PARTNERING GUIDE

FOR

ENVIRONMENTAL MISSIONS OF THE AIR FORCE, ARMY, NAVY

JULY 1996

PARTNERING GUIDE

FOR ENVIRONMENTAL MISSIONS
OF THE
AIR FORCE, ARMY, NAVY

July, 1996

Prepared by

a Tri - Service Committee:
Air Force, Army, Navy

“FIX THE PROBLEM
NOT THE BLAME”

Theme from a Partnering Workshop

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This guide was prepared under the sponsorship of DoD Environmental Programs. It was developed by a Tri-Service Committee with the representatives from the Air Force, Army and Navy. This Tri-Service Committee was formed as a result of the National Performance Review. Its purpose was to describe ways in which Partnering could be used in the Environmental Programs of the three services. BG Gerald Brown and Colonel Frank Finch of Army Environment were assigned the responsibility for the guides development.

Mr. Charles Schroer, Chief of Military Construction in the HQ of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers was the team leader. Dr. Jerome Delli Priscoli of the Corps Institute for Water Resources directed the actual writing of the guide together with Dr. James L. Creighton, Creighton & Creighton, Inc., Los Gatos California. The other team members were: Mr. Lee Schoenecker of the Office of the Civil Engineer, Environmental Directorate, HQ U.S. Air Force; Mr. Warren Meekins and Mr. Tony Danesi of Naval Facilities Engineering Command; Mr. John J. Mahon, Senior Counsel for Environmental Restoration, the Office of the Chief Counsel, HQ U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Many professionals in each of the Services made valuable contributions to the development of the guide, to the focus groups which were held throughout the country to test the ideas of the guide and to the writing of case studies. The Environmental Restoration Management Alliance, which is a partnering alliance involving the Navy in the Southeastern US, was instrumental in organizing focus group discussions in Atlanta among a variety of stakeholders with experience in partnering. Mr. Phillip E. Lami and Mr. Michael L.Tye of the Air Force Regional Environmental Compliance Office in San Francisco managed the focus group discussions on the West coast. Ms. Kimberly K. Collins and Lawrence J. Smith USACE Missouri River Division and Mr. Jeffrey Smith of the HQ USACE CEMP-RI managed the focus group meetings in the Midwestern States. Lorenz Aggens, of L. Aggens Associates, co-participated in the focus groups.

Mr. Paul G. Brunner and Mrs.Linda Geissinger of McClellan Air Force Base, Mr. Gene Ninneman, formerly of HQ Air Force Materiel Command at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Mr. Jon T. Ussery formerly of Reese Air Force Base, Mr. William B. Lopp, HQ Air Education and Training Command at Randolph Air Force Base; Mr. Thomas D. Sims and Mr. John M. Gordon of the Air Force Regional Environmental Compliance Office in Atlanta, helped develop the Air Force case studies. Ms. Trudie Weatherall, on IPA to IWR, and Dr. Michele Slagel of the University of South Alabama helped in the early phases of writing the case studies.

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Introduction

The Department of Defense (DoD) is seeking better ways to make decisions that accomplish our environmental mission and also generate broad support from other agencies and interests. Partnering is one of a variety of tools to meet these needs. DoD has successfully used partnering in construction, contracting, and other business relationships, and is now applying it to environmental programs.

The purpose of this guide is to encourage greater use of partnering at the policy, installation, and project levels of DoD compliance, cleanup, pollution prevention, and conservation programs. Its primary audience is DoD employees and contractors. However, this document has been reviewed by a number of other federal, state, and local officials, as well as representatives of environmental groups. They endorse the concept of partnering and join in encouraging DoD employees, and other agencies, to support partnering.

Depending upon the circumstances, other Federal and State agencies, local governments, Restoration Advisory Boards (RABs), other community groups and private individuals might also become formal partners. It should be noted that, for cleanup and restoration, RABs serve as important mechanisms for securing community involvement as they are intended to bring together people who reflect diverse interests within a local community. Each service should refer to their particular policies and guidelines concerning how to include RABs in partnering processes involving cleanup and restoration.

Chapter 1: Partnering in the DoD Environmental Mission

Partnering is a process by which two or more organizations with shared interests act as a team to achieve mutually beneficial goals. Typically, the "partners" are organizations that in the past have worked at arm's length, or have even had competitive or adversarial relationships. For DoD's environmental mission, partners might include DoD agencies and contractors, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and state regulatory agencies. In some situations, Restoration Advisory Boards (RABs), other federal agencies, local governments, community groups and private individuals might be partners.

Partnering is not a legally binding relationship. But it does involve a commitment to:

- Participate in structured, facilitated team-building sessions and joint training to acquire the skills needed to work together as a team.

- Remove organizational impediments to open communication within the team, regardless of organizational affiliation.

- Provide open and complete access to information (except information specifically excluded by law, regulations, or ethical requirements).

- Empower the working-level staff to resolve as many issues as possible.

- Reach decisions by consensus as much as possible, and when consensus is not possible, achieve resolution in a timely manner using an agreed-upon process for resolving disagreements.

- Take joint responsibility for consultation with other affected agencies, groups, or individuals.

- Take joint responsibility for maintaining and nurturing the partnering relationship.

- The real impetus for partnering is the fact that the people involved in implementation are hearing that it works. A review of cases in which partnering has been used shows dramatic time and cost savings. A few examples include:

- At MCB Camp Lejeune, a partnering team developed an expedited process that is intended to shorten study time from an average of 38 months to 19 months. On the first site where the process was used, the team was able to complete a Record of Decision in 10 months. At other sites where the process is currently being applied, the team estimates it will beat the old process by at least 13 months.

- The Bayou Bonfouca remediation project is now projected to be completed three to four years ahead of schedule. Participants give much of the credit to partnering.

- A partnering team overseeing all Navy cleanup projects in Florida estimates cost savings of $2,034,000 during the period December 93 - July 94, and anticipates even larger savings in subsequent months.

Chapter 2: Who Are the Partners?

For the environmental mission, partnering will usually include DOD entities, U.S. EPA, State regulators, and DOD contractors. Depending upon circumstances, partners might also include RABs, other federal agencies such as trustees of the Comprehensive Environment Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA), other state or local government officials, other representatives of nearby communities and private individuals. In any case, regardless of who the formal partners are, there should be a strong commitment of all such parties to make partnering work over a sustained period of time.

Partnering involves a change in the "arm's-length" relationships among regulators and DoD. These relationships have too often turned into building a "paper wall" to prepare for potential litigation, rather than solving problems. In actuality, DoD, the regulators, and the American people want the same thing—effective cleanup at a reasonable cost to taxpayers and an effective program of compliance, pollution prevention, and conservation. The willingness of regulators to enter into partnering is based largely on their confidence that DoD is committed to an effective program. If that commitment is in doubt, regulators may be fearful that partnering undercuts their authority to impose necessary compliance.

Until recently, virtually all DOD partnering has taken place in connection with construction projects. Partnering has proven valuable in finding creative solutions that are in the interests of both DOD and the contractors. Since much of the environmental program is accomplished through contractors, there is considerable potential for partnering with contractors throughout the environmental mission. DOD does not relinquish its responsibility to enforce contracts or its ethical obligations when it enters into partnering. In fact, differences should be explicitly discussed during partnering. But the shared interests of both parties are often better served by building a team.

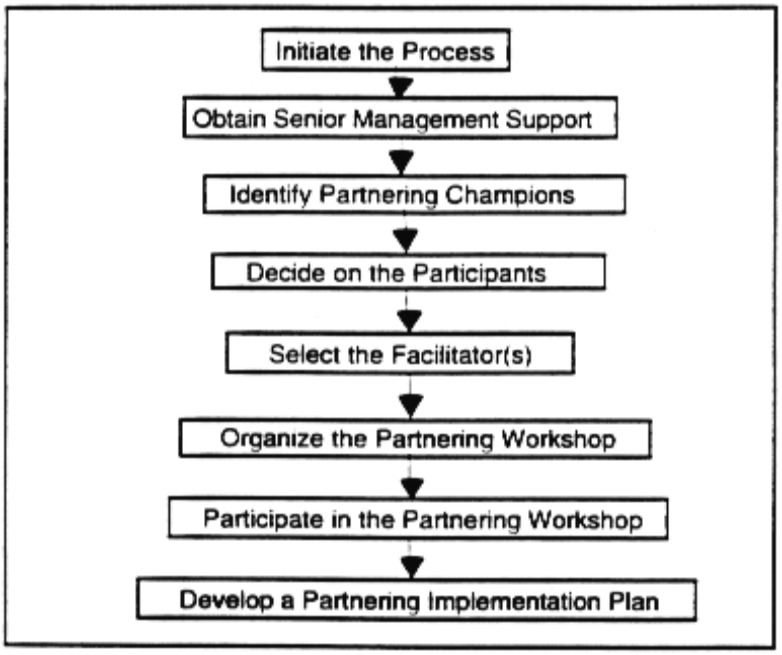
In many cases, it is appropriate to include local Governments and community groups or individuals in the partnering relationship. There is little point in building an open, trusting and empowering relationship among government agencies only to have implementation blocked by potentially affected citizens who have been left out of the process. A variety of community involvement techniques can be employed, including RABs, workshops, public meetings, interviews, and other public information techniques.

Chapter 3: A "How To" Guide to Partnering

This chapter provides guidance on how to carry out the basic steps in the partnering process. On many short-term construction projects, the major focus of the partnering process is a front-end partnering workshop, with a few follow-up activities. In the environmental mission, the partnering relationship may need to be sustained for years and may cover a number of different projects. Under these conditions, partnering may require greater structure and sustained implementation than on construction projects. The initial partnering workshop will simply kick-off the process, and the real work of partnering will be accomplished over a period of many months or years, with a need for both continuing maintenance and occasional reinvigoration of the partnering relationship.

Section one of this chapter describes the steps in the partnering process from initial contact between parties through the initial partnering workshop and development of a Partnering Implementation Plan. These steps are shown in Figure 1:

Figure ES-1 - Initial Steps of Partnering



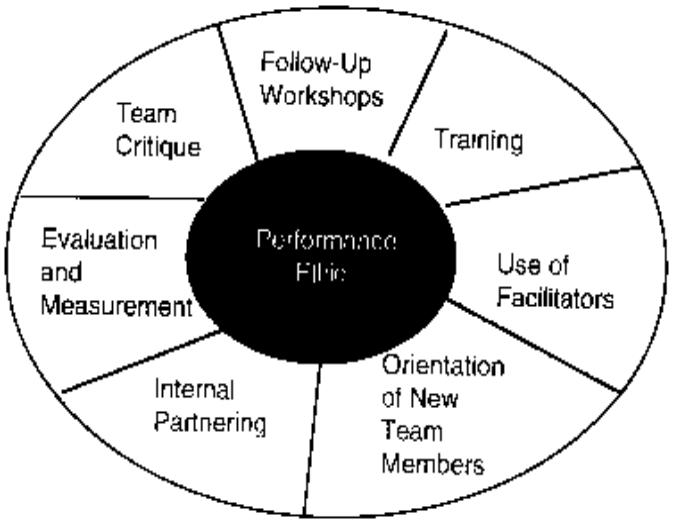
The purpose of the initial partnering workshop is to speed up the process by which a group of people become a team. But after the partnering workshop, the team members must really begin to work together to perform effectively as a team, and sustain the team spirit. Section two discusses the actions that need to be taken to develop a "real team." These are shown in Figure 2.

During the time that DOD agencies have been using partnering, new tools have been added to increase effectiveness, and that evolution is likely to continue. As a result, this guide does not dictate a specific approach. Rather, the partnering team itself should determine the direction and format of the partnering process.

Chapter 4: Frequently Asked Questions

This chapter provides answers to a number of questions asked frequently about partnering.

Figure ES- 2 - Building a "Real Team"



Appendices

Appendix I includes a number of case studies of the use of partnering in the environmental mission. The case studies that are included are: Bayou Bonfouca; Baird & McGuire National Priorities List Site; New Bedford Harbor; Navy Cleanup Program in Florida; McClellan Air Force Base; Marine Corps Air Base Yuma; Reese Air Force Base; Air Force Partnering Initiative with EPA and the Southern States; and Coastal America. Appendix II describes the role of the facilitator and criteria for selection. Appendix III provides a list of resource materials regarding partnering, community involvement, and dispute resolution. Appendix IV provides contact points in each service. Appendix IV provides a list of acronyms.

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INTRODUCTION

The Department of Defense (DOD) is seeking better ways to make decisions that accomplish our environmental mission and also generate broad support from other agencies and interests. Such support will lead to quicker implementation and improved cost effectiveness, and will permit us to anticipate and prevent unnecessary conflict. Partnering is one of a variety of tools to meet these needs.

Partnering was first employed in the chemical and construction industries in an effort to reduce expensive litigation and delays. In the late 1980s, the Corps of Engineers and the Naval Facilities Engineering Command began to use partnering on construction projects. The result has been a significant savings in time and dollars. All DOD Services have now begun using partnering to further the Department's environmental mission. The Services use partnering on all levels—policy, program, and project—and engage state, local, and federal regulators in the process. Partnering is clearly useful for installation cleanup and can benefit DOD compliance, pollution prevention, and conservation programs as well.

This *Partnering Guide* is a step in the implementation of the 1993 recommendations of the Environmental Security Committee to the National Performance Review. As part of the Defense Performance Review, the Environmental Security Committee looked at the need for cooperative relationships, and identified partnering as a way of achieving these. The committee evaluated partnering based on the criteria of the National Performance Review (September 1993), drawn from *Reinventing Government.*[1] The committee concluded:

> Partnering has proven itself to be of great value in promoting cooperative teamwork. Study group members are convinced that the application of partnering to DOD environmental issues will yield positive pay-offs for a quality environmental program. Partnering is quite consistent with the [performance review criteria], fostering a clear sense of mission among all participants, and promoting commitment to the mission among all; promoting appropriate empowerment, delegation, and assumption of responsibility among stakeholders; replacing mistrust and over-reliance on regulations with trust; and by being oriented to achieving mutually satisfying "win-win" outcomes beneficial to all stakeholders.[2]

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[1]David Osborne and Ted Graebler, *Reinventing Government: How the Entrepreneurial Spirit is Transforming the Public Sector* (New York: Penguin Books USA Inc., 1993).

[2]*Cooperative Relationships/Partnering Study Group Report,* Defense Performance Review, Environmental Security Committee (July 1993).

The Final Report of the Environmental Security Committee for the Defense Performance Review specifically recommends "partnering at all program as well as project levels with stakeholders, to accomplish common goals."[3]

In testimony before the U.S. Senate Committee on Armed Services (Subcommittee on Military Readiness and Defense Infrastructure), Deputy Under Secretary of Defense Sherri Goodman stated:

Our new approach to environmental security reflects the President's efforts to implement policies designed to create environmental partnerships. We shall pursue this approach through partnership with other federal agencies, states, industry, the public, and the Congress. . . . Partnerships are the way we work with others to break the regulatory gridlock on the cleanup process.[4]

Further impetus was provided by the *Interim Report* of the Federal Facilities Environmental Restoration Dialogue Committee (*The Keystone Report)*, February 1993, published by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and DOD, and the *Report on the Form of Our Nation's Defense and the Environment,* September 1990.

This guide was prepared under the sponsorship of DOD Environmental Programs. It was developed by a Tri - Service Committee with representatives from the Air Force, Army, and Navy. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), Institute for Water Resources and its14 contractors, Creighton & Creighton, Inc. assisted in its preparation.

The purpose of this guide is to encourage greater use of partnering at the policy, installation, and project levels of DOD compliance, cleanup, pollution prevention, and conservation programs. Its primary audience is DOD employees and contractors. However, this document has been reviewed by a number of other federal, state, and local officials (including regulators), as well as some representatives of environmental and environmental justice groups. They endorse the concept of partnering, and join in encouraging DoD employees, and other agencies, to support partnering.

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[3]Defense Performance Review: Environmental Security Committee, *Final Report* (15 July 1993), 4.

[4]Statement of Sherri Goodman, Deputy Under Secretary of Defense (Environmental Security), before the United States Senate Committee on Armed Services, Subcommittee on Military Readiness and Defense Infrastructure (June 9, 1993).

CHAPTER 1

PARTNERING IN THE DoD ENVIRONMENTAL MISSION

Organizations and people who share an interest in the success of environmental cleanup and protection often act as if they were adversaries. Ideas are sometimes rejected simply because another agency or the public originated them. Information is withheld, and communication takes place only through formal channels. Specifications are rigidly enforced even when a less costly and equally protective solution is available.

