

News Release



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Tooele Chemical Agent Disposal Facility Contractor Staff Reductions Begin

DESERET CHEMICAL DEPOT, STOCKTON, UTAH — With chemical weapons destruction operations nearing their end at the U.S. Army's Tooele Chemical Agent Disposal Facility (TOCDF), the first of several planned project staffing reductions began today by system contractor URS.

Today's reduction-in-force (RIF) is affecting 52 URS employees. Last October, it was reported 72 employees were given formal 90-day notifications about their scheduled organizational releases this month; however, the number was reduced by early voluntary departures, job transfers and TOCDF reassignments to new positions.

Since the start of TOCDF chemical operations in 1996, a TOCDF contractor work force which had grown to about 1,200 people has been working to safely eliminate what once was the Army's single-largest stockpile of aging, deteriorating chemical weapons under the provisions of an international treaty. The Deseret Chemical Depot (DCD) stockpile represented 44 percent of the total national stockpile, and originally was comprised of more than 13,000 tons of nerve and blister agents contained within more than one million individual explosive and non-explosive munitions and bulk containers. All chemical weapons destruction operations on DCD are expected to be completed in the next few weeks, with phased facility closure operations scheduled to continue through summer 2014.

Workers whose jobs are ending have worked in a variety of positions across the TOCDF combined projects, including the TOCDF disposal plant; facilities in DCD's "Area 10" munitions storage area; and at the Army's now-closed former chemical weapons disposal research and development plant also at DCD, the Chemical Agent Munitions Disposal System (CAMDS). The last chemical agent destruction operations at Deseret are being completed in two different activities, at two different DCD locations on the depot - at the TOCDF, where operators are working to safely eliminate the last mustard-filled explosively-configured 155-millimeter projectiles; and at the Area 10

Liquid Incinerator (ATLIC), where the last remaining bulk agent containers filled with Lewisite blister agent are being destroyed.

Most contractor workers who remain employed until their organizational release dates, including those being released today, will receive significant incentive payments, plus additional payments for assisting the project in meeting performance objectives.

In addition, workers over the years have been provided with generous education benefits. In the last three years, more than 50 employees have earned new college degrees, while dozens more have added a variety of new professional certifications.

The next TOCDF RIF, planned in March, is expected to affect 23 employees, with other RIFs planned this fall and in 2013 and 2014.

Eventually, every TOCDF worker will be affected by a RIF. Each will be entitled to receive new job search training, including resume writing, interviewing and networking skills development. Severance will be paid according to eligibility. Employees also are encouraged to apply for other positions available across URS. Additionally, URS has been in contact with other employers here in Utah about the availability of skilled, quality personnel who have made outstanding contributions on a successful major national and international project.

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