



Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
Military Integration Management Committee

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Official Comments and Position on the

GUAM AND CNMI MILITARY RELOCATION
DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

Compiled and approved by the
Policy Committee of the MIMC

BACKGROUND:

THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS MILITARY INTEGRATION MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE CHARTER was established in June, 2009 and sets forth the terms for and shall govern the function of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) Military Integration Management Committee (hereafter CNMI-MIMC) as the planning and policy-making entity for all activities that relate to the expansion of military training activities to CNMI resulting from the United States Pacific Command's (USPACOM) initiative known as the "Integrated Global Presence and Basing Strategy (IGPBS)", the United States' and the Government of Japan's "Roadmap for Realignment Implementation", and other defense transformation initiatives in CNMI and Guam. The CNMI-MIMC will be the official entity through which the CNMI will interface with the Department of the Navy, United States Marine Corps, Joint Guam Program Office (JGPO) and other Department of Defense units per the guidance include herein.

The CNMI-MIMC policy committee consists of eight members: the Governor of CNMI, the Lieutenant Governor, the President of the Senate, the Speaker of the House, the Mayor of Saipan, the Mayor of Tinian, the Mayor of Rota and the Mayor of the Northern Islands and/or their designees. This committee is chaired by the Governor.

OVERVIEW:

The MIMC Policy Committee fully supports the military relocation throughout the CNMI and Guam. We understand the desire and need of the Department of Defense to continue to have a strong military presence in our region. We also wish to express our sincere commitment to working together with Guam and having a partnership with our neighbor islands that will benefit the entire region. Our comments have been thoroughly discussed and are offered to constructively bring up further discussion on these issues in hopes that the concerns of our people will be taken into consideration. We look forward to a positive and open dialogue in regards to the future of our islands.

Comments on Draft Environmental Impact Statement/Overseas Environmental Impact Statement, Guam and CNMI Military Relocation, November 2009.

The following comments address several concerns, issues and impacts associated with the DEIS. Several comments propose actions that provide an economic benefit to offset the lack of economic opportunity that was initially envisioned during the early scoping session. These are in contrast to the potential loss of access and economic opportunities eliminated by securing two thirds of the island for training and restricting access and use. The remaining deal with impacts that were not addressed nor had any mitigation proposed.

- F-001-001** | **1. Section 2.3.1.2 page 2-11**
Issue: Economic benefit: possibility for local contract
Quote: "Grass cutting and landscaping maintenance is required to keep range lines of sight and access intact ... (Section 2.3.5.1 states, "Presently, ranges on Tinian are maintained by contract and agreements with the Municipality of Tinian. These contractual agreements would be updated to include maintenance of the proposed ranges.)
Comment: There is no existing contract between the local government and the Navy for maintenance of the Tinian Leased Lands. Providing opportunities for local employment is critical to a continuing positive working relationship between the local and military communities on Tinian. The following action is needed by the military to ensure positive relationships are established and maintained:
Solution: 1. Negotiate a new contract. Provide that all grass cutting and landscape maintenance on Tinian leased lands is bid to local contractors.
- F-001-002** | **2. Section 2.3.1.3, page 2-11**
Issue: Economic benefit: possibility for local contract.
Quote: "Sanitary facilities would be provided through portable means."
Comment: Providing opportunities for local employment is critical to a continuing positive working relationship between the local and military communities on Tinian. The following action is needed by the military to ensure positive relationships are established and maintained:
Solution: 1. Provide that all portable sanitary facilities needed for military operations on Tinian leased lands are bid to local contractors.
- F-001-003** | **3. Section 2.3.3.1, page 2-13**
Issue: Economic benefit: possibility for local contract.
Quote: Table 2.3.3-1. "3,280,000 rounds of ammunition will be expended on Tinian annually
Comments: 3,280,000 rounds of lead will contaminate Tinian soils. This does not count use during MIRC exercises. Every effort must be made to pick up the expended lead. Providing opportunities for local employment is critical to a continuing positive working relationship between the local and military communities on Tinian. The following action is needed by the military to ensure positive relationships are established and maintained:
Solution: 1. Provide that all clean up of expended bullets be bid out to local contractors and all contracts relative to this project are publically announced in the CNMI.
- F-001-004** | **4. Section 2.3.5.1, page 2-19.**
Issue: Economic benefit: possibility for local contract
Quote: "In order to properly maintain the range berms, the Marine Corps would periodically shut down the ranges and sift the expended rounds (i.e., ammunition fired from the weapons) from the soil on site, place the soil immediately back on the berm face, and contain and transport expended rounds to a local recycling contractor or smelter in accordance with all applicable regulations."
Comment: The term periodically is inadequate.
Solution: The period of time between times of clearing away the spent shells should be set by appropriate authorities so that the recycling can be accurate bid locally.

