

Munitions Response Site Prioritization Protocol

Stakeholder Fact Sheet



Background

For decades, the Department of Defense (DoD) has used military munitions in training and testing to ensure force readiness. Munitions remaining from DoD activities may present explosive, chemical agent, human health, and environmental hazards at active installations, Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) installations, Formerly Used Defense Sites (FUDS), or other properties no longer under DoD control. Whenever a former range or disposal site is put to another use, actions must be taken to ensure remediation of any hazards.

DoD has been responding to properties that were known or suspected to contain munitions hazards for over 30 years. In 2001, the Department established the Military Munitions Response Program (MMRP) to address the hazards posed by past military munitions-related activities. As of September 2006, DoD had identified over 3,300 sites eligible for the MMRP, referred to as munitions response sites (MRSs), that may require response actions (e.g., investigation, removal actions, and remedial actions). To efficiently and effectively expedite response actions at all MRSs, the Department must prioritize these sites based on the potential risk posed to human health and the environment.

Munitions Reponse Sites (MRSs)		
1,333 on active installations	318 on BRAC installations	1,658 on FUDS properties

The Protocol

In the FY2002 National Defense Authorization Act (10 USC 2710), Congress directed DoD to develop a protocol for assigning MRSs a relative priority for response activities. DoD convened a workgroup with personnel knowledgeable in explosive safety or environmental responses to develop the framework for prioritizing MRSs. This workgroup engaged in a collaborative process with the States, American Indian and Alaska Native Tribes, and federal agencies to develop a methodology to assign a relative priority for response activities at each MRS in DoD's inventory (the MRS inventory).

On October 5, 2005, DoD published the Munitions Response Site Prioritization Protocol (referred to as the Protocol), codified at 32 CFR 179. The Protocol requires the DoD Components to apply the prioritization methodology to determine a relative priority for munitions response actions at MRSs. The priority assigned is based on the overall conditions at each MRS.

Web Site

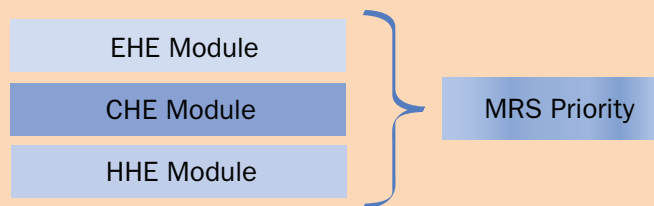


The MRS inventory is updated annually and published in the Defense Environmental Programs Annual Report to Congress:

<http://deparc.egovservices.net/deparc/do/mmrp>

The potential risk posed by past munitions activities at each MRS is captured through the Protocol's central feature, three hazard evaluation modules:

- Explosive Hazard Evaluation (EHE) Module: provides the approach for assigning a relative priority to an MRS where munitions and explosives of concern (MEC) are known or suspected to be present.
- Chemical Warfare Material Hazard Evaluation (CHE) Module: provides the approach for assigning a relative priority to an MRS where CWM hazards are known or suspected to be present.
- Health Hazard Evaluation (HHE) Module: provides the approach for evaluating the relative risk to human health and the environment potentially where munitions constituents and any incidental nonmunitions-related contaminants are known or suspected to be present.



An MRS's relative priority is determined by comparing the results of one or more hazard evaluation modules.

Sequencing Decisions

After an MRS is prioritized, it must be sequenced for response action. The sequencing for response action is based primarily on the MRS's relative risk, reflected in its priority. As a matter of DoD policy, an MRS with higher relative risks will be addressed before an MRS with lower relative risks. Occasionally, other factors, such as environmental justice, economic development, and programmatic concerns can influence sequencing decisions.

Stakeholder Involvement

DoD offers all stakeholders opportunities to participate throughout the Protocol's application. DoD believes that if stakeholders are engaged early and often throughout the process, they will gain a better understanding of the Protocol and its application. DoD Components are required to notify stakeholders of the opportunity to participate in the application of the Protocol; publish an announcement requesting participation; consider stakeholders' input in prioritization decisions; and document stakeholder input. DoD recognizes that stakeholder involvement is an effective way to identify and address stakeholder concerns about environmental and safety issues related to MRSs.

Once an MRS's relative priority is determined, DoD Components will provide stakeholders with the opportunity to review and comment on how an MRS is sequenced for response actions. DoD believes that a proactive stakeholder involvement program will facilitate the munitions response process and help ensure the protection of human health and the environment.



Web Site

For more information on the MMRP or the Protocol please visit:

<https://www.denix.osd.mil/denix/Public/Library/Cleanup/CleanupOfc/derp/mmrp.html>