Often the result is that costs soar, projects are delayed, and problems become worse while the bickering continues. At the heart of the problem is an adversarial relationship that can lead to an impasse in which no party's needs are met.

Partnering is designed to break down organizational barriers that block performance. It empowers organizational representatives to implement programs in a way that maximizes the resources of all participating groups. Partnering is a tool for creating teamwork even though the participants represent different interests. It can help ensure an outcome that endures because all stakeholders are involved at the inception of a project in identifying the goals and strategic plans that will drive the process.

What Is Partnering?

Partnering is a process by which two or more organizations with shared interests act as a team to achieve mutually beneficial goals. Typically, the "partners" are organizations that in the past have worked at arm's length, or have even had competitive or adversarial relationships. For DoD's environmental mission, partners might include DoD agencies and contractors, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, state regulatory agencies. Depending upon the circumstances, partnering might also include other federal and state agencies, local governments, RABs, other community groups and private individuals.

Partnering is not a legally binding relationship. Rather it is a commitment and agreement between the parties to:

- Participate in structured, facilitated team-building sessions and joint training to acquire the skills needed to work together as a team.

- Remove organizational impediments to open communication within the team, regardless of rank or organizational affiliation.

CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY INSTITUTE (CII)
DEFINITION OF PARTNERING

The Construction Industry Institute has played an important role in encouraging the use of Partnering. Here's CII's definition of partnering:

Partnering is "a long-term commitment between two or more organizations for the purpose of achieving specific business objectives by maximizing the effectiveness of each participant's resources. The relationship is based on trust, dedication to common goals, and an understanding of each other's individual expectations and values."

Construction Industry Institute Task Force on Partnering, 1989

- Provide open and complete access to information (except information specifically excluded by law, regulations, or ethical requirements).
- Empower the working-level staff to resolve as many issues as possible.
- Reach decisions by consensus as much as possible, and when consensus is not possible, achieve resolution in a timely manner using an agreed-upon process for resolving disagreements.
- Take joint responsibility for consultation with other interested or affected agencies, groups, or individuals.
- Take joint responsibility for maintaining and nurturing the partnering relationship.

These are not commitments made lightly, so typically partnering requires senior management support, both to remove organizational impediments and to ensure that each organization acts in a manner consistent with a partnering relationship.

At the same time, the term "partnering" should not be used as a generic term to cover all efforts to work together in a cooperative manner. Partnering is a structured process that uses specific tools to accelerate the creation of teamwork.

During the time that DoD agencies have been using partnering, new tools have been added to increase effectiveness, and that evolution is likely to continue. Figure 1 provides a description of a "typical" partnering process, at the present level of development. Partnering is still evolving. Partnering teams are encouraged to innovate and try new approaches.

Figure 1 - A "Typical" Partnering Process

Any of the parties involved can invite others to engage in partnering. Senior management then decides whether to commit to partnering, and managers often serve as "champions." A decision is also made whether to include interested and affected parties other than DoD, its contractors and federal and state regulators. Depending upon the circumstances, the formal partnering arrangement could also include other federal and state agencies, local governments, RABs, other community groups and private individuals.

The initial partnering activity is a "team-building" workshop attended by the key representatives of the various parties and led by a neutral facilitator. This workshop usually begins with activities designed to help participants become comfortable with each other, followed by training on the principles of effective partnering. These activities are often followed by training in communication skills. Participants then develop common goals and agree on a process for resolving disputes quickly and effectively. Teams also discuss how to remove barriers to communication, how to ensure that decision making is delegated to members of the team, and how to bring about continuous quality improvement. These agreements are incorporated in a charter. Often the charter is enlarged and hung on the wall to remind team members of the commitments made. Teams may also develop a formal plan that contains additional detail about implementation of the goals and objectives in the charter.

The partnering workshop is not the end: it merely kicks-off the partnering process. Each team designs its own follow-up program to improve teamwork and maintain the partnering spirit. The real practice of partnering occurs in the day-to-day interactions of team members, and may continue for months or years. Teams work hard to ensure that regular team meetings and individual interactions express the spirit of partnership. Many teams use follow-up or "maintenance" workshops where participants learn new skills and have the chance to identify problems or behaviors that prevent the team from being as effective as possible, and to act quickly to make changes. Teams may seek out additional training in interpersonal and group process skills. Often the facilitator continues to work with the team to provide additional guidance and process consultation. Some teams also make a point of reinforcing team identity by developing a logo for the partnership that is used on doors, cars, coffee mugs, even T-shirts.

Partnering in the environmental mission may well require greater structure and sustained implementation than does partnering on construction projects. On many short-term construction projects, the major focus of the partnering process is a front-end partnering workshop, with follow-up activities. In the environmental mission, the partnering relationship may need to be sustained for years and may cover a number of different projects. Under these conditions, the initial partnering workshop simply kicks-off the process, and the real work of partnering is accomplished over a period of many months or years, with a need for both continuing maintenance and occasional reinvigoration of the partnering relationship.

Principles of Partnering

Partnering embodies several important management principles. They include:

Teamwork can overcome organizational impediments.

Any large organization can unintentionally create barriers to communication and implementation. These problems are multiplied when the proposed action requires the commitment of several organizations. Partnering addresses this problem by creating an ethic of teamwork that cuts across organizational barriers. The individuals on the team and the organizations they represent both commit to overcoming unnecessary organizational constraints.

"I keep stressing with my people that the partnering agreement is *not* the contract. When the agreement says that we'll handle modifications and claims in 30 days, it doesn't mean that it must take 30 days. If it can be done in 10 days, do it in 10!"

—Participant in Bayou Bonfouca Partnering

The team should be empowered down the line.

It does little good to create a partnering team if the members do not have the authority to make decisions. Organizations that are parties to partnering openly delegate decision-making to those people on the team who are actually responsible for implementation. Representatives of each organization involved in the partnering relationship commit to a good faith effort to resolve the issue collaboratively, at their own level. When decisions cannot be delegated to the team, they are quickly elevated up the line for prompt resolution at the first appropriate management level.

> "It appeared to some that [one of the] participants had not been empowered by their supervisors or managers to make decisions. It made what could have been a productive meeting into a non-productive meeting, and caused a lot of extra meetings after the fact."
>
> —Participant in Yorktown Naval Weapons Station Partnering

The best approach to resolving disputes is to prevent them.

Partnering is a tool for dispute prevention. When people from all the organizations are brought together on the ground, they can identify and resolve issues before those issues escalate into organizational confrontation. Failure to address an issue quickly can lead to festering ill will, making resolution more difficult. Far more resources are needed to solve a problem when it is permitted to go unchecked.

> "One benefit of partnering is that from the start we all have a clear understanding of who is responsible for what. This is a significant benefit because it cuts down on the potential for conflict. The consequences of conflict are much worse than the original problem, particularly if the problem is allowed to fester."
>
> —Participant in Bayou Bonfouca Partnering

Shared responsibility involves shared risks and benefits.

All partnering participants build a sense of responsibility toward the overall success of the project. This shared responsibility expresses itself in a commitment to the goals defined by the team and a willingness to pitch in and help solve other organizations' problems if that is what is needed to make the project successful. This commitment to team goals is reinforced by creating incentives for team success. The nature of the incentives depends on the project and often requires creativity and a willingness to find new ways of doing things. But incentives are meaningless unless there is also joint acceptance of the risks. The goals will not be achieved if all parties benefit when things go well but only one party suffers if things go badly.

Partnering requires open communication and flexible boundaries.

Openness, honesty, and clear communication channels are needed for partnering to be effective. Frequently this requires more than just a positive attitude; it also requires the removal of organizational barriers. In most bureaucratic organizations, patterns of communication are highly structured. Review and approval are required before organizational lines can be crossed. In partnering, every effort is made to remove these barriers, and teams report dramatically increased efficiency and reduced frustration.

Partnering strives to minimize artificial distinctions between organizations and instead create a team that works together to solve problems. In effect, partnering requires flexible boundaries between the organizations and reduction of the "not-invented-here" attitude that so often prevails when organizations try to work together. Every participant has access to technical information and may arrive at ideas to solve problems. Ideas are considered on their merits.

Partners maximize each other's resources.

In partnering, organizations work together to maximize each other's resources and produce a synergy that is superior to their individual efforts. The outcome is greater than the sum of its parts.

Benefits of Partnering in the DOD Environmental Mission—Perspectives from the Field

The real impetus for partnering is the fact that the people involved in implementation are hearing that it works. Faced with difficulty in persuading organizations and people to work together, program implementers see partnering as a real-life solution. The following are some of the early results from the field:

- At MCB Camp Lejeune, a partnering team developed an expedited process that is intended to shorten study time from an average of 38 months to 19 months. On the first site where the process was used, the team was able to complete a Record of Decision in 10 months. At other sites where the process is currently being applied, the team estimates they will beat the old process by at least 13 months.

- The Bayou Bonfouca remediation project is now projected to be completed three to four years ahead of schedule. Participants give much of the credit to partnering. One said: "The process is working because people are talking to each other." Another added: "We all have a clear understanding of who is responsible for what."

- On the Baird & McGuire cleanup project, partnering helped reverse an adversarial relationship between USACE and the contractor that had been deteriorating for nine

months due to numerous large and unforeseen change orders which impacted the contract fixed price and schedule.

- At Reese Air Force Base, a great deal of frustration was apparent with the cleanup effort's lack of coordination. Partnering improved the situation. Participants now say that "partnering saves everybody money up front because of technical and regulatory discussions before the scope of work is written."

- The Navy and its contractors, EPA, and the State of Florida have established a partnering team to oversee all Navy restoration activities in Florida. The Navy estimates cost savings of $2,034,000 in the time period from December 93-July 94, with more to come in subsequent months. $996,000 in savings resulted from cost avoidance of actual or implied penalties. The remainder resulted from reduced cycle times and process improvements.

- Members of the Southeast Regional Implementation Team (RIT) of the Coastal America partnership discovered redundancies in aerial reconnaissance of whale migrations by individual agencies. The RIT added up agency expenditures for partial and incomplete coverage and found that one agency could conduct aerial reconnaissance of the entire area for less than the sum of the agencies' individual efforts. This information was passed along to the national level, and an agreement was signed in early 1994. Today, one agency provides the necessary information, achieving greater coverage at less cost.

Opportunities to Use Partnering in the DoD Environmental Mission

Ultimately, the goal of partnering is a government that works better, costs less, and meets the needs of the American people. Because of this objective, DoD actively encourages the use of partnering in all four pillars of the department's environmental mission: compliance, cleanup, pollution prevention, and conservation.

Compliance

- Partnering will increase the capacity to clarify priorities and anticipate problems, reducing the need for regulators to issue Notices of Violation (NOVs) and Notices of Noncompliance (NONs).

- Partnering will build a team commitment to reducing the number of enforcement actions caused by facilities operations.

- New relationships established through partnering can keep compliance high, even as budgets drop.

Cleanup

- Partnering will encourage more efficient use of cleanup dollars by promoting better communication and teamwork among installations, contractors, contract managers, and communities.

- Partnering will help reduce gaps between studies and actions.

- Partnering will help maintain performance despite projections of trends toward reduced budgets.

Pollution Prevention

- Partnering builds a proactive climate that identifies opportunities, anticipates problems, and acts in a timely fashion to prevent them.

- Partnering with project managers, together with life cycle analysis of weapons systems, helps prevent pollution.

- Partnering among infrastructure designers helps identify approaches that reduce pollution, material, and procedures.

- In logistics, partnering among the Deputy Chief of Staff for Logistics (DCSLOG) and the Defense Logistics Agency (DLA) helps identify ways to dispose of pollutants. Partnering can help continue the reduction of the Toxic Release Inventory (TRI) while budgets also decrease.

Conservation

- Partnering can be an indispensable link in the process of educating stakeholders in conservation techniques.

- Through partnering, facilities become the test sites for new techniques that are then disseminated in the private and public sectors.

- Partnering among stakeholders facilitates ecosystem management and sustainable use of training lands.

Conclusion

DoD actively encourages the use of partnering in DoD's environmental mission. Partnering has proven successful at the project, program, and policy levels, and has value for each of the pillars of that mission. Partnering is a proven tool for dramatically improving working relationships between agencies and organizations that share a common environmental goal. The result can be a solution that is better than could be achieved by any of the organizations acting alone. Above all, by creating a joint solution to problems, all organizations have a commitment to successful implementation.

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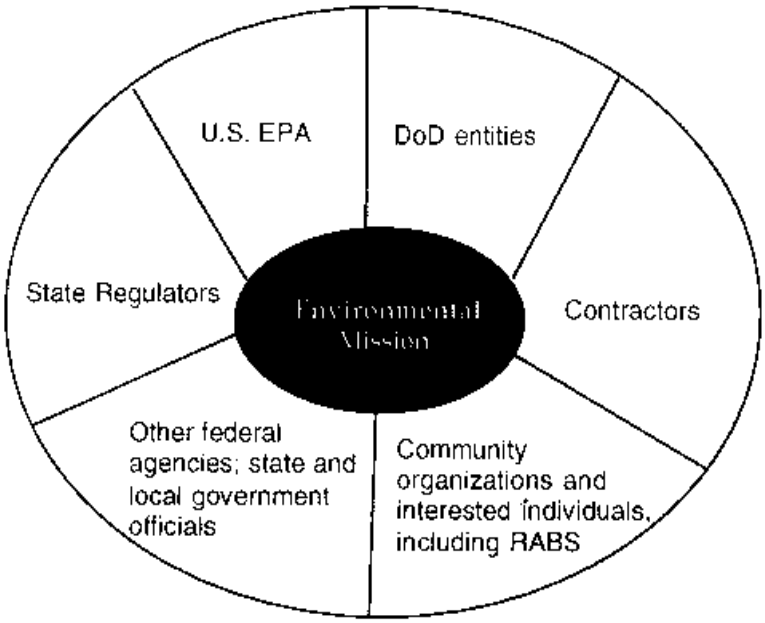
CHAPTER 2

WHO ARE THE PARTNERS?

As shown in Figure 2, many agencies and people have an interest in the successful execution of DoD's environmental mission. The question is: Is it effective or appropriate to include all of these interested parties in a "partnering" relationship?

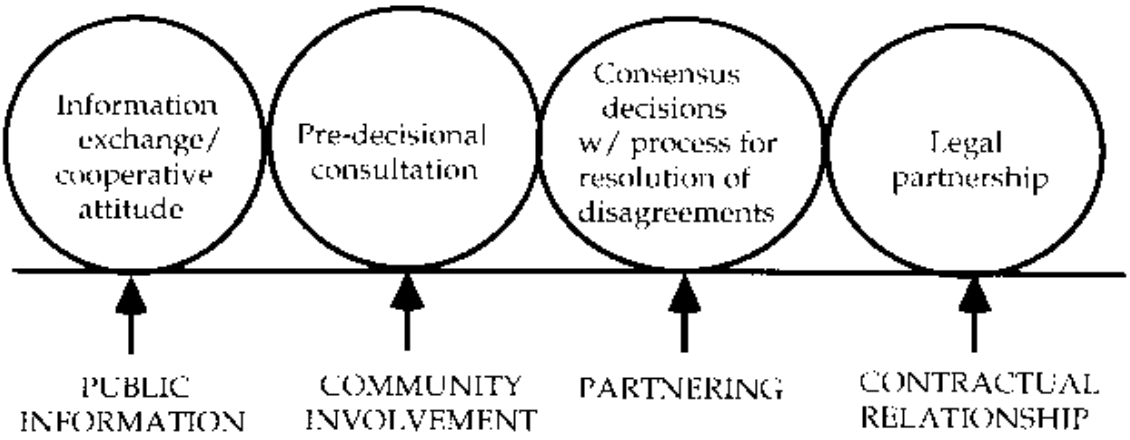
Figure 2. Interested Parties



The answer to this question requires some precision in the use of the term "partnering." Working cooperatively with people can mean many different things, as shown in Figure 3. It can mean that information is shared back and forth, and that people have a cooperative attitude toward each other. In can mean that no significant decision is made without prior consultation. It can mean that there is a clear effort to reach a consensus decision, and that if there are disagreements, there is some agreed- upon mechanism by which the disagreements are resolved. Finally, it can mean a contractual relationship, in which failure to resolve issues could require formal legal dissolution of that relationship.

