OVERVIEW OF THE PRINCIPAL ISSUES AND THEMES

The United States and Mexico recognize the need for close cooperation in preparing for and preventing hazardous substance incidents in border cities. Before the *La Paz Agreement* was signed, various border communities had established the foundation for contingency planning and response to emergencies that threaten human life and the environment.[1] Annex II of the *La Paz Agreement* reinforces those efforts and establishes a mechanism for planning and responding to hazardous substance incidents in the border area, with the support of federal authorities of both countries. Annex II of the *La Paz Agreement* also provided for the establishment of a Joint Response Team (JRT). The JRT includes representatives from all federal agencies responsible for chemical emergency prevention, preparedness, and response, as well as state and local officials. Annex II further required that the JRT develop a Joint Contingency Plan (JCP) that would establish cooperative measures for responding effectively to hazardous substance incidents along the inland border.

Contingency Planning and Emergency Response

The Contingency Planning and Emergency Response (CPER) Workgroup, otherwise known as the JRT, was created to execute the provisions of Annex II of the *La Paz Agreement*. The workgroup focuses its efforts on two main goals:

- Increase the preparation and response capacity for hazardous substances incidents at the local and municipal levels.
- Implement the JCP to optimize the notification systems and the use of resources from the United States and Mexico.

These two goals demonstrate how the workgroup assists federal, state, and local officials in responding with greater effectiveness to environmental emergencies and ensuring the safety of the population and the protection of the environment.

Co-chaired in the United States by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and in Mexico by the *Procuraduría Federal de Protección al Ambiente* (PROFEPA, or Federal Attorney General for Environmental Protection), the JRT develops and implements policies, protocols, and programs to implement the JCP. The workgroup also participates in the diverse activities of emergency response planning, conferences, drills, and other training initiatives. In addition, the workgroup provides support to local communities for developing sister city contingency plans. The concept of sister city contingency plans was established in 1985 by the JRT. Recognizing that chemical emergencies affect the local community first, the JRT members agreed that subsequent planning efforts would be needed for the 28 sister cities—14 in Mexico and the adjacent 14 in the United States—that could be affected by a major hazardous substance release. The sister city contingency plan program was created to meet that need.

OBJECTIVES OF THE CPER WORKGROUP AND PROGRESS TOWARD GOALS

With the creation of the JRT and the development of Border XXI, a series of objectives was identified. The objectives were aimed at obtaining the participation of the three levels of government and of public and private organizations that respond to chemical emergencies in the entire border area. The objectives are listed in Table 5-1 on the following page.

Progress Toward Goals

Using the *1996 U.S.-Mexico Border XXI Program: Framework Document (Framework Document)* as the basis for its efforts, the workgroup has achieved a number of its objectives.

Annex II

A newly revised Annex II of the *La Paz Agreement* was signed on June 4, 1999 to allow cross-border response to hazardous

[1] The *Agreement Between the United States of America and the United Mexican States on Cooperation for the Protection and Improvement of the Environment in the Border Area* was signed in La Paz, Baja California Sur, Mexico on August 14, 1983, and entered into force on February 16, 1984.

Objectives[2]

- Implement and complete the following pending activities: JCP; emergency notification system; procedures for quick mobilization of transboundary emergency response personnel and equipment; and a pilot project with Computer-aided Management of Emergency Operations (CAMEO), a computer system jointly developed by the U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and EPA.
- Effectively implement the JCP on a regional level in the United States and on a state and local level in Mexico.
- Improve cross-border notification and communication at all levels to facilitate fast and effective responses to chemical emergencies and improve chemical emergency preparedness.
- Exercise and annually test the established procedures in the JCP for cross-border notification of chemical accidents.
- Work to remove impediments related to legal and political issues, as well as issues of liability associated with emergency response, including compensation from responsible parties.
- Promote the creation of and coordination among emergency response committees, including local emergency planning committees (LEPC) in the United States, Mexico's *comites locales para ayuda mutua* (CLAM, or local committees for mutual assistance), and binational emergency response committees, to foster ongoing planning and response awareness, including the development and implementation of sister city contingency plans.
- Improve chemical emergency preparedness and response capabilities in each sister city by providing technical assistance in identifying chemical risks and actions to take and to prepare for and respond to those risks.
- Integrate prevention of, preparedness for, and response to chemical accidents in sister city contingency plans and develop a strategy for training emergency response personnel and exercising sister city contingency plans.
- Encourage industrial facilities to make information about use and storage of chemicals and inventories available to local response officials and to provide response equipment and assistance in the event of a chemical emergency.
- Communicate with the public about chemical risk in the area to raise public awareness and to increase public participation in contingency planning.

