

RECORD VERSION

STATEMENT BY

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BEFORE THE

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COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS**

Chair McCollum, Ranking Member Calvert, and distinguished Members of the Subcommittee, I am honored to appear before you today and I am pleased to address your interest in, and answer questions about, the Army's Defense Environmental Restoration Account (DERA). My name is Amy Borman. I am the Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Army for Environment, Safety and Occupational Health (DASA(ESOH)). My portfolio includes the policy, planning, budgeting, and execution of the Army's Environmental Restoration Program, also known as the Cleanup Program.

The Army conducts cleanup under the Defense Environmental Restoration Program (DERP) and in accordance with the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA). This provides a consistent national approach for addressing cleanup and includes prioritizing sites throughout the United States using a risk-based process—essentially worst sites first. The Army uses DERP to address two types of environmental cleanup: the Installation Restoration Program (IRP), which manages the cleanup of chemicals released to the environment —things that may cause human health or ecological concerns, and the Military Munitions Response Program (MMRP)—primarily addresses explosive hazards. DERP cleanups primarily occur at Active and Reserve installations as well as closed installations excessed via the General Services Administration (GSA). The Army has implemented and continues to execute a strategy that enables sites that meet eligibility guidelines, to be cleaned up using DERA funding. The FY21 National Defense Authorization Act, authorized use of DERA funds to address Perfluorooctane Sulfonate (PFOS) and Perfluorooctanoic Acid (PFOA) at Army National Guard locations. Within the framework of CERCLA, the Army investigates releases, prioritizes responses, and assesses appropriate, cost-effective cleanup actions based on risks to human health and the environment.

I am proud to report that approximately 91 percent of our Restoration Sites have reached the Response Complete (RC) milestone, which occurs when sites complete the proposed remedial action or require no further investigation. This was an Office of the

Secretary of Defense's (OSD) goal we met in 2015; three years ahead of the goal's stated metric of 2018.

I assure you that the Army is fully committed to addressing our cleanup responsibilities. CERCLA is a process that can take many years and begins with site identification, involving a Preliminary Assessment/Site Inspection (PA/SI) to identify and assess the potential source of a release and the nature of the release (through sampling). Using data gathered in the PA/SI, the Army is able to prioritize sites for further action using a risk-based approach. Throughout the United States, the Relative Risk Site Evaluation (RRSE) methodology is used to assess the sequence for funding actions at IRP sites, and the Munitions Response Site Prioritization Protocol (MRSP) is used to assess the sequence for funding actions at MMRP Sites. Where PA/SIs indicate further investigation is warranted, the RRSE or MRSP is used to sequence and prioritize the sites for Remedial Investigation (RI); a CERCLA phase where site-specific risks to human health and the environment are analyzed through additional data collection and analysis including a risk assessment.

The Army's universe of cleanup sites yet to achieve RC is approximately 1,200 spread across active and closed installations. In order to make the most impact, we continually reassess the Cleanup Program with the intention of addressing the highest risk sites first. As cleanup sites are identified and progress through CERCLA phases, the actual timing and scope of response actions are tailored to site conditions and funding priorities. At the same time, we are committed to achieving RC at our sites. The stable and consistent funding provided by Congress to the DERA account has given us the financial certainty to make significant cleanup progress in this mature program.

Funding requirements in the form of cost estimates are developed using auditable and defensible standard accounting practices. These estimates include the cost to complete a project and also sufficient financial fidelity to identify the required funding by CERCLA phase. On an annual basis, the Cleanup Program provides input to the President's Budget build and the 5-year Program Objectives Memorandum cycle to Army and OSD. Annual funding priorities are: 1) ongoing remedial actions and long-term management of existing remedies to ensure continued protectiveness; 2) initiation

of remedial actions and/or commitments to stakeholders for implementation of remedies; 3) ongoing investigations; and 4) new investigations.

While the Army is proud of our successes and remains focused on continuous improvement in our Cleanup Program, we know that cleanup at many of the remaining sites is more complex and requires additional time and/or a remedy based on more advanced technology. The Army has been identifying and conducting cleanup at sites since the 1980s and has come a long way. Still, we remain fully aware of the magnitude of our mission and look forward to continued partnerships with fellow federal agencies, state regulators, and industry stakeholders to increase efficiency in our cleanup efforts. In addition, the Army is focused on responding to the challenges of PFAS and is committed to making the substantial investment necessary to continue forward progress. The Army is committed to being transparent about our cleanup progress, with both Congress and the public, and is taking steps to make data, particularly concerning PFAS, more accessible. The Army will also continue to notify the appropriate Congressional delegations when PFAS sampling or notifications are about to occur both on and off installations.

Our priority remains the health and safety of our Service members, their families, Army civilians, and the communities surrounding our installations. We will continue to prioritize and address sites where risk to human health is the highest. We greatly appreciate the funding provided in FY21 and commit to being a responsible steward of the resources entrusted to us. Thank you for the opportunity to present this testimony and for your continued support of the Army.