

Mobile assets the result of personal interest, teamwork

Connie Eckard, CH2M HILL

Sometimes it just takes a little personal interest and dedication to get something done. People said Mark Sims of CH2M HILL Hanford Group couldn't get a decontamination trailer ordered before the end of the fiscal year. His co-workers even bet him he couldn't pull it off.

What they didn't figure on is just how strongly Sims felt about the need for mobile units that could handle both radiation and chemical contaminations wherever workers might be exposed at Hanford.

Sims and others doing radiological-control work for CH2M HILL started by developing a list of desired criteria and specifications for a decontamination unit. As the specifications evolved, it was determined that, in addition to being moveable, each unit would also need self-contained power and water supplies for safety showers as well as change areas and locker space for clean clothes and towels.

However, as their desires began to be spelled out, they realized that there was a gap between deciding on specifications and getting such a mobile unit ordered and delivered. "I'm a health physics technician," said Sims. "I didn't know how to make these things happen."

Partly because of his determination to meet the need, Sims had other people working to turn efforts into reality. CH2M HILL senior managers Dave Amerine, John Fulton, Bill Ross, Kevin Dorwick and John Hobbs were responsive and supportive in providing the resources that were needed to make the decontamination units happen. Operators and technicians also worked the issues to support the effort, as did CH2M HILL people from Business Services, Engineering, Operations, Safety and Radiological Control.

Jennifer Simon of CH2M HILL Facilities and Property Management played a key role in expediting the procurement and delivery of the two trailers. From the beginning, she researched the subject, dug out ground-work information and provided Radiological Control with everything needed to initiate the appropriate paperwork to procure the trailers.

"She knew who to call and stayed involved to get things done," said Sims.

Simon credits the teamwork of Diane Kelly of Material Coordinators, Jeff Ranschau of Safety and Health, Perry Bushnell of Procurement and herself. They produced a successful end result by caring and staying in continuous communication from start to finish.

Advanced Containment Systems, Inc. had to build the trailers to specifications developed in the tank farms. The trailers, manufactured outside Houston, include many features ACSI had designed for the Marine Corps. Each trailer contains a water supply, a diesel engine, a generator and a ventilation system.



Mark Sims of CH2M HILL Hanford Group stands in the open bay of a new decontamination mobile unit. The bay includes two water heaters that will sustain 20 gallons a minute of instantly heated water for safety showers.

Continued on page 8.

Mobile assets the result of personal interest, teamwork, cont.

The trailers are the same type recently ordered by New York State hazardous materials response officials to be used in “ground zero” situations.

Sims was sent to Houston to approve the custom-built trailers before they were shipped from the manufacturer. “I was impressed that the ACSI people fixed every discrepancy from our specifications while we were standing there,” said Sims. He also liked that the trailers were red.

Richard DeBusk, CH2M HILL Safety and Health Program director, led efforts to identify the best spill kits available. DeBusk then used a crosscutting team of hourly and other employees to add materials for responding to specific hazards in the tank farms.



Two decontamination trailers will provide new capabilities for tank-farm worker safety in the 200 East and West areas. Thanks to the dedication and efforts of many people, the trailers were ordered and delivered from Houston in only four months.

The trailers have been located at the 242-S Evaporator in the 200 West Area and across the street from 274-AW at the 2715-AW Building in the 200 East Area.

“A comprehensive plan that addresses responding to spills in the tank farms has been developed and is being implemented,” said Amerine, executive vice president and deputy general manager of CH2M HILL. “In addition to reviewing past events, plans for training and drills are being developed to enhance the proficiency of responses.”

A training series will begin this month, and a lot more effort by Sims and others will be needed before the trailers are operational.

Partly for meeting objectives such as no human errors that would reset the “event-free lock” and no recordable injuries — and as part of the CH2M Hill Process Improvement program, for acquiring the decontamination trailers — Sims’ Interim Stabilization Radcon group was rewarded with a new barbecue grill.

Later this spring, after the trailers are operational, the Radcon group just might invite a lot of people over so Sims can practice cooking his renowned Texas smoked chicken on the big, new grill that’s sitting out behind the group’s mobile office building. ■