The objectives listed above may have been paraphrased from the Framework Document. For a more detailed description of the objectives, please refer to that report.

The objectives described in this section may be referred to by number. The numbers are intended for ease of reference only and do not imply order of importance.

Table 5-1

substances incidents. Before the adjustment to Annex II, cross-border joint responses were not permitted. The revised Annex II will allow one country, at the request of the other, to provide assistance and resources to mitigate the effects of a chemical accident in the border area.

U.S.-Mexico Joint Contingency Plan

The JRT has spent the past two years revising and modifying the U.S.-Mexico JCP to reflect the institutional and legislative changes that have occurred in both countries since the original JCP was signed on July 18, 1985. This new JCP was signed by environmental officials of both countries on June 4, 1999.

The revised JCP resulted in changes in the binational notification systems in both countries to ensure timely notification of the appropriate officials when a chemical accident occurs in the border area. In the United States, the current binational notification system was expanded to automatically send chemical substance incident reports by facsimile to all appropriate personnel and federal agencies to bring about the timely and necessary actions to respond to border chemical emergencies. In Mexico, the *Centro de Orientación para la Atención de Emergencias Ambientales* (Orientation Center for Response to Environmental Emergencies) has been established to facilitate the quick notification of all authorities located along the U.S.-Mexico border. The center is similar to the National Response Center (NRC) in the United States. The NRC, the U.S. national reporting center for chemical accidents, notifies appropriate officials of all reported chemical accidents, including those that occur in the U.S. border area.

To test the new JCP and the changes in the binational notification system, drills of the new procedures were held in each of the U.S. border states; between the cities of Nuevo Laredo, Tamaulipas and Laredo, Texas; and during several JRT meetings. The lessons learned are being incorporated into the planning of future drills, since it has been determined that the JRT should continually evaluate the binational notification systems at all levels.

Sister City Contingency Plans

Sister city contingency plans have been signed for six city pairs (Table 5-2 on the following page). The plans address international coordination requirements for responses to emergencies involving hazardous substances. They are the first step in developing an efficient, coordinated, standard emergency response to hazardous materials spills that affect both countries. Plans for the remaining sister cities along the border will be completed over the next several years.

[2] With respect to the objectives established by the workgroup in the *Framework Document*, the implementation of an emergency response center, the acquisition of mobile equipment units, and the establishment of a communication center in a sister city have not been made final because they require large resource commitments. These objectives have been modified to better reflect the future goals and direction of the workgroup. The modified objectives are focused more realistically on improving chemical safety in the border area than were the previous objectives.

Sister City Contingency Plans	
Sister City Pairs	**Signature Dates**
Brownsville, Texas and Matamoros, Tamaulipas	May 6, 1997
Eagle Pass, Texas and Piedras Negras, Coahuila	March 25, 1998
Laredo, Texas and Nuevo Laredo, Tamaulipas	December 21, 1998
San Luis, Arizona and San Luis Río Colorado, Sonora	February 25, 2000
McAllen, Texas and Reynosa, Tamaulipas	February 29, 2000
Nogales, Arizona and Nogales, Sonora	March 17, 2000

