



## Global Resource for Munitions Response Services

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Dear Member of Congress:

I am writing on behalf of the National Association of Ordnance Contractors (NAOC). NAOC is an association of nearly seventy companies who perform cleanup of munitions and explosives of concern (MEC) across the country. In addition to removing unexploded ordnance (UXO) across the country, NAOC member companies employ hundreds of former military Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) technicians, providing a civilian career bath for our servicemembers who have given so much to our country. As President of NAOC, I am writing with regards to the cleanup of MEC and munitions constituents (MC).

Thanks to Members of Congress, the rate of funding for remediation of dangerous UXO and discarded military munitions (DMM) has not dipped in the past few years despite this program being chronically underfunded by the Department of Defense. The Defense Committee's directive in the Fiscal Year (FY) 23 Omnibus to the Secretary of Defense and the Service Secretaries to provide the committee a quarterly budget execution report will continue to highlight the importance of the need for remediation. We urge Congress to continue this directive approach by supporting \$300,000,000 above the President's Fiscal Year 2024 (FY24) budget request for the Military Munitions Response Program (MMRP) within the Environmental Restoration (ER) Formerly Used Defense Sites (FUDS), Army, Navy, Air Force, and Defense-wide accounts in funding for the cleanup and remediation of UXO/DMM. Of the requested \$300,000,000, \$150,000,000 would be specifically for the ER, FUDS account. In addition, we ask that you also include report language that would both enforce this programmatic request and direct DOD and the Services to execute the funds they receive for the MMRP in a manner consistent with their budget requests.

We take great pride that the United States military is the best trained fighting force in the world. As a result of this training, however, dangerous explosives and residual harmful contaminants are located on millions of acres of active and former military land, and much of the latter now serve as housing, schools, parks, and playgrounds. In fact, every state, and nearly every Congressional district, plays host to at least one of the more than 10,000 MMRP sites (including Superfund sites) under Pentagon supervision that require cleanup. FUDS are a subset of the MMRP program and are littered with MEC, which could be either UXO or DMM. Local communities and families should not have to worry about finding ordnance in their local park, school, or backyard. Sadly, this is not the case, and communities across the country are exposed

***Detection. Remediation. Destruction.***

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to unnecessary risk. The presence of these extremely hazardous materials also prevents the return of property to local communities for redevelopment or other use.

In 1986, Congress established the Defense Environmental Restoration Program, with the MMRP following in 2001, to address the ordnance and munitions chemical constituents and allow for safe reuse. Over two decades later, however, we have barely moved the needle and the estimated cost of cleanup is over \$10 billion. Current requested funding for the program is less than \$300 million annually. Of these appropriations, only a fraction (an average of 18%) is expended for contracted activities to cleanup of UXO/DMM. At this rate, it will take well over 40 years to complete remediation at MMRP sites. For FUDS sites specifically, by their own estimate, the Army Corps of Engineers estimates full cleanup at this level of funding could take until 2085 or beyond. (<https://www.usace.army.mil/Missions/Environmental/Formerly-Used-Defense-Sites/Frequently-Asked-Questions/>)

It is important that the \$150,000,000 be directed to FUDS not only because the FUDS program makes our communities safer and returns unused, blighted land to economic use, but because the program supports our veterans. Many of the companies hired to do this dangerous work are small businesses including Veteran-Owned Small Businesses (VOSB), Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Businesses (SDVOSB) and Women-Owned Small Businesses (WOSB). The companies doing the cleanup employ many former military EOD Technicians and are dedicated to helping those separating from service make the transition into the civilian world.

I appreciate your consideration and look forward to working with you throughout the authorization process to ensure the cleanup of the thousands of local communities that are impacted.

Sincerely,

*Lanette Shea Waite*

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President, National Association of Ordnance Contractors  
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