F-001-001

Thank you for your comment. In Section 2.3.5.1, the statements about current contract and agreements have been removed. A contract for range maintenance would be awarded in accordance with Federal Acquisition Regulations.

F-001-002

Thank you for your comment. Contracts for sanitary facilities will be awarded in accordance with Federal Acquisition Regulations. Local contractors would be eligible to compete for these contracts.

F-001-003

Thank you for your comment. DoD will certainly consider this request.

F-001-004

Thank you for your comment. Range clearance periods are determined by environmental testing procedures that will be outlined in local range directives and will be based on the local environment and range usage. At a minimum, Marine Corps directives require testing for potential contaminants every two years.

F-001-005	<p>5. Section 2.3.3.2, page 2-13</p> <p><i>Issue:</i> Impact: Protection against invasive species</p> <p><i>Quote:</i> "The transport of 200-400 Marines to Tinian from Guam for the proposed 1 week per month company level training exercise would be via air transportation."</p> <p><i>Comment:</i> Serious agricultural pests exist on Guam that might be introduced to Tinian. US Wildlife Services is predicting that MIRC exercises may be bringing troops from Asia. Because the Brown Tree Snake, the Coconut Rhinoceros Beetle and other invasive species do not now exist on Tinian, every aircraft landing on Tinian must be inspected by a CNMI Quarantine Inspector, who has been trained and certified by USDA, APHIS-PPQ.</p> <p><i>Solution:</i> Fully adopt the plan outlined on page 2-14, "Biosecurity risk assessment and biosecurity plan, non-native species plan." Fully qualified entomologists must be assigned full time to Tinian to monitor invasive species.</p>
F-001-006	<p>6. Section 2.3.3.3, page 2-14</p> <p><i>Issue:</i> Impact: Biosecurity procedures</p> <p><i>Quote:</i> "Biosecurity training would be coordinated through informal consultations with USDA, WS, CNMI Department of Fish and Wildlife, and DAWR through regional training authority 1 week prior to training event." Page 10-25 "A BSP with Risk Analysis is currently being developed by the National Non-native Species Council in conjunction with the USFWS, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Guam Division of Aquatic and Wildlife Resources, CNMI Department of Fish and Wildlife, and other interested parties to facilitate a comprehensive approach to control non-native species export, import and spread"</p> <p><i>Comment:</i> Training and maintenance of the biosecurity plan must be constant and on-going.</p> <p><i>Solution:</i> The following action is needed by the military to ensure positive relationships are established and maintained: Complete the comprehensive Biosecurity Plan. A qualified federally funded official should be stationed permanently on Tinian with responsibility of preventing the introduction of invasive species to Tinian.</p>
F-001-007	<p>7. Section 2.3.3.2, page 2-13</p> <p><i>Issue:</i> Impact: Tinian Harbor usage</p> <p><i>Quote:</i> "If equipment is moved by barge, a single barge would be able to carry the equipment necessary to support the estimated 200-400 Marine training evolution."</p> <p><i>Comment:</i> Tinian Harbor, particularly the breakwater, needs repair. It is clear that eventually the Navy will require the use of Tinian Harbor to maximize its utilization of DoD Tinian Leased Lands. Sooner or later, the harbor will have to be repaired. The CNMI does not have adequate funding to support the reconstruction of Tinian Harbor.</p> <p><i>Solution:</i> The DOD should coordinate with the Office of Economic Adjustment to identify sufficient funding to complete a comprehensive reconstruction study, including the dredging of the access channel and the inner harbor to the original World War II depth. The Department of the Interior should participate in this process.</p>
F-001-008	<p>8. Section 2.3.3.3, page 2-14</p> <p><i>Issue:</i> Impact: Lack of adequate advance planning on Tinian for training exercises</p> <p><i>Quote:</i> "Training activity would be scheduled and notice provided in newspapers and via public service announcements on radio and TV at least 1 week prior to training."</p> <p><i>Comment:</i> In the past, Tinian has often not received notice of military arrivals until after the plane arrived. Tinian needs long range forecasting to ensure proper coordination during training exercises. Communications between the training officers on Guam and Tinian must be direct.</p> <p><i>Solution:</i> The U.S. Marine Corps should establish a community relations/recruiting office on Tinian with direct communications to headquarters, Guam.</p>

