

Depleted Uranium Munitions Action Plan

Updated July 11, 2004 by Glen Milner

DOT-E 9649 has not been renewed. Letters may still be sent to the Department of Transportation.

The Depleted Uranium Munitions Action Plan is an attempt by activists across the United States to prevent the renewal of a special U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) exemption, DOT-E 9649, which allows the shipment of depleted uranium munitions without a DOT "Radioactive" placard displayed on the shipment.

The expiration date for the exemption was June 30, 2004. The complete action plan is posted at http://www.traprockpeace.org/du_mun_action_plan.pdf or contact info@gzcenter.org for a copy.

The following is updated information based on discussions with Mr. Delmer Billings of the Department of Transportation on May 3, 2004 and July 9, 2004 and a letter from the U.S. Army to Congressman Jay Inslee dated July 6, 2004:

DOT-E 9649 has not been renewed. Mr. Delmer Billings of the DOT stated on July 9, 2004 that his agency is waiting for further information regarding the shipment of depleted uranium munitions. The U.S. Army Military Surface Deployment and Distribution Command (SDDC, formerly MTMC), which manages the shipment of depleted uranium munitions, has been granted a time extension in order to provide information requested by the DOT.

Congressman Jay Inslee (north Seattle area) received a letter dated July 6, 2004 from Major General Ann Dunwoody, of the U.S. Army, SDDC, that stated, **"...the Department of Defense shipped depleted uranium munitions in the United States and overseas in both 2003 and 2004. DOD used DOT-E 9649 for those shipments."** This statement **directly contradicted a statement by Major Mark Wyrosdick, of the U.S. Army, SDDC, in the March 2, 2004 renewal application for DOT-E 9649, which said, "There were no shipments made by DOD using this exemption..."**

Congressman Inslee also received a statement from **the DOT dated July 6, 2004 which said the DOT is still reviewing the exemption.**

Mr. Delmer Billings, Director of the Office of Hazardous Materials of the Department of Transportation (DOT), stated on May 3, 2004 he thought **he had received approximately 50 to 75 statements against the exemption renewal through e-mail and the postal service.** It is likely activists have sent well over 100 letters or e-mail messages to Delmer Billings against the renewal of this exemption.

Mr. Billings stated on July 9, 2004 that the DOT would soon be placing all letters, messages and documents regarding the renewal of DOT-E 9649 on the DOT docket management system which will be available for viewing online at <http://dms.dot.gov>. Mr. Delmer said the docket number should be available around July 16, 2004.

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Statements by activists may still be made to the Department of Transportation regarding DOT-E 9649. Mr. Billings stated on July 9, 2004 that he did not know why U.S. Army officers of the same military command, managing depleted uranium shipments, would give contradicting statements about whether the exemption is used. Mr. Billing also stated he could not deny the application for renewal until the Department of Defense is given the chance to respond to opposing allegations.

A related statement from 1998: A letter from the Chief of the Transportation Operations Team, E. M. Jones, of the Department of the Army dated December 3, 1998, to the Commander of the Military Traffic Management Command stated that DOT-E 9649, at that time, needed to be renewed. The letter stated the current exemption expired on December 31, 1998. The letter stated, "The requirements for military shipments of munitions containing components made of depleted uranium has not changed." The Chief of the Transportation Operations Team further stated, "Historically, **we have shipped millions of tons of this type of ammunition without incident under this exemption since this exemption was first approved.**" (*emphasis added--note that just 2 million tons over the 12 year period since DOT-E 9649 had been approved would average 166,000 tons of depleted uranium munitions shipped under this exemption each year.*)

I apologize for the delay in reporting on this issue. Congressman Inslee had been trying since May 20, 2004 to obtain the statement from the U.S. Army that the exemption is used by the military. **I will post the docket number for DOT-E 9649 when it is available.** I can be contacted at gkaajm@juno.com or at (206) 365-7865. Glen Milner

The following is from the original Depleted Uranium Munitions Action Plan:

What to do...

*Contact the Department of Transportation Exemptions division and ask that the **DOT immediately terminate and not renew DOT-E 9649.** Depleted uranium munitions should have a "Radioactive" placard and an "Explosives" placard on shipments. Depleted uranium is an extremely toxic material and much more dangerous when shipped with an explosive propellant as in the case of DU munitions. In case of a fire, first responders (local police and fire fighters) would have no idea the shipment contained radioactive material. The public has a right to know about hazardous shipments through their communities.*

*Send correspondence regarding DOT-E 9649 to: Mr. Delmer Billings DHM-31
Director, Office of Hazardous Materials, Exemptions and Approvals
Department of Transportation 400 7th St. SW, Washington, D.C. 20590
Fax: (202) 366-3308 E-mail: delmer.billings@rspa.dot.gov*

Please also (if you want) send a copy to info@gzcenter.org Please share this information with others and local officials.

Organizations sponsoring the Depleted Uranium Munitions Action Plan:

Ground Zero Center for Nonviolent Action, Poulsbo, Washington : www.gzcenter.org E-mail: info@gzcenter.org; **Traprock Peace Center**, Deerfield, Massachusetts : www.traprockpeace.org E-mail: traprock@crocker.com; **Military Toxics Project**, Lewiston, Maine www.miltoxproj.org Email: mtp@miltoxproj.org; **Nukewatch**, Luck, Wisconsin www.nukewatch.com E-mail: nukewatch@lakeland.ws