The term "partnering," as used in this guide, is reserved for those situations in which every effort is made to make decisions by consensus and there is an agreed-upon process by which the parties seek to resolve any continuing disagreements.

Figure 3. Alternative Forms of Cooperation



Given this description, partnering in the environmental mission will almost always involve regulatory entities such as the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the state environmental regulatory agency. Depending upon the circumstances, formal partnering might also include local governments, RABs, other federal agencies such as trustees of the Comprehensive Environment Response, Compensation and Liability Act (CERCLA) agencies, other state and local government officials, other representatives of nearby communities and private individuals. Whether or not these latter parties are part of the formal partnering structure, the team as a whole should take responsibility for conducting effective public involvement and public information programs with these parties.

Partnering with Regulators

Historically, many regulators have chosen to maintain an arm's-length relationship with DoD. DoD has also often kept regulators at arm's-length. Regulators need to avoid both the reality and the appearance of being so close with the entities they regulate that their regulatory function is no longer credible. But often the result of the arm's-length relationship is that much energy is expended justifying positions and often there is more litigation than cleanup.

The arm's-length approach emphasizes the differences in the interests of DoD and the regulator. In actuality, DoD and the regulators both want the same thing—effective cleanup at a reasonable cost to taxpayers and an effective program of compliance, pollution prevention, and conservation. Partnering is a tool to help DoD and the regulators meet these objectives within the law, with minimal time and energy wasted due to "case-building."

Generally speaking, regulators seeking compliance will benefit from joining in a partnering relationship.

Many of the case studies in Appendix I illustrate the benefits and the challenges of partnering with regulators, a relatively new application of partnering. The case studies also demonstrate that there is considerable promise and opportunity for innovation.

The willingness of regulators to enter into partnering is based largely on their confidence that the DoD entity is committed to an effective program. If that commitment is in doubt, regulators may be fearful that partnering will undercut their authority to impose necessary compliance. In examples such as the McClellan Air Force Base partnering, in which management of the cleanup program is virtually a joint responsibility, the relationship is built on DoD's demonstrated willingness to address the problems at the site.

One fear for regulators is that if they enter into a partnering relationship, they will be accused of violating it if they take enforcement actions such as issuing Notices of Violation. They are concerned that requirements for inspection and enforcement must be understood by all partners. By working as partners, it may be increasingly possible to avoid non-compliance situations. But if such a situation does occur, the regulator cannot be accused of failing to act as a partner because it fulfills its regulatory role. At the same time, partners should strive to resolve compliance issues without going to court. The goal in partnering should be for everyone to go beyond the compliance specifications. But partnering cannot be used as a way to manipulate regulators to be more lenient or to "go along." That would violate the trust relationship necessary for partnering.

State regulators, and sometimes EPA, often have severely limited staff and resources for the scope of responsibilities they have. This means that—even if they are supportive of partnering—they have to make hard choices about whether they can commit time and resources to partnering. Even if partnering saves money in the long run, it often involves a larger commitment of time early in the process than does the arm's-length approach. With limited resources, regulators may have to pick and choose which issues justify full involvement in partnering, even if they might want to do more.

Funding is one area of potential discord between regulators and DoD. Local DoD officials normally cannot guarantee the funding needed to carry out the program—even if the whole team agrees to the appropriateness of the program. There needs to be a joint understanding of the funding process and the constraints on the ability of DoD entities to "deliver." Partnering allows for joint planning to address these issues.

Partnering with Contractors

Until recently, virtually all DoD partnering has taken place in connection with construction projects. Although not every partnering effort has been completely successful, partnering with contractors has generally proven useful in building a shared commitment to cost reduction, keeping to schedule, and preventing accidents. Partnering has proven valuable in finding creative solutions that are in the interests of both DoD and the contractors. Since much of the

environmental program is accomplished through contractors, there is considerable potential for partnering with contractors throughout the environmental mission.

Again, partnering represents a change in the "arm's-length" relationship that has traditionally been maintained with the contractor. This relationship has too often turned into building a "paper wall" to prepare for potential litigation, rather than solving problems. Often litigation has resulted from the soured relationships that resulted when the arm's-length approach turned into an adversarial relationship.

But differences will occur. DoD does not relinquish its responsibility to enforce contracts or its ethical obligations when it enters into partnering. In fact, differences should be explicitly discussed during partnering. But the shared interests of both parties are often better served by building a team.

Even with partnering, the contract award process is, of course, competitive. Under current procurement procedures, DoD's desire to engage in partnering may be discussed in the solicitation but need not make partnering a requirement. Experience suggests that a procurement process that takes into account the experience of the contractor, rather than awarding the contract solely on a least-cost basis, produces a situation that is more amenable to partnering.

In the few instances where partnering has not been fully successful, one of the major problems has been employee turnover. In the Baird & McGuire case presented in Appendix I, the contractor's project manager changed a number of times. Under such conditions, the senior level membership in the partnering relationship must take positive action to sustain the commitment to partnering and initiate new members. Based on these experiences, personnel turnover might well be a discussion topic in the partnering.

Both the Corps of Engineers and the Naval Facilities Engineering Command have produced guides on partnering with contractors.

Partnering with Local Governments and Communities

Local Governments and communities always need to be consulted, whether through formal partnering, other consultation, or both. There may be a core team that is together for all decisions, with other parties drawn in for specific decisions. For example, local government or stakeholders may be full partners in decisions that directly affect them but not be a partner on all decisions.

Certainly there is little point in building an open, trusting, and empowering relationship with other agencies, only to have implementation blocked by citizens who have been left out of the process. The New Bedford Harbor Remediation Project, in the Appendix, illustrates

this dilemma. Partnering has led to an improved working relationship at the project level, but incineration and ash disposal phases at the site may be suspended indefinitely because of local opposition.

On the other hand, on the Bayou Bonfouca National Priorities List Site, test burns have occurred and the project is three years ahead of schedule. In this case, EPA conducted a community involvement process that complemented the partnering process. EPA was chosen to take the lead by the partnering team because it was believed that the agency would be the most credible organization to the community. Several community concerns identified during this process led to the selection of mitigation measures that were satisfactory to the community, thereby permitting the test burns to take place.

Based on these cases, the question is not whether interested members of the public should be consulted—they should be—but whether partnering is the appropriate vehicle. In many cases, community involvement would be the more effective approach for including members of the public.

Community groups usually do not have accountability for implementing the program or responsibility for producing a solution. Also, they often don't have the time or resources to participate on a par with the agencies. One of the defining characteristics of a true "partner" is that the partner can not easily walk away from solving the problem—but many interested and affected parties explicitly reserve the right to disown the work of the agencies anytime they disagree with it, whether or not the problem is solved. In some circumstances, groups or individuals themselves will be unwilling to enter into partnering, for fear they will be "co-opted" or lose their independence.

In most cases, partnering and community involvement are two separate but parallel activities. The partnering team must take responsibility for effective community involvement as an essential part of completing its work. The partnering team will also need to obtain the training or consultant support necessary to be effective in dealing with the public. It may be wise to include a public affairs officer as a member of the partnering team, to remind technical people of public perceptions of their work.

As stated at the outset of this document, under cleanup and restoration, the RABs can serve as one important mechanism for securing community involvement. These RABs are intended to bring together diverse interests within a local community. They are designed to facilitate advice from various local interests to installation decision makers and/or conversion of an installation. While the EPA-DoD RAB guidance issued in 1994 encourages the use of RABs, at the same time, this guidance indicated that all existing public involvement requirements need to be met. They include community relations under CERCLA as amended by the Superfund Amendment and Reauthorization Act (SARA), public involvement requirements of the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA), and any state and local involvement requirements. A variety of other approaches to community involvement might be employed. Among them are community workshops, public meetings, interviews and public information techniques.

Conclusion

Partnering for the DoD environmental mission will normally include federal and state regulators, and contractors. Depending upon the circumstances, other federal, state and local agencies, RABs, other community groups and private individuals might be partners. But such groups do not always have accountability and responsibility for solving the problem, or might more appropriately be involved in some but not all decisions. The decision of whether to include other agencies, groups, or individuals should be made on a case-by-case basis, depending on the nature and circumstances of the project or program.

Building relationships between agencies makes little sense if the program fails because of community opposition or failure to involve communities in the decision-making process. The partnering team needs to accept responsibility for consulting with affected agencies, groups, and individuals who are not a part of the partnering team. Effective community involvement is often essential for getting the commitment of local governments and communities to workable implementation plans.

CHAPTER 3

A "HOW TO" GUIDE TO PARTNERING

This chapter provides guidance on how to carry out the basic steps in the partnering process. Since partnering is a rapidly evolving concept, this information can be seen as a framework from which to build partnering processes to fit specific circumstances.

Getting the Process Started

This section describes the steps in the partnering process from initial contact between parties, through the initial partnering workshop, to the development of a Partnering Implementation Plan. As noted in a prior chapter, for small construction projects these steps may constitute the bulk of the partnering process, with only modest follow-up. For long-term programs or projects, with the relationship sustained over a number of months or years, these same steps simply initiate the process. A second section below discusses some of the elements of a program to sustain the partnering process over a longer period of time.

The steps to initiate the Partnering process are displayed in Figure 4. The following are suggestions for how to implement each of the steps.

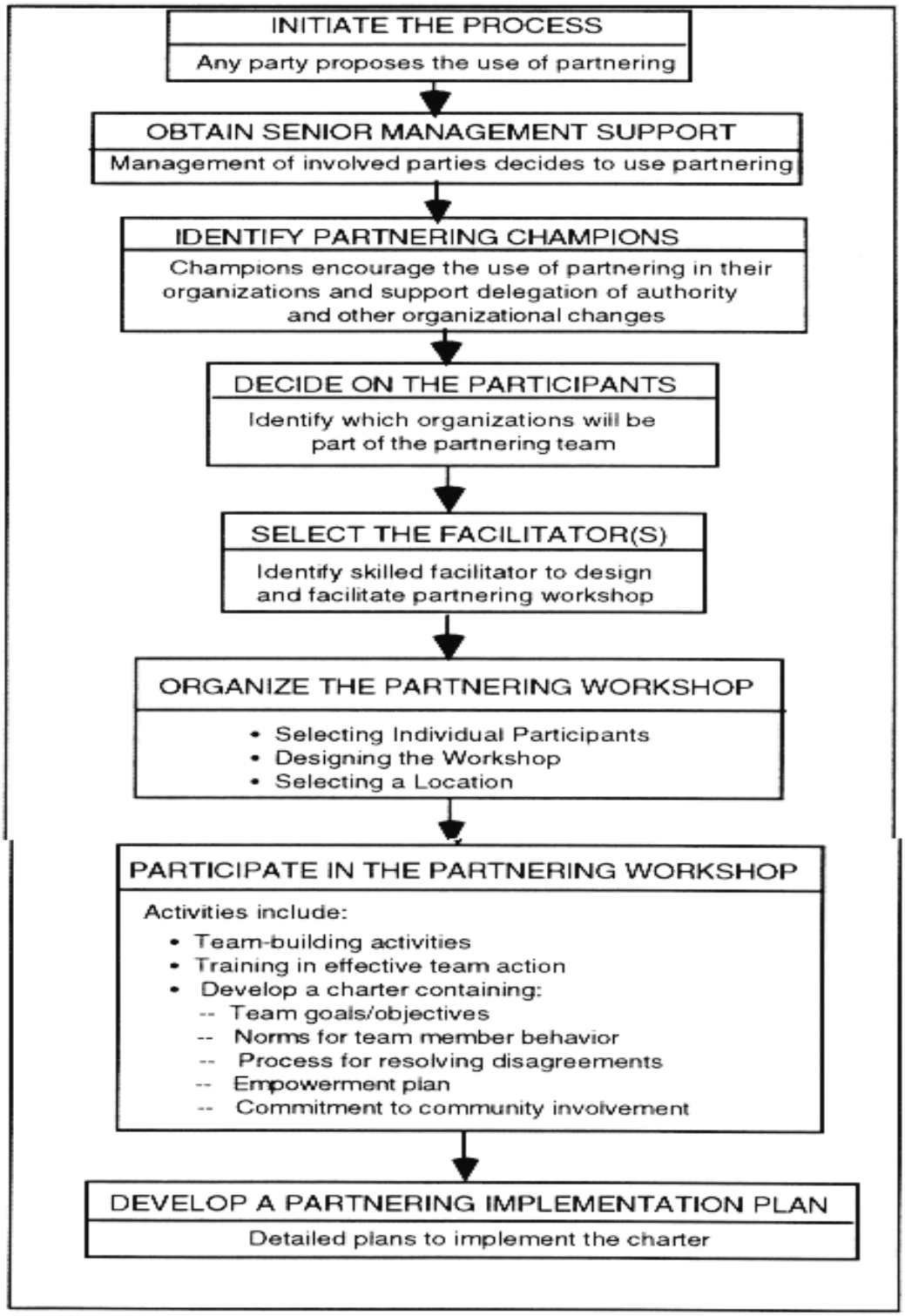
Initiating the Process

The first step is for one of the parties to determine that partnering may be appropriate, then invite the others to participate. There is no standard way to make the first approach. Sometimes partnering is proposed by senior officials, other times by mid-level people or an organization's attorneys.

Similarly, there is no fixed time to initiate the discussion, except that earlier is better. It's easier to establish a positive relationship from the beginning, rather than have a backlog of ill feeling. However, partnering has proven to help even when relationships have already deteriorated.

Many potential partners will be predisposed to enter into partnering because they have heard about it from other sources. The Construction Industry Institute, for example, actively encourages contractors to engage in partnering. A number of regions of EPA have already entered into partnering agreements and are enthusiastic, as is EPA management. Many state regulatory agencies and communities are also supportive of partnering.

Figure 4. Initial Steps of Partnering



Obtaining Senior Management Involvement and Support

Experience with partnering shows that the chances of success are greatly enhanced when there is active involvement and full support by senior management. Senior management involvement could range from sending a clear signal to the field that it is authorized—even encouraged—to initiate and participate in partnerships, to forming a senior management partnering team among agencies that must work together.

One way to solicit management involvement is to distribute copies of this guide, or its Executive Summary, among the prospective partners. If the management of any of the parties is uncertain whether to commit to partnering, the most credible source of information will be another manager (preferably of equivalent level or higher) who has had experience with partnering. A meeting of senior managers from the potential participating organizations could be held, or managers from another organization that has used partnering could meet. Participants can then ask questions and begin to talk among themselves.

An alternative is to bring in a partnering consultant who can explain the process. This is somewhat less credible because the managers may see the consultant as "selling" partnering, but this approach does get managers talking to each other. This meeting is also the time to discuss whether senior management of the organizations should themselves create a partnering team to drive the process such as that used in Florida by the Navy, U.S. EPA, and Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) [See box—next page].

Two Levels of Management Support Full Support

"I am totally convinced that we have the support of the Base Commander. I feel as if our people have been delegated the authority to take care of problems."

☼ ☼ ☼

Danger Sign

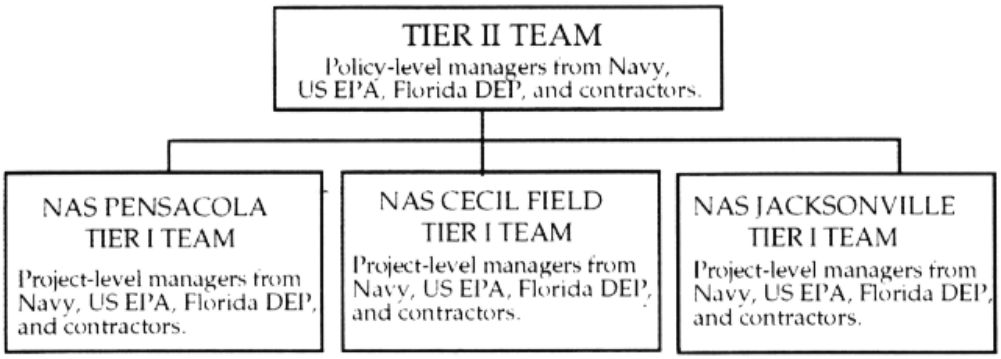
"My management calls partnering 'hand holding,' but they let us try it to see if it helps."

MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE
PARTNERING ON NAVY CLEANUP PROGRAM IN FLORIDA

Partnering was proposed when communication between the Navy (Southern Division Naval Facilities Command), EPA, and the State of Florida broke down to the point that it was primarily occurring between attorneys. The first partnering session involved senior policy-level managers from the three agencies. They made a commitment to personally direct the partnering program, which would include all cleanup projects at Navy/Marine facilities in the state.

