

Convention on Cluster Munitions Intersessional Meeting – 27-30 June 2011
Statement by CANADA on Stockpile Destruction

Madame Chair, Ladies and Gentlemen,

My aim this morning is to provide an overview of Canada's efforts in destroying its stockpile of cluster munitions.

Over the past three decades Canada has had two types of cluster munitions, the air launched CBU Mk20 Rockeye and the ground-based Dual Purpose Improved Conventional Munitions (DPICM) M483A1 155mm Projectile. I will briefly describe the disposal history of each type.

The Rockeye inventory was destroyed by the Canadian Forces Ammunition Depot Dundurn in Saskatchewan, Canada by an Open Detonation program using electric detonators, blasting agents and C4 explosive. After a number of trials, the most effective destruction process involved exposing the bomblets by opening the dispenser, followed by a liberal application of 3 x 22.5 kg bags of blasting agent with 4 x 1.25 lb blocks of C4 and the use of electronic detonators to initiate the blast.

The destruction program was conducted over two years and completed by September 2006. Over 248,000 bomblets contained within 826 bombs were destroyed, after which the area was swept for unexploded ordnance: none were found and complete detonation was confirmed. The Munitions Scrap was removed, screened for trace energetics and identified for future demilitarization.

The remaining challenge is to destroy the DPICM stocks. The entire inventory of 12,600 Projectiles was declared surplus and removed from operational status in January 2007. Due to the large quantity of projectiles awaiting disposal and the associated workload to dispose of them by Open Detonation, the preferred option is to contract out the disposal. Department of National Defence is working with Public Works and Government Services Canada (PWGSC), the contracting arm of the Government of Canada, to develop a solution to achieve this end.

A Statement of Work and evaluation criteria have been drafted and are in the process of being finalized. Once approved, the intent is to publish the disposal requirement as a competitive procurement. It is estimated that it will likely take 12 months to complete the contracting requirements, with roughly 12-24 months to complete disposal of all munitions.

There are a number of challenges associated with contracting out the disposal.

- a. From a due diligence perspective it is necessary that the disposal process meet the more stringent of either Canadian laws and regulations or those of the jurisdiction where the disposal occurs;

- b. At this time Canada is aware of only one supplier within North America with the capability to execute this task, although other potential suppliers may be available outside North America; and
- c. Canadian Controlled Goods regulations must be followed, which add additional steps, and make the process more complex.

In summary, Canada is actively reviewing a number of regulatory and environmentally compliant options to demilitarize its remaining cluster munition stocks.

Madame Chair, this concludes my presentation.