



NATIONAL POLICY DIALOGUE Committee- WASHINGTON D.C. (PENTAGON)

Background

The National Policy Dialogue on Military Munitions Final Report is the end result of several years of discussions among The Department of Defense (DOD), and its stakeholders about their interests and concerns with the life-cycle of military munitions and military installations, and their effects on communities¹, including those where environmental justice is a concern. The Dialogue participants represent perspectives from both within and outside of DOD, regulating agencies at the federal, state, and tribal level, environmental groups, environmental justice groups and communities affected by munitions and military installations. While these diverse perspectives may have different concerns and opinions about the management of munitions, they share a common concern about the health and safety of their communities. Those who share this concern vary from those who have lived and raised their families in the community for decades to DOD families and employees who live on or near installations. This has been a collaborative effort to holistically describe, quantify, and make recommendations to a complex issue that has to-date only been addressed in a piecemeal and fragmented fashion. However, this Report should not be considered a consensus of the Dialogue members.

The initial stages of the Dialogue primarily sought to exchange information among participants about their interests and viewpoints and improve communication. This Report captures the perspectives of the participants as well as possible ways to improve the munitions life-cycle process and the relationships between DOD and its stakeholders on munitions issues. Further, the intent of this Report is to initiate discussions and actions toward the resolution of the complex munitions and related environmental issues it identifies.

The Department of Defense requires the use of munitions in carrying out its mission. Their design and testing are part of maintaining

military readiness, as are training activities that help personnel develop the skills and expertise to use them effectively (see Box 1 for a definition of military munitions). Nonetheless, from product development to use in training and combat, munitions and their constituents pose varying degrees of risk to human health and the environment. Efforts to develop safer and more environmentally sensitive munitions, manage ranges in a sustainable manner, and clean up the impacts of munitions testing and training are all integral to munitions development and use. Such efforts should involve all those affected by these operations. In some cases munitions-associated operations have adversely affected the economic development, human health, and environment of communities

Local communities and affected communities are referred to throughout this Report. Local and affected communities include communities adjacent to installations, and communities where an installation's activities has direct environmental or economic effects on a community, including communities

of color or low-income communities. DOD should make special efforts to share information with these communities, and more effectively involve them in the ongoing decisions that affect their lives.