

Leadership and the Environment: A Unit Leader's Field Guide, Assessment, and Quality Assurance Checklist

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Headquarters, U.S. Army Engineer School
April 2013

*This publication supersedes GTA 05-08-005, March 2008.

ARMY COMMITMENT

“The Army is committed to environmental stewardship in all actions as an integral part of its mission and to ensure sustainability.”

—AR 200-1

THE ARMY STRATEGY FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

Sustainability is the protection of environmental resources to meet current and future mission requirements worldwide, safeguard human health, improve the quality of life, and preserve the natural environment. Environmental sustainability is the wise use and management of environmental resources and is a natural outgrowth of the military’s role as the protector of U.S. national security. *The Army Strategy for the Environment* advocates for sustainable operations, installations, systems, and communities to enable the Army mission.

SUSTAINABILITY IS KEYSTONE

The Army Strategy for the Environment represents a change in thinking and focus from a strictly compliance-based approach to that of prevention and sustainability. It remains a major advancement in the Army’s appreciation of the triple bottom line: the interdependence between the mission, the community, and the environment. The Army is obligated to ensure that today’s Soldiers—and future Soldiers—have land, water, and air resources to train in; a healthy environment to live in; and the support of local communities and Americans. The long-term goals of *The Army Strategy for the Environment* are—

- Foster an ethic that takes the Army beyond environmental compliance to sustainability.
- Strengthen Army operational capability by reducing our environmental footprint through more sustainable practices.
- Meet current and future training, testing, and other mission requirements by sustaining land, water, and air resources.
- Minimize impacts and total ownership costs of Army systems, materiel, facilities, and operations by integrating the principles and practices of sustainability.
- Enhance the well-being of Soldiers, civilians, families, neighbors, and communities through leadership in sustainability.
- Use innovative technology and the principles of sustainability to meet user needs and to anticipate future Army challenges.

Leaders can demonstrate commitment to sustainability by ensuring that units have an environmental program; an environmental standing operating procedure (SOP); and an appointed, trained environmental officer. Personnel should work with the environmental officer to develop a sustainability ethic in the unit.

TRAINING

Environmental officer training is offered online through the Directorate of Environmental Integration, U.S. Army Engineer School. For directions on accessing the training, e-mail <usarmy.leonardwood.engineer-schl.mbx.dei@mail.mil>.

ASSESSMENT QUALITY ASSURANCE CHECKLISTS

Personnel should use assessment quality assurance checklists (table 1) and check supplemental requirements with the local environmental management office.

Table 1. Sample Checklists

	Yes	No
Management		
Are an environmental officer and an alternate environmental officer appointed in writing and properly trained as soon as possible after the appointment?		
Does the unit have a documented environmental program and SOP?		
Does the SOP include guidance for the home station and deployed activities?		
Has the risk management process (including environmental hazards and controls) been conducted on unit activities (including the mission, training, and daily routine)?		
Are the recommended controls developed in the risk management process supervised and evaluated?		
Are after action reviews conducted during the risk management process to document the effectiveness of controls and any recommended changes for unit activities?		
Does the environmental officer maintain a file that contains appointment orders, inspection records, training documents, and disposal records according to local requirements?		
Have all Soldiers received environmental-awareness training and any additional required environmental training?		
Is all environmental training documented?		
Does the unit SOP cover spill prevention and response, the use of safety data sheets, pollution prevention, and recycling?		
Is the emergency contact list current and posted, and does the unit conduct drills on emergency procedures?		
Is good housekeeping evident in storage areas for petroleum, oils, and lubricants (POL) and hazardous material (HM) and in accumulation areas for hazardous waste (HW)?		
Does the unit have appropriate references (Army regulations, field manuals, technical manuals, installation or base camp regulations, command policies, SOPs) on hand?		
Does the unit receive environmental management system awareness training so that personnel can recognize environmental impacts?		
Is the environmental management system awareness training documented?		
Are procedures to reduce environmental impacts included in unit SOPs?		
Are personnel aware of the consequences of not following procedures to reduce environmental impacts?		
Accumulation Sites (Hazardous Waste/Used Oil)		
Are personnel trained in the proper and timely handling, collection, storage, and accumulation of HW?		
Is there adequate secondary containment?		
Are HW, used oil, and other possible pollutants accumulated in authorized containers compatible with their contents?		