Table 5-2

While assisting sister city pairs in developing their contingency plans, the JRT identified the need to further research the problems associated with moving personnel and equipment across the border during an emergency response. The JRT established the Subworkgroup on Cross-Border Mobilization of Personnel and Equipment to evaluate the problem and propose possible solutions. The subworkgroup provided the following recommendations to the sister cities: (1) identify insurance needs and obtain appropriate insurance coverage for those organizations that respond to cross-border emergencies, (2) regularly review response procedures and requirements, (3) include local customs and immigration officials in the sister city planning group, (4) coordinate response procedures with border officials, and (5) clearly define the chain of command and exchange key information about responders. The final report of the subworkgroup, titled *Summary Report of the Cross-Border Workgroup*, can be accessed at *www.epa.gov/ceppo/ip-bopr.htm#mexico*.

In addition to the recommendations listed above, the subworkgroup also proposed several general recommendations to be implemented by the JRT. The actions taken in response to those recommendations are described below.

Contingency Planning and Emergency Response Web Site

A web site has been developed to provide information related to contingency planning and emergency response in the border area. Specifically, the web site includes the JCP, a semi-annual newsletter, reports from all workgroup meetings, recommendations from all subworkgroups, and workgroup environmental indicators and work plans. In addition, the web site provides links to other useful sources at the federal, state, and local levels, as well as a web-based electronic calender that can be used to publicize federal, state, and local events and activities related to chemical emergency preparedness and response along the border. The site can be accessed at *www.epa.gov/ceppo/ip-bopr.htm*.

U.S.-Mexico Border Contingency Planning Activities

Twice a year, EPA publishes the *Semiannual Report on United States-Mexico Border Contingency Planning Activities* to promote exchange of information and coordination among all appropriate officials and all agencies in the border area. The report consolidates information about U.S.-Mexico border joint response and contingency planning by EPA, border states, and sister cities. The report includes information about joint response planning meetings and meetings held to develop sister city plans and joint response exercises and training courses and to identify lessons learned from chemical and environmental emergencies.

Joint Response Team Compendium

The JRT has developed a compendium of laws, treaties, agreements, and other materials related to emergency response in the border region originating at the federal, state, and local levels in both the United States and Mexico. The document can be accessed at *www.epa.gov/ceppo/ip-bopr.htm#mexico*.

Further, as recommended by the Subworkgroup on Cross-Border Mobilization of Personnel and Equipment, the JRT summarized the functions, roles, and responsibilities of each of the key agencies represented on the JRT. The summary was included in the newly revised JCP.

Computer-Aided Management of Emergency Operations (CAMEO)

Recently, the Computer-aided Management of Emergency Operations (CAMEO) system was translated into Spanish for use in the border area. CAMEO is a system of software applications used widely to plan for and respond to chemical emergencies. The system can access, store, and evaluate information critical in developing emergency plans. CAMEO integrates a chemical data base with (1) a method of managing the data; (2) an air dispersion model; and (3) a mapping capability. All modules work interactively to share and display critical information in a timely fashion. This system is a very useful tool for planning and is especially useful for managing information related to chemical substances originating from industrial facilities and transportation corridors. CAMEO train-

ing sessions in English and Spanish have been held, and more training sessions are planned for the coming year.

Sister City Assistance

PROFEPA has conducted a study titled Resource Inventories for Emergency Response in Mexican Sister Cities. The study identifies emergency response resources throughout the Mexican border area, including the states of Baja California, Sonora, Chihuahua, Coahuila, Nuevo León, and Tamaulipas. The types of emergency response resources highlighted in the study include: civil protection agencies, fire stations, Red Cross organizations, local emergency response groups, hospitals, clinics, local government response agencies, and private companies that have response capabilities. The organizations were referenced in a geographic information system (GIS), which will be used by sister cities to develop their sister city contingency plans. General information included in the study can be found in the environmental indicators section below.

