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shall be made to reach these populations. This might include special informational meetings or notices in minority and low-income areas concerning the regular scoping process.

[64 FR 38129, July 15, 1999, as amended at 66 FR 16868, Mar. 28, 2001; 66 FR 26793, May 15, 2001; 72 FR 37106, July 9, 2007]

§ 989.19 Draft EIS.

(a) *Preliminary draft.* The EPF supports the proponent in preparation of a preliminary draft EIS (PDEIS) (40 CFR 1502.9) based on the scope of issues decided on during the scoping process. The format of the EIS must be in accordance with the format recommended in the CEQ regulations (40 CFR 1502.10 and 1502.11). The CEQ regulations indicate that EISs normally contain fewer than 150 pages (300 pages for proposals of unusual complexity). The EPF provides a sufficient number of copies of the PDEIS to HQ USAF/A7CI for HQ USAF ESOHC security and policy review in each member's area of responsibility and to AFCEE/TDB for technical review.

(b) *Review of draft EIS.* After the HQ USAF ESOHC review, the EPF assists the appropriate Air Force organization in making any necessary revisions to the PDEIS and forwards it to HQ USAF/A7CI as a draft EIS to ensure completion of all security and policy reviews and to certify releasability. Once the draft EIS is approved, HQ USAF/A7CI notifies the EPF to print sufficient copies of the draft EIS for distribution to congressional delegations and interested agencies at least 7 calendar days prior to publication of the Notice of Availability (NOA) in the FEDERAL REGISTER. After congressional distribution, the EPF sends the draft EIS to all others on the distribution list. HQ USAF/A7CI then files the document with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) and provides a copy to the Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Environmental Security.

(c) *Public review of draft EIS (40 CFR 1502.19 and 1506.6):* (1) The public comment period for the draft EIS is at least 45 days starting from the publication date of the NOA of the draft EIS in the FEDERAL REGISTER. USEPA publishes in the FEDERAL REGISTER NOAs

of EISs filed during the preceding week. This public comment period may be extended by the EPF. If the draft EIS is unusually long, the EPF may distribute a summary to the public with an attached list of locations (such as public libraries) where the entire draft EIS may be reviewed. The EPF must distribute the full draft EIS to certain entities, for example, agencies with jurisdiction by law or agencies with special expertise in evaluating the environmental impacts, and anyone else requesting the entire draft EIS (40 CFR 1502.19 and 1506.6).

(2) The EPF sponsors public hearings on the draft EIS according to the procedures in appendix C to this part. Hearings take place no sooner than 15 days after the FEDERAL REGISTER publication of the NOA and at least 15 days before the end of the comment period. Scheduling hearings toward the end of the comment period is encouraged to allow the public to obtain and more thoroughly review the draft EIS. The EPF must provide hearing scripts to HQ USAF/A7CI (or ANGR/CEV) no later than 30 days prior to the first public hearing. Public hearings should generally be held at off-base locations. Submit requests to deviate from procedures in appendix C to this part to HQ USAF/A7CI for SAF/IEE approval.

(3) Where analyses indicate that a proposed action will potentially have disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects on minority populations or low-income populations, the EPF should make special efforts to ensure that these potentially impacted populations are brought into the review process.

(d) *Response to comments (40 CFR 1503.4).* The EPF must incorporate in the Final EIS its responses to comments on the Draft EIS by modifying the text and referring in the appendix to where the comment is addressed or providing a written explanation in the comments section, or both. The EPF may group comments of a similar nature together to allow a common response and may also respond to individuals separately.

(e) *Seeking additional comments.* The EPF may, at any time during the EIS process, seek additional public comments, such as when there has been a

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significant change in circumstances, development of significant new information of a relevant nature, or where there is substantial environmental controversy concerning the proposed action. Significant new information leading to public controversy regarding the scope after the scoping process is such a changed circumstance. An additional public comment period may also be necessary after the publication of the draft EIS due to public controversy or changes made as the result of previous public comments. Such periods when additional public comments are sought shall last for at least 30 days.

[64 FR 38129, July 15, 1999, as amended at 66 FR 16868, Mar. 28, 2001; 72 FR 37106, July 9, 2007]

§ 989.20 Final EIS.

(a) If changes in the draft EIS are minor or limited to factual corrections and responses to comments, the proponent and EPF may, with the prior approval of HQ USAF/A7CI and SAF/IEE, prepare a document containing only comments on the Draft EIS, Air Force responses, and errata sheets of changes staffed to the HQ USAF ESOHC for coordination. However, the EPF must submit the Draft EIS and all of the above documents, with a new cover sheet indicating that it is a final EIS (40 CFR 1503.4(c)), to HQ USAF/A7CI for filing with the EPA (40 CFR 1506.9). If more extensive modifications are required, the EPF must prepare a preliminary final EIS incorporating these modifications for coordination within the Air Force. Regardless of which procedure is followed, the final EIS must be processed in the same way as the draft EIS, including receipt of copies of the EIS by SAF/LLP, except that the public need not be invited to comment during the 30-day post-filing waiting period. The Final EIS should be furnished to every person, organization, or agency that made substantive comments on the Draft EIS or requested a copy. Although the EPF is not required to respond to public comments received during this period, comments received must be considered in determining final decisions such as identifying the preferred alternative, appropriate mitigations, or if a supplemental analysis is required.

(b) The EPF processes all necessary supplements to EISs (40 CFR 1502.9) in the same way as the original Draft and Final EIS, except that a new scoping process is not required.

(c) If major steps to advance the proposal have not occurred within 5 years from the date of the Final EIS approval, reevaluation of the documentation should be accomplished to ensure its continued validity.

[64 FR 38129, July 15, 1999, as amended at 66 FR 16868, Mar. 28, 2001; 72 FR 37106, July 9, 2007]

§ 989.21 Record of decision (ROD).

(a) The proponent and the EPF prepare a draft ROD, formally staff it through the MAJCOM EPC, to HQ USAF/A7CI for verification of adequacy, and forwards it to either SAF/IEE or SAF/AQR, as the case may be, for approval and designation of the signator. A ROD (40 CFR 1505.2) is a concise public document stating what an agency's decision is on a specific action. The ROD may be integrated into any other document required to implement the agency's decision. A decision on a course of action may not be made until the later of the following dates:

(1) 90 days after publication of the DEIS; or

(2) 30 days after publication of the NOA of the Final EIS in the FEDERAL REGISTER.

(b) The Air Force must announce the ROD to the affected public as specified in § 989.24, except for classified portions. The ROD should be concise and should explain the conclusion, the reason for the selection, and the alternatives considered. The ROD must identify the course of action, whether it is the proposed action or an alternative, that is considered environmentally preferable regardless of whether it is the alternative selected for implementation. The ROD should summarize all the major factors the agency weighed in making its decision, including essential considerations of national policy.

(c) The ROD must state whether the selected alternative employs all practicable means to avoid, minimize, or