Table 1. Sample Checklists (continued)

	Yes	No
Accumulation Sites (Hazardous Waste/Used Oil) (continued)		
Are containers in good condition?		
Is access to containers controlled by container logs?		
Are container lids kept closed except to add or remove material?		
Are used-oil accumulation tanks used for oil collection only?		
Are used-oil tanks pumped out when full?		
Are containers properly labeled? (Requirements differ by locality.)		
Are containers secured to prevent contamination by rainwater and other potential contaminants?		
Are accumulation sites routinely inspected for container damage and leaks?		
Are accumulation start dates and HW labels applied if applicable?		
Are full containers turned in before accumulation time limits expire?		
Is the area secure and restricted to authorized personnel only?		
Is appropriate signage (HW accumulation point, no smoking) posted?		
Is proper personal protective equipment available on-site?		
Is the spill plan posted?		
Are fire extinguishers and spill kits on-site and easily accessible?		
Is at least 36 inches of aisle space allotted?		
Are containers turned so that the label is visible?		
Are containers being properly managed (55-gallon drums are not stacked more than two-high, waste batteries have terminals capped or taped and are not stacked more than two-high)?		
Are inspections being conducted and documented as required by the local SOP?		
Is HW properly managed for transport to a disposal facility?		
Are good housekeeping measures being implemented?		
Hazardous Material		
Are amounts of HM on hand limited to the minimum needed (no stockpiling of HM is occurring)?		
Is the unit HM inventory (including quantity and location) up to date?		
Are safety data sheets on hand for all HM?		
Are safety data sheets readily available to workers who use HM and to personnel who may be exposed to it?		
Have workers been taught to read safety data sheets and to obtain information from them?		
Is appropriate personal protective equipment available and being used properly?		
Are container labels in good condition and legible?		
Are containers properly labeled with their contents if the HM is not in its original container?		
Are containers in good condition and closed when not in use?		
Are HM storage areas inspected at required intervals?		
Are HM storage area inspection records kept?		
Are good housekeeping measures being implemented?		
Are appropriate health and safety labels applied to containers of HM?		

Table 1. Sample Checklists (continued)

	Yes	No
Hazardous Material (continued)		
Is the spill plan posted?		
Are fire extinguishers and spill kits on-site and easily accessible?		
Is secondary containment adequate?		
Is at least 36 inches of isle space allotted?		
Are danger and warning signs placed where they can be seen easily?		
Are personnel trained in the proper and timely handling, collection, storage, and accumulation of HM?		
Are personnel trained in the proper transport of HM?		
Are empty POL containers reused or disposed of properly?		
Are asbestos-containing items handled and disposed of properly?		
Are batteries stored, recycled, and disposed of properly?		
Is equipment containing radioactive sources (gun/mortar sights, M22 Army chemical-agent detector alarm) properly stored to prevent breakage and the release of radioactive materials?		
Are incidents reported properly?		
Is ammunition stored properly?		
Is incompatible HM stored separately?		
Are HM shelf life dates checked routinely?		
Is HM stocked and used following the first-in, first-out rule?		
Solid Waste		
Are procedures to reduce waste production enforced?		
Are waste segregation and recycling efforts in effect?		
Is dining facility waste being properly managed?		
Is a grease trap or soakage pit being used at the dining facility?		
Are soap, water, and kitchen grease properly managed and not being discharged into the street, storm drainage system, or groundwater source while washing garbage cans and field kitchen equipment?		
Are solid-waste containers kept closed except to add or remove waste?		
Are dumpsters free of recyclable items and HM?		
Are waste containers clearly marked with contents to assist Soldiers with source segregation?		
Is composting being done for food scraps?		
Spill Prevention		
Is the unit spill prevention plan present and up to date?		
Has the unit spill prevention plan been implemented?		
Is the spill prevention plan being followed and understood?		
Is required spill prevention and response training provided and documented?		
Are spill exercises being conducted?		
Are POL, battery acid, and other HM spills properly reported?		
Are spill kits and appropriate personal protective equipment available for a spill response?		
Does the unit enforce prohibitions against discharging pollutants into storm or washrack drains and pouring pollutants on the ground or along fence lines?		

