

TRU TeamWorks

A weekly e-newsletter for the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant team

November 13, 2003

The Big Story Farewell to a leader



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WIPP Shipments (as of 11/13/03 at 8:15 a.m.)

Shipments
scheduled to
arrive at WIPP
this week
17

Total shipments
received at WIPP
2,161

Dr. Inés Triay has capably led the Carlsbad Field Office for four and a half years, but recently announced that she will leave DOE to pursue a career in the private sector. As the WIPP team wishes Dr. Triay well in her new endeavors, it is fitting to recall the importance her leadership has played in the success of WIPP.



Dr. Triay managed WIPP during one of the project's most critical transitions. Taking the CBFO and WIPP helm in 1999, Dr. Triay's challenge was to transform the project from a "readiness" posture to full-fledged disposal operations. She was appointed CBFO manager just months after WIPP received its first shipment. At the time, TRU waste processes were laborious and shipments intermittent. Dr. Triay recognized that an effective infrastructure was needed to ensure the increased and continuous flow of TRU waste from the generator sites if WIPP were to fulfill its mission.

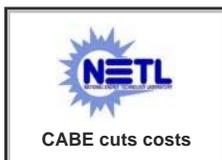
Under her direction, the National TRU Program (NTP) was established. The program now oversees and standardizes best practices for TRU waste characterization, packaging, transportation and disposal. The NTP program has, in Dr. Triay's words, effectively "filled the pipeline." In three short years, shipments to WIPP increased from an average of 2 per week to more than 25 by the end of last year — with more planned. She galvanized mobile teams and equipment to assist small-quantity sites that lacked the expertise or equipment to characterize and ship waste. The result has been remarkable. "I am truly proud of our WIPP team and its accomplishments. We made the facility fully operational. We ramped up shipments from 1 to 2 per week to more than 25," Triay comments. "Our safety record is world-class."

Dr. Triay's initiatives did not stop there. To ensure a business-like approach to TRU waste management, she created a corporate board comprised of DOE and contractor management. The board reviews NTP and other TRU management initiatives for cost-effectiveness and efficiency.

Importantly, Dr. Triay spearheaded a national effort in 2001 to accelerate the clean-up and disposal of legacy TRU wastes. With DOE Headquarters and TRU waste sites' collaboration, she developed a management plan for acceleration that cuts clean-up by 20 years and is estimated to save taxpayers \$8 billion. "Challenges for WIPP lie ahead," Triay continues, "But I am confident that the WIPP team will overcome all of them to complete the TRU waste clean-up and disposal mission in a safe and efficient manner."

Dr. Triay leaves DOE to form a New Mexico-based company that will provide homeland security solutions. She leaves behind a legacy of success and strength. The WIPP team is better equipped to accomplish the project's long-term mission as a result of her strong and decisive leadership.

In the news





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Multi-port glove box system to be completed in Carlsbad

Work on the new multi-port glove box system for use at SRS continues. The project, headed by WTS with design expertise from LANL, has been ongoing since late May. The four-port system consists of four, 45-foot transportainers which contain a control room/office, two glove box assemblies and a waste container staging area. Once complete, the system will be put into operation at SRS to assist the site in meeting its 2006 waste remediation goal. *TRU TeamWorks* initially profiled this project in the September 25 issue. Since then, significant progress has been made by the project team.



Left: Contractor personnel gather for a pre-job safety briefing before moving the transportainers. Photo courtesy of Mark Davis, WTS.

Initially, different components of the four-port system were being completed at different locations. Glove box fabrication was taking place at EPD in Carlsbad, with transportainers being built in Idaho and drum lift fabrication in Colorado. Now the system components have all been transported to Carlsbad for final commissioning and testing.

Brian Hammond, WGI four-port system project manager, explains, "WTS and area contractors have all of the technical expertise and equipment necessary to complete this project. Once our team took a look at what the community and this company had to offer, there was no reason to fabricate this system anywhere else."

