

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

Ballistic Missile Defense Organization; Preparation of a Theater Missile Defense Extended Test Range Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement—Eglin Gulf Test Range

AGENCY: Ballistic Missile Defense Organization (BMDO).

ACTION: Notice of availability (NOA).

SUMMARY: This notifies the public that BMDO is issuing a Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (FSEIS) for the Eglin Gulf Test Range (EGTR). The FSEIS assesses the potential impacts associated with developmental and operational flight testing of Theater Missile Defense (TMD) systems. The proposed action would allow for the development and testing of TMD systems to protect U.S. forces, friends, and allies around the world from attacks by ballistic missiles. No decision has been made concerning the EGTR proposal and cannot be made until at least 30 days after the NOA is published in the **Federal Register**. As the Executing Agent for the SEIS, the Air Force Development Test Center (AFDTC), Eglin Air Force Base (AFB), FL, managed the FSEIS for BMDO. The FSEIS analyzed additional missile launch and support locations, facility construction, launch preparation activities, missile flight tests, radar and optical tracking operations, and intercept tests in the EGTR portion of the Gulf of Mexico not analyzed in the *TMD Extended Test Range Final Environmental Impact Statement*, November 1994.

The Record of Decision on the *TMD Extended Test Range Final Environmental Impact Statement*, March 21, 1995, documented only the selection of U.S. Army Kwajalein Atoll, Republic of the Marshall Islands, and the White Sands Missile Range, NM, for TMD tests. However, additional interceptor and target missile launch options have been identified for the EGTR. These additional alternatives are within treaty and technology limitations. The EGTR alternatives would provide a more complete set of test scenarios than is possible at existing ranges, and would permit realistic threat ranges for testing of TMD interceptor systems. Copies of the *TMD Extended Test Range Final Environmental Impact Statement* are available at various locations within the interested communities. The exact locations can be provided by contacting the point of contact listed below.

The purpose of expanding the EGTR's missile defense testing capability is to

test TMD systems to validate their capability to intercept enemy missiles with the capability of ranges up to 1,100-kilometers (684 miles). Testing with both target and interceptor launch facilities located within the continental United States and its adjacent waters would provide a cost-effective, flexible, long-term means of meeting TMD test requirements.

Environmental issues analyzed in the FSEIS for the EGTR include: air quality; airspace control; biological resources (such as threatened or endangered species and wetlands); cultural resources; geology and soils; hazardous materials and waste; safety and health; land use; noise; socio-economic; transportation; utilities; visual and aesthetics; and water resources.

Lead Agency: Ballistic Missile Defense Organization.

Cooperating Agencies:

Department of the the Air Force
Department of the Army
Department of the Navy
Federal Aviation Administration
Department of Interior
U.S. Coast Guard

Proposed Action

The BMDO proposes to enhance the capability to conduct missile defense testing and training at the EGTR against targets simulating threat systems having the capability of ranges up to 1,100-kilometers (684 miles). Defensive missile intercepts would occur over the Gulf of Mexico within the EGTR.

Preferred Alternative

The preferred alternative includes three types of TMD activities:

- (a) Target launches from land at Eglin AFB and/or from aircraft above the Gulf of Mexico;
- (b) Interceptor (defensive missile) launches from Eglin AFB and/or ships; and
- (c) Intercept of the target missile by the interceptor over the Gulf of Mexico and within the EGTR.

The ground-launch locations evaluated at Eglin AFB are the Santa Rosa Island and Cape San Blas test locations. The air-launched locations evaluated include the airspace within the EGTR and other locations in the Gulf of Mexico within U.S. controlled airspace.

Other Alternatives

1. *Florida Keys Target Launches:* As an alternative to the air launch the Eglin AFB target launch sites, and ground-launch locations evaluated in the Florida Keys are Department of Defense controlled areas at Saddlebunch and Cudjoe Keys. These locations, along

with Boca Chica, Dredger, Sugarloaf, and Fleming Keys, are also evaluated to support missile tracking and sensor activities.

2. *Ship-based Target Launches:* In addition to the air launch and Eglin AFB target launch sites, targets launched from ships located within the EGTR and other locations in the Gulf of Mexico are evaluated in the FSEIS.

3. *Platform-based Interceptor Launches:* In addition to the Eglin AFB interceptor launch sites, interceptors launched from platforms located offshore from the Santa Rosa Island and Cape San Blas test locations and evaluated in the FSEIS.

4. *No Action:* In addition to the above alternatives, the No Action Alternative is considered for evaluation in the FSEIS.

Information/Comments

Information on the proposed action is available at the following internet address; <http://tw1.eglin.af.mil/46mtd/tmd.htm>. The point of contact for the FSEIS is: Ms. Linda Busch, 46 OG/OGM-TMD, 205 West D Ave., Suite 241, Eglin AFB, FL, 32542-6866. A Record of Decision on the EGTR SEIS alternatives could be made available no earlier than [30 days of publication].

Dated: September 4, 1998.

L.M. Bynum,

Alternate OSD Federal Register Liaison Officer, Department of Defense.

[FR Doc. 98-24376 Filed 9-10-98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 5000-04-M

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

Office of the Secretary

Strategic Environmental Research and Development Program, Scientific Advisory Board

ACTION: Notice.

In accordance with Section 10(a)(2) of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (Pub. L. 92-463), announcement is made of the following Committee meeting:

Date of Meeting: September 23, 1998 from 0830 to 1745, September 24, 1300 to 1745 and September 25, 1998 from 0800 to 1045.

Place: U.S. Army Engineer Waterways Experiment Station, Vicksburg, Mississippi.

Matters to be Considered: Research and Development proposals and continuing projects requesting Strategic Environmental Research and Development Program funds in excess of \$1M will be reviewed.

This meeting is open to the public. Any interested person may attend, appear before, or file statements with the Scientific Advisory Board at the time and in the manner permitted by the Board.