

After Action Report – Installation Tour and Environmental Management System (EMS) Workshop #1 at Fort Eustis

Background Workshop Information

On 21 and 22 January 2004, the Fort Eustis Directorate of Public Works Environmental and Natural Resources Division (DPW-ENRD) hosted the first in a series of workshops designed to introduce installation personnel to Environmental Management System (EMS).

In an earlier meeting attended by all major installation commands, activities, directorates and tenants, the senior leadership was directed by the Commanding General to provide EMS Points of Contact (POCs) for the EMS process. Therefore, all participants at the EMS to Sustainability: Aspects Tour and Workshop 1 were identified by their respective commands as the designated EMS POC.

Environmental Management System (EMS) provides the Army with a mechanism to integrate environment with mission and base operations. Army installations already have mature environmental programs with many elements of an EMS. The next step is to leverage existing capabilities into a systematic approach aligned with mission priorities. In addition, E.O. 13148, “Greening the Government through Leadership in Environmental Management” requires implementation of EMS at all appropriate federal facilities by December 31, 2005.

Installation Tour (21 January 2004)

Introduction to installation environmental aspects began with an installation bus tour for workshop participants. Ms. Linda Rice (DPW – ENRD) and Mr. Randy Amici (Contractor-DPW-ENRD) were the tour speakers. The tour was to provide participants with an overview of various installation activities (i.e., Third Port vessels) and their corresponding environmental impacts (i.e. spills-water quality degradation). This “big picture” is needed to prepare participants in eventually identifying short and long term goals for environmental management. During the tour, attendees observed the environmental challenges confronting Fort Eustis and were asked to consider how these can be better balanced with the need for performing mission.

Of 44 Evaluation Form responses, 37 were participants that also attended the installation tour. Of those 37 responses, 78 % felt the Installation Tour provided “above average to excellent” helpful insight. That percentage combined with the nineteen percent (19 %) which felt the tour provided an “average” level of helpful insight equals 97% of the responses.

EMS to Sustainability Workshop (22 Jan 2004)

Participants: All activities were represented at the workshop except:

- DPTMSEC – representative did not attend tour or workshop
- Corps of Engineers – representative attended tour but not workshop.
- Reserve Affairs – said they will try to find a representative for future workshops

We really need their representation in the future.

Content: COL Imholte opened the workshop, attended by 63 participants, with a welcoming address that touched on the importance of the concept of using EMS to keep our installation sustainable. Following his opening, Ms. Linda Rice further explained EMS and the sustainable benefits that could be gained by its implementation.

Other speakers then expanded on the concepts of both EMS and sustainability. During the working lunch, the Environmental, Safety and Occupational Health director of Siemens Automotive in Newport News explained EMS implementation at their facility and the benefits gained by adopting an EMS approach.

After lunch the attendees broke out into functional area teams (Mission/Industrial Maintenance Operations, Training, Natural Resource Management, Public Works (Infrastructure), Troop and Community Support (includes Recreational Management), and Medical Support to work toward the identification of activities associated with these major functional areas and the significant environmental characteristics (i.e. hazardous materials use, air emissions, waste generation, land disturbance, water consumption, noise) of these activities at Fort Eustis. Groups were also asked to think about how the installation may change in 25 years.

The team input will be compiled by DPW-ENRD and posted to the DPW-ENRD web site for review by the EQCC and participants. Participants will use this information in subsequent workshops as they work toward eventually setting long and short term goals for environmental management and prioritizing these goals.

This effort will eventually complement the efforts of other types of strategic planning on the installation.

Participant Evaluation Form Responses

Each participant was requested to fill out a workshop evaluation form which consisted of nine (9) questions and a comment section. The responses were requested using a ranking system of 1 to 5 where 5 equaled the best possible or excellent. The comment section requested additional comments or suggestions to improve future workshops.

Forty four (44) responses were received. A sample of responses includes the following:

- Eighty-four percent (84 %) responded that the workshop presented concepts that interested them at an above average or best possible level.
- Seventy-nine (79 %) the participants rated the workshop as “above average to excellent”
- Seventy-seven percent (77 %) believed the workshop prepared them with an understanding of environmental management on Fort Eustis
- Ninety percent (90 %) and eighty-six (86%) of the respondents respectively felt the effectiveness of the presenters and the quality of visual aids were “above average to excellent” while the remainder ranked them as “average”.

Comments made by the participants were as follows:

- Presenters were very good and information was useful. I look forward to being a part of this important process. Thanks for the opportunity!
- Very valuable asset if it can keep the support of the command.
- Good instructors, room noisy, system may be less complicated than it sounds. May simplify presentations a little.
- Thanks for having speakers who were vibrant and passionate about this issue. It makes a BIG difference!
- Listening to the speakers bored me to death after breaking into small groups the understanding gained helped me to think about the impact on society. I’m actually excited about making a difference on Fort Eustis.
- A little more explanation of the differences between Aspect and Impact at the outset of the group activity so that groups don’t get so confused.
- Great presentation! Group activities are the key to understand the purpose of the workshop.
- The knowledge given was more beneficial to me in knowing my responsibility in preserving the environment.
- Please give the attendees more breaks.

⋮
⋮ EMS to Sustainability: Aspects Tour and Workshop 1

- The instruction was excellent, but the activity was difficult to follow/stay focused. Less broad topics would have been more effective and easier to understand for the participants.
- Very informative, enjoyed the day.
- More guidance on aspects/impacts differences.
- Where was the senior leadership? What keeps this going if no leadership involvement?