The four-port project team has temporarily relocated to the EPD facility on US 62/180 (Hobbs Highway). There, WTS personnel along with local contractors Constructors, Inc; Budwine Service Electric; and Sullivan Crane and Rigging are already hard at work on the system fabrication. The four transportainers arrived this week and are being moved into the EPD building. All final fabrication and construction on the system, including installation of ductwork, electrical wiring, breathing air, instrumentation, and control electronics, will be completed by local personnel. The system will be fully tested here as well.



WTS employees temporarily located to the EPD facility on US 62/180 include:

- | | | |
|--------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|
| Royce Allen | Bob Baker | Jerry Brown |
| Mark Davis | Mike McFarland | |

The team looks to begin testing of the system early next year, with final installation at SRS to follow in the spring of 2004. Look for updates on this important project in future editions of *TRU TeamWorks*.

Left: Sullivan Crane and Rigging, of Hobbs, provides contract support to the four-port project.



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TRI-State - TRU hauler and more

What is banner green, has white lettering and weighs 18,600 pounds? A Tri-State Motor Transit Company (TSMT) tractor, of course. TSMT is one of two carriers that transport TRU waste to WIPP, and its green tractors are a common sight around Carlsbad.

TSMT has been hauling payloads since 1929. The company began by transporting explosives for three powder mills in the Joplin, Missouri, area to support the local zinc and lead mining industry. Joplin has been the company's headquarters ever since.



TSMT corporate headquarters in Joplin, Missouri.

WIPP Shipments

(as of 11/13/03
at 8:51 a.m.)

<p>Shipments scheduled to arrive at WIPP this week 17</p>
<p>Total shipments received at WIPP 2,161</p>
<p>Total Waste Disposed Underground at WIPP</p>
<p>CH drums 46,186</p>
<p>CH standard waste boxes 2,264</p>
<p>CH ten-drum overpacks 516</p>
<p>Cubic meters 16,278</p>

Today, TSMT operates 15 facilities in 15 states. TSMT employs 750 people nationwide and has more than 400 tractors in the company fleet. Each TSMT tractor is equipped with a satellite communication and tracking system compatible with the TRANSCOM system employed at WIPP.

While TSMT contracts with DOE to haul TRU waste, it transports a variety of materials for other industries. Its hauling services are separated into two categories: secured materials and heavy haul.

The Secured Materials Division includes the transportation of hazardous materials. TSMT is recognized as one of the largest national carriers of hazardous materials, contracting with both DOE and the Department of Defense. The company has vast experience hauling explosives, nuclear fuel, radioactive materials (such as TRU waste) and toxic materials over U.S. roadways and provinces of Canada.



A fleet of TSMT trucks parked at the local yard.

The Heavy Haul Division transports over-sized and over-dimensional payloads. Tri-State's Heavy Haul Division specializes in loads over 50,000 pounds, and can handle loads that exceed 150,000 pounds and 125 feet in length. Loads of this proportion require not only special driving skills, but permits and highway escorts. TSMT is certified to transport over-size loads throughout the United States and Canada.

Like WIPP, TSMT takes great pride in its safety record. When contacted by phone, TSMT Executive Vice President David Bennett relates, "We take great pride in the high quality of our driver personnel selected for the transportation of materials for WIPP. Tri-State is pleased and honored to be a part of the project."

And that makes 17

On Monday, David Waugh, president of the New Mexico Mining Association, again named Washington TRU Solutions (WTS) "Mine Operator of the Year," based on the company's consistent record of excellence in underground operations. WTS has, in fact, received the award for 17 consecutive years.



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Congratulating WIPP miners, from left: Bob Kirby, WTS manager of Underground Operations; David Reber, WTS deputy general manager; David Waugh, president, New Mexico Mining Association; Dr. Inés Triay, manager CBFO; Jack Gilbert, CBFO waste disposal operations team leader; and Subhash Sethi, WTS repository development project manager.

Total Waste Disposed Underground at WIPP

(as of 11/13/03 at 8:51 a.m.)

CH drums 46,186
CH standard waste boxes 2,264
CH ten-drum overpacks 516
Cubic meters 16,278

Waugh told the crowd of miners, DOE and WTS managers and employees, "This award is based on the accident frequency rate, and the site with the best numbers wins. It's a great job that you all do." Joking with the audience, Waugh, who is also the mine operations manager at IMC Global, a local potash mine, said "We wish your mine rescue team would give us a break. Your team is second to none." Waugh was referring to national mine competitions where both IMC and WIPP teams compete.