Transportation commodity flow studies have been completed at various border crossings to provide information about transboundary shipments of hazardous material, hazardous waste, and other dangerous materials. The studies include weighing and physical inspection of trucks (including tires, leaks, license, insurance, and placards). Compliance with all U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) regulations was also checked. The studies provide valuable information about the occurrence and transportation patterns of hazardous materials within border communities. The information is being used by LEPCs and CLAMs in the development of sister city plans to guide response actions in the event of an international incident.

Studies have been completed in Brownsville, Texas-Matamoros, Tamaulipas; McAllen, Texas-Reynosa, Tamaulipas; Laredo, Texas-Nuevo Laredo, Tamaulipas; Del Rio, Texas-Ciudad Acuña, Coahuila; El Paso, Texas-Ciudad Juárez, Chihuahua; the crossing at Santa Teresa, New Mexico, and Interstate (I-) highways I-10 and I-25, including the city of Las Cruces, New Mexico. The implementation of the studies was coordinated with the U.S. Customs Service, DOT, and the Departments of Safety of Texas and New Mexico. The information also served as a foundation for conducting international exercises along the border in Brownsville-Matamoros, McAllen-Reynosa, Laredo-Nuevo Laredo, and El Paso-Ciudad Juárez. Future studies are planned in light of the construction of new bridges at Los Tomates, Tamaulipas-Brownsville; Los Indios, Tamaulipas-Harlingen, Texas; Solidarity; and Columbia and the completion of the new bridge at Eagle Pass, Texas-Piedras Negras, Coahuila.

In 1997, San Diego County was awarded a Border XXI Community Grant in the amount of $39,420 to fund a hazardous waste response project. The project, which was administered by the San Diego Department of Environmental Health, aimed to increase cross-border interagency coordination for chemical spills and related emergencies. It provided training specific to firefighters and first responders on how to proceed when addressing chemical emergencies at the border. The training seminars, conducted in various cities in Baja California, were designed for four categories of people who play roles in responding to chemical spills and emergencies (Table 5-3). The overall success of the project has prompted the Department of Environmental Health to translate the training manuals into Spanish and to tailor courses to the environmental health laws of Baja California.

Emergency Response Training Seminars
(Chemical Spills)

Cities	Total Number of Participants	Course Name
Mexicali and Tijuana	145	First Responder Awareness
Ensenada, Tecate, and Tijuana	138	First Responder Operations
Ensenada, Mexicali, and Tijuana	108	Emergency Management
Mexicali and Tijuana	55	Incident Commander

Table 5-3

To assist sister cities in risk management planning and prevention efforts, risk management plan (RMP) training was conducted through bilingual workshops to familiarize facility workers and preparedness and response personnel with EPA's Clean Air Act Amendments, Section 112(r). The workshops were held in Brownsville, El Paso, Laredo, Del Rio, and McAllen. The bilingual seminars assisted local officials and managers of manufacturing, production, and water treatment facilities; propane dealers; ammonia dealers; and personnel of other facilities in preparing RMPs to reduce the likelihood and severity of accidental chemical releases that could cause harm to border residents and the environment.

EPA has provided grants to sister cities for sister city plan development and emergency response preparedness. The grants also identify specific equipment to be lent to the key

hazardous materials (HAZMAT) planners and responders in Mexico so that communication between the sister cities can be exercised and improved. EPA has arranged for grant funding to the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality to support that agency's border planning and response activities and arrange for HAZMAT training in sister cities and to the California Department of Toxic Substances Control for emergency response equipment in the border city of Calexico.

