

If there is a prescribed burn in 2004, the relocation program will be offered and there will be a communication program comparable to that implemented during the Range 43-48 prescribed burn.

TOTALS FOR RELOCATION PROGRAM ENROLLMENT

The dates and numbers of enrollment in the relocation program are shown below:

| <u>Enrollment Date</u> | <u># of Enrollments</u> |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Re-enrolled from 2002 | 219 ³ |
| January – June 2003 | 2 ⁴ |
| July 2003 (signup workshops) | 48 |
| August 2003 | 16 |
| September 2003 | 20 |
| Oct. 1 – October 21, 2003 | 89 |
| October 22, 2003 | 40 |
| October 23, 2003 | 78 |
| October 24, 2003 (day of burn) | 119 |
| October 25, 2003 | 35 |
| October 26, 2003 | 11 |
| October 27, 2003 | 38 |
| October 28, 2003 (relocation ends) | 11 |
| October 29, 2003 | 6 |
| October 30, 2003 | 5 |
| October 31, 2003 | 1 |
| Nov. 1 – Dec. 31, 2003 | <u>30</u> |
| | 768 |

RELOCATION PROGRAM COSTS

The Army received 493 reimbursement claims. 427 families made their own arrangements, while 66 requested prepaid rooms. The Army has processed all claims, at a cost of \$291,309.

The overall per-family average payment was \$596.42. The average payment for people who made their own arrangements was \$629.14. The average payment for people who received prepaid rooms was \$343.41.

³ These are individuals who registered in 2002 and completed a form acknowledging the changes in the program and asking that they remain enrolled.

⁴ There was no announced relocation enrollment during this period. The two individuals who enrolled during this period walked into the building and were registered by Community Relations staff.

Prepaid rooms paid for directly by the Army Corps of Engineers cost a total of \$39,357.50, and food vouchers cost \$33,111.50. An additional \$800 was paid for rooms reserved for the postponed Oct. 13th fire.

Total relocation expenses -- including motel rooms and meal vouchers paid for directly by the Army -- were \$364,578.

COMMENTS FROM STAFF:

Below are evaluation comments generated by the relocation registration and travel arrangements/contracting staff:

1. It really paid off having enough people. There was a good fit (in terms of the personalities of the staff) among those people working in relocation.
2. Having the registration staff and the travel arrangements/contracting staff in the same building was very helpful. It led to easy communication between staff signing up people for relocation and the staff actually doing the placement.
3. It made a big difference (compared to the 2002 relocation) having enough computers, phone and faxes.
4. During the relocation itself, the Army Corps of Engineers making travel arrangements were located at motels in Gilroy (the same hotels where all pre-paid relocatees were housed). This made communication difficult for registration staff in Building 4463 when they needed to check with Army Corps of Engineers staff on the availability of rooms for emergency relocations. The cell phones were not always working, nor were people always available through the Gilroy hotel phone number.
5. There were problems with the Army network connections to access the relocation database. Fortunately, a method of access was found using an alternate (in-house) Internet connection (Redshift).
6. About 160 families received meal vouchers. All the vouchers were for Denny's, located in walking distance from the hotels where people who selected the pre-paid options were housed. There were long lines at Denny's for the people using vouchers.
7. The number of people who requested pre-paid rooms but were "no-shows" just about balanced out the number of people who required emergency placement due to a combination of significant health problems/financial hardship.

8. Some people did call to change from pre-paid rooms to reimbursable travel. This made it possible to change their status or cancel their prepaid arrangements.

COMMENTS RECEIVED FROM THE PUBLIC

Most of the comments received from the public regarding the Ranges 43-48 prescribed burn discussed the burn itself, the prescription for the burn, and the impacts of the burn. The responses to these comments will be posted soon on www.FortOrdCleanup.com. However, several comments were received about the communications with the public prior to the burn, and the relocation program itself. These comments are summarized below. Responses to these comments are provided in Appendix 1.

COMMENTS REGARDING COMMUNICATIONS

- Some people felt they had not been properly informed about what they should expect from a prescribed burn. One urged the Army to take significant steps to restore public trust before carrying out any future burns
- Some people said that enough information was available prior to the burn and felt well informed
- One individual said there was no real public involvement
- Several comments reported difficulty getting up-to-date information from organizations such as the American Red Cross, local fire and police agencies and nearby businesses, and suggested that more needed to be done to inform these organizations
- Some people requested adequate advance notice to the public and better follow-up information as the burn is happening
- One comment suggested a “prescribed burn registry” program, under which people who would be directly impacted by a burn would get calls from the Army’s staff
- One person commented that the web site (www.FortOrdCleanup.com) was useful
- One individual stated that the Army should post warning signs about the potential danger of unexploded ordnance, although this should not be necessary in housing projects
- The comment was made that the amount of smoke and ashes caught many people by surprise, and the Army should promote awareness of the consequences of the burn so people could avoid being exposed to hazardous chemicals
- One commenter urged the Army to educate the public on the environmental benefits of a controlled burn

