John W. Libby
Major General
Commissioner
207-626-4205

Peter W. Ogden
Director
207-626-4464

Department of Defense, Veterans and Emergency Management
Maine Veterans' Services
117 State House Station, Augusta, ME 04333-0117
Tel.: 207-626-4464

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INFORMATION PAPER

Agent Orange/Agent Purple and Canadian Forces Base Gagetown

1. **Background Information:**

a. Agent Orange was a mixture of chemicals containing equal amounts of the two active ingredients, 2, 4-D and 2,4,5-T. The name, "Agent Orange," came from the orange stripe on the 55-gallon drums in which it was stored. Other herbicides, including Agent Purple a less well known but more toxic agent, were also used in Vietnam, but to a much lesser extent. Republic of Korea forces used small amounts of Agent Orange in 1968-69 in the area from the Civilian Control line to the southern boundary of the Demilitarized Zone. Since the initial use of Agent Orange, significant studies and validation of effects on personnel have resulted in various national programs and assistance for affected veterans. The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) currently maintains an active VA Agent Orange Registry and provides medical treatment or disability compensation to Vietnam veterans. In 2001, the program expanded to examinations of Korean veterans who served in Korea in 1968 and 1969 and may have been exposed to dioxin or other toxic substances while serving in the military. Additional information, fact sheets, and newsletters are available online at www.va.gov/agentorange or call the toll-free helpline at 1-800-749-8387.

b. In June of 2005, the Canadian Department of National Defense (DND) announced that for three days in June 1966 (14-16) and four days in June 1967 (21-24), testing of various defoliants, including Agent Orange and Agent Purple, took place over a limited portion of the Canadian Forces Base (CFB) Gagetown, New Brunswick. Additionally, according to the Canadian DND and the Canadian Forces (CF) website, "the testing was conducted under strictly controlled conditions, ensuring minimal spray drift, in an area of the base that was difficult to access," "the testing did not involve wide-spread spraying," and "these tests are the only known instances, based on available information, in which Agents Orange and Purple were sprayed at CFB Gagetown." According to the Canadian DND and the Canadian Forces, the testing area consisted of two small areas covering approximately 83 acres of the 180,000 plus acres of CFB Gagetown. Additional information is available at the Canadian DND/CF website: (http://www.forces.gc.ca/site/newsroom/view_news_e.asp?id=1685).

2. What the State of Maine is doing for those who may have been exposed to Agent Orange while training at CFB Gagetown:

a. The Maine National Guard and the Maine Bureau of Veterans' Services take very seriously the health and safety concerns of both present soldiers and our veterans. In that regard, on July 6, 2005 a link was established on the Maine National Guard internet website (http://www.me.ngb.army.mil/Default.htm) to provide updates regarding this issue as information became available. In addition, soldiers and veterans were afforded the opportunity to be added to a contact list of soldiers who trained at CFB Gagetown. Those without internet access could call the Bureau of Veteran's Services in Augusta, Maine at 207-626-4464 to obtain updates and manually register.

b. The Director of Maine Veterans' Services met with The Adjutant General of the Maine National Guard, the Togus VA Medical Center Director, and the VA Regional Office Director in early July 2005 to determine the best way to move forward with providing information to Maine's veterans and to discuss the handling of potential claims for possible exposure to Agent Orange at CFG Gagetown. Both the Medical Center Director and the Regional Office Director have been very supportive in the development of this information paper and are just as concerned for the welfare of our veterans as we are.

c. The Director of Maine Veterans' Services wrote to Maine's Congressional Delegation in July 2005 informing them of the Agent Orange issue at CFB Gagetown and requesting their support in working with the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to assist Maine's National Guard members with any Agent Orange issues they may have.

d. The Director of Maine Veterans' Services wrote to the Secretary of the Department of Veterans Affairs in October 2005 asking for clarification of how Maine National Guardsmen and women could get the AOR screening and file claims with the VA for Agent Orange issues. The results of this letter are: CFB Gagetown is on the approved DOD list of potential Agent Orange exposure areas; the VA will adjudicate claims for those illness that are presumptively attributed to Agent Orange; and veterans, as defined by the VA, can receive an Agent Orange Registry examination if they so chose.

e. Maine Veterans' Services and the Maine National Guard are producing a map that will show the habitual training areas frequented by Maine National Guard units while training at CFB Gagetown. This map will be available for viewing at all Maine Army National Guard Armories and Maine Veterans' Services offices by April 15, 2006. A copy of this map will be provided to the Department of Veterans Affairs Regional Office at Togus to assist in adjudicating claims for exposure to Agent Orange at CFB Gagetown.

f. This information paper will be made available to the individuals on the contact list, veteran's organizations in Maine, Maine National Guard Armories, local media outlets, and the other states whose National Guard and Reserve soldiers trained at CFB Gagetown.