The team structure is two-tiered, as shown in Figure 5. Tier I teams are project-oriented teams (currently at three Navy installations), staffed appropriately from each agency. Tier II is a management-level team that oversees the activities of all the Tier I teams. Navy contractors participate on both levels. The Tier II team communicates direction, and can resolve disagreements that occur at the project level. The Tier I teams work as a group to meet remediation challenges.

Figure 5. Florida Partnering Structure



Tier I teams have no questions about senior management support. The Tier II (management) team selects members for the Tier I teams, personally participates in training and conducting the initial partnering workshops for each Tier I team, replaces team members who are not effective in working collaboratively, and evaluates the performance of the team. When there are disagreements, the Tier I teams know they will not simply go up organizational stovepipes and be resolved in the old adversarial manner. Instead, the policy decisions will be made by the same people who are driving the partnering process.

The four partnering entities have turned a crisis situation into a successful process. Not only are there cost and time savings at each of the three installations, but the open communication between the agencies resulted in a dredging disposal issue at NAS Mayport being resolved in a matter of hours instead of weeks of negotiation.

Identifying Partnering Champions

Most people who have been involved in partnering talk about the need for a champion within each participating entity. The champion actively encourages the use of partnering throughout the organization and defends it if it comes under attack. This means that the champion must make a personal commitment; the role must be heart-felt. He or she is most likely to be found in an organizational role that places a high value on what partnering can accomplish (e.g., a chief of construction or an attorney who supports a preventive approach to dispute resolution) or uses similar tools and concepts (such as Total Quality Management). In the Florida example above, the entire Tier II team is the champion for the process.

There is also a need for champions at the operational level. At this level, champions make a commitment to keep track of and care for the process itself. This means providing administrative and logistic support, distributing information, setting up follow-up meetings, making sure that plans are prepared, tracking completion, and thinking about how the team could work together more effectively. Ideally, at least one person in each partnering organization will take responsibility. If only one person on the team, or one organization, plays this role, the danger is that other participants will soon see that person or organization as responsible for the partnering and avoid taking personal responsibility for its success.

Deciding on the Participants

For DoD environmental mission programs and projects, the parties in the partnering process often include the DoD agency, EPA, the state regulator, and DoD contractors. Depending upon the circumstances, the partnering team could also include other federal and state agencies, local governments, RABs, other local groups or private individuals. When regulators are involved in determining who else should be invited, there is less danger that people will think DoD is "stacking the deck."

Since the affected or interested parties change with each issue, it is not possible to prescribe in advance who should be a part of the partnering team or who should be included in community involvement programs. A decision about an environmental cleanup issue may be of interest primarily to other federal agencies, state regulatory agencies, local governments, interest groups representing environmental or economic interests, and people living near the facility. But if the issue involves transportation of weapons, then new people, groups, and organizations—those living near roads along which the weapons may travel—will quickly express their interest in the decision. Also, as the process proceeds, partners may "arise" that could not have been identified at the beginning of the process.

Below are some criteria to assist in determining who should be included in partnering. The criteria are:

The potential participant should:

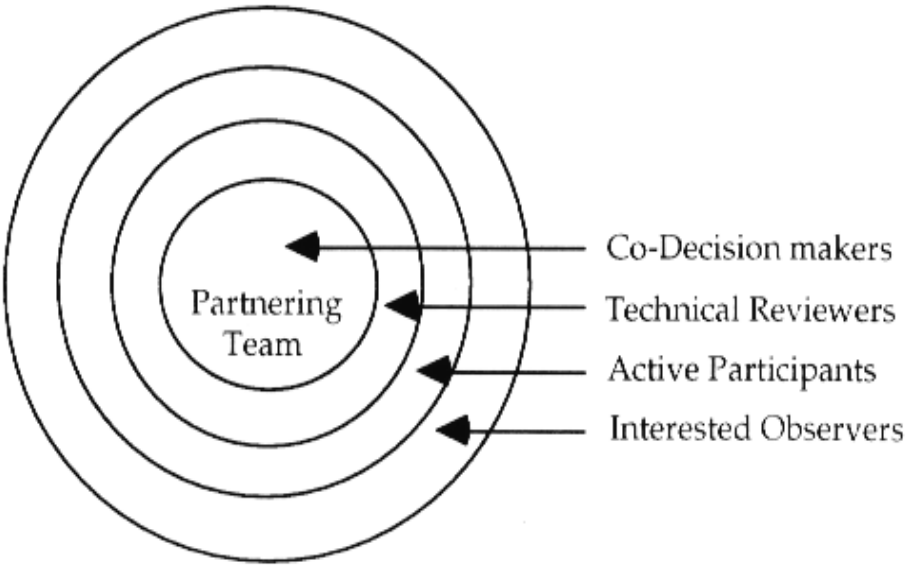
- *Have a substantial interest in seeing the mission accomplished.*
- *Agree to commit to the philosophy and principles of partnering.*
- *Bring something to the table, whether it is time, resources, expertise, legal authority, or political influence.*
- *Be willing to make an up-front commitment to be part of the team, rather than waiting to see what decision is made and then deciding whether to support it.*
- *Be sufficiently well-defined and organized that it can make and keep commitments.*
- *Clearly represent the group or interests it claims to represent.*

When there are affected or interested parties who are not included in the partnering team, the team should develop other mechanisms—such as a community involvement program—for informing and consulting with these parties prior to major decisions. There's little point in the agencies working together to arrive at a decision that cannot be implemented due to community opposition.

It is helpful to see the partnering entities, those people who are part of your formal effort to reach consensus, as "co-decision-makers" (see Figure 6). Other parties, such as other governmental entities concerned about the technical adequacy of the studies performed, are "technical reviewers." Once they are satisfied on technical adequacy, they have no interest in being a part of the decision-making team. Other parties—who may not have direct authority or responsibility for solving the problem—see themselves as affected by the decision, and are "active participants" who will actively endeavor to influence the decision. Finally, there are numerous "interested observers" who will normally choose not to participate directly but may get involved if they are not kept adequately informed, or if they believe the process is not going well.

The partnering team's job is to provide forums for informing and consulting with these different orbits, in a manner appropriate to the level of interest each orbit exhibits. At McClellan Air Force Base, numerous community organizations play an active role through task forces and public involvement programs, but the core team remains the three agencies. The Coastal America partnership includes a number of federal agencies and works with—but does not include as formal partners—a number of local agencies and private organizations. The Baird & McGuire study includes the co-chair of the Baird & McGuire Citizens Task Force in partnering meetings.

Figure 6. Orbits of Involvement



References to guides on community involvement are provided in the appendix.

Selecting the Facilitator(s)

A facilitator is usually needed to design the partnering workshop, lead it, and conduct any training that is a part of the workshop design. Some teams that continue to work together for a number of years also use facilitators on a continuing basis to help participants become a "high-performance team."

Facilitators are specialists trained in how groups work together, as distinct from being experts on a subject such as engineering, environmental cleanup, regulatory law, etc. Among other things, facilitators help people design effective meetings and then serve as the meeting leader on behalf of the group. The facilitator's job is to take care of *process* so that participants can focus on the *content* of the meeting.

The idea of facilitation is to remove process issues—such as how the workshop is run—as a source of dispute by delegating those decisions to a third party who is impartial about the substantive outcome and who will act on behalf of all participants. Without a facilitator, the group risks engaging in competition, struggling for leadership of the meeting, and disagreeing about what should be included on the agenda. A skilled facilitator will be able to suggest activities that will speed up the process of becoming acquainted and will know how to create a safe structure for dealing with conflicts. Once the team begins developing agreements, it often starts dictating its own agenda and takes a more assertive role in prescribing its needs. But a skilled facilitator can continue to coach the team on process issues.

Appendix II provides more information about facilitators and how to retain their services. Federal procurement requirements make it very cumbersome to prepare and maintain a list of "pre-approved" partnering facilitators; however, the appendix lists several contact points that can provide suggestions on how to identify a facilitator. There are considerable differences in experience and skill level among facilitators, and not all of them are familiar with partnering. Selection of a facilitator is an important decision, and should be given adequate time and attention by the partnering entities.

With internal partnering that involves only DoD entities, department facilitators may be available. At McClellan AFB, for example, internal partnering sessions are facilitated by individuals from the base Total Quality Office's Teambuilding Center. If the partnering involves external organizations, or if there is a strained relationship between any of the participants, it may be better not to use a facilitator affiliated with any of the parties so there are no concerns about bias or favoritism.

Organizing the Partnering Workshop

The next step in partnering is a team-building session, sometimes referred to as the "partnering workshop." The steps involved in preparing for and conducting the workshop are: (1) selecting the individual participants; (2) designing the workshop; and (3) selecting a location.

Selecting the Individual Participants

Principals from participating organizations need to determine both which individuals will be regular members of the partnering team and who will attend the partnering workshop. The first consideration in selecting team members has to be their technical expertise and their role in the organization. However, individual participants should make a personal commitment to working in a collaborative manner and have good "people skills." But if they occupy a key role organizationally, it may be necessary to include people who will need to learn new skills and attitudes in order to have effective partnering.

Participation in the partnering workshop is not restricted to just the working team. In fact, the workshop is an opportunity to build a sense of "team" with those other people in each organization whose support may be necessary to make partnering a success. Participants may be drawn from many organizational levels, as this builds commitment at all levels and communicates a willingness to remove organizational constraints to communication and project implementation.

The "champions" of the process need to make a thoughtful decision about who from each organization should be included in the workshop. Here are some of the possibilities:

Senior Managers: As a minimum, the managers to whom partnering team members directly report should be participants. Depending on the nature of the issue, very senior managers may need to be present to communicate organizational commitment to the partnering effort, and to increase their understanding of the kind of support the organization may need to provide to make the partnering a success.

Implementors: Typically, each team member must rely on other people within his or her own organization to accomplish the work. This could include clerical support or technical specialists. If such support is necessary for success, and within reasonable constraints on the number of participants in the partnering workshop, it may be helpful to include some of these people in the workshop.

System Maintainers: Each organization also has people whose job is to maintain important systems such as procurement, legal, and human resources. Each of these systems must conform to policies and regulations. The partnering team may call on many of the "system maintainers" to help devise new ways to partner more efficiently and effectively. Including representatives of these organizations in the partnering workshop, or even on the partnering team, may be a way to build receptivity to new approaches.

"If we had included a procurement person as part of the team, it would have gone much faster because of the heavy workload in contracting."

--From the Yuma Marine Corps Base Partnering

Public Affairs, Community Involvement Facilitators and Others: On issues where community involvement is likely to be a major task of the team, or controversy may result in media relations, it may be useful to include the Public Affairs Officer or other community relations specialists on the team, or in the partnering workshop.

A public affairs officer or community relations specialist can assist the formal partnering team in creating an effective plan for including the surrounding community in the decision making process. For cleanup and restoration, this will mean soliciting the views of the RABs as well as other community groups, especially when the RABs and other community groups are not formal members of the partnering team.

Designing the Workshop

It is useful for the facilitator to meet with the principals from each of the parties, as a group. The purpose of this first meeting is to allow the facilitator to assess whether there is a common understanding and shared expectations for the partnering process. The meeting is also an opportunity for the team members to share their thinking about workshop goals, duration, and location.

Occasionally, organizations ask the facilitator to conduct interviews with the team members prior to the workshop to identify attitudes, level of commitment, issues, or concerns. By summarizing the issues at the workshop, the facilitator can speed up the process of identifying issues candidly and objectively.

When working with the facilitator to design the workshop, team members should concentrate on what they hope to accomplish rather than try to prescribe the exact activities that will occur. The facilitator can take these expectations and draft a format that will meet those hopes. However, participants should have the opportunity to review a draft format.

Typically, the primary workshop itself will last two or three days. Sometimes there are several workshops, with shorter ones for CEOs or multiple workshops to include all the people needed for support. If there are many participants, some activities—such as the training—might be designed for everybody, with a core team remaining for more activities requiring a smaller team.

The agenda will usually include the following basic elements:

1. Activities designed for "getting to know each other";

2. A "self-perception" exercise, such as use of a leadership-style or personality-type inventory;

3. Training in the skills and principles of effective team action. Skills to be taught might include:

    - How to listen effectively;
    - How to disagree without being disagreeable; and
    - How to support each other's ideas.

Principles to be taught might include:

- The value of using win/win decision-making;
- People support what they help create;
- Problems are best addressed by using a systematic problem-solving process; and
- How to share leadership and participation in decision-making.

4. Activities designed to develop team agreement on:

- goals and objectives;
- The charter, a document containing partnering goals, objectives, and agreements on how the team will work together;
- Procedures for resolving disagreements; and
- Community involvement approach.

Selecting a Location

The initial partnering is best held off-site, away from phones and other disturbances. Dress should be comfortable. It is often helpful to take some meals together and to avoid meeting in a facility owned by any of the participants. Meeting locations have symbolic as well as practical functions, so the "turf" should be as neutral as possible.

Participating in the Partnering Workshop

All team members should participate in the partnering workshop. Important changes in relationships take place during the workshop, and any team member who does not participate could slow the whole team.

Teambuilding and Training

As mentioned above, partnering workshops typically begin with some kind of "getting to know you" activity. Its purpose is to encourage participants to come to see each other as people, not just as roles. Often this activity is augmented with use of a testing instrument, such as a leadership-style or personality-type inventory. While discussing the results of these inventories, participants not only share more about who they are as people but also begin to appreciate how personality and leadership style can impact communication within the group. These activities are often followed by training in the principles of effective team action and communication skills such as Active Listening or Congruent Sending.

Establishing Team Goals and Objectives

One of the fundamental premises of partnering is that participants have many common interests. One of the ways this is made tangible to the team is to develop common goals and objectives. These goals might cover such topics as schedule, cost, safety, standard of compliance, or other measures of performance. If specific targets are set in the charter, they should be balanced between realism on the one hand and genuine commitment and effort on the other. In the excitement of first coming together as a team, it is possible to have an inflated sense of how much

change can be accomplished. Unrealistic goals can discourage a team as much as goals that are too modest.

Agreeing on Norms for Team Member Behavior

The "norms" for team member behavior revolve around sustaining the spirit of partnering. They include: (1) a commitment to honest and open communication; (2) a commitment to open access to information; and (3) a commitment to engage in collaborative problem solving.

Developing an Empowerment Plan

When people can't make commitments, collaboration soon breaks down. Partnering works best when the partnering team is empowered to make the decisions it needs to make to implement the project or program. But government is hierarchical in nature, and it is not realistic to think that partnering teams can exist as self-sustaining autonomous cells. Decisions will arise that the team will not be able to make.

These somewhat contradictory realities can be handled if: (1) senior managers clearly state the authorities they are delegating to team members; (2) team members understand the limits of each other's authority and develop mechanisms for quickly obtaining approvals when needed; and (3) people develop a strong sense of commitment to advocate on behalf of conclusions drawn by the team, with a strong enough sense of ownership that they feel like they are letting the team down if they can't produce. Also, many teams that feel "empowered" report that they often have "implied authority." Someone up the line, often an installation commander, is still signing on the bottom line, but deferring to the team's recommendations.

The empowerment plan is a statement of the team's understanding of which decisions it can make, the limits upon its authority, and the process by which decisions outside the team's authority can be quickly made. The plan may also contain joint actions that senior management will take to obtain increased authority for the team. These actions might include efforts to obtain guidance from headquarters organizations, or a program of "internal" team-building—sessions involving partnering team members and others within their own organizations whose support they need to make commitments on behalf of their organization.

Developing a Process for Resolving Disagreements

Even if the team has been granted considerable leeway to make decisions, some disagreements will arise that cannot be resolved within the team. They may result from communications problems or personality conflicts, or may be rooted in fundamental differences in the roles of the organizations.

If disagreements are allowed to continue, there is a danger of undermining the partnering spirit. Experience suggests that it is important to define a process for resolving issues quickly, before bad feelings begin to develop in the team.

Processes for resolving disagreements should be appropriate to the specific circumstances of each team. Here are some of the issues that might be addressed in the plan:

1. Agree to pursue a win/win outcome.

The basic commitment is to look for "win/win" solutions rather than "win/lose" or "winner-take-all" outcomes. Without an understanding that all parties must be satisfied, the rest of the partnering process often breaks down.

