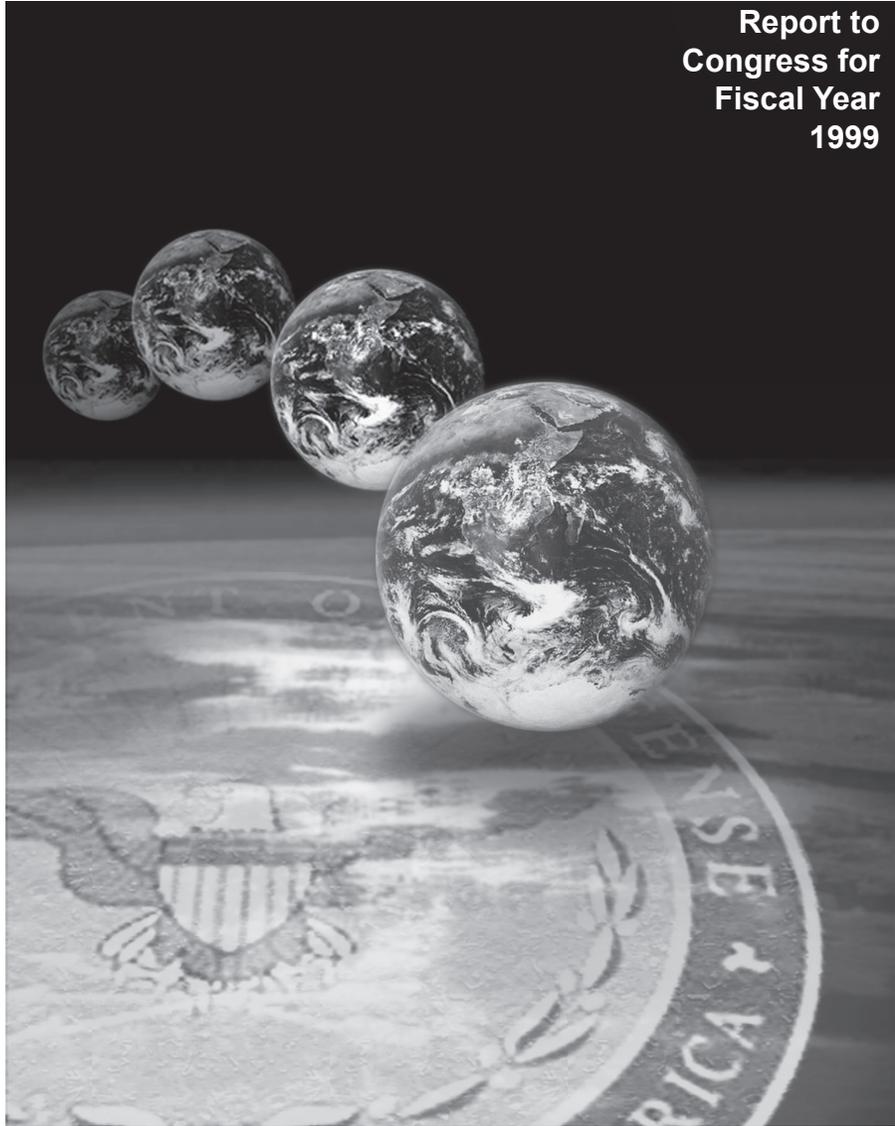


Restoration Advisory

Board (RAB)

Report to
Congress for
Fiscal Year
1999



Supplement to the Defense
Environmental Restoration
Program Report to Congress

Restoration Advisory Boards

Fiscal Year 1999

Meaningful communication and cooperation with stakeholders near our installations is key to fulfilling DoD's mission.

Sherri W. Goodman,
Deputy Under Secretary of Defense
(Environmental Security)



RAB Fact

DoD's RAB program is the largest public involvement program of any federal government agency.



The Department of Defense's (DoD's) public involvement program grew out of an understanding that the decisions and actions military installations undertake to clean up and reuse property inevitably affect the surrounding communities. The Department believes these communities have a right to participate in the environmental restoration process and provide input in reuse decisions.

In the mid-1980s, DoD established technical review committees (TRCs) to provide a forum for stakeholders to review technical documents and discuss the environmental restoration process. In 1993, the Federal Facilities Environmental Restoration Dialogue Committee (FFERDC), a federally chartered advisory committee, met to develop recommendations to improve the decision-making process and set priorities for restoration efforts at federal facilities. One of the findings of the FFERDC was that the federal government



RAB members at the Twin Cities Army Ammunition Plant in Minnesota tour the site to learn about restoration activities. In FY99, the Army awarded the Twin Cities RAB \$25,000 under the Technical Assistance for Public Participation (TAPP) initiative to hire a private consultant to review technical documents.

RAB Fact

Establishment of RABs fulfills the federal legal requirements (10 United States Code §2705) directing DoD to establish TRCs.



did not provide enough opportunity for community involvement in its cleanup efforts. As a result, DoD expanded the TRC concept by forming restoration advisory boards (RABs). Unlike TRCs, which operate strictly in the technical realm, RABs provide the community with a forum for understanding and evaluating all aspects of the environmental restoration process. Although TRCs still exist, most have been converted to RABs to increase community involvement opportunities.

