

Summary of Activity Under the Current LOAs

In compliance with the 2004–2005 LOAs, on May 28, 2005, the Navy submitted the annual report on SURTASS LFA sonar operations. A summary of that report (Navy, 2005) follows.

During the period between February 16, 2004 and February 15, 2005 (the reporting period required under the 2004 LOAs), the *R/V Cory Chouest* operated in the Philippine Sea in the winter and spring of 2004. The *RV Cory Chouest* conducted four training missions covering a period of 38.8 days with 93.3 hours of transmissions by the LFA sonar array. The purposes of the training missions are to provide fully functional hardware and software, extensive personnel training, job experience, and operational/system monitoring in a variety of LFA sonar mission scenarios and acoustic environments. All LFA sonar operations included the operation of the High-Frequency Marine Mammal Monitoring (HF/M3) sonar and compliance with all mitigation requirements.

The second SURTASS LFA sonar system, onboard the USNS IMPECCABLE (T-AGOS 23), commenced sea trials in late February 2004. During the spring and summer of 2004, the USNS IMPECCABLE conducted five training missions in the Philippine Sea and the northwest Pacific Ocean covering a period of 26.2 days with 63.0 hours of transmissions by the LFA array. All LFA sonar operations included the operation of the HF/M3 sonar and compliance with all mitigation requirements.

In summary, SURTASS LFA sonar operations from February 16, 2004 to February 15, 2005 consisted of nine training missions totaling 65.1 days of operations with 156.3 hours of active transmissions by the LFA sonar array. Operations were conducted at three different sites in the Philippine sea located in the Kuroshio Current and North Pacific Tropical Gyre West Provinces.

Summary of Monitoring Under the 2004–2005 LOAs

In the annual report, the Navy provides a post-operational assessment of whether incidental harassment occurred within the LFA sonar mitigation and buffer zones and estimates of the percentages of marine mammal stocks possibly harassed using predictive modeling based on dates/times/location of actual operations, system characteristics, oceanographic conditions, and animal demographics.

Post-operational incidental harassment estimates indicate that there were no marine mammal exposures to received levels at or above 180 dB (Navy, 2005).

The percentage of marine mammal stocks estimated to be exposed to noise between 120 and 180 dB (re 1 microPa) from the LFA sonar array, both pre- and post-operational risk assessment estimates, were all below the 12-percent maximum percentage authorized under the LOAs. The majority of the estimates were below 1 percent; however, there were marine mammal stocks at all three sites with more than 1 percent estimated exposed to between 120 and 180 dB: (1) east of Japan, the short-finned pilot whale (1.67 percent) and the false killer whale (1.58 percent); (2) in the North Philippine Sea, the short-finned pilot whale (1.50 percent); and (3) in the West Philippine Sea, the Pacific white-sided dolphin (9.72 percent), the melon-headed whale (9.46 percent), the false killer whale (4.22 percent), Risso's dolphin (3.6 percent), the short-finned pilot whale (3.46 percent), the humpback whale (3.27 percent), the bottlenose dolphin (2.45 percent), the Minke whale (1.75 percent), the pygmy killer whale (1.69 percent), Blainville's beaked whale (1.27 percent), and the rough-toothed dolphin (1.10 percent).

During the nine missions, no sightings of marine mammals were noted by the trained personnel responsible for marine animal monitoring, and no marine mammal vocalizations were identified on the SURTASS passive sonar displays.

The HF/M3 sonar operated continuously during the course of the missions in accordance with the LOAs. As required by the LOAs, the HF/M3 sonar was "ramped up" prior to operations. During seven of the nine missions, there were 12 HF/M3 alerts that were identified as possible marine mammal detections. No additional correlating data were available to further verify, identify, or clarify these detections. Because these detections met the minimum shutdown criteria (i.e., multiple detections (two or more) within the same area), the Navy's requisite protocols were followed, and LFA sonar transmissions were suspended a total of 12 times. In addition, during one mission there were two suspensions of LFA sonar operations due to HF/M3 sonar software failures.

Authorization

Accordingly, NMFS has issued two LOAs to the U.S. Navy, authorizing the incidental harassment of marine mammals incidental to operating the two SURTASS LFA sonar systems for

training, testing and routine military operations. Issuance of these two LOAs is based on findings, described in the preamble to the final rule (67 FR 46712, July 16, 2002) and supported by information contained in the Navy's required annual report on SURTASS LFA sonar, that the activities described under these two LOAs will have no more than a negligible impact on marine mammal stocks and will not have an unmitigable adverse impact on the availability of the affected marine mammal stocks for subsistence uses. These LOAs also comply with the NDAA amendments to the MMPA.

These LOAs remain valid through August 15, 2006, provided the Navy remains in conformance with the conditions of the regulations and the LOAs, and the mitigation, monitoring, and reporting requirements described in 50 CFR 216.184–216.186 (67 FR 46712, July 16, 2002) and in the LOAs are undertaken.

Dated: August 22, 2005.

Michael Payne,

Acting Director, Office of Protected Resources, National Marine Fisheries Service.

[FR Doc. 05–16938 Filed 8–24–05; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

Office of the Secretary; Defense Science Board

AGENCY: Department of Defense (DoD).

ACTION: Notice of Advisory Committee meeting; improvised explosive devices (IEDs).