2. Openly disclose interests.

Agreement up front to provide full disclosure of interests can build a team relationship. Often participants do not let the others know their real interests for fear that doing so will strengthen another party's hand. But during decision making, the parties cannot take each other's interests into account unless everyone has been candid and open.

3. Agree to follow and complete the process.

If the team sets up a process to resolve disagreements, team members should be expected to use that process. It is inappropriate for team members to use other processes unless this process has failed.

4. Avoid negotiating through the media.

It is useful to establish ground rules for how and when team members deal with the media. Generally speaking, team members should avoid comments to the media about any disagreement in the team. Comments by one of the parties may be perceived as jockeying for negotiating position or abrogating the process. Either way, it can create bad blood that makes resolving the issues that much harder.

5. Recognize that timely resolution is crucial.

Some teams establish deadlines for how long an impasse will be tolerated before the issues must be moved to the next stage in the process. Nothing is more likely to push a team member outside the agreed-upon process than the failure of the partners to address concerns in a timely manner.

6. Quickly assemble those who are needed to resolve the issue.

Timely resolution is aided by a commitment from each organization to assemble quickly all those who are needed to resolve the issue. On one international construction project, for example, an agreement was reached that issues were to be resolved within 24 hours. Since the policy makers were in different time zones, this agreement required bedside fax machines. More typically, senior management agrees to resolve an issue within a matter of days.

7. Use different approaches for different types of disagreements.

It is helpful to establish various mechanisms to settle different types of disagreements. Disagreements over technical issues may be resolvable with additional research or more discussion among technical staff. Third-party technical experts can also be helpful in these situations. For example, a technical issue might be resolved by having all sides present their information and interpretations to a panel of experts or a disputes-review panel, which would render a nonbinding opinion. But if a disagreement is over political philosophy or values, technical information alone is not going to solve the problem. In such a case, it may be more effective to get the dispute elevated as quickly as possible to the level of decision-makers who can resolve such issues.

8. Commit to advocate for the decision when necessary.

In some cases, decision-making authority resides outside the power of the partnering organizations. An example would be a cleanup plan that does not have sufficient funding from Congress. Even if everybody in an agency is supportive of the plan, that unanimity cannot make Congress produce a larger budget. What team members can do in such circumstances is agree to advocate, jointly and individually, the recommendations of the team to whoever has final decision-making authority.

One of the reasons it is important to define the process is that without such a definition, issues may go up organizational stovepipes and be addressed by people who have not bought into the need for partnering, or don't understand the implications of their actions on the partnering relationship.

The Navy in Florida has solved many of these problems by establishing project-level partnering teams that report to a policy-level partnering team. If issues cannot be resolved at the project level, the teams know that the issues will be addressed by a team that is not only committed to the spirit of partnering but also is driving the partnering process. In fact, the policy-level team has recently been trying to get project-level teams to resolve more issues, rather than have them pushed up to the policy level.

Agreeing on a Community Involvement Approach

As discussed earlier, many environmental programs and projects take place in a public context, with many interested and affected agencies, groups, and individuals. Where projects hold some potential for controversy, or could involve impacts upon the community, partnering between agencies and contractors should be augmented with a parallel community involvement program that permits the partnering team to consult with the public before reaching decisions. For many projects or programs this is a subject of sufficient importance that it needs to be addressed by the team, at least at a philosophical level, during the partnering workshop.

Creating a Charter

The charter is a document that summarizes the many agreements reached during the partnering workshop, such as the goals and objectives of the partnering effort, norms for team member behavior, commitment to empowerment, process for resolving disagreements, and the community involvement approach. Figures 7-9 show charters from partnering for the Navy Cleanup Program in Florida, Bayou Bonfouca, and Baird & McGuire.

Even though the charter is not a legally-binding document, it should be signed by all participants to clearly show organizational support. Often the charter, with signatures, is then duplicated and distributed to team members and other support groups. This reminds the team members of their commitment and also sends a signal to their subordinates and others in the organization that the participants' credibility is on the line.

Some teams have found it useful to develop a "graphic plan" that clearly portrays the roles and relationships, problem-solving process, or issue-resolution process. Figure 10 presents an example from the MCLB Barstow Partnering Process. The graphics can even be in the form of a cartoon—whatever form captures the key concepts and communicates them effectively. The graphics are distributed throughout the offices where the team works. Experience shows that graphics are referred to more often than written plans.

Some teams have even duplicated their charter as a poster, so that each organization can have the charter on the wall. One team even has its agreements duplicated on place mats, which are used as a checklist at team meetings for discussing how members are working together.

Developing a Partnering Implementation Plan

Increasingly, as partnering is used for projects of long duration, or whole programs, teams are finding that charters do not contain the level of detail or specificity they need to capture all the important agreements. Some organizations add substance to the charter by developing a more detailed implementation plan after the workshop. For most DoD agencies this step is optional, although the Navy requires the preparation of an implementation plan.

Figure 7. Charter for Navy Cleanup Program in Florida

PARTNERING CHARTER – APRIL 1, 1993

Goal:	To characterize and respond as appropriate to additional risk posed by release of hazardous substances on public health and welfare and the environment at Navy and Marine Corps Installations.
Mission:	To structure an effective program for prompt environmental restoration that will be a model for similar efforts elsewhere.
Vision:	Teams are empowered and operate cohesively to achieve our environmental restoration goal.

We, the partners, commit to teamwork to achieve these objectives:

- Develop ways to determine acceptable program risk in fostering progress
- Eliminate barriers to a faster more cost-effective program
- Clarify roles and responsibilities of each party
- Make our processes more efficient
- Create organizational cultures able to accommodate change
- Provide for a greater exchange of lessons learned
- Obtain consensus on short and long-term budget and implementation plans
- Promote success and cooperation
- Develop innovative ways to acquire and administer contracts
- Demonstrate and use innovative technologies
- Foster community participation
- Resolve conflicts through a coordinated work effort to avoid adversarial relations
- Maintain professionalism and enthusiasm and encourage communication to make the partnership educational and enjoyable
- Reinforce the partnered relationship with honest feedback and continual improvement

Figure 8. Bayou Bonfouca Partnering Agreement

We, the Bayou Bonfouca Superfund Project team, commit to work together with the spirit of openness and trust and to respect the goals and needs of all stakeholders.

Our team is founded on principles of:

- Teamwork
- Mutual respect
- Openness
- Honesty
- Trust
- Professionalism
- Understanding of one another's position
- Walking the talk

With the objectives of:

- Completing the project on schedule;
- Completing the project within budget;
- Developing and maintaining good community relations by minimizing impact to the community at large and coordinating actions through EPA lead;
- Pursuing shared savings through value engineering;
- Developing and maintaining an awareness of safety—daily throughout the project—in order to achieve zero lost time accidents;
- Establishing a forthright approach to modifications and claims in order to avoid litigation;
- Remediating the site in accordance with the NCP;
- Implementing TQM concepts, specifically in administration, engineering, construction, and operations;
- Providing contractors the opportunity to make a reasonable profit; and
- Enhancing reputations of all the stakeholders with respect to public perception of remediation/Superfund efforts.

We, the undersigned, in an effort to achieve the intent of the partnering process, commit to the above principles and objectives.

Figure 9. Baird & McGuire Partnering Agreement

Partnering Agreement

Among EPA, USACE, Mass. DEP, Baird & McGuire Task Force, OHM

We, the partners of the Baird & McGuire Superfund Site, agree to work together as a cohesive team to produce a quality project that protects and informs the surrounding community in accordance with the contract, on time, within budget, safely while enabling the contractor to earn a fair profit. Members of the partnering team will deal with each other in a fair, open, trusting, and professional manner. In that spirit, we are committed to the following concepts:

Communication

1. Communicate problems openly and as early as possible.
2. Establish and maintain community relations through open lines of communication by keeping the public informed and an integral part of the cleanup process.
3. Resolve problems and make decisions at the lowest possible level in a timely manner.
4. Maintain a professional atmosphere of mutual respect and resolve personal conflicts immediately.
5. Communicate problems openly before resorting to written correspondence.
6. Develop a periodic evaluation program on the partnership's effectiveness.

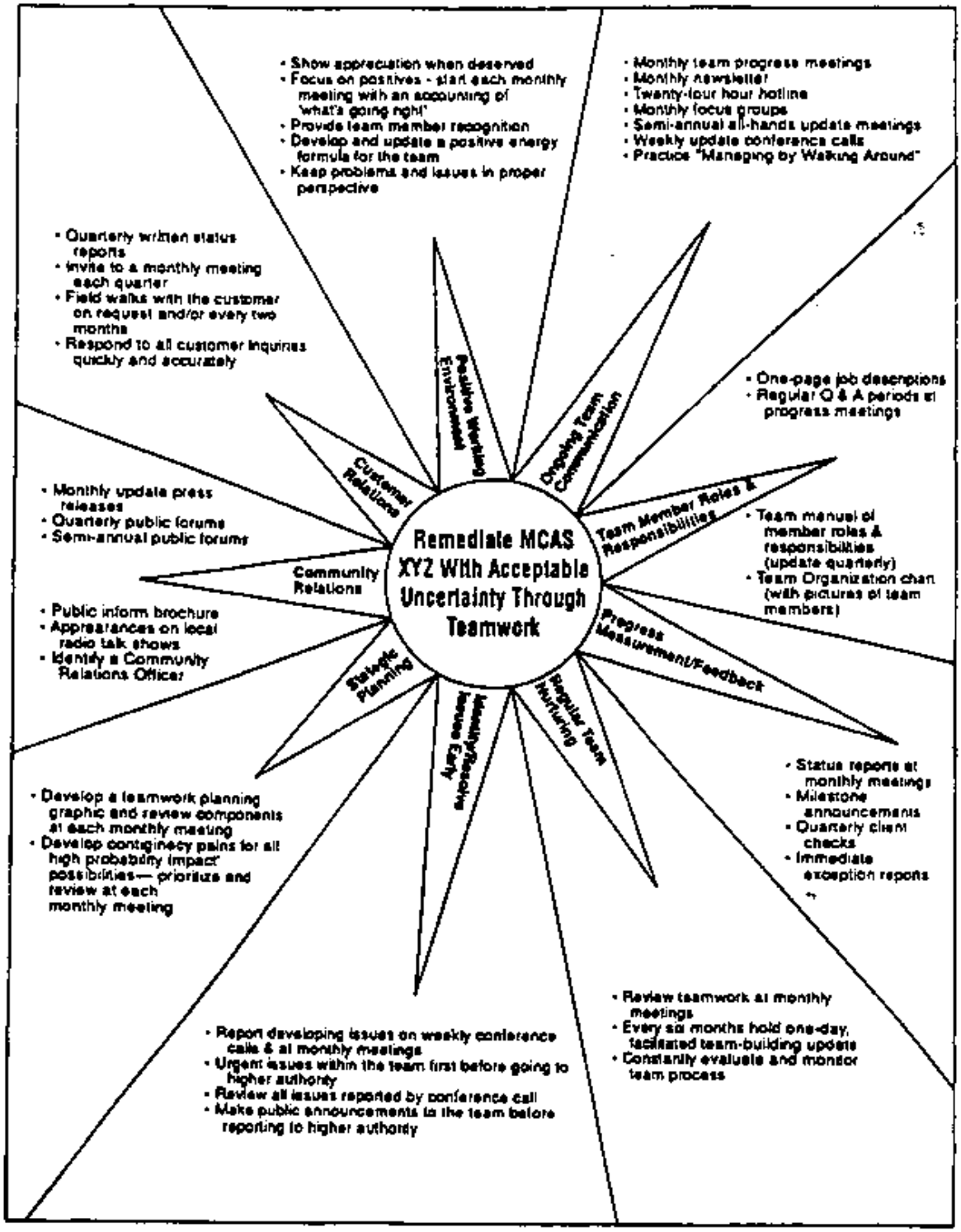
Performance

1. Produce a quality product the first time through an effective and committed quality management program. (QA & QC)
2. Complete project ahead of, or on, schedule. (Avoid delays.)
3. Perform work in a safe manner, minimizing recordable lost time injuries and maintaining the utmost concern for public safety in the surrounding community.
4. Promote pride in workmanship by all members of the partnering team.
5. Minimize formal disputes. (No litigation.)
6. Ensure successful project completion.

Agreed to this date May 26, 1993

_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

Figure 10. MCLB Barstow Graphic Teamwork Plan



A Partnering Implementation Plan might include:

1. The roles and responsibilities of each organization as it relates to the team;
2. Measurable objectives related to each goal;
3. A written description of the process to resolve disagreements;
4. A statement of the team's authority to make decisions, and the process for getting decisions made in a timely manner when they are outside the team's authority;
5. A series of standard steps the team will employ in reading decisions;
6. A community involvement plan indicating how the team will consult with other interested or affected parties, either within their own organization or in the public;
7. Mechanisms for sharing risks and benefits; and
8. A process to orient new members of the team.

Usually these topics are discussed, at least briefly, in the partnering workshop, but the plan spells out a concrete program for action.

Sustaining the Partnering Process

The purpose of the initial partnering workshop is to speed up the process by which a group of people become a team. But though the partnering workshop can dramatically speed things up, it is still just the start of the partnering process, not the end. After the partnering workshop, the team members begin to work together to perform effectively as a team, and sustain the team spirit.

Realistically, the best a single partnering workshop can do is start the process of creating a "real team" (see box), and there is some risk it will merely create a "pseudo-team." That means it is incumbent on the team members to continue to work together to create clarity on goals and work products, and develop an ethic that holds the team responsible for performance, both individually and collectively.

Over the past 20 years, much has been learned about how to build effective teams as part of organizational effectiveness and total quality management or improvement programs. Most of the concepts and skills from these two fields have direct applicability to partnering. There are skilled people in these areas within DoD who may be able to serve as a resource to the team.

Based on this experience, a number of critical components are needed to build a "real team," as shown in Figure 12.

MAKING A "REAL TEAM"

Management consultants Jon R. Katzenbach and Douglas K. Smith define a team as:

> *"A team is a small number of people with complementary skills who are committed to a common purpose, performance goals, and approach for which they hold themselves mutually accountable.."*

Based on their research, many groups that have been called "teams" by management are teams in name only. Many are *working groups* or *pseudo-teams*. In *working groups*, tasks are completed by individuals, and group members interact only to share information, best practices, and perspectives. *Pseudo-teams* are groups in which there is an acknowledgment of the need for collective performance, but the group has not yet achieved a common purpose or set of performance goals, even though they call themselves a team.

Katzenbach and Smith claim that the *pseudo-team* is the least effective form of group work, because their interactions detract from the individuals' performance without achieving any joint benefit.

The defining characteristic of a *real team*, Katzenbach and Smith argue, is equal commitment by all team members "to a common purpose, goals, and working approach for which they hold themselves mutually accountable." The characteristic of a *high performance team*—which Katzenbach and Smith believe to be rare—is that it has all the characteristics of a real team and that members "are also deeply committed to one another's personal growth and success."

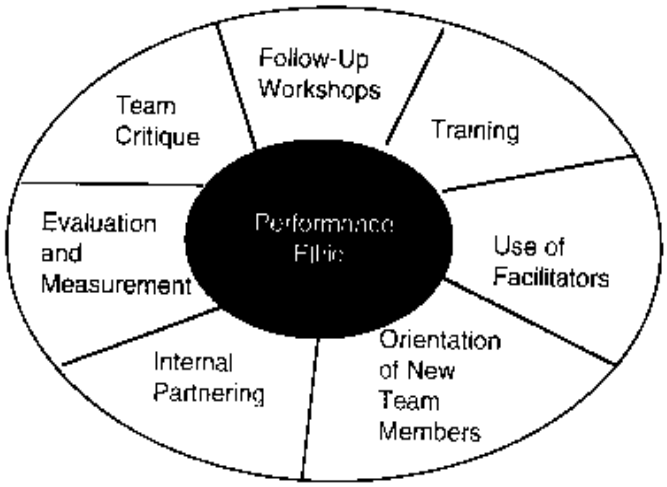
Partnering requires a *real team* and works best when there is a *high performance team*.

Performance Success/Ethic

At the core of an effective team is a shared sense of accountability for both individual and collective performance. If a team has aspirations of being a high performance team, it must consistently hold both its members and itself accountable for high levels of performance.

Often the most important ingredient in building a "performance ethic" is actual success in working together—nothing succeeds like success. Rather than immediately addressing your most intractable problem, it may be appropriate to take a task that is a challenge but not overwhelming, and make a success of it.

