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Top Story

Corrosion Office Studies Impact of Material Degradation on Facilities

Defense Committees Request Evaluation and Report in 2012

By Cynthia Greenwood

Four congressional defense committees want to understand how material degradation affects American military installations and their supporting infrastructure. So they have requested that the director of the Corrosion Policy and Oversight Office evaluate the cost of such degradation, as well as the technology, military requirements, and acquisition and sustainment processes that are brought to bear on mitigating corrosion within Department of Defense (DoD) facilities.



Congress has asked a Corrosion Office team to evaluate 18 installations nationwide that contain facilities similar to this Army repair depot in Corpus Christi. Here, soldiers and a crew conduct a pre-flight inspection of a Black Hawk helicopter before it leaves Corpus Christi Army Depot. Photo by Jaclyn Nix.

To conduct the evaluation, a team of experts will visit 18 installations in 10 different locations, which represent all environmental zones where existing DoD facilities are found. The locations will extend from the Gulf coast to Alaska, and as far west as Guam.

“We’re putting a road map together to investigate how we plan for the degradation of our facilities so we can better understand the process,” said Daniel J. Dunmire, director of the Corrosion Policy and Oversight Office. “The 18 installations will represent all military departments and will also encompass how corrosion planning is incorporated into facility design. As we look at how corrosion is impacting facilities and infrastructure, we’ll be gathering anecdotal data that provides a case study.”

The Corrosion Office and a team of experts will conduct the study under the aegis of Frank Kendall, acting under secretary of defense for Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics. Kendall’s office will approve a team of experts in coatings, cathodic protection, civil engineering, and other corrosion mitigation processes.

To meet the objectives requested by Congress, the Corrosion Office team plans to:

- Summarize the maintenance and facility engineering processes, policies, and procedures related to corrosion, fatigue, and wear used by each military department in developing and sustaining infrastructure.
- Identify key material degradation cost drivers associated with U.S. infrastructure, and identify strategies for enhancing sustainability.
- Review a sampling of bases and repair depots that represent all facility types and ages under the Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marine Corps.
- Assess at least one facility’s construction program in the planning stages.

“Because of the vast number and type of military facilities and their decentralized execution, this study will adopt a case-study approach and be more anecdotal than our [evaluation of corrosion on the F-22 and F-35 aircraft in 2010](#),” Dunmire said.

The House Armed Services Committee has requested a report on the Corrosion Office’s findings around late October, to comply with the 300-day deadline expressed in the fiscal year 2012 National Defense Authorization Act. Sixty days after the Corrosion Office submits its report, the Comptroller General will assess the report for the House and Senate Armed Services Committees and the Defense subcommittees under the House and Senate Appropriations Committees.



During 2012, the corrosion evaluation team will visit sites similar to this corrosion rehabilitation facility at Camp Kinser, Okinawa. The facility includes four double bays for performing vehicle body work. Photo courtesy of Marine Corps Corrosion Prevention and Control Program.