

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

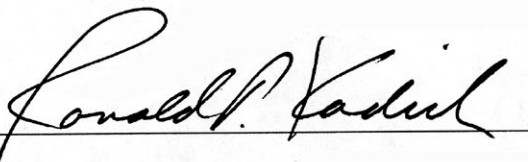
MISSILE DEFENSE AGENCY

**GROUND-BASED MIDCOURSE DEFENSE
VALIDATION OF OPERATIONAL CONCEPT
ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT**

AGENCY: Missile Defense Agency

ACTION: Finding of No Significant Impact

APPROVED:



DATE: 15 APR 02

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Lieutenant General, USAF
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DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
Missile Defense Agency

Ground-Based Midcourse Defense (GMD)
Validation Of Operational Concept (VOC) Environmental Assessment

AGENCY: Missile Defense Agency

ACTION: Finding of No Significant Impact

BACKGROUND: Pursuant to the Council on Environmental Quality regulations for implementing the procedural provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act (40 Code of Federal Regulations 1500-1508), Department of Defense (DoD) Instruction 4715.9, Army Regulation 200-2 and Air Force Instruction 32-7061, which implement these regulations, an Environmental Assessment (EA) to analyze the environmental consequences of the GMD VOC has been completed. The EA is incorporated by reference in this Finding of No Significant Impact (FNSI), and is also summarized below.

Within the DoD, the Missile Defense Agency (MDA) (formerly known as the Ballistic Missile Defense Organization) is responsible for developing, testing, and preparing to deploy a ballistic missile defense system (BMDS). There are three BMDS Segments currently under development, Boost Defense, Midcourse Defense, and Terminal Defense. One element of the Midcourse Defense Segment is Ground-based Midcourse Defense (GMD) (formerly known as National Missile Defense [NMD]), which is designed to intercept long-range ballistic missiles during the midcourse (ballistic) phase of their flight, before their reentry into the earth's atmosphere.

The NMD Deployment EIS analyzed the proposed deployment of the NMD to defend against limited strategic ballistic missile threats to the United States. GMD is the successor missile defense element to NMD, and it consists of the same components as did NMD. The GMD consists of five components: Battle Management, Command, Control, and Communications (BMC3), which includes the Battle Management, Command and Control (BMC2), the GMD communication network (GCN) (formerly called National Missile Defense Communication Network, and the In-Flight Interceptor Communication System Data Terminal (IDT); Ground-Based Interceptor (GBI); X-Band Radar (XBR); Upgraded Early Warning Radar (UEWR); and space-based sensors.

The purpose of the GMD is to defend the entire United States against limited ballistic missile attack. However, there has been no decision to deploy the GMD. Following a series of reviews, the MDA re-focused the GMD from near term

deployment to an effort to provide operationally realistic testing. Validating the operational concept through ground based testing of the GMD is a vital part of operationally realistic testing. The EA analyzes potential GMD VOC test sites in Alaska that were identified in the 2000 NMD Deployment Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and which remain reasonable alternatives for providing a limited ballistic missile defense for the entire United States and related actions in sites outside Alaska.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED ACTION: This EA evaluates activities designed to validate the GMD operational concept, including construction techniques, operational procedures, installation, checkout, assembly, and maintenance. These activities would enable MDA to assess the performance of the existing and planned BMC3 network and provide vital validation of the operational concept through distributed integrated ground tests using GMD components located in operationally representative locations and environments. This validation of the operational concept has utility and importance to MDA independent of the more robust integrated flight testing of GMD components, also in the planning stage.

Many of the locations for the infrastructure and facilities proposed for use in testing the GMD operational concept were analyzed in the NMD Deployment EIS and are, in general, smaller scale, or closely related versions of actions at locations identified in the EIS. Validation of the GMD concept through operationally realistic testing of selected components is integral to accomplishing future deployment of the GMD. Consequently, the GMD VOC EA incorporates by reference much of the analysis in the NMD Deployment EIS. Those activities not addressed in the EIS, or that are significantly different from those analyzed in the EIS, are analyzed in detail in the GMD VOC EA. The current timetable is for construction of test facilities to begin in the Spring of 2002, with testing of the operational concept to begin no earlier than the Fall of 2004.