F-001-005

Thank you for your comment. DoD will work with CNMI and USDA APHIS to meet the inspection recommendations on Tinian for the troops and equipment that will be arriving there under actions being proposed. All DoD personnel traveling to Tinian under the proposed action will be briefed on biosecurity issues. Issues related to the MIRC training are covered under a separate EIS and are not included in this EIS. Development of the MBP will include rapid response capability on based on Guam with ability to operate on Tinian. DoD complies with CNMI's quarantine and interdiction procedures and will continue to do so for all future activities on Tinian.

F-001-006

Thank you for your comment. The Micronesia Biosecurity Plan (MBP) is being developed. However some proposed project construction may occur before the MBP is finalized therefore interim biosecurity measures have been outlined in the FEIS (See Volume 2, Chapter 10, Section 10.2.2.6) to supplement existing measures. DoD will work with CNMI and USDA APHIS to meet the inspection recommendations on Tinian for the proposed buildup actions.

F-001-007

Thank you for your comment. The items identified in this comment are not part of the proposed action and are therefore not addressed in the EIS. However, CNMI can seek assistance of the Office of Insular Affairs for port improvements.

F-001-008

Thank you for your comment. As identified in Volume 3, Chapter 2 of the DEIS, the public would be notified via newspaper, radio and TV at least 1 week prior to training events. Establishment of a community relations recruitment office is not a part of the proposed action and therefore is not

- F-001-009** | **9. Section 2.3.3.3, page 2-14**
Issue: Economic benefit: Cultural resource education
Quote: "Cultural resource briefing would be completed prior to departure."
Comment: Cultural resource briefings regarding Tinian should be made on Tinian. Providing opportunities for local employment is critical to a continuing positive working relationship between the local and military communities on Tinian.
Solution: The following action is needed by the military to ensure positive relationships are established and maintained: Every Marine that visits Tinian should receive a cultural resource briefing on Tinian. This service should be bid out in the CNMI.
- F-001-010** | **10. Section 2.3.3.3, page 2-14**
Issue: Economic benefit: refueling ground transportation on Tinian.
Quote: "... there will be four sorties assuming two High Mobility Multipurpose Wheeled Vehicles (HMMWVs) are included in the equipment lift."
Comment: These vehicles will need refueling. Providing opportunities for local employment is critical to a continuing positive working relationship between the local and military communities on Tinian.
Solution: The following action is needed by the military to ensure positive relationships are established and maintained: Allow refueling to be done at locally owned fueling stations.
- F-001-011** | **11. Section 2.3.3.3, page 2-15.**
Issue: Economic benefit: feeding the Marines while on Tinian
Quote: "Evening meals would be served in the Bivouac Area utilizing Meals Ready to Eat or Unitized Group Rations."
Comment: Providing opportunities for local employment is critical to a continuing positive working relationship between the local and military communities on Tinian.
Solution: The following action is needed by the military to ensure positive relationships are established and maintained: Provide that supplemental rations may be purchased from the local community, particularly fruits and vegetables.
- F-001-012** | **12. Section 2.3.3.3., page 2-15.**
Issue: Economic benefit: liberty for the troops
Quote: "Marines would collect brass and ammunition containers for transport to Guam and the range would be secured by 3. p.m"
Comment: There is no mention of what the Marines will do after 3:00 pm, although a previous section states there will be some night training. Providing opportunities for the Marines to visit the historical sites of Tinian as well as San Jose Village is critical to a continuing positive working relationship between the local and military communities on Tinian.
Solution: The following action is needed by the military to ensure positive relationships are established and maintained: Provide for the Marines to have liberty as often as possible during their training exercise.
- F-001-013** | **13. Section 2.3.4.3, page 2-17.**
Issue: Social Impact: cross training for local DPS, THS and EMO personnel.
Quote: "A fire management plan that would address the proposed action at Tinian is under development by NAVFAC Pacific. Units using the proposed Tinian ranges would be required to plan for and have the capabilities to respond to fires, consistent with the fire management plan in preparation. Using units also would be responsible for their own medical service using corpsmen and would secure access to a casualty evacuation aircraft while training on Tinian." Section 2.3.5.2, page 2-20, states, "Fire condition monitoring for firefighting readiness and modification of training a appropriate as part of RTA management procedures. Unit-based fire fighting capacity to access range areas with appropriate equipment") Section 3.2.2.1, page 3-13, states, "Units using the proposed Tinian ranges would be required to plan for and have the capabilities to respond to fires consistent with the fire management plan in