- Several people asked for more information about how and why the community was so impacted by smoke, and requested an opportunity to discuss the fire with the people who made the decision to proceed with the burn

COMMENTS REGARDING THE RELOCATION PROGRAM

- Several people expressed their appreciation of and support for the relocation program and said they would be relocating during any subsequent burns
- Two people said they had difficulty finding the relocation office
- One person said she was told that only 300 people would be relocated because there was not sufficient funding to relocate more people
- One person said there should be consideration for people who are unable to leave the area for work-related or other reasons

CHANGES NEEDED IN THE RELOCATION PROGRAM

The Army did not send a questionnaire to people who relocated during the 2003 relocation program. The Army was focused primarily on addressing concerns raised by the escaped fire. The comments received by the public during the November public meeting, or sent to the Army by mail or e-mail, are summarized above, with a full list of comments and responses in Appendix 1.

As discussed earlier, there were policy changes in the relocation program based on the 2002 relocation. These policy changes were largely effective. Establishing a Monterey County exclusion zone, coupled with closer coordination with the CSUMB administration does appear to have significantly reduced potential abuses of the program. All reimbursement requests were paid within 30 days of actual receipt of the request, although there continued to be some delays in delivery of mail by the U.S. Post Office. These delays are outside the control of the Army Corps of Engineers. The requirement that pre-paid rooms be requested at least 48 hours prior to relocation did permit the Army Corps of Engineers to make commitments on the number of pre-paid requirements. However, some applicants with genuine financial need did request pre-paid rooms after the 48-hour cutoff, and were given pre-paid rooms if they were available. The 48-hour cutoff needs to be emphasized in all communications to the public.

Based on staff analysis, the one possible policy change required would be a redefinition of the Monterey County exclusion zone. Relocation staff had difficulty explaining why relocation to places as distant as Big Sur, Lucia and Parkfield could be impacted by smoke. The argument in favor of continuing the present policy of excluding all of Monterey County is that the boundaries are well defined and there is no smoke exposure within those boundaries. Attempts to narrow

down the boundaries could lead to confusion and arguments over which areas are exposed to smoke and which are not.

The other changes recommended by relocation program staff and the public are operational in nature and will be addressed during planning for any future prescribed burns. These recommendations include:

1. When most of the travel arrangements/contracting staff relocate to Gilroy to be available to pre-paid relocatees, one travel arrangement/contracting person should stay at Building 4463 (registration center) to address questions related to emergency pre-paid relocations.
2. Purchase 50% of the meal vouchers from Denny's and 50% from Fresh Choice (the other restaurant within walking distance of the motels where pre-paid relocatees are housed). This would distribute the crowds between the restaurants, shortening the lines, and providing for greater variety.
3. There needs to be a clear, well communicated cut-off time for those families who have been assigned prepaid rooms, (i.e. if they do not check in by a certain time, their room will be given to an emergency pre-paid family).
4. There needs to be a review of all relocation literature to ensure there is a consistent message about when people who apply for reimbursement will receive their reimbursement check. For example, the 30-day pay period starts when the Army Corps of Engineers receives the request for reimbursement, not when the request is mailed.
5. Both relocation registration and travel arrangements/contracting staff should be provided special identification to show they are "official." This will help relocatees know who can give definitive information.
6. Once people have completed the relocation program application they should be given a signed piece of paper stating that they are enrolled in the relocation program. This is needed to reassure people that the transaction has been completed. It doesn't have to be fancy, but it should look official.
7. Registration staff needs to discuss newly completed applications with applicants to determine whether special arrangements are needed for pets. Arrangements for pets require extra coordination and need to be done well in advance.
8. A list of the motels where pre-paid relocatees will be housed, including addresses and phone number, should be published in advance and given to individuals or families requesting pre-paid accommodations.
9. Relocation literature needs to stress that, for people receiving pre-paid rooms, there will be no hotel changes from city to city once a burn is announced. Their preferences from the application will be recorded, and

their wishes will be accommodated if possible before the burn is announced. However, once a burn is announced there will be no changes.

10. The relocation insert from Community Bulletin #6 was too large. Something smaller would work better. For example, there could be a wallet-sized card showing abbreviated "rules of the road," especially for people assigned to prepaid rooms.
11. Despite substantial notice that no pre-paid rooms would be available for people who signed up later than 48 hours before the prescribed burn. Many of the people who signed up after the 48-hour cutoff and still expected pre-paid rooms were military personnel. Information should go out from the Garrison Commander's Office offering relocation but emphasizing the 48-hour cutoff for pre-paid rooms.