Table 1. Sample Checklists (continued)

	Yes	No
Spill Prevention (continued)		
Are small oil spills cleaned up promptly and effectively?		
Are drip pans used under vehicles, equipment, and POL container spigots?		
Are vehicles grounded before refueling?		
Is contaminated soil properly disposed of at the designated, authorized disposal area?		
Recycling		
Is material recycled according to directives?		
Is the unit delivering recyclable items to the installation recycling center?		
Are recyclable items segregated at the source?		
Is the unit recycling all materials accepted by the installation recycling center?		
Are dumpsters free of recyclable items?		
Are used cleaning solvents collected and recycled properly?		
Washracks		
Do washracks have working oil-water separators, catch basins, collection ponds, drains, and tanks?		
Are treatment devices (oil-water separators, catch basins, collection ponds, drains, tanks) properly maintained and serviced?		
Does the unit SOP provide a maintenance schedule for the oil-water separator?		
Does the unit SOP provide instructions for requesting service for the oil-water separator?		
Is washrack cleaning documented, and are records maintained?		
Are vehicles and equipment washed only in authorized washracks?		
Is steam-cleaning equipment used in authorized washracks?		
Are soaps or emulsifying agents used in washracks? (Soaps and emulsifying agents should not be used because they render the oil-water separator ineffective.)		
Are washracks and the vicinity free of contaminated soil, sand, and silt?		
Are metal gratings or baffles present and in good condition at washrack oil-water separators, catch basins, and floor drains?		
Are washrack areas free of oil and fuel spills?		
Are washrack areas free of oily rags and trash?		
Are faucets and backflow preventers in good operating condition?		
Are oil-water separators in good working condition?		
Are vehicle, equipment, and aircraft wastewater discharges tied into a treatment system?		
Land		
NOTE. Personnel should check local supplemental requirements for land management and also coordinate with the local environmental staff or range control.		
Are vehicles maneuvered in authorized areas only?		
Are surface areas and curbs free of vehicular damage?		
Is the area free of litter?		
Is gravel used only in authorized areas and in an authorized manner?		

Table 1. Sample Checklists (continued)

	Yes	No
Land (continued)		
Are archeological, cultural, and historical resources safeguarded?		
Are vegetation and trees only being cut, removed, or used with appropriate approval from range control or a forester?		
Are personnel ensuring that garbage is never burned or buried at ranges or training areas without appropriate approval?		
Are storm water ditches in the vicinity of motor pools free of POL and other HM and HW?		
Are detention ponds and sump collection points functional and properly serviced?		
Are painting, battery charging/discharging, and radiation repair operations conducted properly and coordinated with the local environmental, safety, and preventive-medicine offices?		
Are collection points established and procedures in place for the management of waste generated by equipment maintenance?		
Does the unit fill fighting positions and other excavations upon exercise completion and redeployment?		
Does the unit have a maneuver damage control element for each operation?		
Are damages properly reported and corrected according to command guidance?		
Are refueling sites located away from sensitive areas (wetlands, water sources, drainage areas, endangered species habitats)?		
Does the unit have appropriate spill prevention equipment at high-risk locations (refueling points, maintenance areas, dining facility areas).		
Does the unit have appropriate spill prevention equipment available to personnel?		
Does the unit use track-turning pads when appropriate?		
Does the unit confirm and mark sensitive areas to prevent damage to endangered species habitats and archeological and cultural areas?		
Does the unit conduct Soldier environmental-awareness briefings before an operation?		
Does the unit conduct smoke operations according to directives?		
Does the unit use pyrotechnics according to directives?		
Does the unit coordinate with the installation/operational staff before an exercise to obtain information on the environmental issues in the area of operations?		
Does the unit cross or ford streams and rivers at authorized points?		
Is the unit aware of, and complying with, noise restrictions (limited hours, rotary-wing operations, demolitions, proximity to civilian population, endangered species habitats)?		

