

Communications Plan
Western Governors' Association
Technical Advisory Group for WIPP Transport
December 2007, Rev 3

PURPOSE

The purpose of this plan is to re-affirm the partnerships, roles, activities and messages that have proven to be most effective to address concerns and questions about the transportation of transuranic waste to the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP).

GOALS

These goals are compatible with Western Governors' resolutions supporting safe and uneventful transport of radioactive materials through the Western states. These goals are to:

1. Address public concern about the transport of transuranic waste by providing accurate and unbiased information about the transport safety program and the risks involved with this activity.
2. Respond in a timely manner to inquiries from the media, elected and appointed officials, and others about the transport of transuranic waste.
3. Coordinate public information efforts among corridor states and tribes, the Western Governors' Association, the U.S. Department of Energy's Carlsbad Field Office (CBFO) and Washington TRU Solutions.
4. Provide consistent messages by all involved.
5. Identify and provide opportunities for public involvement.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

It is the responsibility of each participant in this plan to communicate all initiatives, actions, events and results with all involved or affected partners. The principal partners involved in this plan are identified below. Each organization will identify a communications point-of-contact as its representative to this agreement.

- **Corridor States/Tribes.** Each corridor state has the lead responsibility for communication with local officials, the public and the news media in its own state about the WIPP transport safety program. Each tribe has the same responsibility

within the borders of its reservation. Each state will inform the other partners as to major communication activities planned within each state.

- **The Western Governors' Association (WGA).** The WGA will coordinate and facilitate activities among all partners. The WGA will identify and initiate communication forums that will help all partners and institutions reach the goals identified in the plan. Communication materials produced by member states as a part of the Cooperative Agreement will bear the WGA logo.
- **U.S. Department of Energy Carlsbad Field Office (CBFO).** The CBFO will provide technical/strategic/schedule information and assistance to the corridor states and tribes to support their communication efforts. The CBFO will coordinate its activities with the respective states prior to the initiation of these activities within a state.
- **CBFO Contractors.** The CBFO contractors, subcontractors and consultants will assist the CBFO, states, tribes, and the WGA. Contractors will coordinate their activities with the respective states prior to the initiation of these activities within a state.

AUDIENCES

The audiences along the transportation routes will vary somewhat from state to state, but will include:

- Citizens along the route;
- Public safety officials along the route;
- Elected and appointed officials along the route;
- The news media;
- Public interest groups.

MESSAGES

- Safety is the first priority.
- Emergency response professionals at the local and state level worked with their federal counterparts to design and implement the comprehensive transportation safety program that is used for these shipments.
- The transport safety program goes beyond what is required by law. As examples, trucks are not allowed to proceed when road or weather conditions are hazardous – even if the roads are open. Trucks also must pass the most strict inspection program required of any truck on the road.
- The program is proven, with more than 6,000 shipments made safely over the past

eight years in total, and more than (insert number on appropriate route) made safely through this area.

- The transportation of these materials makes it possible for the federal government to clean up (name the nearest or most appropriate Department of Energy site), which helps protect the environment.
- WIPP shipments undergo more scrutiny than any other shipments on the road. Local, tribal and state transportation safety specialists all work together to make these shipments safe.
- Local Fire Departments in (name nearby local towns) have received training and equipment (if appropriate), and are prepared to respond if an accident occurs.

ACTIVITIES

Public Information

- Distribute the WGA fact sheet and other informational materials on the WIPP Transport Safety Program (all parties). On-going.
- Make public presentations to civic groups, schools, special interest groups and others (all parties). On-going.
- Display the TRUPACT, RH 72B and 10-160B casks and trucks and the WIPP exhibit in corridor communities (CBFO, with state and WGA assistance). On-going.
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- Conduct public information activities in connection with WIPPTREX exercises (states and WGA, with CBFO assistance). On-going.

News Media

- Media work, including meetings with editorial boards, guest articles and news releases (all parties). On-going.
- Conduct risk communication training for state and local spokespeople (states and WGA, with CBFO assistance). On-going, as need is identified.

Public Officials

- Arrange meetings with state and local officials along the transportation corridor (CBFO, with state and WGA assistance). On-going.
- Identify public officials along the transport corridor who may wish to visit the WIPP site (CBFO, with state and WGA assistance). On-going.