

## **Navy Public Health Review Update: Naval Station Guantanamo Bay Moving Ahead with Environmental Sampling Plan - October 9, 2015**

By NS Guantanamo Bay Public Affairs

Environmental sampling will begin the week of Oct. 9 as part of the ongoing public health review being conducted on Camp Justice, the site of the Office of Military Commissions (OMC) located at Naval Station (NS) Guantanamo Bay.

“The sampling plan is intended to fill gaps in data identified in an earlier Public Health Review Report for the OMC facilities,” said Naval Station (NS) Guantanamo Bay's Commanding Officer, Capt. David Culpepper. “We want to ensure that the appropriate action is being taken so we can continue to provide quality living and working spaces.”

A team of experts from the Navy and Marine Corps Public Health Center (NMCPHC), Commander, Navy Region Southeast (CNRSE), and Navy Facilities Engineering Command Southeast (NAVFAC SE), visited NS Guantanamo Bay Sept. 25-29 to develop the sampling plan, which will be conducted over the course of the next several months and into 2016. The first sampling efforts will be conducted during the week of Oct. 9-16 and again from Oct. 30 to Nov. 10. Additional sampling will be conducted after the new year. Results of the sampling will help complete some of the data gaps that were identified in initial assessments that were conducted last month. The results will be carefully analyzed with a final report anticipated by mid-2016.

Indoor air sampling, soil sampling, water sampling, testing for ionizing radiation and paint samples in and around Camp Justice, will be included in the sampling efforts. Multiple buildings within Camp Justice also will be sampled, including the OMC Headquarters (AV29), McCalla Hangar (AV32), the old Commission Building (AV34), the Security Building (AV 31), and the Expeditionary Legal Complex. Additionally, sampling will be conducted in the tents and Cuzco trailers, and at the base's incinerator. Personnel working in these locations can expect to see sampling equipment placed in various locations around Camp Justice, and technicians conducting the sampling during these time frames.

This sampling is the latest step in addressing concerns brought to Navy leadership's attention alleging that since 2004 military and civilian employees working for the DOD Military Commissions on Camp Justice at NS Guantanamo Bay have been exposed to carcinogens in an area surrounding the Commissions' trailers, tents, offices and courtrooms. The Navy requested that a Public Health Review be launched with the assistance of the Navy and Marine Corps Public Health Center (NMCPHC) to investigate the allegations. The initial site visit for the Public Health Review was conducted Aug. 4-8 by a team of Navy public health experts from NMCPHC, Portsmouth, Va.

Based on a review of available documentation and the site visit, the public health experts determined that the buildings, tents and trailers where personnel live and work are habitable for occupancy. The team also determined the administrative worksites are low hazard and have low potential for overexposures to current occupational health standards.

While the review of existing environmental records for Camp Justice found no record of contamination, the team did find that data gaps exist in the available historical documentation. In order to address those gaps, the experts recommended follow-on sampling be conducted.

For updates on the public health review, visit

[http://www.cnic.navy.mil/regions/cnrse/installations/ns\\_guantanamo\\_bay.html](http://www.cnic.navy.mil/regions/cnrse/installations/ns_guantanamo_bay.html).