The proposed action includes construction and test activities at the following locations:

Fort Greely – construction and operational testing of six GBI silos and supporting facilities, one IDT, and one Defense Satellite Communication System (DSCS) earth terminal and a BMC2 execution node. Activities at Fort Greely would also include installation of fiber optic cable, electrical distribution system upgrades, upgrades to the Allen Army Airfield, establishment of a construction debris landfill and extension of the existing solid waste landfill at the GMD VOC test site, and establishment of mancamp(s) for construction workers.

Eareckson Air Station (AS) Alaska – construction and testing of one IDT and DSCS earth terminal, upgrades to hardware and software and interior

modifications at the existing COBRA DANE Radar, installation of terrestrial fiber optic cable, refurbishment of the existing Air Force power plant including addition of one previously designed 9.5 million liter (2.5 million gallon) fuel tank, modifications to existing administrative and support facilities, and establishment of mancamps if interior modification to existing facilities are not adequate to house the number of personnel involved in the construction project.

Eielson Air Force Base (AFB), Alaska – construction and operation of a missile transfer facility and construction of an emergency pull-off ramp on the Richardson Highway.

Beale AFB, California – upgrade the hardware and software to the Early Warning Radar as analyzed in the NMD Deployment EIS and incorporated by reference in the GMD VOC EA, and perform interior building modifications to accommodate the upgrades.

Installation of equipment and use of existing communications and facilities at one or more of Peterson AFB, Cheyenne Mountain Complex and Shriever AFB in Colorado, Eareckson AS, Alaska, Beale AFB California, and contractor facilities in Alabama and California.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED: Clear Air Force Station (AFS), Alaska is being considered as an alternative location to Fort Greely for the six GBI silos and support facilities and associated BMC3 including one IDT, one Defense Satellite Communication System (DSCS) earth terminal, a BMC2 execution node and installation of terrestrial fiber optic cable.

The no-action alternative was also considered. Under the no-action alternative, MDA would not proceed with construction and testing to support validation of the GMD operational concept through ground-based testing. Selection of the no-action alternative would not allow this vital part of operationally realistic testing needed to further develop the GMD element of the Midcourse Defense Segment.

ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS: Thirteen broad environmental resource areas were considered to provide a context for understanding the potential effects of the proposed action and to provide a basis for assessing the severity of potential impacts. These resource areas included air quality, airspace, biological resources, cultural resources, environmental justice, geology and soils, hazardous materials and waste, health and safety, infrastructure, land use, noise, socioeconomics, and water resources. They were analyzed as applicable for each proposed location or activity. Implementation of the proposed action at Fort Greely or at the GBI VOC test site alternative at Clear AFS could indirectly affect nearby wetlands. Impacts to wetlands will be avoided where possible by using erosion and storm-water runoff control and obtaining required permits. The positive economic benefit of

the construction and test activities would help offset job losses and economic impacts from the realignment of Fort Greely. The electrical transmission upgrade would benefit the surrounding area. Implementation of the proposed action would result in only minor impacts to all other resource areas considered.

Under the no-action alternative, no environmental consequences associated with GMD VOC activities would occur.

CONCLUSION: Based on the environmental analysis in the GMD VOC EA, MDA has determined that no significant impacts would occur as a result of the construction and operation of any of the GMD VOC test sites and related support facilities. Preparation of an EIS, therefore, is not required.

DEADLINE FOR RECEIPT OF WRITTEN COMMENTS: April 13, 2002

POINT OF CONTACT: Submit written comments or requests for a copy of the EA to:

U.S. Army Space and Missile Defense Command
Attention: SMDC-EN-V (David Hasley)
Post Office Box 1500
Huntsville, Alabama 35807-3801