**UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY**
REGION 6
1445 ROSS AVENUE, SUITE 1200
DALLAS, TX 75202-2733

June 24, 2014

Hershell E. Wolfe
Deputy Assistant Secretary for
Environment, Safety, and Occupational Health
110 Army Pentagon
Room 3D453
Washington, DC 20310-0110
Hershell.e.wolfe.civ@mail.mil

Dear Mr. Wolfe:

The purpose of this memorandum is to request a Technical Assistance Visit within the next 30 days to Camp Minden, Louisiana by the Department of the Defense Explosives Safety Board /US Army Technical Center for Explosives Safety. The Board visited the site in April and May of 2013 and provided the State of Louisiana and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) their assessment of risks. This year private parties began removing a portion of explosives under EPA Administrative Orders enabling further inspection of the contents of the bunkers. As discussed below, we are concerned that conditions at the site may be increasingly deteriorating. The purpose of the Board visit would be to assess potential short and long term hazards associated with the storage of M6 propellant and provide any recommendations for the risk of explosion presented by the current storage configuration.

The storage of the M6 propellant and other explosives within the magazines does not comply with relevant safety regulations and practices. Many of the boxes and super sacks containing M6 propellant and other explosives are damaged and/or crushed. In most magazines, explosive materials are stacked 3-5 pallets high and are in direct contact with magazine walls. Extensive vegetation on the tops and sides of the magazines adversely affect their structural integrity and allow the intrusion of moisture and humidity into the magazines. These are the factors that compel us to ask for a follow up evaluation and assessment. Photographs showing these conditions are attached.

If you wish to discuss this matter or wish clarification of our concerns, please contact me at (214) 665-6701 or edlund.carl@epa.gov. Thank you for your assistance in this matter.

Sincerely,

Carl Edlund
Superfund Division Director
Environmental Protection Agency

Attachments

M6 Propellant/Explosive Storage Photos
Explo Systems, Camp Minden, LA

Photo 1: Several pallets (containing M6 or other explosives) fallen forward with one drum hanging from strap approximately 3 feet from magazine floor. (Photo taken May 21, 2014)

Photo 2: Pallets of aluminum/TNT/Tritonal stacked 4-5 pallets high, leaning against each other/magazine walls, collapsing, and falling over. (Photo taken June 11, 2014)

Photo 3: Drums of M6 propellant or other explosive material on pallets, stacked 3-4 pallets high, leaning against each other/magazine walls, collapsing, and falling over. (Photo taken June 11, 2014)

Photo 4: Drums of M6 propellant or other explosive material on pallets, stacked 3-4 pallets high, leaning against each other/magazine walls, collapsing, and falling over. Several drums are visibly crushed. (Photo taken June 11, 2014)

Photo 5: M6 propellant found on the ground outside an explosive storage magazine. Spilled/released explosive material is commonly found in and around magazines due to poor housekeeping/previous explosive incidents. (Photo taken June 11, 2014)

Photo 6: M6 propellant stored inside an 880 lbs. super sack and cardboard box. Visibly weathered cardboard box is torn/crushed. Weathered, crushed, and damaged fiber containers are common within the storage magazines containing Explo related material at Camp Minden. (Photo Taken June 11, 2014)

Photo 7: M6 propellant stored inside an 880 lbs. super sack and cardboard box. Visibly weathered cardboard box is torn/crushed. Weathered, crushed, and damaged fiber containers are common within the storage magazines containing Explo related material at Camp Minden. (Photo Taken June 11, 2014)

Photo 8: Drums and boxes of aluminum/TNT/Tritonal mixture or other explosive material on pallets, stacked 3-5 pallets high, leaning against each other/magazine walls, collapsing, and falling over. Several containers are visibly crushed and some are releasing their contents. (Photo taken January 16, 2014)

Photo 9: Aluminum/TNT/Tritonal found on the ground inside an explosive storage magazine. Spilled/released explosive material is commonly found in and around magazines due to poor housekeeping/previous explosive incidents. (Photo taken May 21, 2014)