CBFO Manager Dr. Inés Triay was on hand to greet WIPP miners at the door. Addressing the audience, she said, "You are the strength of the project. Your safety record and professionalism make us extremely proud of you." Jack Gilbert, CBFO waste disposal operations team leader, followed Triay's praise, encouraging miners to "continue our safety culture" and "watch out for fellow miners."

Unlike years past, the award was presented to the miners themselves rather than to a WIPP representative. Waugh said that although the Mining Association's annual convention was in Taos, officials decided to present the award at the WIPP site, noting, "We wanted to come to the mine site and congratulate the people that actually make it happen."

WTS is the management and operating contractor for DOE at WIPP. The award is given each year in the category of large non-producing mine, or one that does not mine for profit.



WIPP miners and employees awarded "New Mexico Mine Operator of the Year" for safety.

Hoist Schedule Changes

Beginning November 30, WTS Operations will adhere to a new hoist schedule. The purpose of the schedule is to maximize the use of the hoists in support of increased waste disposal operations. Waste and salt hoist mantrips will be set to a schedule that ensures mission-essential waste emplacement and mining activities.

Individuals planning trips to the underground must plan in advance and should be prepared to stay underground until the next scheduled mantrip out of the mine. Contact the Underground Controller at 234-8246 for hoist availability. If interested in being placed on the electronic distribution list of the weekly shaft schedule, contact Ashlee Newton at 234-8467. A link to the hoist schedule will be available each week in the Disposal section of *TRU TeamWorks*.

Official foreign travel



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Planning to travel abroad on company business? Be sure to include Security in your plans. Foreign travel is controlled and regulated by DOE Order 551.1B, "Official Foreign Travel" and is part of the Foreign National Visit and Assignment Program.



As a requirement, CBFO/DOE maintains a Foreign Travel Plan (FTP) that is generated every six months. The plan is used as a budgeting and planning tool to project upcoming travel and is provided to DOE Headquarters for approval. All EM travel is scrutinized and refined by officials at DOE Headquarters before issuance of the final FTP. Those travels listed on the final FTP have the best chance of transpiring. Several forms must be completed before DOE or contractor personnel can travel to a foreign country:

- Request for Approval for Foreign Travel (DOE F 551.1)
- A memo of travel justification signed by the CBFO manager.
- Country Clearance and Security Information form.
- The traveler must have a valid United States passport.
- Personnel must also contact WIPP's Counterintelligence Information Officer (Hector Saldana) to receive briefings and debriefings when traveling to sensitive countries.
- Travel information must then be provided to the Foreign Travel Official Point of Contact (OPOC) (Jessica Vasquez) to be entered into the Foreign Travel Management System (FTMS). The DOE order requires that the travel forms be entered into FTMS 30 days before the proposed departure date, or 45 calendar days before the proposed departure date, if travel is to a sensitive country or involves a sensitive subject.
- Trip reports must be closed out in FTMS within 30 calendar days of the traveler's return date. Information such as trip expenses (lodging, meals, incidentals, and miscellaneous costs); and a trip abstract is also required.

“The process for approving foreign travel is very complex and can be time consuming. In order to ensure your travel is properly approved and funded, please contact Jessica Vasquez or Hector Saldana for assistance. Remember, be careful what you say and whom you say it to.”

*Terry Cuba, Manager,
Santa Fe Protective
Services WIPP Site
Security*

Final approval for official foreign travel can be granted only by the responsible program Secretarial Officer or Under Secretary and Administrator, NNSA, or their designee, funding the official foreign travel. If there is no DOE funding, the official having programmatic responsibilities associated with the official foreign travel must give final approval.

For further information on Unclassified Foreign Visit and Assignment Program and Official Foreign Travel, contact Jessica Vasquez at Extension 8321 or Hector Saldana at Extension 8481.

WIPP takes big steps forward in 2003

Second of two articles on Fiscal Year 2003 (FY03) accomplishments



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It was a year of big strides for WIPP and the National TRU Waste Program during FY03.

Those included safe performance, strategic business management and key regulatory approvals.



