

This brochure describes the Partnering initiative used in the southeastern United States for the installation restoration program on military facilities. It outlines the theory, structure and expectations of the Partnering process.

Tiered Partnering in Region 4 is increasingly becoming an “instrument for change” in coordinating and directing the cleanup of contaminated sites at military installations. This initiative, which involves the primary environmental program managers and staff from major commands, installations, the Environmental Protection Agency and the states, is built on mutual trust, open communication and joint cooperation.

A SHARED COMMITMENT TO PROTECTING HUMAN HEALTH AND THE ENVIRONMENT

The reason for Partnering is simple. Escalating costs, budget reductions, technical complexities, competing priorities, pressures to respond more efficiently and other factors have highlighted the need for a team approach in the installation restoration program. All participants in the Partnering process benefit from working closely together. Team members are adequately trained and facilitated in team skills. Each participating organization contributes authorities, expertise and resources to provide a complete set of “tools” for remediating hazardous substance sites.

CHALLENGES

Environmental cleanup programs involve several potentially competing and

perhaps conflicting requirements and priorities. It is of little wonder, then, that much energy has been spent trying to determine who is in charge of cleanup decisions and whose standards apply.

CLEANUP CONFLICTS

- Federal statutes, state laws and regulations may apply, depending on waivers of sovereign immunity.
- Authority to run certain programs may be delegated to states (in lieu of the EPA).
- The military may serve as both the lead agency (under CERCLA) and as a regulated entity (under RCRA/HSWA).

RESOLUTION

Partnering brings order and efficiency to environmental cleanup efforts. In all decisions, partners are guided by the need to provide for the quickest and most cost-efficient cleanup.

Region 4 has established a coordinated cleanup partnership at three levels, or tiers. Integration of seemingly conflicting statutes and regulations starts with the Tier I team focusing on needs at the site, rather than differences between programs or questions of authority. Because most cleanup decisions are limited by available technology and fiscal prudence, Tier I teams work across organizational boundaries to choose effective remedies and find ways to implement them promptly. The Partnering process thus limits delays based on jurisdictional disputes that can impede cleanup efficiency.

• TEAMWORK •

THE TIERED PARTNERING TEAMS

TIER I

Installation Teams, comprised of “on-the-ground doers,” focus on priority sites cleanup. As a team, the members design, implement and evaluate the studies that determine what needs to be cleaned up and what doesn’t, and then build the remedies. The EPA Region 4 Partnering program focuses on the Tier I level.

TIER II

State Partnering Teams, consisting of program managers from the “next level up,” focus on the priority facilities in a single state. Tier II teams provide a strong support base for the Tier I teams, providing team skills training to Tier I members and resolving policy implementation conflicts between partners before they disrupt cleanup activities. Tier II teams also raise policy issues to Tier III, allowing Tier I to focus on efficient cleanup of sites.

TIER III

The Regional Partnering Team, involving key environmental policy, programming and budgeting managers, works from a broad-based perspective to merge organizational policies and goals into a coherent whole. Tier III provides an opportunity for sharing ideas and resources across all services and states. Policy issues can be identified before they cause dissent and delay; the team can influence policy development by sharing experiences with partners’ headquarters components. A Tier III Steering Committee — consisting of state environmental managers, EPA regional managers, and DoD and service Regional Environmental Coordinators — works issues in support of Tier I and Tier II teams.

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EDUCATION STANDARDS

As Partnering teams are formed, new participants are provided background information on the tier in which they participate. They attend the three-day "Basics of Partnering" seminar provided by the Tier II teams. The seminar uses a standard format to teach team skills, develop team relationships, and define team VISION — MISSION — GOALS and operational parameters. Thus, participants can attend a seminar in any state and receive the same appropriate basic training.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

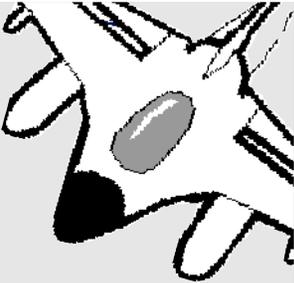
Contact your installation environmental coordinator, or state or EPA remedial program manager.

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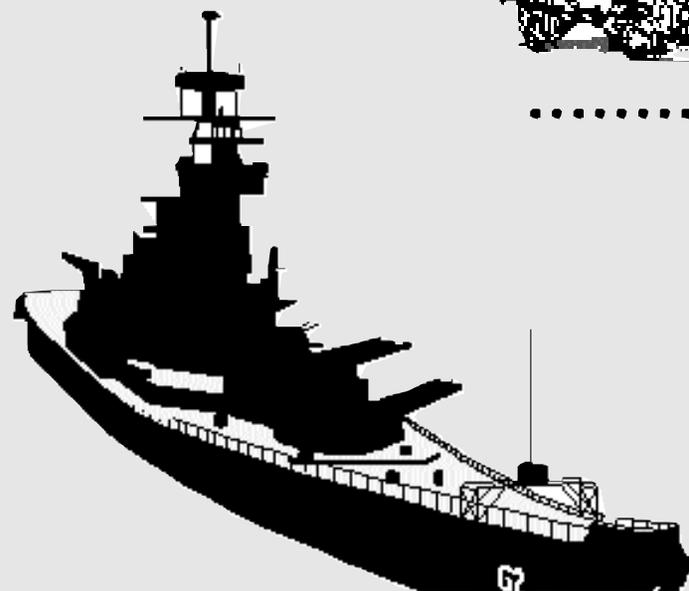


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ORIENTATION TO REGION 4 TIERED PARTNERING FOR INSTALLATION RESTORATION



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