



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460

APR 27 1993

**IMPORTANT -- ALL READ**

OFFICE OF  
SOLID WASTE AND EMERGENCY RESPONSE

**DIRECTIVE NO. 9203.1-08**

**MEMORANDUM**

**SUBJECT:** Further Direction on Implementing the Superfund Accelerated Cleanup Model (SACM)

**FROM:** Henry L. Longest II, Director  
Office of Emergency and Remedial Response  
Bruce M. Diamond, Director  
Office of Waste Programs Enforcement

**TO:** Addressees

**PURPOSE**

This memorandum provides a summary of where we are in our efforts to implement the Superfund Accelerated Cleanup Model (SACM). It is essential that we continue to refine our goals as we transition to full implementation in Fiscal Year (FY) 1994 when all sites will be addressed under the SACM principles.

We have made excellent progress in developing SACM over the past year and it has been due in great part to the coordination among every facet of the Superfund program. As SACM is implemented, we expect to see all staff working more and more closely with each other to take advantage of the strengths and economies of each program. Headquarters remains committed to assisting you.

**BACKGROUND**

SACM is the most significant change to the Superfund program to date. With any major change comes some resistance to letting go of what is familiar. As you know, Superfund was first designed with the expectation of a small number of sites that would receive absolute and complete cleanup. Experience in implementing the many requirements of the statute and the National Contingency Plan (NCP) has brought us to a new environmental equilibrium. We must balance cleanup resources

with the need to tackle worst pollution sources first and reduce risk to people and the environment. As pointed out in Osborne's and Gaebler's Reinventing Government, traditional bureaucracies have tended to focus solely on cost of services and control of tax dollars in order to avoid waste, fraud and abuse. However, modern government must also find creative ways to speed, streamline and leverage traditional government services under tight budget constraints and funding cuts. This, along with the desire to quickly reduce risk, is the intent of SACM.

## **OBJECTIVE**

SACM will accelerate and streamline the Superfund process in order to: **BUILD PUBLIC CONFIDENCE THROUGH PROMPT AND APPROPRIATE HAZARDOUS WASTE CLEANUP THAT PROTECTS THE HEALTH OF PEOPLE AND THE ENVIRONMENT.** We will achieve this through:

- o working together as **One Program**: coordinating our efforts among enforcement, assessment, removal, remedial, community relations, information management, analytical services, and contracts; Headquarters and Regions
- o focusing on the **worst sites first** by addressing sites on the "One List". The One List is the integrated site list for all site assessment, non-emergency early actions, and long-term actions
- o applying SACM principles to everything we do to ensure a smooth transition to full implementation of SACM in **FY 1994**

## **IMPLEMENTATION**

### **Program Priorities**

In a recent directive (OSWER Directive No. 9202.1-14), the Acting Assistant Administrators for OSWER and the Office of Enforcement (OE) outlined the eight National Superfund Program Priorities. The top three are: (1) meeting our construction completion commitment of 650 by the year 2000; (2) maximizing PRP participation while testing ways to accelerate cleanup; and (3) accelerating cleanup through implementation of SACM and presumptive remedies.

We view these as complementary priorities that are aimed at achieving measurable program results (completions), leveraging

all available resources for cleanup (enforcement first), and improving and streamlining our process (acceleration). As public managers we must allocate our resources to create synergy among our program priorities. SACM provides tools to help us accelerate sites already in the pipeline, and assess and respond to the worst sites that are awaiting entry into the pipeline. Headquarters is developing more detailed guidance on how to manage, the blending of these program priorities.

With SACM, we must continue to keep sites moving through the pipeline. Our priority still is to deal with the worst sites first. As part of SACM implementation in FY 1993, we are asking each Region to develop an integrated site list for all assessment, non-emergency early actions and long-term actions (the "One List"). It is a base assumption that emergencies will always be given first attention, and are "above" the List. The purpose of this list is to help ensure that resources are directed to the most serious risks at National Priorities List (NPL), NPL-caliber, and non-NPL sites. "NPL-caliber" sites are those sites with a potential for a Hazard Ranking Score (HRS) above 28.5. At such sites, the remedial investigation (RI) and enforcement actions like the PRP search, can begin prior to the NPL proposal. This will enable faster response. The SACM Assessment Short Sheet (Publication No. 9303.1-05I) gives an excellent list of examples of NPL-caliber sites. Further guidance on NPL-caliber sites is being developed.