Figure 11. Building a "Real Team"



Team Critique

A former mayor of New York City used to greet all his constituents with: "How am I doing so far?" Teams members need to ask each other the same question frequently, even when there are no problems. Team critique should be built into regular team meetings, or periodic meetings should be scheduled specifically for critique. But all teams should celebrate accomplishments as well as discuss areas needing improvement.

One partnering team completes a quarterly questionnaire that addresses issues such as how the team is communicating and what unresolved issues need to be addressed. This questionnaire is used as a diagnostic device, with team sessions called as needed to address any problems. In other cases, periodic conference calls are used to identify problems or concerns.

Evaluation and Measurement

One of the findings from the quality improvement field is that in the most effective teams there is a commitment to continuous process improvement. One of the necessary conditions for this constant improvement is to describe the desired outcome in measurable terms. This way the team can concentrate on those behaviors or process changes that will produce the desired effect. Measurement—or, in the language of quality improvement, "metrics"—can greatly strengthen the effectiveness of team critique.

At the most basic level, there should be periodic evaluation of how well the team is doing in achieving the objectives and criteria identified in the initial partnering workshop or in the Partnering Implementation Plan. The criteria for measuring team success usually include measures of *productivity* (cost, schedule, profitability, safety) and *process* (how well the team worked together, resolved issues, and brought about organizational improvements).

A sample of an evaluation questionnaire is shown in Figure 12. Other teams have used outside parties to conduct interviews with team members and selected representatives of participating organizations to solicit perceptions of the team's productivity and effectiveness. This information can then be summarized and provided as a stimulus to the team at follow-up sessions.

When the partnering is finished, it is useful to hold a final session to evaluate the effectiveness of the partnering effort, recognize achievement, and identify lessons learned.

Follow-Up Workshops

Periodic follow-up workshops can be instrumental in maintaining a spirit of partnering. Experience shows that without follow-up sessions, the "we/they" adversarial mentality can creep back in. There have been several cases where partnering was considered an initial success, but because there was no follow-up, misperceptions and miscommunication developed and the relationship soured.

Follow-up workshops differ from normal team meetings in that, instead of concentrating on immediate work tasks, they focus on how the team is communicating, whether there are unresolved issues, whether roles and responsibilities are clear, how well the team is doing in meeting its goals, how well the dispute-resolution process is working, and what problems exist with "parent" organizations. Follow-up sessions may also include brief refresher training sessions. Typically follow-up sessions last at least one day, with some partnering teams allowing two days. Usually a facilitator is retained to lead these sessions, and attendance should be given high priority. Several individuals experienced at partnering recommend holding follow-up workshops at approximately quarterly intervals.

Use of Facilitators

Some teams develop a continuing relationship with their facilitators that extends beyond simply conducting the initial training and partnering workshop. The facilitator provides periodic critique on how well the team is working, and proposes actions or programs the team might undertake to improve effectiveness. In this case, the facilitator is serving as a full-fledged management consultant on team effectiveness. If such a role is anticipated, it should be taken into account when selecting the facilitators. Some facilitators would be entirely competent to conduct the partnering workshop but lack sufficient background to serve as a continuing management consultant to the team.

Figure 12. Sample Partnering Evaluation Form

The Partnering Rating Form developed by the group will be completed by participants on a monthly basis. The intent of the form is to monitor the effectiveness of the overall partnering effort—not to rate how "the other guy" is doing.

PARTNERING EVALUATION FORM

	LOW 1	BELOW AVERAGE 2	AVERAGE 3	ABOVE AVERAGE 4	EXCELLENT 5
Teamwork					
Understanding "Other" Position					
Walk The Talk					
Mutual Respect					
Openness					
Honesty					
Professionalism					
Quality of Synergy					
Trust					
Effective Communications					
Responsiveness					
Issue/Conflict Resolution					
Goal Clarity					

TOTAL: _____ AVERAGE: _____

Observations: _____

_____

_____

Plans for Improvement: _____

_____

_____

Award Recommendation: _____

_____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

1 (Low) - Consistently fails to meet expectations of Partnering team
2 (Below Average) - Occasionally fails to meet expectations of Partnering team
3 (Average) - Meets expectations of Partnering team
4 (Above Average) - Occasionally exceeds expectations of Partnering team
5 (Excellent) - Consistently exceeds expectations of Partnering team

Training

Working in a collaborative manner with a team of equals is a new behavior in many organizations. It requires distinct skills, and many people have not been trained in these skills, precisely because the approach is new. Most partnering workshops include a brief training session, but typically it lasts only a few hours. Most team members require additional training in communication skills, meeting facilitation, group problem solving, and effective team action. The team, not just the member organizations, needs to take responsibility to ensure that all team members receive the additional training they need to be effective in the team.

At McClellan Air Force Base, all members of SC-ALC's Environmental Management (EM) staff have attended "Seven Habits Training," a 40-hour program held over a two-month period to improve cooperation and teamwork within the Environmental Management Division (EMD). Further, internal partnering efforts have been undertaken, led by trained facilitators from the on-base Total Quality Office's Teambuilding Center and involving EM with Public Affairs, EM and the Surgeon General, and other on-base entities. At these partnering workshops, participants develop memoranda of understanding and work to foster a greater sense of teamwork.

Orientation of New Team Members

Changes in personnel are inevitable. But too much turnover can create problems. In the Baird & McGuire case, for example, the contractor's staff changed completely during the course of the project, and there were seven changes in project manager. Without constant re-education in the principles of partnering, personnel changes will inevitably water down the commitment to partnering.

The team needs to develop a plan for how new members are introduced to partnering and indoctrinated in the norms and skills of working together effectively. The team as a whole should take responsibility for this orientation, not just the individual organization for which the new team member works.

Internal Partnering

Beyond sustaining the commitment of team members, there is also a need to sustain or expand the understanding and commitment of individuals in procurement, design and engineering, legal, human resources, and virtually any other part of the organization involved in establishing requirements or procedures that impact the operation of the team. This is especially true at the installation level where the Installation Restoration Program calls for coordination among actors over a variety of projects.

One of the ways to obtain this support is by doing internal partnering. Those people involved in the inter-organizational team could participate in an internal partnering workshop with representatives of all the support organizations. An alternative is to provide brief training programs for all support staff.

Conclusion

Although this guide provides many of the basics, partnering is evolving so rapidly that those who are thinking of using partnering should feel free to try new forms or approaches. One of the best sources of information is DoD staff who have participated in successful partnering efforts. It can be helpful to track people down and talk to them directly, and then design a process that meets your specific requirements.

Chapter 4

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

The following are responses to some questions frequently asked about partnering:

Is Partnering Required?

No, but it is encouraged. In many cases, partnering will produce a better product with less cost. This isn't achieved through requirements. It must be freely given by the individual participants.

Is Partnering All Relationship and No Substance?

This concern just doesn't fit the facts. Partnering results in tangible, measurable results, as shown in the cases in Appendix I. This is particularly easy to see when partnering is used at the project level. There are demonstrable savings in cost, time, and safety. It is sometimes more difficult to measure the benefits of partnering when implementing a program or developing a policy, but people who have participated in partnering at these levels believe that it was well worth the effort.

How Much Does Partnering Cost?

The most expensive aspect of partnering is the staff time spent in the workshop and follow-up sessions. This is an up-front expenditure that can save a great deal in the long run. Experience with partnering demonstrates that a preventive approach to issues usually saves staff time over the life of the program or project, including costs of litigation and overhead.

The facilitator is the next largest up-front cost. Facilitators range in cost from $500 to $2,000/day. Some teams use two facilitators. If the facilitator is going to work with the team throughout the process, the budget should also include time at maintenance meetings and time for any other appraisals or analysis that the team wants the facilitator to provide. The total cost for a facilitator depends upon the needs of the particular partnering effort.

The third cost factor is the travel expense associated with the initial team-building session. This includes transportation, meals, and lodging. The final cost factor is the cost of meeting room space for the initial team-building session and periodic maintenance sessions.

How Do We Find Time for Partnering?

Partnering is actually a way to reduce work, but it is a preventive rather than a fire-fighting approach. One of the barriers to partnering is the attitude that building relationships is a luxury, something to be done when there is plenty of time. In fact, it is often problems with relationships that create extra work—and work that is nonproductive.

Does Partnering Raise Issues about Ethics or Standards of Contact?

The traditional "arm's-length" relationship between the DoD and other agencies, contractors, communities, or stakeholders often turns into an adversarial relationship that can lead to situations in which none of the parties achieve their objectives.

DoD attorneys encourage DoD agencies to engage in partnering because it is a preventive approach that can dramatically reduce the need for litigation. But it is important to remember the ethical and legal standards that must be observed even during partnering.

All DoD employees must meet the Standards of Ethical Conduct for Employees of the Executive Branch (Part 1 of Executive Order 12674 and 5 C.F.R. Part 2635 Regulation August 1992) and the DoD Joint Ethics Regulations (DoD 5500 - 7 - R, August 1993). The Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) and Federal Acquisition Regulation Supplement (DFARS) still apply.

The basic thrust of these standards and regulations is that federal employees act impartially and not give preferential treatment to any private organization or individual. The obligation of a federal employee is to avoid any actions that create the appearance of violating the ethical standards in federal or DoD regulations. These ethical constraints apply in relationships not only with contractors but also with state agencies, local officials, and even nonprofit organizations—anyone who may wish to influence a federal decision. Specifically, during the course of partnering, nonfederal parties cannot pay for your meals or lodging. Nonfederal parties must also be shielded from access to information that would give them preferential treatment in obtaining another contract. If there are questions, consult with a DoD Ethics Counselor.

Beyond issues of ethics, legal considerations arise whenever any of the parties in a partnership are also parties to litigation. Once there is litigation, even if it does not appear to bear directly on the issue, it will be necessary to consult with the Department of Justice, which manages litigation. Even in those circumstances, partnering may be desirable, possibly removing the issue or the party from litigation. But it is a good idea to talk to the Department of Justice to establish the guidelines within which the partnering can work.

Will Personal Relationships Become So Strong that Laws and Regulations Won't Be Enforced Properly?

This fear is probably overstated, although reasonable caution is legitimate. DoD must observe legal and regulatory constraints, and there are ethical standards that will need to be met. Regulators must be credible to the public they represent. Contractors must protect their economic viability. On the other hand, a great price can be paid for the "wall of paper" that is created to protect the agencies in the event of litigation.

An example of the kind of issue that might come up is whether to relax specifications or criteria at the request of one of the partnering parties. This decision may be within the discretion of the agencies. In the past, such decisions often became the subject of interagency disputes or contract claims. One of the purposes of partnering is to create a sense of "team," reducing struggles of this kind. But relaxing a specification or criterion should not be done just to "get along" or make people happy. Rather the choice should be measured against the goals agreed upon by the team and the intent of the specification or standard, and the decision should be based on these principles.

Partnering stresses the commonality of most interests and creates a willingness to support each other in meeting those interests that may not be common, so long as they are not in conflict. When the potential for conflict arises, there are agreed-upon dispute resolution mechanisms that permit the conflicts to be addressed and resolved before they begin to affect the team's productivity.

How Can We Build Support for Partnering?

Organizational change requires training, incentives, and peer pressure. Many people will be excited by the opportunity for innovation. Participation in an internal team-building session provides training as well as peer support for making changes. Management may also need to issue clear policy guidance and provide incentives for those people who engage in partnering. When possible, it is useful to surround the partnering team with people from support organizations who are enthusiastic about partnering.

What If Other Stakeholders Fear that DoD Agencies Will Dominate the Partnering Relationship?

To allay this fear, it is useful to provide these stakeholders with names and phone numbers of stakeholders who have participated in partnering. It can also help to bring in people who have participated in partnering to talk with concerned stakeholders. Ultimately, of course, the only proof that partnering is a process for equals is actual experience of the process.

What About People Who Don't Want to Take Any Risk?

One of the primary reasons people refuse to accept risk is because they have no strong incentives for doing so. If they work in an organizational climate in which there are few personal rewards and lots of dangers in taking risks, then their response makes sense. Management must provide strong incentives for taking risk, and when there is a problem, fix the problem rather than fixing blame.

What Do We Do if Conflict Occurs after Partnering Efforts?

Experience shows that once a dispute arises, it is important to address it promptly and resolve it before it escalates. If collaborative problem solving proves ineffective, it may be helpful to use a designated alternative dispute resolution (ADR) technique to obtain resolution. The fact that such an agreement is in place—so that participants know what happens if they reach an impasse—may keep the impasse from occurring.

Is Partnering Just the Newest Management Trend?

Partnering is a powerful tool for improving efficiency and effectiveness. But its ultimate value rests on the willingness of DoD employees to use it and make it a success. If it saves time and money, it will last.

PARTNER 'TIL YOU DROP

T-shirt on construction site

Appendix I

CASE STUDIES

DoD use of partnering in environmental decisions is growing at the national, installation, and project levels. An oversight panel of representatives from Air Force, Navy, Army, and DoD recently conducted an appraisal of partnering throughout the Services. Interviews were conducted at sites representing a variety of circumstances in which partnering is used within DoD. Seven cases are reported here. Some are still in progress, and future events could change the midstream evaluation of the effectiveness of these uses of partnering.

The cases presented represent a range of different activities, all described under the umbrella term "partnering." In several cases, the process followed was considerably less intensive and structured than the kind of partnering described in this guide. Some of the recommendations made in this guide are based upon lessons learned in these cases.

The case summaries cover these basic topics:

- Who was included in the partnering;
- Why partnering was initiated;
- What were the management attitudes toward partnering;
- What were the partnering activities;
- What were the results of partnering; and
- What were the lessons learned.

Partnering at the Project Level

Bayou Bonfouca

Bayou Bonfouca is a remediation project in Louisiana that is required because creosote washed into the bayou and seeped into the groundwater. The site is on EPA's National Priorities List. The project consists of two phases: The first is running trial burns, and the second includes pumping and cleaning the groundwater, and excavating the plant site and the bottom of the bayou to prepare for incineration.

Partnering was introduced by participants who had prior good experiences using the process on other construction jobs. In fact, the USACE Chief of Construction was a champion of partnering. Participants at the initial partnering workshop included EPA, Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality (LDEQ), USACE New Orleans Division, and the contractor. In all, 23 participated for one-and-a-half days.

The contractor and USACE shared the cost of the initial workshop. Participants developed subordinate objectives that would represent success for all stakeholders. They identified team norms, including mutual respect, openness, honesty, trust, professionalism, team playing, understanding the other position, and "walking the talk." They also discussed barriers to team effectiveness, produced a partnering agreement, and developed a partnering evaluation form.

One and a half years into the project, the team held a self-facilitated partnering "booster shot" at which they celebrated successes and delineated outstanding issues. The team employs the partnering agreement as a constant symbolic reminder used for reference when issues arise.

The project is expected to be completed earlier than scheduled, and few modifications and claims have arisen. One reason is that EPA carried out a public involvement program that produced satisfactory mitigation measures for the burning.

The case shows that partnering can be useful when working on a complex job. Partnering helped establish a clear understanding of responsibilities. Information, such as sample agreements, was sent to participants prior to the partnering workshop. Participants felt that the good relationships they built will last through the operational stages.

Bonfouca illustrates that partnering can produce significant savings even on projects that are highly controversial. It also shows the importance of explicitly sharing interests and goals and developing joint statements of partnering norms. It suggests the effectiveness of formal means of evaluating the process and demonstrates the symbolic importance of the partnering agreement. Although showing respect for the law, it also shows that the law need not be constraining.

Baird & McGuire National Priorities List Site

The Baird & McGuire Site (B&M) is located 10 miles south of Boston. Twenty years ago, the well water in communities surrounding Baird & McGuire was found to be contaminated with dioxin. All wells were closed, and the community was forced to find other sources of drinking water. Higher than usual levels of cancer have appeared in adjoining communities, and the site is high on the National Priorities List.

The project has three construction phases, beginning with Phase 1 site preparation and construction of a groundwater treatment plant. In Phase 2, the USACE is working with EPA and contractors to construct and install an on-site incinerator. Phase 3 consists of diverting a small river, excavating polluted sediments, and then returning the river to its bed. Phase 1 is completed, and construction of Phase 2 began in 1992. Construction of the incinerator was slated to take one year with subsequent operation to last for two to three years depending on production efficiencies. The work is being accomplished under a firm fixed-price service contract valued at approximately $58 million.