Types of Environmental Indicators

P	PRESSURE: ACTIONS OR ACTIVITIES THAT INDUCE PRESSURE ON THE ENVIRONMENT
S	STATE: ENVIRONMENTAL AND NATURAL RESOURCE QUALITY AND QUANTITY
R	RESPONSE: ACTIONS TAKEN TO RESPOND TO ENVIRONMENTAL AND NATURAL RESOURCE PRESSURES

ENVIRONMENTAL INDICATORS

The fundamental purpose of the CPER Workgroup is to increase municipal and local capacity to prepare for and respond to hazardous material emergencies and optimize the use of U.S. and Mexican resources. The environmental indicators discussed below describe the initial steps the workgroup is taking to measure the progress and success of its efforts. The workgroup is further refining and revising the indicators to better reflect improvements in chemical safety,

R NUMBER AND LOCATION OF FACILITIES IN THE BORDER AREA POSING RISK THAT HAVE COORDINATED EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLANS

Facilities that use or produce hazardous chemicals run the risk of chemical accidents that could affect nearby communities. These facilities, therefore, are the first line of defense in mitigating the effects of a chemical accident, should one occur. An emergency response plan provides communities with initial protection from the effects of a chemical accident.

The Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990 require facilities that pose hazardous materials risks to develop RMPs and submit them to EPA. The plans will be placed in a computer data base that the public can access and will include information about the amount and location of hazardous chemicals at the facility, a history of the chemical accidents that have occurred at the facility in the past five years, and a description of the worst-case accident that could occur at the facility. In addition, Mexico is developing a data base of information about industries that pose a chemical risk to the local community. The information can also be included in the CAMEO system in sister cities.

This indicator covers those sectors that distribute or store liquid petroleum gas or that generate or produce (as a product or by-product), process, or refine any of the following: electricity, chemicals, metallic and non-metallic minerals, vegetables, wood products or wood derivatives, food, or textiles. Tables 5-4 and 5-5 list for the United States and Mexico,

City and State	Number of Facilities		Number of Facilities with RMPs
	1998	1999	1999
Brownsville, Texas	40	45	5
Calexico, California	7	7	x
Columbus, New Mexico	-	-	x
Del Rio, Texas	5	5	x
Douglas, Arizona	3	3	x
Eagle Pass, Texas	3	4	1
El Paso, Texas	25	42	21
Laredo, Texas	8	14	9
McAllen, Texas	46	47	5
Naco, Arizona	-	-	x
Nogales, Arizona	7	6	x
Presidio, Texas	1	1	x
San Diego, California	31	37	6
San Luis, Arizona	-	-	-

- No facilities are present in those cities.
x No RMPs were submitted in those cities.
~ Information is currently being collected.
Further research and analyses are being completed on the RMP data, and a more in-depth report will be available soon.

Table 5-4

The following information pertains to Mexico:

State	Facilities Posing Risk That Have Emergency Response Plans in Place
Baja California	7
Chihuahua	2
Coahuila	1
Nuevo León	0
Sonora	2
Tamaulipas	6
Total	**18**

Table 5-5

R **NUMBER OF ORGANIZATIONS CAPABLE OF RESPONDING TO CHEMICAL EMERGENCIES ALONG THE BORDER BY STATE AND LOCALITY OR MUNICIPALITY**

When local communities lack the capability to respond to chemical accidents, state or federal responders must deploy to such accidents, resulting in potential delays in mitigating the incidents and preventing additional harm to the community and the environment.

The workgroup is collaborating with sister cities to identify resource needs (for example, equipment, personnel, and funding) and chemical risks. Using the information gathered, the workgroup will help determine additional needs. Provided below is information about the number of organizations that will be able to help respond in an emergency.

The information is gathered from a study titled *Resource Inventories for Emergency Response in Mexican Sister Cities*. The study identifies emergency response resources available throughout the Mexican border area (Table 5-6).

State	Organizations That Provide Assistance During Emergencies
Baja California	67
Chihuahua	44
Coahuila	30
Nuevo León	0
Sonora	72
Tamaulipas	53
Total	**266**

Table 5-6

The types of emergency response resources highlighted in this study include civil protection agencies, fire stations, Red Cross organizations, local emergency response groups, hospitals, clinics, local government response agencies, and private companies having response capabilities.

Table 5-7 provides information about the emergency response resources of U.S. sister cities. Table 5-8 on the following page provides a breakdown of information by Mexican sister cities and organizations.

