SECRETARY OF THE ARMY
WASHINGTON

DEC 1 0 2013

Major General Glenn H. Curtis
The Adjutant General
Louisiana National Guard
6400 Saint Claude Avenue
Jackson Barracks
New Orleans, LA 70117

Dear General Curtis:

Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel asked me to respond on his behalf to your October 29, 2013 letter requesting Department of Defense (DoD) support in disposing of propellant and other explosive material that was owned by Explo Systems, Inc. (Explo) and is stored at Camp Minden.

As you know, DoD was not a party to the lease between Explo and the State of Louisiana and does not own either the propellant material or the land at Camp Minden. Therefore, DoD is not authorized to use funds to provide the support requested.

Regarding the Louisiana Military Department's (LMD) request for a waiver of reimbursement, Defense Support to Civilian Authorities (DSCA) regulations require a commitment to reimburse DoD for the costs of the requested support (32 CFR § 185.4). DoD is not authorized to waive reimbursement or provide support on a non-reimbursable basis under these circumstances.

According to information provided by the State, the State implemented the recommendations of the Army's teams that conducted Technical Assistance Visits on April 2-3, 2013, and May 7-9, 2013. The State's implementation of these recommendations ensures the propellant and other explosive material stored at Camp Minden is in a storage configuration that is consistent with DoD's explosives safety criteria. Those criteria are protective of the public and public assets. As such, the materials do not appear to present an imminent threat.

DoD encourages LMD to establish, as recommended by the Army's Technical Assistance Team in May 2013, a propellant stability monitoring program. Such a program will help ensure the propellant material in storage at Camp Minden continues to remain safe for storage, pending its final disposition. This program will also help LMD to conduct the sampling needed to establish the propellant material's stability and allow this recyclable material to be sold and transported for other uses. The results of the stability sampling will support LMD's proper management of the material by prioritizing its disposition according to its stability.

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Although DSCA assistance cannot be provided, DoD will consider a request to provide technical experts from the U.S. Army Technical Center for Explosives Safety or other DoD activities, offering LMD and other State entities additional technical advice for the State's consideration in managing the propellant materials stored at Camp Minden. As before, these technical experts would be able to offer LMD advice on potential hazards associated with the materials in storage, the establishment of a propellant stability monitoring program and actions that may be taken with regard to the final disposition of these materials. Such advice will help ensure that the propellant materials at Camp Minden remain safe for continued storage through final disposition.

My point of contact for this action is Mr. J. C. King, Director for Munitions and Chemical Matters, Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Army for Environment, Safety and Occupational Health, at (703) 697-5564 or email jc.king@us.army.mil.

Sincerely,

John M. McHugh