



NEWS RELEASE

U.S. Army Chemical Materials Agency

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CMA Changes Charter— Col. Lemondes Assumes Responsibility as New CSE Project Manager

ABERDEEN PROVING GROUND, Md. The Director of the U.S. Army Chemical Materials Agency (CMA), Conrad Whyne, hosted the Project Manager for Chemical Stockpile Elimination (PM-CSE) Change of Charter ceremony July 26 at Aberdeen Proving Ground, Md. PM-CSE is responsible for the safe, efficient destruction of the U.S. stockpile of chemical weapons that fall under CMA's disposal mission.

The ceremony, a long-standing tradition within military services, officially denotes the transfer of responsibility for the project from the outgoing commander to the incoming commander. It also honors the outgoing commander after a successful command and welcomes the incoming commander.

The ceremony included remarks from the CMA Director, the outgoing PM-CSE, Col. Robert Billington, and the incoming PM-CSE, Col. John Lemondes.

Since 2007, Billington oversaw daily operations of the chemical demilitarization sites at Anniston Army Depot, Ala.; Pine Bluff Arsenal, Ark.; Deseret Chemical Depot, Utah; Umatilla Chemical Depot, Ore.; and the now closed Newport Chemical Depot, Ind.

"CMA is honored to have had Colonel Billington as a driving force towards the ultimate destruction of chemical weapons under CMA's destruction purview," Whyne said. "He was dedicated and determined. We will miss him greatly." After highlighting the history of Billington's tenure as PM-CSE, Whyne welcomed Lemondes as the new PM-CSE. Whyne emphasized Lemondes' service record and expressed confidence that he brings a proven tradition of dedication to his new responsibility.

Billington spoke about the exceptional workers at CMA and how they had set a safety benchmark for industry. "The men and women who make up CMA and CSE are the main reason behind our success. They have set the bar of excellence at a new high," said Billington.

Thanking his family for their on-going support, Lemondes then spoke about the CMA and CSE work force, saying "I feel welcomed by each of you. And because of the excellent early communication and coordination from Colonel Billington and the Chemical Stockpile Elimination personnel," Lemondes stated, "I feel confident that we will reach ever higher, building upon the foundation and tradition of dedication and pride created by the CMA and CSE work force, as we complete the stockpile disposal mission."

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Prior to joining CMA, Lemondes was the Director of the Soldier and Maneuver Systems Directorate on the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Acquisition, Logistics and Technology (ASA(ALT)) staff. Additional acquisition assignments included service in the Army Research Office, the Joint Program Executive Office for Chemical & Biological Defense, the Acquisition Support Center, the ASA(ALT) staff and the Deputy Under Secretary of the Army for Operations Research. He served as the Product Manager for Clothing and Individual Equipment (PM CIE) from May 2005 through July 2008 and followed that assignment with a year on the Army Staff (G8/PAE).

His awards and decorations include the Legion of Merit, Bronze Star Medal, Defense Meritorious Service Medal, Meritorious Service Medal (4th Oak Leaf Cluster), Army Commendation Medal (1 OLC), Army Achievement Medal (1 OLC), National Defense Service Medal (2nd award), South West Asia Campaign Medal (3 service stars), Army Superior Unit Award, DA Staff Badge, Ranger Tab, Parachutist Badge and Order of Saint Maurice (Centurion). Lemondes earned a bachelor's degree from Pennsylvania State University and received a master's of business administration from Syracuse University.

As the PM-CSE, Lemondes has responsibility for the three remaining CMA disposal sites currently in operation at Anniston Army Depot, Ala.; Deseret Chemical Depot, Utah; and Umatilla Chemical Depot, Ore., where chemical weapons continue to be destroyed. As of July 24, 2011, CMA has safely destroyed more than 72 percent of the chemical agent munitions and more than 87 percent—52.5 million pounds—of the nerve and blister agent that comprised the U.S. stockpile at Entry-Into-Force of the Chemical Weapons Convention Treaty in April 1997.

In addition, Lemondes has responsibility for the safe closure of the CMA disposal facility at the Pine Bluff Arsenal, Ark., which successfully completed agent destruction operations in November 2010. CMA also safely manages the chemical weapon stockpile sites near Richmond, Ky., and Pueblo, Colo. The Kentucky and Colorado stockpiles will be destroyed by the Assembled Chemical Weapons Alternatives—a separate U.S. Army element.

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