State/City	Fire Stations	HAZMAT Teams	Ambulances	American Red Cross	Hospitals/Clinics	Total
Texas						
Brownsville	8	1	1	1	3	14
McAllen	6	1	7	1	4	19
Laredo	10	3	4	1	3	21
Eagle Pass	2	1	1	0	2	6
Del Rio	3	1	1	1	1	7
Presidio	1	0	1	0	0	2
El Paso	27	1	3	1	13	45
Totals	**57**	**8**	**18**	**5**	**26**	**114**
New Mexico						
Columbus	1	0	0	0	3	4
Arizona						
Accurate, comprehensive information about the emergency response resources in Arizona currently is being compiled.						
California						
Accurate, comprehensive information about the emergency response resources in California currently is being compiled.						

Table 5-7

State/ Municipality	Civil Protection and Fire Stations	Mexican Red Cross	Local Emergency Response Groups	Hospitals and Clinics	Local Government Response Agencies	Private Companies Having Response Capabilities
Baja California - 67 Response Organizations						
Ensenada	5	0	0	2	2	0
Mexicali	21	1	2	1	5	2
Rosario	1	1	0	0	0	0
Tecate	0	1	0	2	1	1
Tijuana	9	1	4	1	2	2
Chihuahua - 44 Response Organizations						
Ciudad Juárez	9	1	1	8	13	3
Praxedis el Porvenir	0	0	0	1	0	0
Puerto Palomas	1	0	0	1	1	0
Ojinaga	1	1	1	2	0	0
Coahuila - 30 Response Organizations						
Ciudad Acuña	2	1	3	7	3	0
Piedras Negras	3	1	0	6	4	0
Nuevo León - 0 Response Organizations						
Colombia	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sonora - 72 Response Organizations						
Agua Prieta	2	1	3	3	3	0
Cananea	3	1	3	6	3	0
Imuris	0	1	0	0	2	0
Magdalena de Kino	1	1	0	3	3	0
Naco	2	0	0	1	0	0
Nogales	2	1	5	3	3	0
San Luis Río Colorado	3	1	1	2	4	0
Sonora	2	1	2	0	0	0
Tamaulipas - 53 Response Organizations						
Matamoros	2	1	0	4	7	2
Miguel Alemán	1	1	0	2	0	0
Nuevo Laredo	2	2	0	5	4	1
Reynosa	2	1	1	5	4	6

Table 5-8

R NUMBER OF SISTER CITIES THAT HAVE CONTINGENCY PLANS

Sister cities must be prepared to respond quickly and effectively when a chemical accident occurs to mitigate devastating human health and environmental effects. Although the cities are in different countries, they share a common border and therefore must work together to combine their resources and protect their communities from the risks associated with chemical accidents. The sister city contingency plan prepares sister cities for such accidents and helps them to identify ways to reduce risks and prevent chemical accidents.

A sister city contingency plan is a document that describes the organization of available actions, people, services, and resources for response during a disaster. The plan is based on risk identification, available human and material resources, the level of community preparedness, and local response capabilities. It also establishes the hierarchical and functional structure of the authorities and organizations working during the emergency in the context of the relationship between two border cities. Emergency planners and responders can take preventive measures to reduce risks posed by the hazards identified in their plans. To date, six sister city contingency plans have been developed (Table 5-9).

Sister Cities That Have Contingency Plans
Brownsville, Texas-Matamoros, Tamaulipas
Eagle Pass, Texas-Piedras Negras, Coahuila
Laredo, Texas-Nuevo Laredo, Tamaulipas
Nogales, Arizona-Nogales, Sonora
San Luis, Arizona-San Luis Río Colorado, Sonora
McAllen, Texas-Reynosa, Tamaulipas
Sister Cities That Are Developing Contingency Plans
Del Rio, Texas-Ciudad Acuña, Coahuila
El Paso, Texas-Ciudad Juárez, Chihuahua

Table 5-9

S **NUMBER OF BORDER AREA ACCIDENTS OF RECORD PER YEAR, CLASSIFIED BY TYPE, FREQUENCY, AND HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCE**

The types of accidents that will be measured by this indicator include any dangerous event that (1) occurs as a result of the handling of hazardous substances, such as spills, leaks, fires, or explosions; and (2) causes temporary or permanent damage to the environment, human health, or property. In the United States, the information is captured on the Emergency Response Notification System (ERNS), which records the type and quantity of the chemical involved; the date, time, and location of the accident; the date and time of the response efforts; and the type of response and mitigation effort.