In the five years since its inception, the RAB program has become the largest public involvement program of any federal agency in the United States. Initiatives such as Technical Assistance for Public Participation (TAPP) and tools such as the RAB Web page help communities access valuable technical information and foster partnerships between installations and the community. Through the RAB program, communities can give input into DoD's environmental restoration program, and DoD can use the RABs as an effective forum for communicating the status of an installation's restoration to the community.

RABs are only one facet of DoD's public involvement program, and they have a specific, unique role as a link between communities and DoD. The RAB program is a vital component of the Defense Environmental Restoration Program (DERP).

RABs Facilitate Community Involvement

A RAB is a group, equally co-chaired by a DoD representative and a community member, that provides a forum for dialogue between government officials and members of the local community on installation restoration issues. RABs meet regularly to discuss environmental restoration at DoD installations in the DERP. They may also review and comment on cleanup plans and reports. RABs are responsible for keeping the community informed of installation restoration activities and for relaying the community's views and concerns to DoD.

DoD policy requires that a RAB be created when there is sufficient and sustained community interest. Circumstances that point to such interest or otherwise indicate the need for a RAB may include —

- A closing or realigning installation involving transfer of property
- Fifty or more citizens petitioning for a RAB
- A request from a federal, state, or local government body to form a RAB
- An installation's decision that a RAB is necessary.

We're not done until the community says we're done.

Karla Perri,
Assistant Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for
Environmental Security (Cleanup)



RABs are an important component of DoD's environmental restoration program and of DoD's public involvement efforts. In the five years since its implementation, the RAB program has matured and expanded. DoD and the Military Components continue to explore ways to help RABs evolve as the needs of the communities evolve.

Technical Assistance for Public Participation

DoD believes that a community that understands the restoration process will support and accept an installation's restoration decisions. The issues surrounding environmental restoration are complex, and the jargon found in technical documents is difficult for the layperson to understand. DoD recognized that this difficulty in understanding the technical issues surrounding environmental restoration was a barrier to the communities' understanding and acceptance of restoration efforts as a whole. To help break down this barrier and facilitate positive community involvement, DoD developed the TAPP program.

RABs Tap Into TAPP

The K.I. Sawyer Air Force Base RAB in Michigan was one of the first RABs to apply for, and receive, TAPP assistance. Through TAPP, the RAB hired a contractor to perform an independent study of groundwater contamination at three sites. The contractors performed a technical document review, interpreted the information for the community, and agreed with the Air Force's approach to the cleanup.

Many other RABs have also tapped into this resource, and DoD expects the numbers to continue growing as communities realize the value of this type of assistance. Some of the installations that have participated in TAPP are —

Component	Installation	Award
Navy	Adak Naval Air Station	\$24,937
	Alameda Naval Air Station (2)	\$23,000
	Mare Island Naval Ship Yard	\$1,480
	Treasure Island Naval Station	\$2,400
DLA	Defense Distribution Depot Memphis	\$25,000
	Defense Supply Center Philadelphia	\$25,000
FUDS	Buckley Field	\$24,900
Army	Jefferson Proving Ground	\$25,000
	Twin Cities Army Ammunition Plant	\$25,000
	Ravenna Army Ammunition Plant	\$25,000
	Longhorn Army Ammunition Plant	\$25,000
	(TRC not RAB)	
Air Force	K.I. Sawyer Air Force Base	\$25,000
	Kelly Air Force Base	\$16,187
	Lowry Air Force Base	\$25,000
	McClellan Air Force Base	\$7,294

Partnering with the Community

TAPP helps RAB and TRC community members better understand the scientific and engineering issues underlying their installations' environmental restoration activities. A TAPP award allows DoD to procure an independent technical consultant to advise the RAB or TRC on a specific project and provides RABs with an independent explanation of the technical issues. With this understanding comes increased community trust, confidence, and involvement in environmental restoration activities.

The TAPP program is designed so that community members can obtain independent, scientific, and engineering advice for specific projects, such as reviewing proposed remedial technologies, interpreting health and environmental effects data, or reviewing restoration documents. RABs and TRCs may receive up to \$25,000 per year, or 1 percent of the total cost of completing environmental cleanup at the installation, whichever is less. TAPP funding is limited to \$100,000 per installation over the lifetime of the installation's cleanup program.

TAPP Fact

In FY99, DoD continued work on the TAPP Handbook. It is posted on the Web at:

<http://www.dtic.mil/envirodod/rab/pubs.html>



As TAPP Evolves, Community Interest Grows

DoD implemented TAPP as a way to help RAB members gain more insight into the restoration process. As more communities tap into this resource, they have realized what a valuable tool it is.

TAPP consultants have diverse backgrounds. Some are environmental consultants, others are graduate students working on behalf of a university. Brian Johnson, a graduate student hired by the Twin Cities RAB said, "I hear from other RAB members, who are not trained technically, that having a resource available such as the TAPP program is a great benefit in communicating technical issues in layman's terms. This is very important so the entire RAB can grasp the issues at hand." An added benefit of the program is that the increased understanding of the technical material has helped RAB members review documents more quickly and disseminate pertinent technical information to their constituents.

DoD is developing guidance — the TAPP Handbook — to provide RABs with information on all facets of TAPP. This guidance, which DoD will finalize in FY00, will help installations, RABs, and TRCs access this valuable tool. DoD placed the draft TAPP Handbook on the Internet at:
<http://www.dtic.mil/envirodod/rabs/pubs.html>.