3. Agent Orange Registry:

a. In order for individuals to be eligible for the Agent Orange Registry (AOR), they must first have veteran status. National Guard personnel can qualify as veterans by:

(1) having been called to active duty by presidential order and having completed the full period of time they were called to active duty;

(2) having a prior active duty period; or

(3) having a VA adjudicated service-connected condition or disability. National Guard personnel who were on active duty for training (ADT) only are not eligible for the AOR examination unless they have a VA adjudicated service-connected disability or condition.

b. If you are veteran who has had exposure to Agent Orange, you are eligible for a free Agent Orange Registry examination. Veterans who participate in the registry program are asked a series of questions about their possible exposure to herbicides. A medical history is taken, a physical examination is performed, and a series of basic laboratory tests, such as a chest x-ray (if appropriate), urinalysis, and blood tests are done. If the examining physician thinks it is medically indicated, consultations with other physicians are scheduled.

c. Results of the examinations, including a review of military service and exposure history, are entered into special, computerized databases called registries. These databases assist the VA in analyzing the types of health conditions being reported by veterans. Registry participants are advised of the results of their examinations in personal consultations. Veterans wishing to participate should contact the nearest VA health care facility for an examination. Additionally, the VA has established an Agent Orange Helpline at 1-800-749-8387. As with the Korean veterans (1968-1969), **the VA currently will only provide Agent Orange Registry examinations to those veterans who were in CFB Gagetown during 1966-1967 and are exhibiting symptoms of one of the Agent Orange presumptive illnesses.**

d. National Guard personnel who served in Vietnam and CFB Gagetown and have not participated in the Agent Orange Registry examination should request the examination for their Vietnam service as this provides a broader period of eligibility and the presumption of exposure to Agent Orange.

4. Filing a claim with the VA for exposure to Agent Orange:

a. The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) currently offers service-connected compensation for certain diseases believed to be associated with Agent Orange exposure. The following conditions are now presumptively recognized for service-connection for Vietnam veterans and other veterans based on exposure to Agent Orange or other herbicides: **chloracne** (a skin disorder); **porphyria cutanea tarda**, acute or subacute; transient **peripheral neuropathy** (a nerve disorder); **Type 2 diabetes**; **non-Hodgkin's lymphoma**; **chronic lymphocytic leukemia; soft tissue sarcoma**; **Hodgkin's disease**; **multiple myeloma**; **prostate cancer**; and **respiratory cancers** (including cancers of the lung, larynx, trachea, and bronchus). In addition, Vietnam veterans' children with the birth defect spina bifida are eligible for certain benefits and services. Spina bifida benefits are also provided to

the children of veterans who served at or near the Korean DMZ from April 1968 to July 1969. In 1999, the VA announced that statutory authority would be sought for similar benefits and services for children with birth defects who were born to women Vietnam veterans.

b. If an individual who trained in CFB Gagetown suffers from one of the above presumptive illnesses attributed to Agent Orange, he/she should file a claim with the VA. A veteran who served in Vietnam (boots on the ground) is presumed to have been exposed to Agent Orange because of the large volume and the widespread use of Agent Orange in Vietnam. **Individuals who trained at CFB Gagetown <u>will not</u> have the same presumption of exposure given to Vietnam Veterans due to the limited use of Agent Orange at CFB Gagetown.** National Guardsmen and women will have to provide credible evidence that they were in Gagetown and in the area where Agent Orange was used. Surviving spouses and/or children of National Guard members who trained at CFB Gagetown and died of one of the presumptive illnesses can also file a claim with the VA.

c. Current and former **<u>Maine</u>** National Guard members can get copies of their orders showing duty at CFB Gagetown from the Maine National Guard Records Holding Facility at Camp Keyes. We recommend that anyone having a computer request their records by email at the following address: RECORDS@ME.NGB.ARMY.MIL. The subject line should include: CFB Gagetown Records. **<u>All</u> requests will require the completion and submission of the Maine National Guard Request For Information Disclosure Form prior to the information being released.** The form can be mailed or faxed to Camp Keyes. The request should be processed within 30 days of receipt depending on the volume of requests for records.