Nine months into the incineration segment of the B&M remediation project, the parties were in an adversarial position. Project schedule was an issue, and public concerns were growing. Despite the reservations of some of the government project team members, partnering was begun in an attempt to assure that the project would go forward. Participants in the partnering workshop included EPA; the State of Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection; the Baird & McGuire Citizens Task Force, representing a segment of the local citizenry; the USACE New England Division, and the contractor.

The USACE, using EPA funds, and the contractor shared the costs of the partnering workshop. An external facilitator was engaged, and a one and one-half day formal workshop was held in April 1993. The agenda covered basic elements of partnering according to the USACE partnering model. The format, however, did not allow for full development of those elements, and some participants from each of the team

members did not attend the entire session. Working relationships had nine months to develop into a very difficult situation, so participants entered the workshop with a negative experience coloring their openness to partnering. The workshop did result in a signed partnering agreement, and work continues on the project.

The contractor's original site staff definitely felt empowered, but numerous personnel changes have strained the partnering relationship. Numerous meetings have occurred at the senior leadership levels, and plans are being developed to focus future meetings at the on-site management level.

The partnering team now conducts task force meetings to which the community is invited. Early meetings were well attended, but attendance slacked off as the project progressed and the issues became more technical.

As of April 1994, there have been no claims on the project. One dispute arose and was satisfactorily handled through the use of an alternative dispute resolution process. It is not clear whether the project will be completed as scheduled. The test burn has been postponed because of public concerns over the safety of incineration as a process to remove contaminants.

Some working relationships between USACE site staff and environmental regulators have become more open and effective as a result of partnering. It has also helped in dealing with a fixed-price contract and has enabled partners to find approaches that helped the contractor. This good working relationship served to enhance the credibility of the project within the community, at least until concerns about incineration as a safe process were raised.

The B&M case shows the utility of beginning partnering soon after the notice to proceed. Partnering as early as possible in the contract allows cooperative attitudes to develop before specific issues and disputes polarize the players. New project personnel need to be informed about partnering and what it means for their own activities and responsibilities. As exemplified by the initial government/contractor issues and personnel turnover among all members of the Baird & McGuire team, it is important that the highest level person representing each stakeholder group at the initial partnering session remain involved in the project to provide continuity and motivation to the partnership.

One of the lessons learned is that success cannot be measured solely by improvements in internal operations. The challenge is to get the project operational, and this requires public support. It is also important to involve members of the public, even on technical issues. Team members observed that it is helpful to have individuals with good "people skills" on the project. This helps not only in the project working groups but also when interacting with the local community.

The Baird & McGuire case illustrates the problems created by personnel turnover and the importance of trying to find ways to bring new personnel into the partnering team. It shows how a good relationship between government agencies can affect interactions with the community.

New Bedford Harbor

The remediation of the New Bedford National Priorities List project consists of five sequential components: site preparation; construction of a water treatment plant; dredging of contaminated materials and water treatment with filters, settling, and ultraviolet light; incineration; and ash disposal and capping the disposal site. Dredging began in April 1994, but the incineration and ash disposal phases may be suspended indefinitely because of local opposition.

The USACE New England Division is managing the contract for EPA. All five components are part of one fixed-price contract that was awarded in August 1992 to a contractor selected for expertise, not as the lowest qualified bidder. The contract contained a clause indicating that the partnering process would be used on the project.

Because of the high visibility of the project, a partnering workshop was held in June 1993 on the job site and jointly facilitated by the USACE Chief of Construction and the president and CEO of the contractor. Because the group was already working well together, the short sessions skipped many of the team-building activities and focused on identifying perceived objectives common to all. A signed partnering agreement was produced.

Stakeholders who participated in the workshop included EPA, Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection, USACE New England Division, and the contractor selected to undertake the work. As mentioned earlier, community representatives were not included, because the local populace was not well organized or tied into local government and general community feeling was against the project from the beginning.

EPA representatives supported partnering but were not fully convinced that it was necessary. The USACE and its chief of construction were familiar with and endorsed the use of partnering on this project. The contractor CEO and vice president supported partnering.

In addition to the individuals mentioned above, participants included the site project manager, project controller, project engineer, and site safety and health officer. USACE representatives also included the contracting officer, project manager, resident engineer, engineer, mechanical engineer, construction manager, and office engineer. The remedial project manager represented EPA.

Although no follow-up partnering sessions have been held, the almost continuous flow of information between USACE and the contractor has enabled the latter and its subcontractor to mitigate costs relative to the incineration phase of the project, which had already been delayed eight months by bid protests and a regulatory rule change. By April 1994 there had been some change orders and modifications to the contract but no claims.

Participants say that partnering is working on the project level, but it is not getting support at program and policy levels, primarily from the regulators. The small number of individuals involved and the strong commitment by USACE and the contractor's senior management were seen as major reasons for the smooth functioning of the partnering process relative to the physical aspects of the project.

New Bedford demonstrates the danger of evaluating partnering success primarily in terms of contractor-government relationships. The case also illustrates the utility of writing partnering into the construction

project. It shows, however, the importance of relating community involvement to the partnering process.

Partnering at the Installation Level

Naval Facilities Engineering Command, EPA Region IV, and the State of Florida

A large amount of Navy environmental cleanup work exists within the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Region IV and the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP). In late 1992, the Naval Facilities Engineering Command, Southern Division, had reached a low point in its relationship with EPA. Communications between the two agencies was being accomplished by the lawyers and not by the engineers and project managers. Although FDEP and Southdiv were still communicating via the technical/programmatic personnel, FDEP felt that little environmental remediation was being accomplished due to the lack of communication between the other two parties. It was at this point that the agencies realized that their resources were not being targeted toward the ultimate objective, which was the cleanup of military bases.

In cooperation with the Atlantic Division, the groups commenced a facilitated meeting aimed toward formal partnering between the Navy, EPA, and FDEP. The objectives were to develop a team approach to facilitate communication, maximize use of limited resources, provide a win/win situation for all involved, and enhance the quality of work. After several intense sessions, a common goal was developed: "to characterize and respond to risk posed by the release of hazardous substances on public health and welfare and the environment." The mission then became the development of a methodology to structure jointly an effective program for prompt environmental restoration.

The agency leaders agreed to form teams that were empowered and operated cohesively to achieve the restoration goals. The group created a charter and a Partnering Implementation Plan, defined roles and responsibilities, developed a model for a team approach, provided processes for dispute resolution, and developed measurements for success.

The team structure for the partnering effort is two-tiered. Tier I teams are project-oriented and staffed appropriately from each agency. Tier II is a management-level team that oversees the activities of all the Tier I teams. Navy contractors participate on both tier levels. Tier II communicates direction: First, work as a team to meet remediation challenges. Second, be willing to take risks to accelerate remedies. Third, minimize conflict and maximize progress.

Initially, three installations in Florida were chosen for Tier I teams: NAS Pensacola, NAS Cecil Field, and NAS Jacksonville. All are on the National Priority List (NPL) for cleanup. The Tier I teams participated in a joint training session, which included Navy field division and installation members, Navy contractors, FDEP regulators, and EPA Region IV regulators. The meetings were conducted formally with a professional facilitator. Team-building exercises were conducted as well as problem-solving tools and training exercises such as goal development.

Since the initiation of formal partnering, formal dispute resolutions at NAS Jacksonville and Cecil Field were resolved with no financial penalties being assessed, but with a clearer definition of objectives being developed. A dredging disposal issue at NAS Mayport was resolved in a matter of hours instead of weeks of negotiation. Communication has improved, as have planning and scheduling on a programmatic basis.

Southern Division, EPA Region IV, and FDEP turned a crisis situation into a successful formal partnering effort. If the parties had not already been drawn into an adversarial relationship, the startup of partnering would have been easier. If formal facilitated partnering had been employed much earlier, the near crisis in relationships would have been avoided. Southern Division is in the process of initiating contracts for formal partnering on a similar scale with EPA Region IV and other states.

McClellan Air Force Base

The McClellan story in California is one of moving from crises to collaboration, externally and internally, and from collaboration closer to partnering. Officials at McClellan Air Force Base (AFB), the highest ranked AFB on EPA's National Priorities List, first acknowledged the pollution problem in 1979. When soil and groundwater contamination was first discovered in the early 1980s, there was a climate of distrust among the base personnel, regulatory agencies, and the public. In recent times, McClellan's environmental program has received national recognition and is touted by regulators as a model. This leadership role evolved from cooperative working arrangements that culminated in a unique voluntary partnership called the Environmental Process Improvement Center (EPIC).

EPIC is a partnership alliance made up of a loosely knit network of organizations, including McClellan AFB, EPA Region IX, and the California Environmental Protection Agency. The EPIC alliance works on environmental issues in the areas of technology, research, training, and support. Its purpose is to improve utilization of resources by streamlining management, administrative, and regulatory processes through the demonstration of technical advances.

The EPIC council is composed of key environmental leaders for the local and federal regulatory agencies and McClellan. The council and its work groups meet quarterly or more frequently to set objectives, track progress, and develop strategic plans. Innovation, long-range thinking, and challenging the status quo are frequent byproducts of the council meetings.

The council participated in team-building sessions to develop cohesiveness and clarify goals and roles. These sessions advanced the "culture change" necessary to implement Total Quality Management (TQM) in environmental business. All EPIC parties now have reached consensus on the importance of customer focus and continuous process improvement.

Several tangible benefits have been realized. With EPIC as the hub, other environmental partnerships have been formed. These include the Western Governors' Association Develop On-Site Innovative Technologies (DOIT) Partnership, the Clean Sites Public Private Partnership, and the California EPA Environmental Test Center Partnership. All are aligned with McClellan's goal of leveraging valuable resources through partnering and using the base as a proving ground for innovative technologies. Successful joint demonstrations of new technologies, such as Dual Phase Vacuum Extraction and Soil Vapor Extraction, are underway on base.

EPIC's informal cooperative arrangements offer the possibility of increased efficiency and effectiveness in addressing environmental concerns. In conjunction with private industry, EPIC has worked to accelerate cleanup, develop new technology, prevent pollution, and serve as a clearinghouse for technical information and public input. McClellan was recently named a National Restoration Test Site, and EPIC was praised by President Clinton.

The impetus for working collaboratively with the community was initiated by U.S. Representative Robert T. Matsui, later joined by U.S. Representative Vic Fazio. General Hammond was a strong supporter.

However, commitment from the top has varied substantially in subsequent years due to normal differences in management philosophy. At the traditional manager level, partnering has sometimes been perceived as threatening, and good leadership is required from senior management on a continuing basis to overcome this perception. Sacramento Air Logistics Center (SC-ALC) is doing internal partnering as it attempts to overcome the difficulties created by variable support from the participating organizational entities.

McClellan illustrates that crises can set in motion an evolution toward partnering. It also shows the need for continuous commitment by senior management through changes in personnel. Further, it suggests the difficulties of partnering at a large installation with divergent perspectives and interests. It also shows that internal partnering and organizational development can be important to effective external partnering.

Marine Corps Air Base Yuma

Soil and groundwater contamination from the Marine Corps Air Base Yuma led to the establishment of a cleanup program in 1985. To date, 12 of 14 identified sites have undergone sampling. The Arizona Department of Environmental Quality (ADEQ) requested further examination, and Yuma sites were listed on EPA's National Priority List in 1990. An FFA was signed in January 1992.

After the agreement was signed, the program struggled. Subsequently, the Navy Southwestern Division Facilities Engineering Command decided to use partnering on all Southwestern Division (SW) sites. The SW Division empowered project level team members. The participants included the Navy Southwestern Division Facilities Engineering Command, EPA, ADEQ, and the prime contractor. A key stakeholder, contracting/procurement, was left out, and this ultimately led to delays in contracting.

The ADEQ enforcement person supported partnering and remarked how easy it was to establish better relationships with others on the team. However, the ADEQ organization apparently had mixed feelings about partnering.

The initial meeting, employing an outside facilitator, lasted two days and included team-building exercises, communication and trust building, identification of common goals, and development of critical performance elements.

Several follow-up sessions have been held, using videotapes on topics relating to team building and communication. A "refresher" meeting was also held. Subsequently, new people have replaced the original partnering team and have updated the performance process. However, many feel that the process degenerated during the first year.

The partnering process allowed FFA deadlines to be revised without violating laws. Understanding of the interests and needs of the other parties, especially those of DoD and regulators, has grown.

The experience at Yuma shows that partnering can work despite differing levels of senior management support, but it would have worked better with full support. The Yuma partnering also indicates the importance of a process for initiating replacement team members and the need for someone at higher levels to be closely involved with the project to help new members. Some participants complained that team building took too much time and created a greater sense of empowerment than was realistic. The Yuma case also

shows the importance of doing a stakeholder assessment so that critical interests are not left out.

Reese Air Force Base

As with most AFBs, Reese in Texas initiated environmental cleanup efforts in the early 1980s at the beginning of the Installation Restoration Program (IRP). Reese is not on EPA's National Priority List; however, early investigation and cleanup efforts were established under CERCLA. As a result, both federal and state environmental laws are considered when appropriate and applicable. IRP studies concluded that groundwater and soil at 13 sites on the base were contaminated with chlorinated solvents and jet fuel products. The most significant groundwater contamination is believed to be associated with flightline maintenance activities where discharges of chlorinated solvents occurred. By mid-1993, a variety of coordination problems had been experienced. Much time, effort, and money was expended with minimal results.

Historically, the IRP at Reese AFB was centrally managed at the Major Command (Randolph AFB), and no IRP staff members were located at Reese. In the early 1990s, decisions were made to restructure IRP project management at Reese. In mid-1993, a full-time IRP Remedial Project Manager was hired with the intent that management of the IRP at Reese would become an installation function rather than remain as a Major Command function.

To resolve problems associated with regulatory agency coordination, a two-day environmental partnering seminar was held at Reese in June 1993. Attending that meeting were the Reese AFB principal stakeholders (commanders and project managers); HQ Air Education and Training Command (AETC); USACE (service agent); Texas Natural Resource Conservation Commission (TNRCC), the state regulatory agency; and EPA. The meeting was conducted by USACE and was modeled after similar partnering meetings held by USACE prior to the beginning of major construction projects. A professional facilitator led the meeting, and the theme was "Fix the Problem, Not the Blame."

After an overview of partnering, the meeting members proceeded through norm identification, goal identification as separate groups, work team development, and goal identification as a team. This process led to the drafting of a partnering agreement, which was followed by review, signing of the agreement, and planning to meet the partnering objectives. Participants agreed that the meeting was extremely useful. A copy of the one-page agreement was enlarged on fluorescent yellow poster paper and hangs in the IRP office at Reese AFB.

The partnering work group adopted the name "Reese AFB Environmental Restoration Working Group" (ERWG). It meets once a month, rotating the location of the meeting to reduce the travel burden. During these meetings, attention is given to the process of partnering. When circumstances cause the group to reach an impasse, reference to the partnering goals usually helps bring the group back on track. Participants have not observed a need for a formal follow-up partnering workshop. New members are "informally socialized" into the group.

ERWG members agree that partnering has been successful at Reese AFB with respect to all aspects of the IRP, including resolution of a number of issues related to IRP investigations. It is anticipated that partnering will be carried into the construction of remedial action projects. The USACE project managers noted that individual partnering agreements will be developed for each "construction project."

Through the partnering agreement, Reese AFB solicits regulatory concurrence in prioritizing IRP projects. Due in part to the partnering processes, Air Force and regulatory project mangers are becoming more proactive and are anticipating (rather than reacting to) project needs. Through candid exchanges between Air Force and regulatory decision-makers, issues such as institutional limitations on both sides are becoming better understood, as are the challenges facing environmental restoration at military bases. Improved understanding translates into a willingness to work together to complete the cleanup job.

At the policy level, Reese AFB lobbied the TNRCC to adopt a state policy to use state risk reduction regulations in association with the EPA "contained in" policy to define a more fiscally defensible mechanism for disposal of Investigation Derived Wastes. At the project level, Reese AFB and TNRCC have resolved virtually all technical issues relevant to an administrative order on consent (for corrective action), which will be issued by TNRCC.

Members have found the monthly partnering meetings to be productive. Even if agenda topics for the next meeting are not identified at the conclusion of a session, subjects usually arise during the month that warrant the next meeting. In fact, most members believe that progress is slowed when a monthly meeting is skipped. Members of the ERWG come from technical backgrounds, and participation by legal staff is rare. Most members also believe that cleanup progress is hastened through "decision by consensus of ERWG members" rather than unilateral decisions. Most also believe that the partnering process should have started earlier.

