

Section 11: Public Information and Participation

Lead States: Oregon, Nevada, New Mexico

The Issue: The public and news media have a heightened concern about the transportation of radioactive materials.

Objective: Clearly communicate to the media and public the actual risk of the shipments and the safety measures in place. Encourage continued public involvement in program planning and review.

Approach: The goal of the Western Governors is the safe and uneventful transportation of transuranic waste to the WIPP. This will not be possible unless the public and media have confidence that the WIPP shipping campaign requires the highest reasonable standards for incident prevention and emergency preparedness.

A coordinated effort is needed among the Western Corridor States, WGA, and DOE to clearly communicate the safety measures in place and the actual risk that shipments present. The public must have complete, timely, accurate and unbiased information and the opportunity to judge the merits of the safety program on its own. They should be provided opportunities to participate in the development and evaluation of the program whenever possible.

The states and WGA will develop accurate information materials about the transportation safety program and about other issues of local and regional significance generated by the transportation program. These products must conform to high standards for clarity and meet the needs of the public, the news media, and others.

Communications with the public and media will vary depending on the interest of the audiences. It will likely include the following:

- Publications/direct mail materials, including brochures, pamphlets, handbooks, newsletters, fact sheets, etc;
- Media work, including meetings with editorial boards, guest articles, news releases;
- Public Service Announcements (Radio and TV);
- Informational videos;
- Public presentations to civic groups, schools, etc.;
- Public meetings; and
- Public displays (the WIPP Road Show Trailer)

Because the transportation of radioactive materials generates such strong emotions, those who speak to the media and the public about the transportation program should have training in risk communications.

Evaluation: Evaluation of the Public Information and Participation program will include reviews of the public information products and materials, the effectiveness of public meetings and other events, whether the focus of the states' public and media activities are directed in the most effective manner, and whether states are following the *Communications and Public Involvement Plan* developed in 1999.

Public information products, such as fact sheets, brochures and informational videos, may be reviewed by focus groups of representative target audiences. The lead states will work with the WGA and DOE to conduct small focus groups to review these materials, when necessary. The materials will be evaluated for accuracy and clarity of information, and to ensure that the information is presented in a fair and, unbiased manner.

Evaluation forms will be provided to participants at public meetings. These forms will ask questions to help the states gauge the effectiveness of the meetings. These forms will be reviewed by the lead states as necessary. Pertinent information taken from these forms will be shared with all the Western Corridor States, WGA, and DOE.

Table 11: Public Information and Participation

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Documents	Responsible for Updates	Status
<i>Documents included in Guide</i>		
<i>List of Public Information Officers (PIO)/ Contacts on the WIPP Transportation Safety Program, Oregon and WGA, Revised December 2007.</i>	OR/WGA	Final
Communications and Public Involvement Plan, Oregon, February 2008.	OR	Final
<i>Recommendations for Public Information Activities for WIPPTREX Exercises, Wyoming, January 1997. (Contained in Section 10)</i>	WY	Final
WGA Fact Sheet, <i>Western States Committed to Transport Safety</i> , WGA, December 2007.	OR	Final
Public Meeting Evaluation Form, Oregon, February 1998.	OR	Final
<i>Public Information Coordination for WIPP Transportation Incidents and Accidents, Oregon, February 1998.</i>	OR	Final