



**DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY**  
NAVAL FACILITIES ENGINEERING COMMAND  
ATLANTIC  
6506 HAMPTON BLVD  
NORFOLK VA 23508-1278

5/24/05-02516

TELEPHONE NO:

IN REPLY REFER TO:

May 24, 2005

Honorable Javier Vélez Arocho  
Secretary  
Department of Natural and Environmental Resources  
PO Box 9066600  
Puerta de Tierra, PR 00906-6600

Re: Environmental Restoration Program and Munitions Response Program, Former Naval Facilities, Vieques Island, PR

Dear Mr. Vélez Arocho:

The Navy wishes to extend its sincere appreciation for the Department of Natural and Environmental Resources (DNER) participation in the recent meetings of the Navy's Environmental Restoration and Munitions Response Programs at the former Naval Facilities on Vieques Island, Puerto Rico.

Ms. Irma Pagán Villegas attended the CERCLA Technical Committee (CTC) Meeting on May 3, 2005 and provided us with a better understanding of DNER's role in the cleanup of Vieques. Ms. Pagán offered us DNER's assistance distributing information on the cleanup process in a more effective manner, to the general public, through the press and other media.

There is a high rate of trespassing re-occurring in the area of the Live Impact Area. As a result, we requested Commanders Luis Carmelo Vega and Harold Busigo to participate in a meeting between the Navy and US Fish and Wildlife Service on May 4, 2005. At the meeting they offered their assistance with keeping boaters away from the former bombing range at the eastern end of Vieques during the time when detonations of munitions will be occurring to continue with the Navy's clean up efforts. The next detonations are tentatively scheduled during the week of May 30, 2005. Responding to Commander Vegas' request, the Navy will provide you with at least 24 to 48 hours of notice prior to the time of the detonations, allowing you to timely mobilize personnel and resources to support this effort.

We also would like to thank, Mr. Belardo, DNER wildlife biologist in Vieques for his help with the sea turtle nesting areas monitoring at the eastern end of Vieques when the last set of detonations occurred, helping us ensure there would be no impacts to the nesting areas during the detonations.

**Quality Performance ... Quality Results**

May 24, 2005

We look forward to your continued participation in the environmental and munitions cleanup at Vieques. We cordially invite you or members of your staff to the next CTC meeting which is tentatively scheduled July 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup>, 2005 in San Juan. We will confirm the meeting date and send you a meeting agenda few weeks prior to the meeting.

To provide you with some additional information on the status of the Vieques cleanup we are enclosing for your review copies of recent public notices and minutes from CTC and the community Restoration Advisory Board (RAB) meetings. We will also add your name to our mailing list for newsletters and status reports for the cleanup activities on Vieques. For more information, we invite you to visit the following Navy website on the Navy cleanup program:

<http://public.lantops-ir.org/sites/public/vieques/default.aspx>.

If you need additional information from the Navy or if you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact me at 757-322-4815 or by e-mail: [christopher.penny@navy.mil](mailto:christopher.penny@navy.mil)

We look forward to your continued support.

Sincerely,



Christopher T. Penny, P.E.  
Eastern Vieques Project Coordinator  
Environmental Programs Branch (Caribbean Section)  
Environmental Division  
NAVFAC ATLANTIC  
By direction of the Commander

Copy to:

PREQB (Mrs. Yarissa Martínez)

NAVFAC ATLANTIC (Mr. Byron Brant, Mr. Jeffrey Harlow)

USEPA (Messrs. Tim Gordon, Daniel Rodriguez)

DOI (Messrs. Bud Olivera, Oscar Díaz, Susan Silander, Félix Lopez)

CH2MHILL (Mr. John Tomik)