5. Where to get help in filing a claim with the Department of Veterans Affairs or information on Agent Orange/Agent Purple:

a. Maine Veterans' Services (MVS): MVS has offices in seven locations throughout the state staffed by Veterans Advocates that are familiar with Agent Orange issues and are ready to assist Maine's National Guard member's with claims assistance.

(1)	Bangor	(207) 941-3005
(2)	Caribou	(207) 492-1173
(3)	Lewiston	(207) 783-5306
(4)	Machias	(207) 255-3306
(5)	Springvale	(207) 324-1839
(6)	Waterville	(207) 872-7846
(7)	Togus	(207) 623-5732

b. Veteran Service Organizations: The following service organizations have service officers familiar with Agent Orange issues and are ready to assist in the claims process.

(1)	American Legion	(207) 623-5726	Togus Office
(2)	Disabled American Veterans	(207) 623-5725	Togus Office
(3)	Veterans of Foreign Wars	(207) 623-5723	Togus Office

c. The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA): A veteran can get an Agent Orange Registry examination by calling the VA 1-877-421-8263, ext 4733. If the veteran wishes to file a

claim with the VA themselves they can do that by visiting the VA website: http://www1.va.gov/agentorange/ or calling 1-800-827-1000. The VA stands ready to assist any veteran who wishes to file a claim for service-connected injuries/illnesses.

6. VA Health Care for exposure to Agent Orange:

a. The VA provides treatment to any veteran who, while serving in Vietnam or other approved areas, may have been exposed to dioxin or to a toxic substance in a herbicide or defoliant used for military purposes, for conditions related to such exposure.

b. There are some restrictions. VA cannot provide such care for (1) a disability which VA determines did **not** result from exposure to Agent Orange, or (2) a disease which the National Academy of Sciences has determined that there is "limited/suggestive" evidence of **no** association between occurrence of the disease and exposure to a herbicide agent.

7. Future updates: There has been much speculation about other spraying periods of Agent Orange and/or other dioxins at CFB Gagetown. As new and substantiated information becomes available we will update the information on our websites and provide that information to the individuals on our contact list.

