

InterAction Collaboration Peer Review at TRIUMF Laboratory

Subcommittee on Community Relations

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February 4, 2009



Findings

- TRIUMF has a stated commitment to earn the trust and support of the neighboring community.
- TRIUMF has carried out a number of outreach programs aimed specifically at the neighboring community.
- TRIUMF has generally good relationships with institutional neighbors UBC, NRC Institute, Caprican.
- TRIUMF has many near neighbors, including thousands of new homeowners in close proximity to the laboratory.

Findings

- TRIUMF has produced FAQ's for neighbors on the Web site and has created fact sheets for neighbors.
- TRIUMF has many real or perceived environmental hazards.
 - High-power beams (a “hot” cyclotron)
 - Rad waste storage and transport
 - Activated components
 - Toxic waste
 - Discharges of activated fluids and gases
 - The rabbit line for delivering medical isotopes
- TRIUMF has no risk communication plan.

Comments

- TRIUMF's commitment to earn the trust and support of neighbors, and outreach efforts to date, are commendable.
- The changing community demographics combined with the real or perceived hazards pose a significant risk to TRIUMF and to the achievement of the Five-Year Plan. One reviewer called the situation “a ticking time bomb.”

Comments

- At the same time, these conditions present an excellent opportunity to address the risks and create a strong local foundation for the laboratory's future.
- The FAQs for neighbors are hard to find on the web. The printed fact sheets for neighbors are hard to read, uninviting and in some cases misleading.

Recommendations

- As soon as practicable, TRIUMF should form a Community Task Force of limited duration with the charge to make recommendations to laboratory management on public participation at the laboratory. Ask the neighbors what kind of involvement they would like.
 - How would the community like to interact with the laboratory when issues arise that affect both the lab and the neighbors?
 - What issues are important to neighbors?
 - What risk communication plan would the neighbors like to see?
 - Should the laboratory form a permanent Citizens' Advisory Board?
 - What kinds of communication are effective in reaching the local community?
 - More...

Recommendations

- TRIUMF should invest in the highest quality professional help in conceiving, planning, convening and carrying out the Community Task Force. This is not a do-it-yourself activity.
- Bringing the public into the decision-making process will result in better decisions for the laboratory.
- To the extent possible, TRIUMF should incorporate the recommendations of the Task Force into the laboratory's public participation policy.
- TRIUMF should partner with neighboring institutions in this process, but it should not wait for them. This is an opportunity for TRIUMF to provide leadership for the benefit of all.