Federal Contaminated Sites Management Policies in Canada

NATO/CCMS Pilot Study Meeting
June 13, 2005
Federal Contaminated Sites – The Problem

• Issue identified in 1980’s
• Frequent audit subject
• Concerns:
  • Lack of information
  • Lack of management policies
  • No stable, long-term funding
  • No central leadership or action plan to deal with high risk sites
  • Lack of accurate picture of contingent and actual liabilities
Challenges in Contaminated Sites Management

• Accountability
  • Treasury Board Secretariat responsibility to develop real property policy
  • Custodian departments responsibility to manage real property

• Resources
  • No source of long-term funding

• Governance
  • No collaboration – departments acted independently

• Information gaps
  • Number, location, condition of contaminated sites
  • Nature/effectiveness of management strategies

• No centralized science expertise
Groundwork for a Federal Contaminated Sites Strategy

- Development of federal contaminated sites management framework, consisting of:
  - Treasury Board contaminated sites management policies
    - Federal contaminated sites and solid waste landfills inventory policy (2000)
    - Management of federal contaminated sites (2002)
    - Accounting for liabilities associated with federal contaminated sites (2002)
  - Federal contaminated sites inventory
  - Contaminated sites liability reporting through Public Accounts
Inventory Policy and Assessment Initiative (2000)

- Objective: enhance the management of federal contaminated sites and solid waste landfills through the development of improved information
- Purpose: create a publicly available central database of sites and develop liability figures for known contaminated sites
- Federal Contaminated Sites Inventory – publicly available July 2002
Establish consistent management of federal contaminated sites by supporting sound stewardship of federal real property assets

- Avoid contamination
- Develop site management plans
- Take early action – remediate high risk sites first
- Remediate to support planned use only
- Multi-year effort – work within available funding
Policy on Accounting for Costs and Liabilities related to Contaminated Sites (2002)

- Draft policy in use since 1999
- Adopts a standard classification system
- Requires quantification of contaminated sites liability
- Requires annual reporting
- “Landfills” treated as special case
Building a Federal Contaminated Sites Strategy

- Federal Contaminated Sites Accelerated Action Plan -- $475M / 5 years
  - National Classification System Class 1 (Action required)
  - Remediation costs > $1M
  - Projects ranked according to health/ecological risk
  - Cost sharing approach
  - To date, management/remediation activities at 57 high risk sites - $149.9M
  - Over 400 assessment projects funded
Federal Contaminated Sites Program Enhancement

- $3.5 billion over 15 years to reduce the environmental threat posed by contaminated sites
  - Based on financial liability in Accounts of Canada for costs of cleaning up high risk sites
  - Includes Consolidated Crown Corporations
  - Increased annual program funding levels / increased assessment funding limit
  - Includes Class 2 sites as well as sites with expected costs <$1M
  - More beneficial cost-share
  - Enhanced governance and accountability mechanisms (External Advisory Panel)
Federal Contaminated Sites Action Plan

- Accelerate remediation of federal brownfields
- Increase opportunities for training and capacity building for Aboriginal peoples and in the North
- Encourage development and use of innovative technologies

http://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/dfrp-rbif/cs-sc
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