SUMMARY: The Defense Science Board Task Force on Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) will meet in closed session on September 13, 2005, at Strategic Analysis, Inc., 3601 Wilson Boulevard, Arlington, VA. The Task Force will explore methods and techniques to significantly reduce the effects of IEDs on U.S. and coalition forces in operations such as are currently being conducted in Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF). The Task Force should examine ways to counter the use as well as mitigate the consequences of IEDs. The Task Force should examine ways to counter the use as well as mitigate the consequences of IEDs.

DATES: September 13, 2005.

ADDRESSES: Strategic Analysis, Inc., 3601 Wilson Boulevard, Arlington, VA.
FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: LTC Scott Dolgoff, USA, Defense Science Board, 3140 Defense Pentagon, Room 3C553, Washington, DC 20301–3140, via

e-mail at scott.dolgoft@osd.mil, or via phone at (703) 571-0082.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The mission of the Defense Science Board is to advise the Secretary of Defense and the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology & Logistics on scientific and technical matters as they affect the perceived needs of the Department of Defense. At these meetings, the Defense Science Board Task Force will consider the entire spectrum of intervention objects, including deterrence, dissuasion, remote pre-detonation, remote disarming, elimination of sources and/or manufacturing facilities, discovery and remove of critical personnel, discovery and removal of employed devices, or anything else that has the end effect of either lowering the value or raising the cost of employing IEDs as an insurgent or terrorist weapons of choice. The Task Force will have four primary objectives: Assess the current state of the art of allied forces in countering adversary use of IEDs in operations such as OIF; recommend a mid- to long-term set of integrated activities aimed at improving the state of the art in reducing the effect of IEDs over the next three to ten years; provide recommendations on short term (over the next six months to three years) incremental improvements in U.S. forces' ability to counter or reduce the effectiveness of IEDs, and identify any synergies that may exist between current counter-IED and countermine efforts.

In accordance with section 10(d) of the Federal Advisory Committee Act, Pub. L. 92-463, as amended (5 U.S.C. App. 2), it has been determined that this Defense Science Board Task Force meeting concerns matters listed in 5 U.S.C. 552b(c)(1) and that, accordingly, this meeting will be closed to the public.

Dated: August 19, 2005.

Jeannette Owings-Ballard,

*OSD Federal Register Liaison Officer,
Department of Defense.*

[FR Doc. 05-16911 Filed 8-24-05; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

Federal Energy Regulatory Commission

[Docket No. RT01-74-000]

GridSouth Transco, L.L.C., Carolina Power & Light Company, Duke Energy Corporation, South Carolina Electric & Gas Company; Notice of Filing

August 16, 2005.

Take notice that on August 11, 2005, Carolina Power & Light Company, Duke Energy Corporation, and South Carolina Electric & Gas Company, (collectively, GridSouth Sponsors) notified the Commission that they have elected to terminate the GridSouth Transco project.

Any person desiring to intervene or to protest this filing must file in accordance with Rules 211 and 214 of the Commission's Rules of Practice and Procedure (18 CFR 385.211, 385.214). Protests will be considered by the Commission in determining the appropriate action to be taken, but will not serve to make protestants parties to the proceeding. Any person wishing to become a party must file a notice of intervention or motion to intervene, as appropriate. Such notices, motions, or protests must be filed on or before the comment date. Anyone filing a motion to intervene or protest must serve a copy of that document on the Applicant and all the parties in this proceeding.

The Commission encourages electronic submission of protests and interventions in lieu of paper using the "eFiling" link at <http://www.ferc.gov>. Persons unable to file electronically should submit an original and 14 copies of the protest or intervention to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, 888 First Street, NE., Washington, DC 20426.

This filing is accessible on-line at <http://www.ferc.gov>, using the "eLibrary" link and is available for review in the Commission's Public Reference Room in Washington, DC. There is an "eSubscription" link on the Web site that enables subscribers to receive e-mail notification when a document is added to a subscribed docket(s). For assistance with any FERC Online service, please e-mail FERCOnlineSupport@ferc.gov, or call (866) 208-3676 (toll free). For TTY, call (202) 502-8659.

Comment Date: 5 p.m. Eastern Time on September 15, 2005.

Magalie R. Salas,

Secretary.

[FR Doc. E5-4645 Filed 8-24-05; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

Federal Energy Regulatory Commission

[Docket No. RP05-565-000]

Natural Gas Pipeline Company of America; Notice of Emergency Petition for Waivers

August 18, 2005.

Take notice that on August 16, 2005, Natural Gas Pipeline Company of America (Natural), pursuant to Rule 207 of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission's Rules of Practice and Procedure, submitted an emergency petition for waivers to help its shippers respond to what it states is a *force majeure* situation that will temporarily reduce capacity on a portion of Natural's system. Natural requests that the Commission grant this petition by no later than August 23, 2005 to allow its "customers and the market generally to mitigate the impact of the capacity reduction".

Any person desiring to protest this filing must file in accordance with Rule 211 of the Commission's Rules of Practice and Procedure (18 CFR 385.211). Protests to this filing will be considered by the Commission in determining the appropriate action to be taken, but will not serve to make protestants parties to the proceeding. Such protests must be filed in accordance with the provisions of Section 154.210 of the Commission's regulations (18 CFR 154.210). Anyone filing a protest must serve a copy of that document on all the parties to the proceeding.

The Commission encourages electronic submission of protests and interventions in lieu of paper using the "eFiling" link at <http://www.ferc.gov>. Persons unable to file electronically should submit an original and 14 copies of the protest or intervention to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, 888 First Street, NE., Washington, DC 20426.

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