ERNS is a comprehensive database of oil spill and hazardous substance release reports. It should be noted, however, that the ERNS database contains information about all accidents that have been reported in the sister cities, regardless of the nature or quantity of the substance released. Some releases may be very small or may involve relatively benign chemicals and therefore pose little risk to the border area. In addition, there may be a number of notifications for some releases because data are gathered from many sources. Therefore, the actual number of releases is likely lower than the raw data indicate. To date, none of the incidents has posed an extensive transboundary risk that required the activation of the JCP. The JRT currently is analyzing and evaluating this information to include only chemical accidents pertinent to this indicator. Table 5-10 lists the number of accidents in ERNS for U.S. sister cities (1996 through 1998 data).

Since 1996, PROFEPA has relied on a registry that records the number of accidents per year along the Mexican border that require attention and classifies the accidents by type, frequency, and substance. Table 5-11 lists the accidents recorded in that registry (1996 through 1998 data).

Number of Chemical Accidents in ERNS for U.S. Sister Cities per Year

State/City	Number of Accidents		
	1996	1997	1998
California			
Calexico	*	*	*
San Diego	*	*	*
Arizona			
Douglas	-	-	-
Naco	-	-	-
Nogales	-	*	-
San Luis	-	*	*
New Mexico			
Columbus	-	-	-
Texas			
Brownsville	10	28	18
Del Rio	-	-	1
Eagle Pass	1	-	-
El Paso	14	33	48
Laredo	9	9	9
McAllen	2	-	1
Presidio	2	-	-
Total	**38**	**70**	**77**

- No accidents have been reported.
* Information collected is inaccurate, and further analysis is required.
+ Information is being collected.

Table 5-10

Number of Chemical Accidents for Mexican Border States per Year

State	1996	1997	1998
Baja California	9	16	6
Chihuahua	8	7	3
Coahuila	1	7	1
Nuevo León	0	0	4
Sonora	7	6	8
Tamaulipas	6	3	2
Total	**31**	**39**	**24**

Table 5-11

The United States, through its National Response Center (NRC), manages a registry of emergencies that occur along its own border.

OTHER NOTABLE ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

The workgroup successfully completed the following activities:

- Promoted emergency preparedness in local border communities through a series of workshops in the border area.

- Conducted and distributed CAMEO training to the organizations in charge of emergency response from all the sister cities.
- Promoted the active participation of the border industrial sector in the various activities related to the workgroup.
- Promoted the development of sister city contingency plans and Binational Emergency Planning Committees.

FUTURE PERSPECTIVES

In the future, the workgroup will continue to focus on the following activities:

- Continue to promote the creation of local joint plans for the remaining sister city pairs.
- Periodically carry out binational notification exercises in the sister cities.
- Plan for emergency responses related to the transportation of hazardous substances along the border.
- Revise the environmental indicators as information is collected and analyzed.
- Better identify and prevent potential polluting incidents.
- Continue to increase the preparation and response capacity of local and municipal emergency responders.
- Improve communication from the workgroup to appropriate federal, state, and local officials on programming of events, sharing of experiences derived from drills conducted, and planning of efforts for emergency response.

Among the challenges that the workgroup faces in the coming years are:

- Increased chemical safety risks resulting from increased transportation, handling, and use of hazardous substances in the border area.
- Scarce resources in border cities to support the hiring, training, equipping, and retaining of emergency responders.