

Finding Of No Significant Impact
Environmental Assessment of New Mission Beddown and Construction
at Clear Air Force Station, Alaska

BACKGROUND

The Missile Defense Agency (MDA) and Air Force Space Command (AFSPC) prepared a joint environmental assessment (EA) of potential environmental impacts from conducting four inter-related projects. These projects bed down new mission requirements and upgrade the early warning radar (EWR) and associated facilities at the solid-state phased-array radar system (SSPARS) at Clear Air Force Station (AFS), AK. The proposed new diesel fuel storage facility is related to proposed actions in the 2002 *Supplemental Environmental Assessment, Coal-Fuel Heat and Power Plant Upgrade Backup Generators* prepared by the Air Force, which is incorporated by reference.

This EA was prepared in accordance with the:

- a. *National Environmental Policy Act* (NEPA) of 1969, as amended (42 United States Code [U.S.C] 4321 et seq.)
- b. President's Council on Environmental Quality regulations implementing NEPA (Code of Federal Regulations [CFR], Title 40, Parts 1500-1508), and
- c. Department of the Air Force Policy and Procedures (32 CFR 989), *Environmental Impact Analysis Process*

DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED ACTIONS

The proposed SSPARS facility upgrades are four construction projects in the SSPARS radar facility or in the immediate area.

- 1. EWR Upgrade:** MDA will upgrade the EWR by installing or upgrading equipment in the radar facility and on the roof. The AN/GSC-52B (V) 5 Earth Terminal (MET), comprised of antenna, radome, condenser, communications equipment and inter-connect facility, will be installed with some related structures and improvements. MDA will also install one 3-megawatt diesel-electric generator in the new emergency generator plant at the SSPARS facility. This makes a total of three 3-megawatt generators.
- 2. Enhanced Polar System (EPS) Beddown:** AFSPC will bed down, install and field an EPS gateway. Two gateway antenna towers and radomes will be built east of the radar facility. A third gateway tower, radome and pad could be added as backup. AFSPC will install one interim command and control antenna tower in the same area as the EPS and build an exterior shelter with an arctic vestibule.
- 3. New Diesel Fuel Storage Facility:** A new facility is required to support the emergency generator plant. The new system, four 60,000-gallon diesel fuel tanks, will fuel the diesel emergency backup power generators and the radar station's existing fire pumps.

4. Perimeter Fence Upgrade: For adequate security for the EWR upgrades, EPS beddown and new diesel fuel storage facility, we will expand the current security fence and upgrade it to a double fence with buried line sensors. We will build a new entry control point and parking area. We will move the existing drainage basin outside the new fence line.

ALTERNATIVES TO PROPOSED ACTION

Upgrade EWR Alternative Construction Worker Parking Area: The proposed EWR upgrade laydown area stays in the same location, but is reduced by about 1 acre. Construction worker parking would be located in several existing parking and newly built areas around the composite area. About 0.79 acres of extra parking spaces, with electrical outlets (head bolts) for engine heaters, would be built to meet parking demand.

Perimeter Fence Upgrade Alternative Parking Site: The perimeter fence and entry control point is built as in the proposed action. The parking lot, however, would be southeast of the radar facility, connecting to the access road leading to it. Building the parking lot at this site disturbs about 0.49 acres of previously disturbed land.

No-Action: Under the no-action alternative, the EWR upgrades, EPS beddown, new diesel fuel storage facility and perimeter fence upgrade do not occur. We identified no environmental impacts for this alternative.

SUMMARY OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

We evaluated each environmental resource for impact from implementing proposed actions and alternatives. We did not evaluate further the resources where impacts from proposed actions or alternatives would be negligible. A review of the analyses follows:

Air Resources: Proposed actions cause a *temporary* increase in pollutant emissions from the construction of new facilities (MET, EPS beddown, diesel fuel storage, and perimeter fence upgrade). Impacts to air quality would be neither significant nor long-term.

Biological Resources: Impacts to Clear AFS biological resources come from construction, which will affect both vegetation and wildlife. However, construction will not degrade critical habitat or viability. Impacts to biological resources would not be significant.

Cultural Resources: All new construction is on previously disturbed ground or within already developed areas of the station. We expect no effects to cultural resources.

Geology and Soils: Site preparation may have minor, short-term impact on adjacent soils. Impacts would not be significant.

Hazardous Materials and Waste: Proposed actions or alternatives don't change the types and quantity of hazardous materials routinely used on Clear AFS. Spills and leaks from the new diesel fuel storage could occur. We will implement design and safety measures to isolate any spills or leaks to prevent any significant impacts.

Safety and Occupational Health: Proposed actions at Clear AFS, including the EWR upgrade, MET antenna addition, and EPS beddown do not significantly increase the safety and health impacts from non-ionizing radiation at the SSPARS facility. The EWR upgrade does not

increase the maximum power density output. The proposed actions don't add any risk of exceeding the maximum permissible exposure for all personnel in either controlled or uncontrolled locations at Clear AFS. They don't require additional safe distance restrictions during operation. The three proposed EPS antennas and one potential backup antenna comply with non-ionizing radiation safety standards. No electromagnetic radiation impacts are expected to wildlife or birds.

Water Resources: Proposed actions and alternatives do not impact water resources from construction. Short-term disturbances from grading and excavating land could cause wind or water soil erosion. No significant impacts are projected to occur to surface water from airborne sediment or surface water runoff. There is no impact to the unconfined aquifer and groundwater because of its extensive area and depth. There would be no impacts to floodplains.

Cumulative Impacts: Cumulative impacts result when an action's impacts combine with impacts of past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions at a location. There are no significant cumulative impacts with the proposed new mission bed down and construction at Clear AFS, AK.

PUBLIC REVIEW AND COMMENT. We published a Notice of Availability of the draft EA and draft finding of no significant impact (FONSI) for public review and comment in local newspapers and post offices. We placed copies in local libraries and posted them on the MDA internet site at http://www.mda.mil/news/environmental_reports.html. The public comment period closed on July 31, 2012. We received no comments.

CONCLUSION. The environmental analysis shows no significant impacts from any of the proposed actions or alternatives. Preparing an environmental impact statement is not required. The MDA and AFSPC are issuing a FONSI. We made this determination in accordance with all applicable environmental laws.

POINT OF CONTACT

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ACTION. Finding of No Significant Impact.

APPROVE:



JOHN H. JAMES, JR.
Executive Director
Missile Defense Agency

DATE: 2 Oct 2012

APPROVE:

for 

JEFFREY C. ALLEN
SES, DAF
Director of Logistics, Installations
and Mission Support

DATE: 26 Oct 2012