The project maintained a strong safety culture, evidenced by:

- DOE recertified WIPP in the Voluntary Protection Program and awarded the Superior Star status rating
- "New Mexico Mine Operator of the Year" for the 17th consecutive year
- Satisfactory reviews of WIPP Vital Safety Systems from DOE-Environmental Management and Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board
- Improvement of 37 percent in industrial safety performance in five months
- Zero radiological incidents handling while 7,500+ cubic meters of TRU waste and zero transportation accidents during 799 shipments
- Achieving over one-million hours without a lost day away from work case in mid-September

WIPP's business accomplishments included negotiating new performance-based incentives for the work and alignment of the prime contract with accelerated/integrated TRU waste disposal throughout the DOE Complex. The NTP-complex-wide baseline accelerated risk reduction for workers, the public and environment by speeding up legacy TRU waste disposal 20 years.

There were big accomplishments in the business of TRU waste clean-up and shipping:

- Removed all TRU waste from Energy Technology Engineering Center
- Completed characterization, transportation and WIPP disposal of all legacy debris TRU waste at Argonne National Laboratory – East
- Removed all legacy TRU waste from the University of Missouri Research Reactor Center
- Shipped 3,100 cubic meters of TRU waste from Idaho to WIPP almost two months ahead of schedule

WIPP made important technical strides to get regulatory approvals for remote-handled (RH) TRU waste disposal. Those included completion of the RH TRU waste characterization demonstration at Los Alamos National Laboratory. EPA and NMED supported regulatory modifications to allow for PCB-contaminated waste to be safely disposed at WIPP. Revisions to the TRUPACT-II Safety Analysis Report for Packaging approved by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission provided technical authorization to safely ship specialized waste packages.



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Kump Honored by NMED

Dave Kump, manager of WIPP Waste Information Systems, was recently honored by the New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) for 18 years of continuous service on the Radiation Technical Advisory Council (RTAC). Bill Floyd, New Mexico Radiation Control Bureau program manager and Sherry Miller, Radiation Control Bureau environmental specialist, traveled to Carlsbad to present the plaque to Kump last week.



At right: Representatives of the New Mexico Radiation Control Bureau honored Dave Kump for outstanding service to the Radiation Technical Advisory Council. Pictured left to right are Bill Floyd, Dave Kump and Sherry Miller.

RTAC is responsible to the executive branch of the New Mexico government. The Council's charter is to provide advice and consent before proposed state radiation regulations can be considered by the Environmental Improvement Board. Members of RTAC must have an extensive background in radiation protection and be recommended by NMED. Kump was first appointed to the Council in 1985 and was reappointed five times by four different governors. He was a member of the Council until January of this year.

Regulatory issues considered by RTAC have included radioactive material transportation, training of medical radiological technologists, radiation licensing fees and many others. New Mexico was the first state to establish a radiation technical advisory council. Now Texas, Colorado and Oklahoma have similar councils in place.

SNL hosts "Take Our Sons To Work Day"

Fourteen boys participated in "Take Our Sons To Work Day" hosted November 10 by the Sandia National Laboratories Carlsbad Programs Group. The event is held to acquaint the youngsters with Sandia's diverse contributions to the nation's security, technological advancements and energy programs. The boys were given presentations on performance assessment work, a WIPP overview, and explanation of the records/library process.



They also conducted chemistry experiments and were given a demonstration of the Scanning Electron Microscope along with tours of the computer lab and soil and sediment lab. They took part in a business exercise where they were assigned jobs and given salaries. As a team, the boys then had to make out a budget for living expenses. The exercise was designed to show them how to plan for their futures and the importance of education.



Sandia employee sons included: Austin Peralta, Benjamin Buell, Phillip Hansen, Austin McCoy, Rivers Chadwick, David Park, Phillip Howell, Brantley Henson, Chris Hansen, Curtis Twitchell, Kevin Park and Erick Guerin.

Top right: Anna Snider demonstrates the Scanning Electron Microscope to Erick Guerin, Chris Hansen and Rivers Chadwick. Bottom right: Don Wall explains a chemistry experiment to Erick Guerin, Brantley Henson, Andrew Medrano and Chris Hansen.