SACM will make greater use of both remedial and removal authorities to eliminate or significantly reduce risk. Keep in mind that this year we are testing facets of SACM at "SACM sites," and we will transition to full implementation in FY 1994 where all sites will be addressed under SACM principles. The principles of SACM should be applied to everything we do.

Although we do not expect resource growth over the next couple of years, SACM can achieve economies of time and money so we can accomplish more in the long run with the resources we have.

### Integrated Site Assessment

The concept of a continuous integrated assessment seems to present a particular implementation challenge, since the removal and remedial programs have traditionally approached "assessment" differently. The removal program usually moves quickly into an on-site assessment phase, while the remedial program usually has a more prolonged examination of site records and other file materials for HRS scoring purposes, with on-site assessment happening later in the process. However, SACM calls for a single unified approach that includes coordinated sample collection and analysis performed during site assessment. The data will support future removal, NPL listing and remedial activities; one report

should be written to satisfy both programs' needs where necessary. In the long-run, this will save us time and money because we will not be doing redundant work. Other key elements to integrated site assessment include: (1) ensuring smooth transitions between studies; (2) basing decisions on the commonalities of Data Quality Objectives (DQO's); and (3) using the new START contract to compile one integrated site assessment report. We are working on a directive that addresses data quality issues.

### Enforcement

**Enforcement First will continue to be emphasized.** Since an RI may begin with or during an integrated site assessment, potentially responsible parties (PRPs) must be identified earlier in the process in order to give them an opportunity to participate in the RI and Feasibility Study (FS). Regions should use a phased approach for PRP searches. This involves establishing liability for PRPs on whom we have the most information and then expanding the search process to address the remaining PRPs. Regions should maximize information sharing and cooperation among site assessment staff, staff conducting emergency or time-critical removals, PRP search personnel, and PRPs.

### Non-time Critical Removals

Regions must consult with Headquarters on PRP- or Fund-lead non-time critical removals costing more than \$5 million. We will be issuing guidance soon on conducting non-time-critical removals. It is important to recognize that the use of non-time critical removals will **expedite higher risk components of remedial actions** and is not meant to encumber routine removal actions with inappropriate analytical requirements. There is no intent to push bona fide time-critical removals into the non-time critical category.

### Regional Decision Teams (RDTs)

The RDTs are in place in all Regions. There has been considerable flexibility in establishing a decision process that works for each Region. However, at a minimum the RDT: (1) ensures that all parties are involved at critical points for site decisions; (2) is empowered with as much decision power as possible; and (3) provides policy and strategy direction to designated site managers, while not assuming site management responsibility. True emergency responses remain the purview of the emergency response program.

## Community Involvement

Communicating with the citizens who live near sites is essential for SACM to be successful. We must ensure that the public is involved early in the process while we accelerate the pace at which we clean up sites. Experience has shown us that the earlier the public is involved, the smoother the process will go. We need to be responsive to citizens' concerns and opinions from the beginning. Therefore, it is essential that a community relations specialist is a part of the Regional Decision Team.

## State Involvement

Regions should discuss and establish with each State a process for appropriate and meaningful State involvement to ensure that the worst sites first are being handled and there is no duplication of effort. SACM requires traditional consideration of State-cost share and Applicable or Relevant and Appropriate Requirements (ARARs). For non-time critical removals costing over \$2 Million, Regions should request state participation in the response (e.g. funding or in-kind services).

## CONCLUSION

We have made great headway over the past year in developing SACM and the credit is due to you who have been striving for continuous improvement in the way we do business. It is essential that all components of the Superfund program work together as one team in order to implement SACM. We urge you to continue to be innovative and aggressive in finding better ways to reach our goals.

**Addressees**

**Waste Management Division Directors**  
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Region II  
**Hazardous Waste Management Division Directors**  
Regions III, VI, VIII, IX  
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**cc: Rich Guimond, OSWER**  
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