**Chemical Weapons Convention**

**Performing Organization:**
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Chemical Weapons Convention

Overview

On April 29, 1997, the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling, and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction, known as the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC), entered into force. At that time, the United States and 86 other nations became the first countries to sign and ratify the CWC. In doing so, the United States agreed to destroy all their chemical weapons and former chemical weapons production facilities and to abide by prohibitions from development, use, production and acquisition of chemical weapons. Today, more than 170 nations have ratified the CWC.

Since entry into force of the CWC, the United States has destroyed more than 1.4 million munitions and more than 10,000 metric tons of chemical agent, representing more than 35 percent of its chemical weapons stockpile. The United States has also destroyed all of its unfilled munitions and binary projectiles and 12 of 14 former chemical weapons production facilities in compliance with CWC deadlines.

The U.S. Army Chemical Materials Agency (CMA) is responsible for safely destroying the majority of the remaining U.S. chemical weapons and related materials that are the legacy of our nation’s past chemical weapons production. Additional responsibility for destroying U.S. chemical weapons stored at Army installations in Kentucky and Colorado falls under the U.S. Department of Defense’s Assembled Chemical Weapons Alternatives Program.

Achievements

In December 2000, CMA destroyed the last of the chemical weapons stored on Johnston Island in the Pacific Ocean using the world’s first full-scale chemical weapons disposal facility. In March 2006, CMA completed destruction of the mustard stockpile stored at the Edgewood Area of Aberdeen Proving Ground, Maryland. CMA also operates disposal facilities at Anniston Army Depot, Alabama; Pine Bluff Arsenal, Arkansas; Newport Chemical Depot, Indiana; Deseret Chemical Depot, Utah; and Umatilla Chemical Depot, Oregon.

CMA continues destroying items from the five categories of “non-stockpile” chemical warfare materiel—chemical weapons program items outside of the U.S. unitary weapons stockpile. Non-stockpile materiel encompasses binary chemical warfare materiel, U.S. former chemical weapons production facilities, miscellaneous chemical warfare materiel, buried chemical warfare materiel and recovered chemical warfare materiel (typically samples).

To date, CMA destroyed all of the former U.S. chemical weapons production facilities in time...
to meet the 100 percent production capacity deadline of April 29, 2007. CMA is also on schedule to complete destruction of the remaining binary precursor chemicals by December 2007.

**Challenges**

The CWC requires participating countries to destroy 100 percent of their chemical weapons stockpiles within 10 years, or by April 29, 2007, for original signatories. The CWC also sets intermediate stockpile destruction deadlines, including 1 percent destroyed by April 2000, 20 percent by April 2002 and 45 percent by April 2004. The United States has met both the 1 percent and 20 percent deadlines and was granted an extension of the 45 percent destruction deadline until December 2007. The United States met the 45 percent milestone in June 2007.

In April 2006, the United States requested a five-year extension allowed by the treaty for 100 percent stockpile destruction. The request was granted by the OPCW in December 2006. The extension gives the United States until April 29, 2012, to destroy its stockpile. However, in its extension request letter, the United States notified the OPCW that it does not currently forecast 100 percent destruction by the new deadline but remains committed to the accord and will complete its stockpile destruction under international observation as quickly as possible.

Several factors contributed to the extension request:

- delays in obtaining environmental permits for disposal facilities
- lower than estimated destruction processing rates
- work stoppages to investigate and resolve problems
- development of protocols to improve operational safety
- deteriorating munitions requiring special handling
- conduct of maintenance activities requiring more down time than originally projected
- facility start-up delays caused by additional community emergency preparedness requirements

The United States and CMA will continue to destroy U.S. chemical weapons safely, expeditiously and in full compliance with the treaty.

**Additional resources**

For more information on CMA and its role in safely storing and destroying U.S. chemical materials, please visit [www.cma.army.mil](http://www.cma.army.mil). Detailed CWC and OPCW information can be found at [www.opcw.org](http://www.opcw.org).

### Meeting Chemical Weapons Convention Destruction Deadlines

*The CWC sets weapons destruction requirements with accompanying deadlines for each category of chemical weapons. This table shows the destruction requirements and deadlines that apply to the United States and the status of the U.S. effort to meet them.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DESTRUCTION REQUIREMENT</th>
<th>DEADLINE</th>
<th>U.S. STATUS</th>
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<tr>
<td>1 percent destruction of Category 1 chemical weapons</td>
<td>April 2000</td>
<td>Met deadline in September 1997</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 percent destruction of Category 1 chemical weapons</td>
<td>April 2002</td>
<td>Met deadline in July 2001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45 percent destruction of Category 1 chemical weapons</td>
<td>Originally April 2004, extended to December 2007</td>
<td>Met deadline in June 2007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100 percent destruction of Category 1 chemical weapons</td>
<td>Originally April 2007, extended to April 2012</td>
<td>OPCW granted extension on 8 December 2006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80 percent destruction of chemical weapons production capacity</td>
<td>April 2005</td>
<td>Met deadline in December 2003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100 percent destruction of chemical weapons production capacity</td>
<td>April 2007</td>
<td>Met deadline in December 2006</td>
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<tr>
<td>100 percent destruction of Category 3 chemical weapons</td>
<td>April 2002</td>
<td>Met deadline in March 2002</td>
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