. The Design Centers (DC) plan, manage the technical and contractual aspects, and execute MMRP projects for FUDS (in support of the geographic districts) and Base Realignment and Closure projects. Huntsville Center also supports range maintenance projects and clearance of munitions and explosives of concern (MEC) and munitions constituents (MC) at active ranges to support military construction. The goal at MMRP sites is to reduce in a timely, cost-effective manner, the risk to human health, increase safety and protect the environment from hazards that have resulted from past DOD activities. The DC applies rigid safety standards and uses contractor personnel highly qualified in MEC/MC removal. DC personnel who oversee safety have specialized military training and extensive specialized experience in MEC removal. The DC also uses improving technology to support the mission, such as Advanced Geophysical Classification, and work in the lakes, rivers, bays, and the ocean. These Design Centers have a mission to:

Protect the lives and safety of citizens and soldiers by locating, removing and disposing of munitions on past and current military installations

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A team of engineers and other specialists study eligible sites throughout the country to determine if MEC or MC contamination exists. In cooperation with local USACE geographical districts, public officials, regulatory agencies, interested citizens and other stakeholders, Huntsville Center leads the phases to identify MEC/MC, determines its potential danger, develops a plan to remove the MEC/MC or reduces its risk and oversees the execution of that plan. The local geographic district serves as the overall project manager for the investigation and response actions, and handles the real estate and public involvement responsibilities. Headquarters USACE oversees the FUDS program and provides approval and funding.

The Army Corps of Engineers executes MMRP response actions in accordance with CERCLA in the following described phases:

- Preliminary Assessment (PA): This phase is performed for FUDS to determine property and project eligibility. This PA develops the Inventory Project Report, which recommends further action, if required.
- Site Inspection (SI): The historical use of the site is reviewed, and a limited site investigation is performed which includes samples for both MEC and MC. Records include maps, drawings, aerial photographs and visual inspection of the site. The results of this phase are documented in a SI report. If the SI report confirms a MEC/MC problem, the Corps proceeds to the next phase of the process.
- Remedial Investigation/Feasibility Study (RI/FS): The RI/FS identifies the most appropriate response action to address a MEC or MC risk at a project site. Integral parts of the RI/FS include a complete site characterization in which the area, depth and density of MEC/MC contamination are estimated; risk assessment of site hazards; and an evaluation of potential response alternatives. The selected alternative is documented in a decision document.
- Remedial Design/Remedial Action: A performance work statement, quality assurance project plan and explosives safety plan for the selected alternative comprise the major elements of a removal design. Once these documents are approved, the contractor begins work to perform the remedial action.

The phases described above are followed during the remedial process. If an imminent hazard is discovered during any phase, a time critical removal action may be initiated to address the immediate hazard.