

**WAKE ISLAND LAUNCH CENTER (WILC)
SUPPLEMENTAL ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT (SEA)**

BALLISTIC MISSILE DEFENSE ORGANIZATION

AGENCY: Ballistic Missile Defense Organization (BMDO)

ACTION: Finding of No Significant Impact

BACKGROUND: In accordance with the procedural provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act (40 CFR 1500-1508), Department of Defense Instruction 4715.9, and Army Regulation 200-2, the USASMDC has prepared on behalf of BMDO a Supplemental Environmental Assessment (SEA) of the potential environmental consequences of launching Liquid Propellant Target (LPT) missiles from the Wake Island Launch Center (WILC).

This SEA supplements the *Wake Island Environmental Assessment*, January 1994, in which the environmental effects of Theater Missile Defense (TMD) launch activities as well as other reasonably foreseeable program-related activities were analyzed. At the time of preparation of the 1994 EA, only solid propellant target missiles were available for TMD testing. Since that time, USASMDC has expanded its inventory of target missiles to include liquid propellant missiles. The testing of these missiles will greatly enhance the understanding of TMD threats to the United States and its allies. The USASMDC would use these missiles as targets for several anti-missile interceptors. This SEA analyzes the transportation, storage, fueling, and launch of these LPT missiles at WILC.

PURPOSE: The purpose of the proposed Army action is to provide realistic test situations for missile defenses (acquiring, tracking, and intercepting notional target missiles) within a simulated theater of operations. Such missile flight tests support the development and operational effectiveness of TMD missile and sensor systems. Presently, the United States operates no functional overland ranges, and few over-water ranges, that provide realistic distances for testing within such a simulated theater of operations.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED ACTION: The proposed action would involve only minimal new site preparation activities to establish a liquid propellant missile launch capability at WILC. USASMDC proposes to fuel and launch up to 20 LPTs at WILC over a ten-year period.

LPT missiles and associated components would be transported to Wake Island and would undergo final assembly and preflight testing activities on the island. The missiles would be fueled on the island. Three locations were considered for LPT propellant storage and missile fueling activities. The preferred alternative for propellant storage and the fueling site for the LPTs would be in the harbor area on Wake Island.

LPT missiles would be launched from WILC to be intercepted over the broad ocean area of the Pacific by interceptor missiles launched from other locations. The target launch vehicle would most likely follow a flight trajectory from WILC approximately south-southeast toward Kwajalein

Atoll. No explosives or biological or chemical simulants would be used in LPT warheads. Only instrumentation packages would be flown in the payload section of the vehicle. Radar illumination, flights, and intercepts were analyzed in the 1994 Wake Island EA and the *Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement for Proposed Actions at the U.S. Army Kwajalein Atoll* prepared in 1993. Flight trajectories and any associated intercepts which do not fall under the analysis presented in those documents would be analyzed in subsequent supplemental documentation.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED: Two additional alternative propellant storage and fueling sites were considered in the SEA. One alternative locates propellant storage and missile fueling sites on Wilkes Island at an existing petroleum tank farm. This alternative was not selected due to the inherent dangers of hauling heavy equipment across the aging causeway and the relative isolation of the area. The second alternative locates propellant storage and missile fueling sites near a World War II aircraft revetment, midway between the harbor area and the Peacock Point launch areas on Wake Island. This alternative was not selected because of potential danger posed by heavy equipment to the historic aircraft revetment and the adjoining parking apron.

The no action alternative is the continuation of existing program testing and evaluation activities. Under this alternative, USASMDC would not proceed with any LPT missile activity at WILC. Flight test information for LPT missiles, needed for development of TMD sensors, interceptors, and technology, would not be collected from test activities at WILC.

Another alternative action was examined but was not carried forward due to operational considerations. Two LPT missiles were launched from Aur Atoll in 1995, and were analyzed in the *U.S. Army Kwajalein Atoll Temporary Extended Test Range Environmental Assessment*, prepared in 1995. Although this analysis has been completed, LPT launches from Aur were not considered for this SEA because such launches would not meet the flight distance requirements, engagement geometry, instrumentation coverage, and other mission needs of current test requirements.

ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS: To assess the significance of potential environmental impacts, a list of the activities necessary to accomplish the proposed action was developed. The affected environment at Wake Atoll was then described. Next, those activities with potential for causing environmental impacts were identified. If a proposed activity was determined to cause potential environmental impact, then it was evaluated by considering the intensity and context in which the impact would occur. Twelve broad environmental resources were evaluated to determine the potential impacts of the proposed action. These resources include: air quality, airspace, biological resources, cultural resources, hazardous materials and waste, health and safety, infrastructure and transportation, land use, noise, physical resources, socioeconomics, and water resources.

Minimal site construction and LPT flight preparation and testing activities will result in minor impacts to resources such as air quality, airspace, biological and cultural resources, hazardous materials and waste, noise, and physical resources; however, no significant impacts are expected to any of the resources analyzed in the SEA.

CONCLUSION: Careful evaluation of the areas of environmental consideration for which a potential impact exists has determined that no significant impacts would occur from expanding the suite of target missiles launched and tested from WILC to include LPT missiles. Therefore, the preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement is not required.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD: A thirty-day comment period will commence upon completion of the final SEA and publishing of the Notice of Availability (NOA) in the *Huntsville Times* (Huntsville, Alabama), the *Honolulu Advertiser* and *Star-Bulletin* (Honolulu, Hawaii), and the *Kwajalein Hourglass* (Kwajalein Island, Republic of the Marshall Islands). The NOA will be published August 16, 2000.

DEADLINE FOR RECEIPT OF WRITTEN COMMENTS: The deadline for receipt of written comments concerning the SEA is September 15, 2000.

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

U.S. Army Space and Missile Defense Command
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