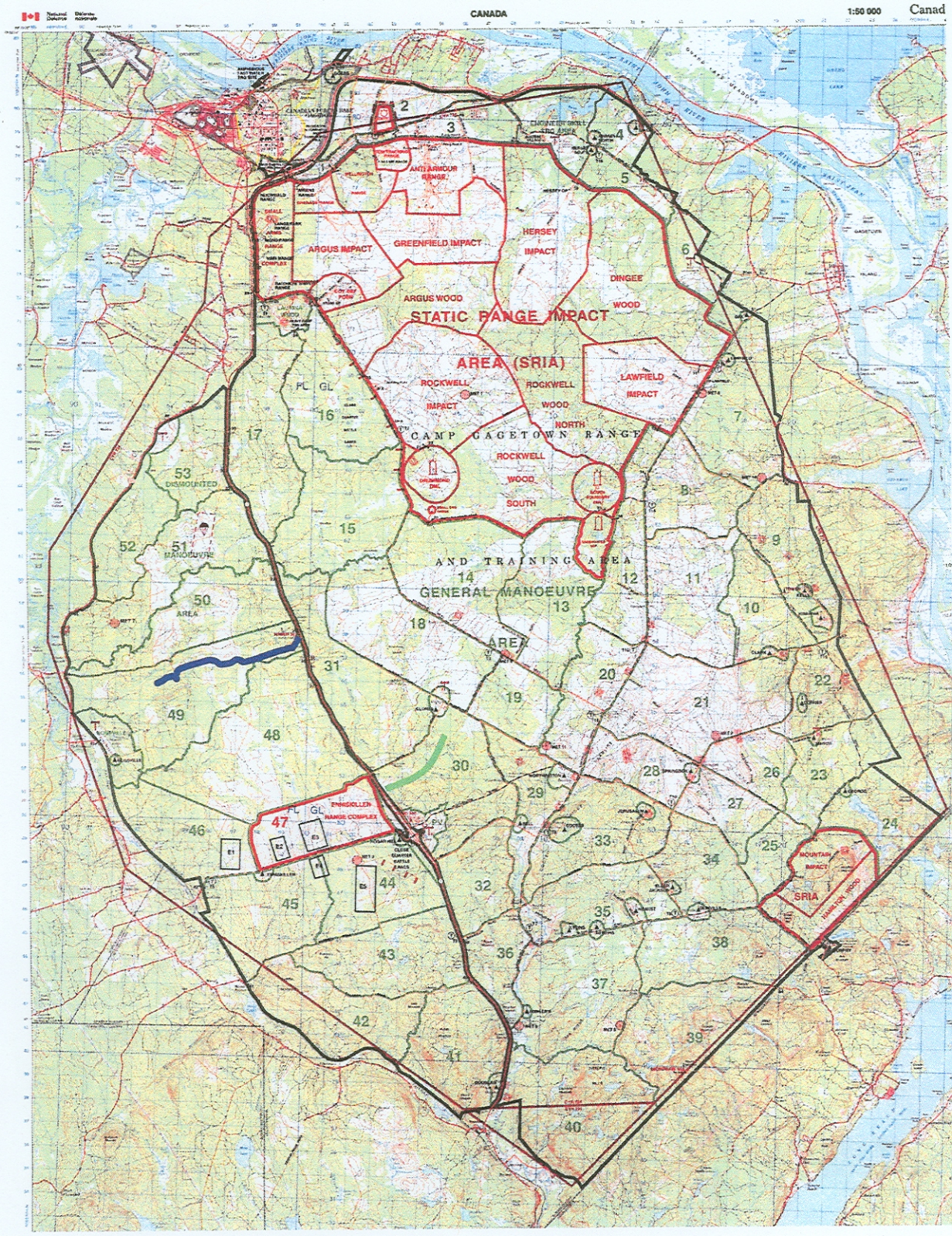
8. Questions concerning this information paper should be directed to the undersigned at (207) 626-4464.

Peter W. Ogden
Director

Enclosures:
1- CFB Gagetown Map
2- Maine National Guard Request For Information Disclosure

Gagetown Range and Training Area

Champ de tir et centre d'instruction militaire de Gagetown



Legend / Légende

Testing area in 1966 / Zone d'expérimentation en 1966

Testing area in 1967 / Zone d'expérimentation en 1967

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE,
VETERANS AND EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT
Military Bureau
JFHQ Maine National Guard
Camp Keyes, Augusta, Maine 04333-0033

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION DISCLOSURE

PLEASE PROVIDE THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION SO THAT WE MAY FACILITATE PROCESSING YOUR REQUEST:

LAST NAME: _____FIRST NAME: _____MI: _____

SSN: _____SVC#: _____DOB: _____

DISCHARGE DATE: _____RANK: _____PHONE#: _____

UNIT: _____REQUESTORS NAME: _____

HOME ADDRESS: _____

CITY/STATE/ZIP: _____

INFORMATION NEEDED: DD214 _____ NGB FM22 _____ NGBFM23_____

MEDICAL RECORDS_____ IMMUNIZATIONS_____

OTHER: _____

THIS INFORMATION IS NEEDED FOR: _____

"THE PRIVACY ACT OF 1974 (5 USC 552a) REQUIRES THAT WE OBTAIN YOUR WRITTEN CONSENT PRIOR TO DISCLOSURE OF THE REQUESTED INFORMATION"

I CONSENT TO THE REQUESTED DISCLOSURE: _____
(YOUR SIGNATURE /DATE REQUIRED HERE)

DO NOT FILL OUT BELOW THIS LINE-OFFICE USE ONLY

REQUEST FILLED ON: DATE: _____BY:_____

RETURN COMPLETED FORM TO:

DEPT OF DEFENSE,
VETERANS AND EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT
Military Bureau, ATTN: HELPDESK ME
JFHQ MENG
Camp Keyes, Augusta, Maine 04333-0033

CONTACT INFORMATION:

EMAIL: RECORDS@ME.NGB.ARMY.MIL
TELEPHONE: (207) 626-HELP (4357

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