Having a resource available such as the TAPP program is a great benefit in communicating technical issues in layman's terms.

Brian Johnson, Consultant
to Twin Cities RAB

TAPP Scores a Hit with Defense Supply Center Philadelphia's Restoration Program

The Defense Supply Center Philadelphia (DSCP) RAB, established in February 1996, applied for and received a TAPP award in 1998. This award provides the community with an independent technical advisor to help community members review and understand the various technical reports and studies relating to restoration and closure.

The TAPP advisor reviews all of the installation's relevant technical documents, updates the community both orally and in writing, and provides DSCP with comments that have the community's stamp of approval.

The TAPP advisor's input also contributes to the decision-making process of the BRAC cleanup team (BCT). Not only is the TAPP advisor welcome at the team's meetings, but he attends all of DSCP's RAB meetings and is invited to address the completed decision documents that support closed IRP sites.

When DSCP received the TAPP award in 1998, only 4 of the installation's 45 IRP sites had been closed. Therefore, the DSCP requested that the TAPP award include measuring completed restoration objectives, such as the completion of the decision document for IRP sites, the completion of closure reports, and finally, the sound environmental closure of DSCP and its ultimate transfer for reuse.

With the help and input of the community, through the TAPP advisor, and the dedication of the DSCP BCT, which is comprised of representatives from U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection, and DSCP, 35 IRP sites at DSCP are now closed. Ten sites remain. The BCT and the community are working aggressively to reach closure at these sites as well.

Partnering with the Community

RAB Roundtable

As the RAB program entered its fifth year, DoD and the Military Components initiated plans to assess the status of the RAB program and to map out a plan for the future. To that end, DoD made plans to host the first RAB Roundtable meeting in FY00 to identify the challenges and possible solutions facing RABs and to determine the best method of assessing RAB performance. The goals of evaluating the RAB program would be to —

- Increase understanding of the RABs' role
- Improve communication
- Assess the impact of RABs
- Identify common issues
- Identify and address RAB members' expectations.

DoD Finds RAB Training Pays

DoD and the Components have embraced a simple, yet powerful concept — train RAB members in the technical aspects of restoration and they will be better able to understand and educate the community about the environmental restoration activities at their installation. The Air Force provides two shining examples of this concept.

Edwards Air Force Base in Kern County, California, has developed a RAB Masters program, a three-day seminar that immerses participants in myriad subjects related to their role as RAB members. Participants begin with a history lesson about DoD's environmental responsibilities and the role of public involvement and end with an exercise in which they become remedial project managers (RPMs) for a day. As RPMs, they must decide the particulars of investigations, remedies, priorities and, of course, funding.

"We got a taste of what it's like to be a project manager," said Ruby Messersmith, a North Edwards RAB representative. "The exercise exposed all of us to details the Air Force has to go through to investigate and clean up a site."

Hill Air Force Base in Ogden, Utah, also offers training sessions that focus on everything from geology and groundwater flow to sampling. Ken Kennedy, a Clinton City community representative on the RAB, said the training helped him answer questions from other Clinton residents. "The training sessions provide me background so I can take an active role in things rather than a passive one," he said. "I'm better prepared to report back to



Members of the Edwards Air Force Base RAB attend RAB Masters Training.

Flexibility Helps DoD Meet Community Needs

DoD recognizes that its past actions have had a negative environmental impact on many communities. The DERP is fixing problems and ensuring that DoD remains a good steward of the lands it uses.

Through RABs and other forms of community outreach, DoD and the Military Components are making strides toward building meaningful public partnerships. Both the Former Badlands Bombing Range (BBR) in South Dakota and the Vandenberg Air Force Base (AFB) in California exemplify DoD's commitment to meaningful community input and willingness to adapt to meet a community's unique needs.

The BBR RAB is unique in that DoD officials and state decision makers attend RAB meetings to hear the personal stories of the Lakota people, and by hearing these stories begin to understand the Lakota's concerns about the cleanup of their tribal lands. Through this forum, DoD is receiving input from the Lakota community on the tribe's goals for cleanup of the Former BBR.

DoD works with the community to make public meetings as effective as possible. In some instances, that means changing the meeting format to accommodate the public. In FY99, the BBR RAB changed its meeting format to more of a workshop environment to better meet the needs of the public. This format allows tribal and public members to freely interact, one-on-one, with BBR project personnel, agency members, and others involved in the project.

At Vandenberg AFB in California, the Air Force changed the RAB to a Community Advisory Board (CAB) to broaden the scope of issues addressed. The CAB is another DoD outreach mechanism that addresses a broader range of issues than just environmental restoration. The public is now actively involved in all environmental programs at Vandenberg, and the installation has successfully recruited representatives from local Chumash tribal elders and the Filipino-American and Hispanic communities to participate. To further respond to community questions, the administrative record and information repository were streamlined and CAB meeting minutes, environmental plans, and pertinent correspondence are now located on the base Web page.



In April 1999, 16 members of the Oglala Sioux Tribe completed Unexploded Ordnance Training. The Badlands Bombing Range RAB has played an active role in helping DoD address the issues important to the community, such as training local people to perform cleanup.

Partnering with the Community

Tools and Resources

One of the primary functions of DoD's administrative oversight of the RAB program is to ensure that the installations and the RABs both have access to the tools and resources to make the program effective. The Internet has become an integral tool in sharing information with the public and the installations.



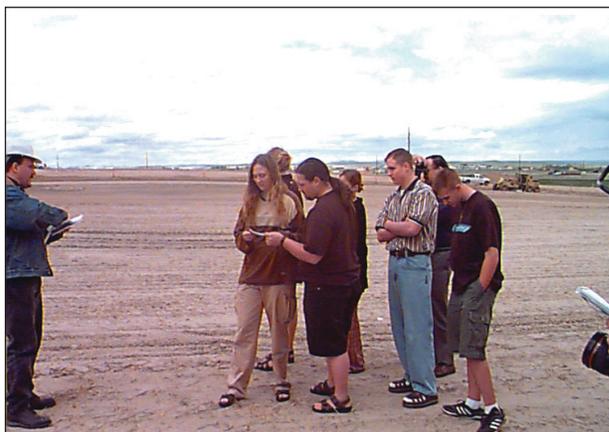
DoD's RAB and TAPP Web Site:
<http://www.dtic.mil/envirodod/rab/rabdir/index.html>

RAB Web Page

During FY99, DoD examined ways to make the RAB Web page more interactive. DoD plans to implement these ideas in FY00. Among DoD's plans is an effort to expand users' ability to submit or post comments and questions 24 hours a day to DoD and other site users. Currently, the RAB Web site houses the RAB Directory, publications, and links to the Military Components' Web pages and other environmental sites of interest.

RAB Directory

Sharing common experiences is an effective tool in any education program. To facilitate sharing of RAB experiences, DoD maintains a directory of RABs. It updates this directory semiannually. The directory gives RAB members direct access to one another by including the names, mail and e-mail addresses, and telephone and facsimile numbers of DoD and community RAB co-chairs (information on community RAB co-chairs is used only with written permission from the individual). DoD posts the RAB Directory on the Web to facilitate access and use of the information.

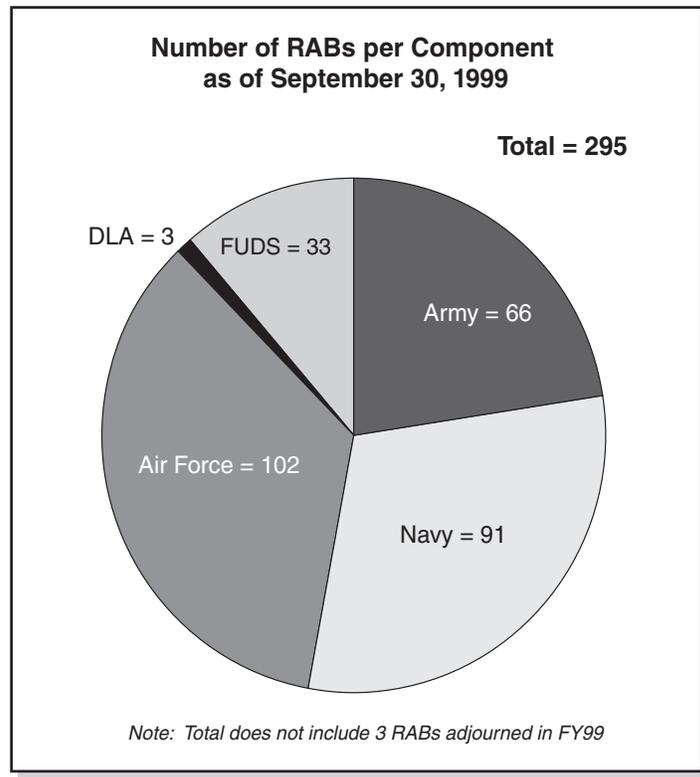


The F.E. Warren Air Force Base RAB in Cheyenne, Wyoming, reaches out to the community through regular RAB meetings and other community activities. In May 1999, students from a local high school visit the base to learn about the environmental restoration program.

RABs and Funding Levels

In FY99, 356 installations reported that there were 292* active RABs across all of the Military Components. DoD provides the resources and funds for RAB administrative costs, such as document reproduction, meeting logistics, and orientation training. DoD also provides oversight of the program and spearheads initiatives to improve the program. Overall, the Military Components spent \$4.7 million on administrative costs for RAB operation in FY99.

Although the number of RABs stays fairly consistent, it is important to note that the particular RABs and installations participating in the program may change from year to year, as some RABs adjourn and others form. These changes are often associated with installations' completing or beginning environmental restoration activities.

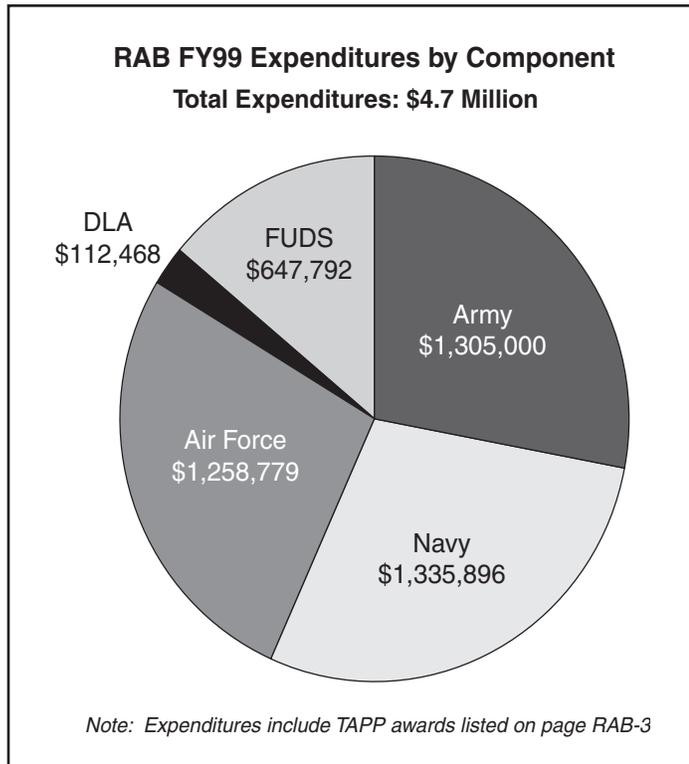


* This number (292) does not correspond to the sum of the RABs per Component because there are 5 joint RABs that include installations from two or more Components. This number includes RABs adjourned during FY99.

Partnering with the Community

Currently, more installations are involved in the program than the number of RABs seems to indicate. Installations located in the same community often join together in one RAB — a joint RAB — to ensure consistency in addressing community concerns. In FY99, a number of joint RABs reorganized, and even more installations became members of such RABs. New joint RABs also formed, reducing the total number of RABs. In FY99, there were 28 joint RABs, with 86 participating installations and properties.

In addition, the number of RABs listed for a particular Component may change when installations are transferred from one Military Component to another. In these cases, the number of RABs for a particular Component may decrease even though the RAB was not necessarily disbanded. This was the case with respect to DESC Dayton, a former DLA installation that was transferred to the Air Force.



Restoration Advisory Boards

Active RAB members are an important part of the environmental restoration process.

Karla Perri,
Assistant Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for
Environmental Security (Cleanup)



While DoD provides administrative oversight, the ultimate success of the RAB program lies with the RABs themselves. Throughout the life of the RAB program, the installations have worked diligently to ensure that all members of the community are represented and that the RAB offers the appropriate forum for public discourse.

RAB Helps Inform Public and Build Trust

A news story about any type of contamination in a community — especially if it is found where local children play — can cause widespread panic. That is, unless the community is already informed about the situation. At the Naval Ordnance Station Louisville (NOSL) in Louisville, Kentucky, such a scenario proved that proactive community involvement can help diffuse a potentially explosive situation.

When the Navy announced that NOSL would close, the community was concerned about the economic impact of job loss. To address this concern and involve the community in the restoration and reuse of the base, NOSL formed a RAB in 1996. By keeping the monthly RAB meetings interesting and informative, the Navy successfully kept RAB members engaged in the sometimes lengthy environmental restoration process and developed an atmosphere of trust in the community.

When the local media reported the presence of contaminants at area baseball fields, the community remained calm — the Navy had already briefed the RAB on this issue. The public showed up en masse at the next RAB meeting to support the Navy's findings that the contamination did not pose a risk to ball players and to protest the closing of the baseball fields. Thus, what could have been a very explosive situation was quickly resolved due to the trust already established between the Navy and the community. The Navy's efforts to communicate and share information openly was in large part responsible for the positive relationship.



Through the RAB's activities, a true partnership has developed between the community and the Navy. This union has helped keep the restoration program on track as NOSL prepares for reuse.

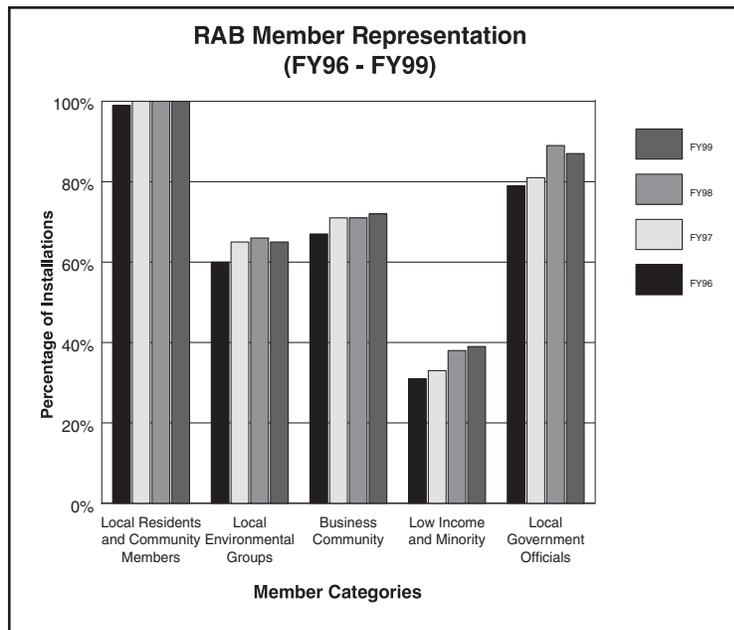
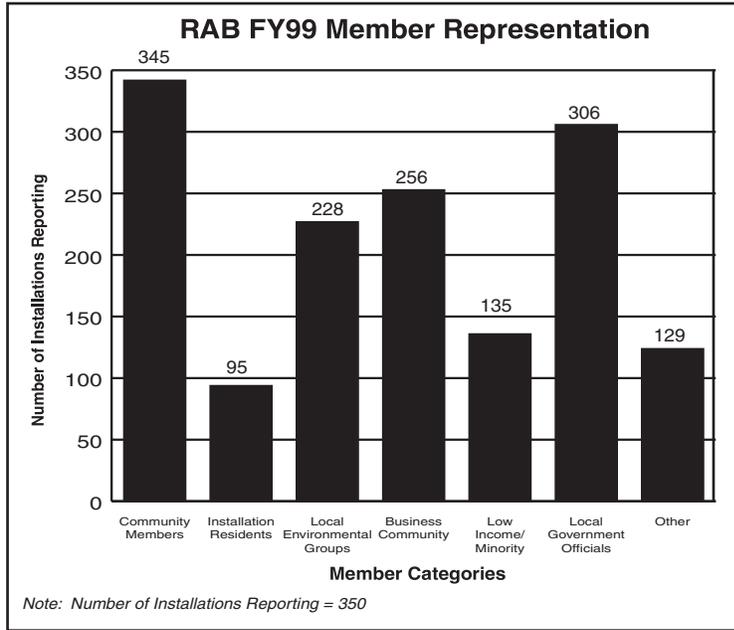
Effective communication between the Navy and the NOSL RAB led the community to support the Navy when local baseball fields, like the one pictured here, were closed down due to possible contamination. The Navy found that the contamination did not pose a threat to ball players.

Involving the Community in Cleanup

FY99 Member Representation

A RAB's mission is to bring together people who represent the community as a whole, embracing diverse interests,

concerns, and values. A diverse but balanced membership is especially important because every community has different needs and one group cannot speak for everyone's interests. Since the inception of the program, every installation with a RAB has worked to ensure that RAB members reflect the diversity in the community it represents. In FY99, installations reported the participation of community members, installation residents, local environmental groups, the business community, low income or minority groups, and local government officials.



RABs have always been made up primarily of local residents and community members. Most RABs include representatives from all of the groups.

In FY99, RAB membership representation decreased slightly. The largest decrease in member representation was noted among installation residents. Three percent fewer installations reported that their RABs have installation resident representation.

Fort Bliss RAB Exemplifies Win-Win Results of Community Partnerships

In the last ten years, DoD has learned that communicating openly and sharing information with the public are effective tools in building trust and achieving community support for program goals.

At Fort Bliss in Texas, the Army has made tremendous strides in building trust with the public.

Through the efforts of a dedicated RAB, the Army built a strong partnership with the civilian communities in far west Texas and south central New Mexico that surround the Post. In building this partnership, the installation personnel have communicated openly with local citizens via the RAB, adhering to the Army Performance Improvement Criteria's core value of public responsibility and citizenship.

This feeling of partnership and trust did not come easily. Marianne Thaeler, the military issue chairperson for the Rio Grande chapter of the Sierra Club and a Fort Bliss RAB member, joined the board expecting to have to deal with "the military way of doing things." Instead, she was surprised to find a "new, open public participation process." One of the things she likes best about the public meetings is that "all concerns raised by the public and members of the RAB are considered legitimate."

For example, public feedback through the RAB showed that the community's overwhelming concern is the Castner Range — a closed military firing range where unexploded ordnance is a major issue. The range is bordered on three sides by residential and commercial development and on the west by the Franklin Mountains State Park, making unauthorized access to the range easy. The community recommended posting warning signs in both English and Spanish, blocking motor vehicle access points, and erecting fences to prevent livestock access. The Army is currently implementing these suggestions, showing the public that not only are their opinions welcome, but also that the Army considers the RAB's advice in making decisions.

It was not just the civilians on the board who approached membership with caution. A former Garrison Commander and RAB installation co-chair commented that despite his "initial misgivings of the RAB process, the RAB had actually made his job easier." It gave him the opportunity to combat misinformation and give the public the facts to make informed decisions about what kind of neighbor Fort Bliss really is. The public has been able to see for themselves "that Fort Bliss is one of the best environmental stewards in the area."



Fort Bliss RAB members survey the Castner Range, a primary area of concern to the community.

Involving the Community in Cleanup

In the past few years, installations report that RAB membership has grown in some categories, including the business community. The increase in the business community representation may be attributable to the evolution of the restoration process — as installations move beyond the cleanup phase to the property transfer phase.

According to the reporting installations, low-income and minority groups have also increased their participation. Overall, the change in RAB composition over the years reflects the installations' progress in the environmental restoration process.

RAB Helps Move Base Toward Reuse

The end goal of the environmental restoration process for BRAC installations is the successful transfer of land for beneficial reuse. The Barbers Point Naval Air Station (NAS) in Hawaii, which officially closed its doors on July 2, 1999, is moving closer to that goal. The base's RAB has been an integral factor in that success. During the six years NAS Barbers Point spent on the base closure list, the RAB worked closely with the Navy to ensure that the property being transferred would be eligible for a variety of uses. The RAB reviewed environmental documents under ambitious deadlines, leading to the transfer of 11 parcels of land for redevelopment.

The NAS Barbers Point RAB distinguished itself through its excellent relationship with the area's Local Redevelopment Authority, a community organization created to oversee reuse and redevelopment issues.



NAS Barbers Point RAB members observe site sampling.

Although the installation is now closed, the RAB still meets quarterly to discuss progress on closure and cleanup efforts and to address citizen concerns. The RAB will continue serving the community until all property is restored for its intended reuse, and will ensure that the community is well represented in the environmental restoration process.

Involving the Community in Cleanup

RAB Fact

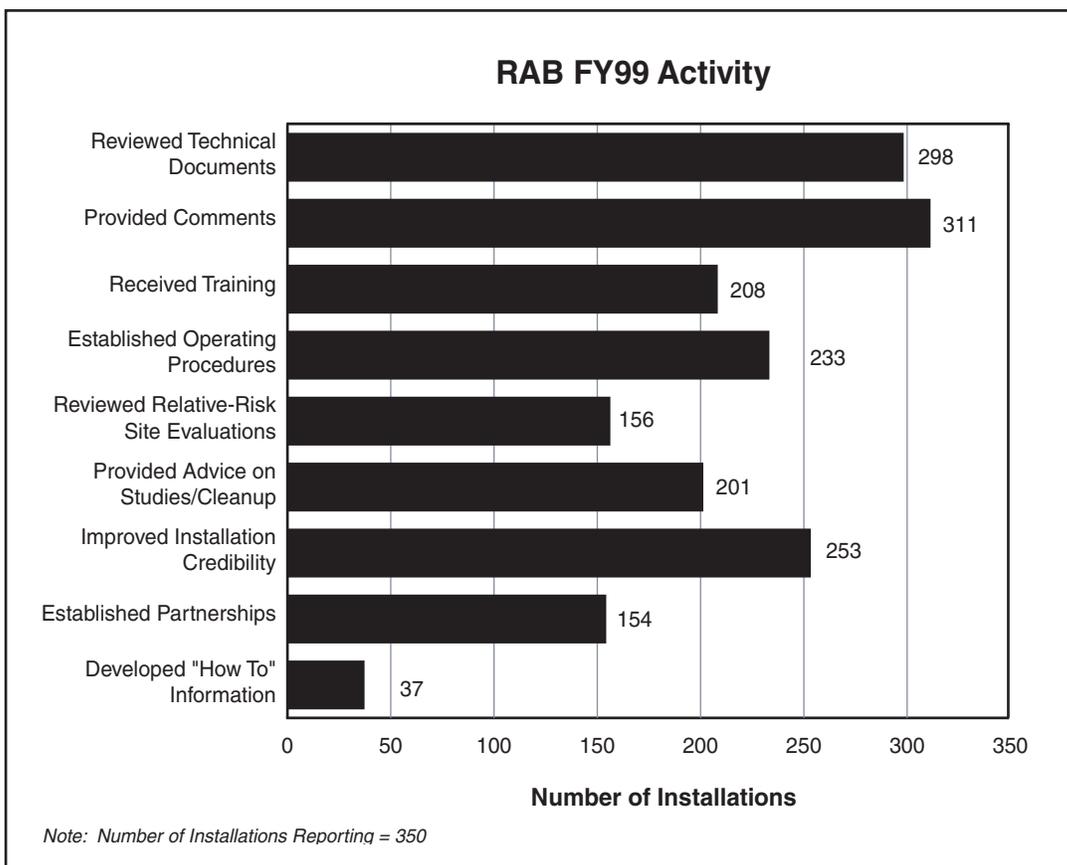
The number of RABs providing advice on future land use has grown steadily since 1996...

- FY96 = 36%
- FY97 = 39%
- FY98 = 45%
- FY99 = 47%



The majority of installations reporting in FY99 indicated that their RABs participated in reviewing plans and technical documents and provided comments or advice on restoration issues. RAB involvement in this capacity is helping DoD conduct more timely and cost-effective restoration by identifying issues of concern early on, thereby reducing potential communication problems that could cause restoration delays.

In FY99, the installations reported a slight overall decrease in participation in all RAB activity categories. These decreases may be the inevitable result of the maturation of the program. Most RABs have been operating for many years now and have already completed many of the listed activities, such as training and preliminary Relative-Risk Site Evaluations. The evolution of the restoration process means that many activities that were important in the beginning of a restoration (such as reviewing Relative-Risk Site Evaluations) have been replaced by other activities.



Advice

In FY99, installations reported that members of their RABs had provided advice in the following categories:

- Scope of environmental studies
- Site prioritization
- Remedy selection
- Future land use
- Site study or cleanup schedule
- Work plan priorities
- Relative-Risk Site Evaluations.

RABs reported little change in the advice they gave in FY99

RAB Members Provide Advice on Luke Record of Decision

At Luke Air Force Base (AFB) in Arizona, RAB members helped select cleanup alternatives for a number of sites, which were incorporated into the Record of Decision (ROD), signed in FY99. The group has met regularly since 1994 to review investigation results, cleanup plans, and progress, and to determine the best way of addressing potential community concerns.

Installation personnel provided community representatives on the RAB with the training and information necessary for understanding the complex cleanup process.

“Luke has exemplified the Air Force pledge of working with its partners to build a strong community as it builds a strong national defense,” said Daniel Salzler, RAB community co-chair.



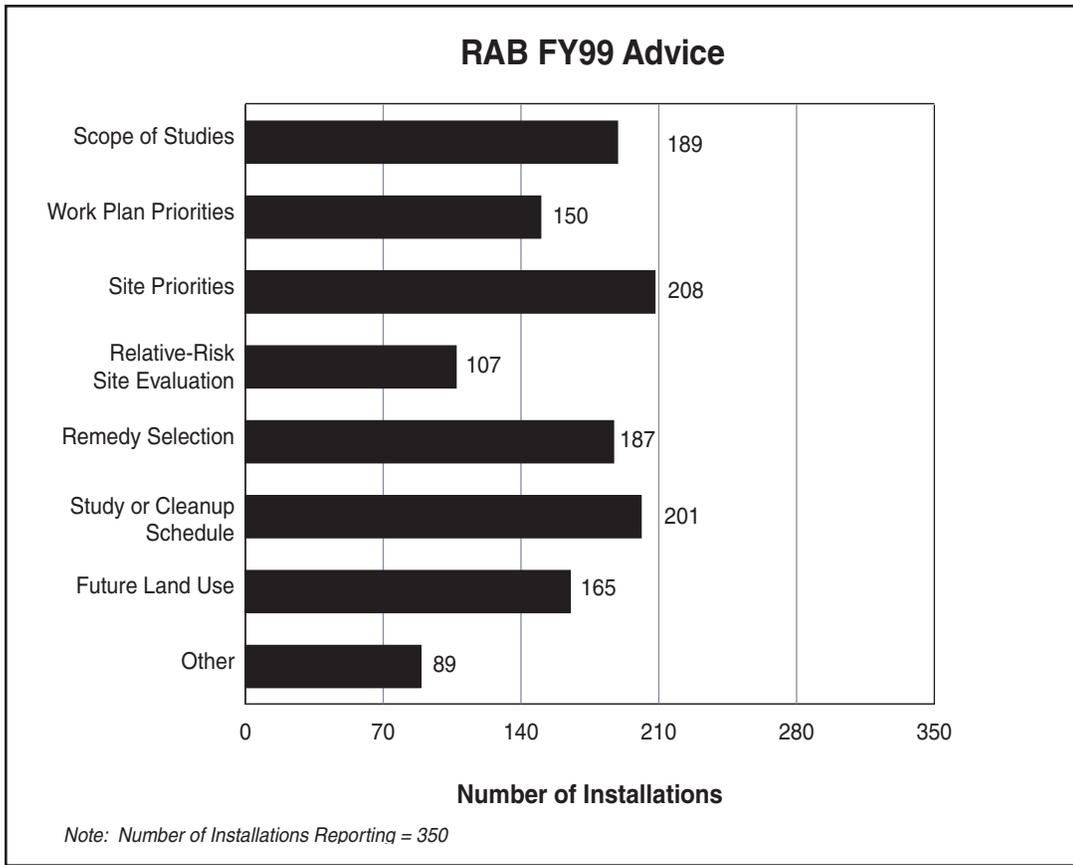
With the signing of the ROD, Luke AFB has taken an important step toward cleaning up the site, and moving it closer to deletion from the National Priorities List.

In FY99, Luke Air Force Base signed its ROD. The RAB has played an important role in providing input that was ultimately incorporated into the cleanup decision.

Involving the Community in Cleanup

compared with FY98. Installations reported no change in the percentage of installations whose RAB members gave advice on the scope of studies and on work plan priorities, but the installations reported an increase in the number of RABs that provided advice on site priorities, remedy selection, study or cleanup schedule, and future land use.

The increase in the number of RABs reviewing issues regarding future land use may result from the increase in the number of closing and realigning installations preparing for property transfer. In these instances, the community's interest and input regarding future land use issues may be more prevalent.



Learning from the Past,

As DoD moves closer toward its goal of site closeout, community involvement will continue to be a vital factor in ensuring that DoD does the right thing.

Karla Perri,
Assistant Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for
Environmental Security (Cleanup)



As the RAB program has matured, RAB community members have become more educated on technical restoration issues. RABs have forged working partnerships with representatives from the installation, regulatory agencies, and other community members. They have also become more proficient in presenting technical cleanup information to the community while bringing community concerns to the installation. DoD's commitment to facilitating public participation in the restoration process, and the communities' active participation both factor into the RABs' success.

DoD is proud of the strides it has made in the past few years toward strengthening public participation in the restoration process. Initiatives, such as TAPP, that proactively address community concerns will continue to ensure that communities can effectively participate in the restoration process. In the coming year, DoD has the opportunity to evaluate progress made and in doing so, to continue to improve the RAB program.

Now that the RAB program has reached the 5-year mark, DoD will scrutinize the RAB process as it evaluates the program's status.

DoD is committed to strengthening its RAB and TAPP programs by building on the successes and lessons of the past and to providing proactive community involvement programs well into the next century.



DoD has made tremendous progress in the last ten years toward its restoration goals on military installations. In the last five years, RABs have helped facilitate the communication process, and will continue to be a conduit for public involvement into the 21st century.

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