Cleanup Program Best Practices: Partnering

DoD, EPA and State representatives presenting on collaboration techniques
Region 3

Brett Fisher and Cecelia Landin
Partnering

• Work that people and organizations do to build and maintain effective relationships with departments and organizations outside of their immediate group.

• Enhances long-term relationships among participants, improves the quality of products and services and assists in meeting cost objectives. Based on mutual understanding, these relationships produce tangible results.

• Four most important elements of partnering: open discussion of ideas, clear and fully accepted shared goals, detailed procedures for key information exchanges and interpersonal understanding and trust.

( GALEN DRISCOL)
# Region 3 Tiered Partnering

**Focus:** Facets and Benefits of Effective Teams

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization</th>
<th># NPL Sites</th>
<th># States</th>
<th>Frequency/year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Navy/MC</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4X plus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Army</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Air Force/ANG</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SE PA NPL* (Navy, AF, ANG)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NASA*</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6X (short meetings)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nansemond (NPL FUDs)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>12X</td>
</tr>
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Tier 1 - Technical staff (DOD installation/State/EPA)
Tier 2 – First Line supervisors (DOD branch/States/EPA)
Tier 3 – Multi-Agency managers (DOD/States/EPA)
What Makes an Effective Team?

• Management buy-in
• Focus on relationship building
• Support of partnering principles
• Meeting management structure
• Open communication within and across Tiers
Partnering Benefits

• Improves alignment of Agencies’ goals and priorities
• Empowers people to make decisions at the lowest level
• Promotes support and transparency across management levels
• Optimizes efficiencies and resources through enhanced communication
• Increases productivity through positive working relationships

Bottom Line – Shorter Durations & Cost Savings
Example Outcomes

• Improved target projections
• Collective recognition of Tier 1 Team Successes
• Integration of Tech Support representatives into meetings (Tier 1 and 2 teams)
• Products to assist Tier 1 Teams
• Program implementation consistency
Region 2

Doug Pocze and Amanda Sherman
Partnering in Region 2

• Ongoing for many years in one form or another
• In Region 2 Amanda Sherman (AFCEC) is our DoD Regional Environmental Coordinator (REC)
• Established workgroups in NY & NJ
Partnering in New Jersey

• Quarterly Meetings
• Focuses on NPL Sites in New Jersey
• Includes: Air Force, Army, Navy, USACE, FAA, EPA, NJDEP but is expanding to other agencies (DOT, Pinelands Commission)
• No one size fits all and tailored to each site
• Tends to focus upon site specific issues
Partnering in New York

• Quarterly Meetings
• Focusing on NPL Sites in New York
• Includes: Air Force, Army, Navy, USACE, EPA, NYSDEC, DOE, but expanding to other agencies
• No one site fits all and tailored to each site
• Tends to focus upon site specific issues
Partnering in Puerto Rico

• No Quarterly Meetings
• Partner at the only two sites which EPA Region 2 is involved (Naval Activity Puerto Rico and Atlantic Fleet Weapons Training Facility)
• Participants: Navy, EPA, PRDNER, FWS, NOAA
• Tier 2 & 3 Level
• Focuses upon site specific issues
Successful Factors for Partnering

• Open communication
• Clear understanding of everyone’s position & goals
• Realistic goals and schedules (Site Management Plans)
• Follow the process with some flexibility
• Check ins - monthly meetings
• No one size fits all and tailored to each site
Region 10

Laura Buelow, Kevin Thomas, and John Tesner
Air Force Partnering

- Partnering has been in place between Air Force, EPA R10, and States (AK, WA, OR, ID) for over 10 years.
- Meet quarterly, generally at first line supervisor level. Two per year virtually and two per year in person.
- Started rotating location of one in person to AF Site.
- Easy to step into manager role and learn my counterparts and site issues.
Navy Partnering

• Started formal Tiered partnering in 2021 between Navy, EPA R10 and Washington State
• Tier II meet monthly and Tier II/III meet quarterly
• Meet in person one time per year
• Time intensive to set up the partnering, figure out how to structure it, especially between the Tiers.
• Helpful to build new relationships with fellow Tier II, learn about site issues, and track personal changes in other organizations
Army Partnering

• In October 2023, commitment for formal partnering between Army, EPA and Alaska on Fort Wainwright

• As a new manager, figuring out who counterparts were was less clear and had fewer opportunities to learn about issues across the sites
Takeaway

• Established partnering between DoD, EPA, and States significantly helps new people learn their counterparts and issues across the sites.

• It provides a structure for clear elevation of issues to reduce frequency of teams getting “stuck”.

• This results in better relationships and quicker decisions being made at lower levels.
Headquarters

Doug Maddox and Brian Jordan
EPA HQ Coordination

• FFRRO Federal Agency and Regional Coordinators

• “Quarterly” meetings with Federal Agency Partners
  • Discuss ongoing site issues and trends across cleanup program
  • Discuss national policy issues and effects on site cleanups
  • Provide updates on priorities and initiatives

• EPA Federal Facilities Leadership Council (FFLC) coordination with DoD

• Ongoing senior management communication

• Allows for direct lines of communication to resolve issues quickly
What is Partnering?

A mutual commitment by all parties

Key Elements: shared goals; open dialogue; procedures for information exchange; trust

Results in mutually acceptable solutions
Regional Partnering

• A collaborative process for EPA, OFAs, and the state regulatory agencies to work together on the cleanup of contaminated DOD sites
  ➢ Focuses on open communication at all levels
  ➢ Facilitates better understanding of each agency’s (and landowners) processes, goals, and constraints
  ➢ Involve entire site team early and throughout the cleanup process
  ➢ Results in mutually beneficial path forward & quicker cleanup timelines

• Tier approach:
  ➢ Tier 1 – the project teams
  ➢ Tier 2 – first level managers
  ➢ Tier 3 – second and third level managers
  ➢ Resolve problems at the lowest level; elevate as needed