

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 OVERVIEW

This Mitigation Measures Status Report documents the progress to date on USAF efforts to implement the mitigation requirements for the Saipan (PACBAR) Radar facility. The report: (1) contains the mitigations required as conditions of project implementation for the design/construction, operations, and other phases of the project (Appendix A), and (2) provides an assessment of their current status. The compilation of this information into a single source document will assist the USAF in its planning for activation and operation of the project. The 150 mitigation measures addressed herein are designed to reduce the overall environmental impacts of the program. This report updates and supersedes the initial Mitigation Status Report completed 3 July 1989.

1.1.1 SAIPAN (PACBAR) RADAR

The U.S. Air Force (USAF) has constructed a radar facility and approximately two miles of access road on Mt. Petosukara, Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI). Known as Saipan (PACBAR) Radar, the facility is located on about four acres of land in the Marpi Commonwealth Forest. The project included paving and constructing drainage improvements for the 1.9 miles of access road between Beach Road and the project site (see Section 2.1.2).

In accordance with the USAF Environmental Impact Analysis Process (EIAP), an initial site evaluation and environmental reconnaissance were conducted by USAF/SSD/DEV at the beginning of the project in 1981. Subsequent preparation of the Environmental Assessment was begun in 1984 and completed in 1987. Project construction began in February 1988 and was completed in May 1989. Activation began in mid-1989, extending through 1990. Site operation is planned to begin in 1991.

1.1.2 PURPOSE OF STATUS REPORT

The primary purpose of this status report is to provide a mechanism whereby the USAF and local permitting agencies can track USAF implementation of mitigation measures associated with the radar facility. It also provides a comprehensive list for implementation of future mitigations. In addition, it provides a model which can be utilized for future projects on Saipan and elsewhere.

1.2 MITIGATIONS SUMMARY

1.2.1 SOURCES OF MITIGATION MEASURES

Mitigation measures are conditions or stipulations which are applied to a project to minimize adverse impacts of its implementation. For the Saipan (PACBAR) Radar, some mitigations apply to a project phase, while others have no specific time requirement. Commonly, mitigation measures are identified by their association with an environmental discipline, such as vegetation, cultural resources, or socioeconomics.

For the Saipan (PACBAR) Radar, 150 mitigation measures have been identified from the six permitting documents:

- Coastal Resources Management Permit
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service - Section 7 Requirements
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service - Section 7 Consultation
- Memorandum of Understanding between USAF and Department of Natural Resources
- PACBAR III Environmental Assessment
- Coastal Zone Management Act - Federal Consistency Determination

1.2.2 IMPLEMENTATION OF MITIGATION MEASURES

The USAF has expended significant time and effort to assure implementation of all mitigation measures to which it has committed. Many of the mitigation requirements were incorporated into the design phase of the project and so are "Complete" and an integral part of the radar facility project. Five mitigation measures are "In Progress," for timely completion; the remainder are "Ongoing," projected to continue throughout the entire operational life of the facility.

1.2.3 MITIGATIONS IDENTIFICATION AND EVALUATION

Mitigation measures were compiled based on review of the project's environmental and permitting documents and files of the USAF and Resident Officer in Charge of Construction (ROICC). They were evaluated based on USAF and ROICC files, field interviews with the ROICC, and visual checks of constructed facilities, which involved visual observation, measurements, and photo-documentation.

The initial evaluation was conducted in April 1989 by a team comprised of representatives of the USAF, the U.S. Navy (USN), and the environmental contractor. Field interviews were conducted with representatives of the Federal Electric Corporation (FEC), USAF/WSMC, and USAF/SSD/CNSE, and there were discussions with members of the Coastal Resources Management (CRM) during the evaluation process. As a result of CRM input, USAF made some field changes to the erosion control system.

A subsequent evaluation occurred in June 1990 by a team comprised of USAF representatives and the environmental contractor. The status of mitigation measures discussed herein reflects the results of that recent evaluation.

For purposes of reference, summaries of mitigations according to number, project phase, environmental discipline, source document, subject, and/or status are presented in Chapter 3.0, Tables 3.1-3.7.

1.3 USAF MITIGATIONS IMPLEMENTATION

There are 150 mitigation measures in the six permitting documents for the Saipan (PACBAR) Radar. These have been identified and evaluated as to their environmental compliance and status. Relative to environmental compliance, each mitigation was determined to be "In Compliance," or "Not In Compliance." The status of each mitigation, relative to its completion, was determined to be "Complete," "In Progress," or "Ongoing." As described above, these categories were verified through documentation, field observation, and/or interview.

Of the 150 mitigations, 103 are Complete, five are In Progress, and 42 are Ongoing. Of the Ongoing mitigations, nine apply to the design/construction phase, 29 apply to operations, and four are considered "other." Two were completed differently from the exact wording of the mitigation. These are considered Complete, but noted under Not Done on Table 3.3 (Summary of Mitigations by Project Phase) (see Section 4.1).

1.4 CONCLUSIONS

This evaluation concludes that 69 percent of the 150 mitigation measures have been completed by the USAF. Most of the remainder are Ongoing, over the life of the facility, while five are In Progress. A review of the impacts projected in the Environmental Assessment (EA) reveals that, in implementing these suggested mitigation measures, the USAF has kept project-related impacts within the limits projected in the EA.