The members agree that success is dependent on the individuals in the partnering work group. Partnering works best when members work to define common goals and build confidence that all members are working toward achieving those goals. Several have stated that successes would be harder to come by without regular face-to-face contact.

The Reese AFB experience illustrates the utility of IRP-level partnering and also the difficulty of making the transition from Air Force policy to completed projects.

Partnering at the Policy Level

Coastal America

Coastal America involves more than 20 federal agencies, including DoD agencies and more than 100 nonfederal partners in cooperative site-specific projects. The 10 key federal partners are the Departments of Agriculture, Defense (Air Force, Army, Navy), Commerce, Housing and Urban Development, Interior, and Transportation; the Environmental Protection Agency; and the Council on Environmental Quality. These agencies entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) committing them to work jointly to restore coastal environments. More than $10 million has been committed to 24 projects in 15 states, with nonfederal partners providing a 100 percent match to federal dollars.

The partners initially established a Principal Group of members at the assistant secretary level, a National Implementation Team (NIT) mirrored by seven Regional Implementation Teams (RIT) (later expanded to nine), and a Coastal America office originally at the President's Council on Environmental Quality and currently at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. Responsibility for chairing the Principals Group rotates among the members. The Principals, NIT, and RIT members meet at national workshops.

Although commitment at national levels is strong, it is perceived as uneven at the regional levels. Some difficulties with implementation have been observed at both the national and regional levels. Communications problems are most likely to occur at the middle management level, partly due to confusion over the nature of the Coastal America goals at the regional and implementation levels.

Coastal America seeks people who have already demonstrated their willingness and ability to work collaboratively and have an open mind about participating. This differs from the traditional team-building approach in which emphasis is placed on changing behavior and attitudes of participants who represent a broader cross-section of viewpoints.

Coastal America's accomplishments include developing a new national policy, preparing regional planning, and addressing a variety of local projects. Coastal America has been successful in helping enact legislation regarding a requirement that affects the nonfederal share in dredging projects. This requirement had previously blocked a number of significant projects.

The Northeast RIT adopted a strategy of integrating environmental concerns with the process of rebuilding and renovating the transportation infrastructure along the Connecticut coast. A project to restore access to historic anadromous fish spawning habitat was established in the Albemarle-Pamlico Sound watershed of North Carolina and Virginia. Permit processes have been expedited because active participation by affected federal and nonfederal stakeholders in project design encourages early resolution of potential issues.

Coastal America illustrates that partnering can be employed at the national level with a large number of actors over a diverse range of issues. It also indicates, however, that difficulties can arise in obtaining commitments to work together at the middle management level across agencies, even if senior management directs a cooperative approach.

Coastal America selects individuals who are willing to work in a cooperative manner. This case illustrates the challenge of communicating goals or outcomes developed in a spirit of partnership so that responses will be made in the same spirit by multiple layers of bureaucracy in a number of organizations.

Air Force IRP Partnering Initiative with EPA and the Southeastern States

The Air Force had historically enjoyed an excellent working relationship with EPA Region IV and the southeastern states in the execution of the Installation Restoration Program (IRP). Following a series of misunderstandings and several bases in Region IV, the Air Force Regional Compliance Office -- Eastern Region (RCO) became aware that regulator support for the IRP was deteriorating. After discussions with EPA Region IV and several key states, the RCO determined that a new approach was needed to restore good relations with the regulators. EPA Region IV had experienced success in a focused application of a partnering approach to IRP execution with the Navy, and suggested that a similar initiative could be helpful for the Air Force.

The RCO and EPA Region IV agreed that a regional partnering initiative would be an effective way to improve IRP support by all eight states in Region IV, and that if successful, could serve as a model for other EPA Regions. In December 1994, the RCO approached the Air Force Major Commands (MAJCOMs) with bases in EPA Region IV and briefed them on the partnering concept. A joint letter signed by the RCO Director and EPA Region IV Deputy Regional Administrator was then sent to the MAJCOMs and state regulators inviting them to participate in a partnering workshop.

The workshop was held in January 1995 and was attended by all affected MAJCOMs and seven of the eight states in Region IV. Representatives from EPA Headquarters, EPA Region IV, and the office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Air Force (Environment, Safety, and Occupational Health) and other Headquarters Air Force offices also attended, along with the RCO and Air Force Regional Counsel. It was evident from the discussions between the Air Force and regulators that neither side was pleased with the way the IRP was proceeding. Further, even though the Air Force and regulators had been working on the same program for a number of years, communication was very poor and there was a general lack of understanding for each other's requirements and constraints. As a result, the participants concluded that the first step in improving the IRP must be improving communication at the senior management level (i.e., MAJCOMs, EPA Region IV, and state environmental agencies). This would have to be accomplished before a serious attempt at installation-level partnering could be undertaken.

A regional partnering team was formed that included EPA Region IV, the southeastern states, and the Air Force (MAJCOMs, RCO, and Regional Counsel). The team held a series of meetings over the next few months with the assistance of a trained facilitator. Communication gradually began to improve which in turn made it possible for the group to reach consensus on areas for improvement and to begin working on possible solutions. The experience convinced the group that a tiered approach to partnering would be the best way to ensure good communication between organizational levels and to resolve problems in a timely and cooperative manner.

The model that evolved called for a three-tier system: Tier III (regional team made up of senior Air Force and regulatory agency representatives), Tier II (state-specific team made up of the next level up from the installation-level representatives), and Tier I (installation level -- EPA, state, and Air Force project managers, including IRP contractors).

It was agreed that most of the work would be done by Tier I teams, but that the support from the Tier I and Tier II teams would be essential to avoid the kind of problems that had plagued the IRP in the past (e.g., resolving problems that exceeded the authority of the Tier I team). Under this model, the regional team became the Tier III team for Region IV.

The Tier III team reached consensus on taking the partnering initiative to the field, using two bases in South Carolina for the initial Tier I and Tier III teams. Myrtle Beach Air Force Base and Shaw Air Force Base were proposed by their respective MAJCOMs and endorsed by the Tier III team. EPA Region IV and the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (SC DHEC) added their support, and implementation of the partnering initiative was ready to begin.

The South Carolina Tier I and Tier II teams underwent an intensive 3-day team training program in June 1995. The workshop followed a training format developed by EPA Region IV that focused on teambuilding, and also helped define the working relationship between the Tier II team and the Tier I teams. A presentation by Mr. Tad McCall, Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Air Force (Environment, Safety and Occupational Health), underlined the importance of creative problem-solving and Air Force/regulatory agency teamwork in improving the effectiveness of the IRP. Following the training session, the Myrtle Beach and Shaw Tier I teams began work by reviewing the current status of IRP activities at their installations.

The success of the South Carolina effort led the Tier III team to begin planning for the second round of Tier I and Tier II team training. Consensus was reached on using Florida as the next state, and Patrick AFB, Cape Canaveral AFB, MacDill AFB, and Tyndall AFB were selected as the Tier I bases. EPA Region IV

and the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) agreed to support the Tier I and Tier II teams, and the Florida workshop was completed in August 1995.

During its September 1995 meeting, the Tier III team received the initial report from the Shaw Tier I team. Early feedback from the Shaw team had been encouraging, but the magnitude of the team's accomplishments was a complete surprise. In the first 3 months of its existence, the Shaw Tier I team had achieved a real cost saving of over $1.7 million in the base's IRP budget. Most of the savings came from the team's determination that an earlier Air Force decision to cap a landfill would provide protection to the environment beyond projected site land use, and thus should not be implemented. The Shaw team also produced future cost savings and reduced document review times by agreeing to end the requirement to produce draft final documents.

The level of cooperation achieved by the Air Force, SC DHEC, and EPA Region IV could not have happened under the pre-partnering approach to the IRP. The Shaw team identified several major improvements under the partnering concept that made the team's early success possible: communication between all parties significantly improved, meetings became more efficient, all team members willingly participated in decisions, and ownership of team decisions was accepted by all team members. The Shaw team also recognized the importance of the Tier II team for guidance and support.

The Tier III team is anxious to expand the number of Tier II and Tier I teams to other states and installations in Region IV. Current plans for 1996 call for completing Tier I coverage for the remaining installations in Florida, and starting new teams in Tennessee, Mississippi, Alabama, and North Carolina. This is an ambitious goal, but given the results so far, it's well worth the effort for both the Air Force and the regulators.

Conclusion

The selected cases illustrate uniqueness and commonalties in partnering approaches. Partnering is undertaken for many reasons, such as the high visibility of a project, existing adversarial relations, prior successes with partnering, or pressure from regulators or political figures.

At a minimum, the partners usually include state and federal regulatory agencies, contractors, DoD installation representatives, project representatives, and other federal agencies. Often the question arises as to other participants who should be included. Attitudes toward partnering are variable among regulators and can also vary within installations and projects, especially given personnel turnover. Outside facilitation is generally used, but internal facilitators are sometimes employed instead, especially after the process has begun.

The most successful partnering efforts develop joint statements of norms, institute internal evaluations, develop and actively refer to a charter, and establish joint goals. It is important to devise means to sustain the partnering effort. A follow-up process is critical. One way to improve follow-up is to link into other processes, such as continuous quality management.

These studies affirm the ability of partnering to produce tangible results. Litigation can be avoided, project completion can be speeded, and claims reduced. Open communication and trust are enhanced. Permits can be accelerated and legislation promulgated. Partnering can bring flexibility to problems that appear to be intractable.

Appendix II

USE OF A NEUTRAL FACILITATOR

The Role of a Facilitator

The following are some of the things a facilitator does to help bring about an atmosphere conducive to collaborative problem solving:

Assists with designing the meeting: Facilitators suggest workshop or meeting formats that avoid pitfalls or have proven effective in addressing issues. For example, a facilitator may recognize when a format is likely to push participants into taking adversarial positions or start proposing solutions before there is agreement on the definition of the problem. The facilitator may then suggest an alternative format that addresses the same issues but does so in a way that is less likely to be adversarial.

Helps keep the workshop on track, focused on the topic: Facilitators are skilled at pointing out when the discussion has drifted, and at restating the purpose of an activity. Facilitators also play the "traffic cop" role of regulating how long people speak and putting limits on such behavior as accusations and emotional tirades. Often this is accomplished by working with participants to establish ground rules that everybody feels are fair. That way, when a facilitator intervenes, everyone understands that the intervention is on behalf of an effective meeting, not because of prejudice or bias.

Clarifies and accepts communication: One of a facilitator's primary tasks is to be sure that everybody feels that they have been listened to and understood. The facilitator may do this by providing a verbal summary of what was said, by relating one participant's ideas to another, by inviting expansion of a comment, or by asking clarifying questions. Sometimes a facilitator will write a summary of comments on a flip chart or will be assisted in doing so by another staff person called a *recorder*. A facilitator might also point out when a participant's contribution has been cut off and invite him or her to complete the idea.

Accepts and acknowledges feelings: During disputes, people are often upset or angry. Telling them not to feel that way simply makes those feelings stronger. In some disputes it is necessary to let everybody ventilate their feelings before it's possible to begin talking about solutions. The facilitator will structure a situation in which it is safe to express feelings without causing a permanent breech in communication between the parties. Even in normal problem solving, strong feelings may emerge. The facilitator will make sure these feelings are acknowledged so that they do not continue to build in intensity.

States a problem in a constructive way: Often problems are stated in such a way that they seem like efforts to assign blame or accuse other parties of unacceptable, dishonest, or even illegal actions. This simply causes the other parties to counter with blame and accusations of their own, escalating the conflict. A facilitator can help by restating comments so that they do not imply blame of any party or so that they define the problem without implying there is only one possible solution.

Suggests a procedure or problem-solving approach: During a meeting a facilitator may suggest a procedure, such as brainstorming or a structured sequence of problem-solving steps, to help the group

work more effectively. Or a facilitator may help break an impasse by suggesting alternative ways of addressing the issue or even suggesting a break.

Summarizes and clarifies direction: Often participants become so involved with the subject being discussed that they lose track of the overall picture. So a facilitator may restate the purpose of the meeting or clarify its direction, (e.g., "We've completed the first two issues, and now we're ready to start talking about alternatives for . . . ").

Does consensus testing: One of the important responsibilities of a facilitator is to sense when participants are coming to agreement and verify that it has been reached by stating the potential basis for agreement and checking to see whether that statement has support from the participants. Since the facilitator doesn't make decisions for the group, this responsibility takes the form of saying something such as: "It sounds as if you are in agreement that . . . Is that acceptable?" Such agreements are usually written on the flip chart by either the facilitator or the recorder.

Because the facilitator needs to remain neutral on the outcome of the meeting and wants to create a climate for collaborative problem solving, there are also certain behaviors a facilitator should avoid, such as the following:

- Judging or criticizing the ideas of participants.
- Using the role of facilitator to push his or her own ideas.
- Making significant procedural decisions without consulting the participants.
- Taking up the group's time with lengthy comments.

Selecting a Facilitator

Many of the partnering workshops to date have used two facilitators, particularly if the team was relatively large (more than 15 participants). One facilitator will lead the meeting, while the other offers observations about how the group is working together, or provides training.

Typically the facilitator is not associated with any of the parties and has no vested interest in the decision being made. This arrangement ensures that no one fears that the way a meeting or workshop is being run gives any particular organization an advantage.

It is helpful—but not mandatory—for the facilitator to be familiar with the organizations involved and the subjects of discussion. As a minimum, the facilitator needs to know enough to be able to follow the discussion. Since agencies often use numerous acronyms and technical jargon, this can be an important point. On the other hand, if the facilitator is too directly involved in the subject matter, he or she may have opinions that make it hard to remain neutral, or he or she may be seen by one of the parties as biased or partial toward a particular point of view or organization.

There are many levels of skill and experience among people who call themselves facilitators. Some have just completed their training, while others may have 20 years of facilitation experience in a variety of circumstances. Typically, their fees reflect these differences (although some relatively junior facilitators may seek "senior facilitator" fees). Facilitator fees range from $500/day (in 1994 dollars) to $2,000/day. A fully qualified facilitator can normally be hired in the $800 to $1,200/day range.

It is not mandatory that the facilitator have conducted a session labeled *partnering*. It is important, however, that the facilitator have extensive experience in conducting team-building sessions, preferably

including some experience with cross-organizational teams (temporary teams drawn together from many parts of the organization) or multi-party teams. The facilitator should also have experience in teaching such skills as active listening, congruent sending, interest-based negotiating, and being an effective member of a team. Another consideration in selecting a facilitator is his or her continued availability to lead follow-up sessions and make assessments of how the team is doing.

Training offices may already be using facilitators as part of your program or may otherwise know skilled local facilitators. On occasion, it may be possible to use an internal facilitator. The two issues that have to be considered are the acceptability of the facilitator to all parties and the skill level required for the particular meeting. An outside facilitator is much more likely to be acceptable if there is any kind of dispute. Outside facilitators, because they spend their entire professional life doing facilitation, may—but do not always—have a higher skill level or base of experience than an internal facilitator.

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Appendix III

RESOURCE MATERIALS

PARTNERING

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Appendix IV

ACRONYMS

ADEQ	Arizona Department of Environmental Quality
AETC	Air Education and Training Command
AFB	Air Force Base
AFMC	Air Materiel Command
B&M	Baird & McGuire National Priorities List Site
CERCLA	Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act
DCSLOG	Deputy Chief of Staff for Logistics
DLA	Defense Logistics Agency
DoD	Department of Defense
DOIT	Develop On-Site Innovative Technologies
EM	Environmental Management
EMD	Environmental Management Division
EPA	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
EPIC	Environmental Process Improvement Center
ERWG	Reese Air Force Base Environmental Restoration Working Group
FACA	Federal Advisory Committee Act
FFA	Federal Facilities Agreement
IRP	Installation Restoration Program
LDEQ	Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NGO	Nongovernmental Organization
NIT	National Implementation Team
NON	Notice of Noncompliance
NOV	Notice of Violation
RAB	Restoration Advisory Board
RCRA	Resource Conservation and Recovery Act
RIT	Regional Implementation Team

SC-ALC	Sacramento Air Logistics Center
SW	Southwestern Division
TQM	Total Quality Management
TNRCC	Texas Natural Resource Conservation Commission
TRI	Toxic Release Inventory
USACE	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers