NAVY CONSOLIDATES CBR DEFENSE PROJECTS TO ACHIEVE SAVINGS

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DAHLGREN, Va. (NNS) – Two of the Navy's surface warfare centers responsible for chemical, biological and radiological (CBR) warfare agent detection have partnered together in an effort to streamline processes and reduce total ownership costs, Naval Surface Warfare (NSWC) Dahlgren Division officials announced August 2.

The partnership transfers all CBR detection services from Naval Surface Warfare Center Crane, located in Indiana, to Dahlgren, which provides technical, engineering, test, evaluation, maintenance and logistics support to the fleet after installing the CBR detection systems.

"Our partnership with NSWC Crane to transfer the acquisition and in-service engineering work associated with chemical and biological detectors is significantly reducing the Navy's total ownership costs," said NSWC Dahlgren CBR Defense Division Head Mike Purello. "This is not only providing opportunities for us to better support the warfighter at Dahlgren and on the waterfront but it's also enabling our scientists and engineers to look for the most efficient ways to support potential next generation detection systems."

Prior to the consolidation, the Navy built and designated a new laboratory to streamline CBR defense work and accrue savings to help fund other required chemical and biological defense projects. Since its completion in August 2011, the CBR Fleet Support and Integration Laboratory has allowed engineers to perform diagnostics, overhaul, testing, and subsequent calibration required to provide systems and equipment to the fleet.

The new laboratory also allowed NSWC Dahlgren to apply for the Naval Radioactive Materials Permit necessary to maintain, store, stage and track all of the Navy's chemical detectors that contain radioactive sources. Navy Radiological Affairs Support Office (RASO) approval is expected by March 2013. Currently, NSWC Crane holds the only permit.

Once obtained, the permit will give Dahlgren the ability to receive and ship the Improved Point Detection System and other detection equipment containing radioactive sources from its laboratory, which is expected to yield maintenance and cost savings from fiscal year 2013-2017.

Meanwhile, NSWC Dahlgren engineers' request for an exemption of the Improved Point Detection System - Lifecycle Replacement (IPDS-LR) permit requirements over the lifecycle of the new detection equipment was approved by RASO.

IPDS-LR - replacing the IPDS currently installed on most Navy ships - is designed to quickly alert warfighters to the presence of chemical warfare agents, and is being installed on 35 ships in 2012.

"We are tracking the IPDS-LR systems informally and performing all exemption requirements with no additional manpower," said Nancy Haymes, NSWCDD AEA. "Dahlgren is committed to ensuring that our support infrastructure is in place to continuously improve business processes. This enables us to develop product improvements that reduce operational and support costs while enhancing the Navy's operational capability."

With the pending permit for IPDS, the exemption for IPDS-LR and the new laboratory, coupled with disposal and demilitarization initiatives, NSWCDD engineers are boosting fleet support and reducing total ownership costs.

"We are now providing all the expertise, knowledge, facilities, capital equipment, processes and skilled personnel to sustain the readiness of in-service warfare systems and equipment," said Haymes. That includes the tracking, shipping and repairing of chemical detectors NSWC Dahlgren is releasing to the fleet.

"Only a determined steady effort with continuous cooperation across offices brought us to this point," said Jon Cofield, Navy Chemical and Biological Defense technical warrant holder. "The initiative that Dahlgren is spearheading saves the Navy funds at a time of significant belt tightening."

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