

EXPEDITED COMPLETION OF SUPERFUND SITE REMEDIATION THROUGH AN INNOVATIVE PUBLIC/PRIVATE COLLABORATION

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Abstract

In the mid 1990s, Chevron was faced with an EPA order to clean up the former Marzone pesticide formulating facility (Superfund site) in Tifton, Georgia. We estimated that the “typical” adversarial and iterative Superfund path would take eight to ten years at a probable cost in excess of \$18 million. Instead Chevron proposed, and EPA accepted, an innovative high performance team (HPT) collaborative approach. The project was completed in four years for about \$11 million. The \$7 million saved was a direct dividend from the success of the HPT.

At the core of the HPT project management structure was a decision-making leadership team comprising the EPA, Chevron, state liaison, and key technical consultants. The HPT was empowered to make virtually all necessary decisions required to implement the ROD. Three critical conditions for success were met, (1) The stakeholders committed the necessary personnel and financial resources, (2) The assigned individuals worked well together on the team, (3) Commitments to goals, timelines, and a high-quality work product were made up front. The result was an extraordinary level of trust, cooperation, and focus, which sustained the team through three ROD amendments and two explanations of significant differences (ESDs). All these changes notwithstanding, 49 months later the project came within one month of finishing on the original timeline and within budget expectations.

Key words: high performance team, collaborative approach