

**FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT FOR
PACIFIC SPACEPORT COMPLEX ALASKA
BALLISTIC MISSILE DEFENSE FLIGHT TEST SUPPORT
ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT**

AGENCY: Missile Defense Agency

ACTION: Finding of No Significant Impact

BACKGROUND: The Missile Defense Agency (MDA) prepared an Environmental Assessment (EA) to evaluate the potential environmental consequences of conducting defensive weapon system flight tests of various Ballistic Missile Defense (BMD) systems from the Pacific Spaceport Complex Alaska (PSCA) located on Kodiak Island, Alaska. The flight tests would include the launch and intercept of target missiles over the Pacific Ocean. The attached EA, which is hereby incorporated by reference, was prepared in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended; Council on Environmental Quality regulations (40 Code of Federal Regulations §§ 1500–1508); MDA NEPA Implementing Procedures (79 Federal Register 46410-46419); Executive Order 12114, Environmental Effects Abroad of Major Federal Actions; and 32 Code of Federal Regulations § 187, *Environmental Effects Abroad of Major Department of Defense Actions*.

MDA is responsible for developing, testing, and deploying BMD systems to defend the United States and its deployed forces, allies, and friends from ballistic missiles. The purpose of conducting the defensive weapon system flight tests from PSCA is to validate the ability of select BMD systems to engage various short-, medium-, and intermediate-range threat representative target missiles. MDA's test program is structured to improve the missile defense capabilities under development and to ensure the capabilities are operationally effective, suitable, and survivable.

In 2004, MDA began using PSCA, a commercial spaceport licensed by the Federal Aviation Administration, to launch target missiles as part of BMD testing that included intercepts over the Pacific Ocean. MDA also previously conducted BMD flight tests at other Department of Defense ranges in the Pacific region, similar to those proposed for PSCA. The findings from NEPA analyses for these earlier BMD tests determined that such activities posed no significant impact to the environment.

DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED ACTION: The Proposed Action is to conduct flight tests of various BMD systems from PSCA, to potentially include Terminal High Altitude Area Defense, PATRIOT, and similar defensive weapon systems. Flight test events could include various short-, medium-, and intermediate-range target missiles launched from aircraft located in the open ocean area of the northern Pacific region, with intercepts over the Pacific Ocean. A specific number of BMD-related missile launches conducted from PSCA has not been determined. On average, MDA expects to conduct up to two flight test events per year over the next 10 years (starting in fiscal year 2017), with no more than three flight test events in any given 12-month period. Individual BMD flight test events may include more than one interceptor missile launch. For the preparation of the EA, up to nine interceptor missile launches from PSCA in any given 12-month period was used for analysis purposes.

To conduct the proposed BMD flight test activities at PSCA, MDA would use facilities and infrastructure (i.e., utilities and roadway system) already in place or in the process of being built by PSCA. The Proposed Action is expected to require little or no ground-disturbing activities and no new construction. For flight tests, the defensive weapon system equipment would temporarily be set up at several optional pad areas located on PSCA. Test support would

include the use of portable radars, generators, and other ground-based telemetry and tracking system assets.

Up to approximately 300 personnel would temporarily deploy to PSCA to support pre-flight preparation and flight test activities. Many of these personnel would stay on PSCA using temporary housing or stay at the nearby Narrow Cape Lodge. It is also anticipated that some of the support personnel would use lodging facilities within the City of Kodiak and other rentals local to PSCA.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED: The No Action Alternative would be to not conduct the BMD defensive weapon system flight tests from PSCA as described for the Proposed Action. Ongoing and future actions, whose impacts at PSCA and within the Pacific Ocean area have been previously analyzed and approved, would continue.

SUMMARY OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES: In assessing environmental impacts of conducting BMD flight tests at PSCA and within the Pacific ocean, MDA determined there would be no significant impacts from implementation of the Proposed Action to the following environmental resource areas analyzed in detail in the EA: air quality and climate change, noise, water resources, biological resources, recreational land use, human health and safety, socioeconomics, hazardous materials and waste, airspace and air traffic, and marine traffic.

Cumulative impacts from the Proposed Action were also reviewed and evaluated for the same environmental resources. Following review of the Proposed Action, in combination with other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions at PSCA and within the Pacific Ocean, no significant cumulative impacts would occur.

ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT AND MONITORING ACTIONS: Although MDA does not expect significant or other major impacts to result from implementation of the Proposed Action, MDA and PSCA would implement various management controls and monitoring actions to minimize the level of impacts that might occur. These activities include Issuing public notices in advance of test activities requiring closure of recreational areas on PSCA; coordinating with the Federal Aviation Administration and United States Coast Guard for the issuance of respective notices for pilots and ship operators to avoid flight test hazard areas; ensuring aircraft surveillance overflights avoid areas where Stellar sea lions and harbor seals temporarily leave the water on Ugak Island; and using secondary containment systems and kits to control potential spills of petroleum, oils, lubricants, and coolant used in equipment and stored at PSCA. Chapter 7 of the EA summarizes these and other measures to be implemented as part of the Proposed Action.

PUBLIC REVIEW AND COMMENT: A Notice of Availability of the Proposed Final EA and unsigned Proposed Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for public review and comment was published in local newspapers. Copies of the documents were placed in local libraries and posted on the MDA website at https://www.mda.mil/news/environmental_reports.html. The public comment period included 31 days and closed on February 13, 2017. Comments received were considered prior to a decision being made on whether or not to sign the FONSI.

POINT OF CONTACT: The point of contact at MDA for questions, issues, and information relevant to the EA is:

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CONCLUSION: An analysis of the Proposed Action of conducting BMD flight tests at PSCA and within the Pacific Ocean concluded that its implementation would not have a significant environmental impact on the human and natural environment, either by itself or cumulatively with other actions. After thoroughly considering the facts herein, the undersigned finds that the Proposed Action is consistent with existing environmental policies and objectives set forth in NEPA and its implementing regulations. Therefore, an Environmental Impact Statement is not required.

APPROVE:



JOHN H. JAMES, JR.
Executive Director

DATE: 12 Apr 2017