part of the EIS. Coordination of military activities in CNMI is a Joint Region function.

F-001-009

Thank you for your comment. If contract support is required for briefings, local contractors would be considered.

F-001-010

Thank you for your comment. Military vehicles have large fuel capacities and carry extra fuel tanks. With the short duration of training in a relatively small area, there likely will not be a requirement for refueling of vehicles being used for training.

F-001-011

Thank you for your comment. If needed, supplemental rations could be purchased from local community.

F-001-012

Thank you for your comment. As stated in Chapter 16 of Volume 3 of the DEIS:
 Local stores and restaurants in San Jose would also benefit from the proposed action if the Marines in training are granted liberty, as has been the case in the past. However, such liberty is not currently guaranteed for regular training exercises under the current description of proposed action. Liberty may be available to advanced teams before and after training exercises, though these advanced teams would be much smaller, and thus, have a lesser economic impact.

F-001-013

Thank you for your comment. Fire conditions would be monitored daily by range operations, and training activities would be adjusted accordingly. A fire management plan would be part of the Range

F-001-013 preparation. This would include fire condition monitoring for firefighting readiness, modification of training as appropriate as part of RTA management procedures, and unit-based firefighting capacity to access range areas with appropriate equipment.
Comment: Fires in the training area occur annually. Live fire practice will increase the probability of range fires. The Tinian Fire Department has had to respond to grass fires begun by live fire exercises in the past. Unless the Marine Corps is planning on moving fire equipment to Tinian for each exercise capable of controlling and extinguishing wild fires during the windy-dry season, the Tinian Fire Department will be forced to respond. It is also possible that an aircraft crash or ordnance explosion might cause multiple serious injuries. Tinian has experienced an aircraft crash during a training exercise when the Tinian THC was called to respond.
Solution: The following action is needed by the military to ensure positive relationships are established and maintained: The Marine Corps should provide continuous cross training activities with Tinian DPS, THC and EMO personnel. During exercises the Tinian Health Center and Tinian Department of Public Safety should be alerted.

F-001-014 14. Section 2.3.4.4, page 2-17.
Issue: Economic impact: Closure of Broadway.
Quote: "Broadway would be closed during training."
Comment: The lands north of West Field and east of Broadway are currently used by local ranchers according to the leaseback agreement. If Broadway is closed, ranchers will not be able to water their cattle.
Solution: The following action is needed by the military to ensure positive relationships are established and maintained: One of the old roads to the east of the leaseback ranches could be opened to provide ranchers with access to their cattle ranches.

F-001-015 15. Section 8.2.2.1, page 8-15.
Issue: Economic impact: termination of leaseback grazing permits.
Quote: "Alternative 1 would affect 35 agricultural/grazing permits, totaling approximately 2,552 ac (1,032 ha) as shown on Figure 8.2-1. There is little cropland and the soil types on Tinian do not meet the requirements for prime farmland (Young 1989, USDA 2009)." ". . . This would safeguard the public by keeping them out of any areas where there are potential dangers while simultaneously maintaining access to areas where training is not being conducted." "Existing leases within the LBA would be reviewed and potentially terminated." Page 8-17 "Permits within the LBA would be terminated, causing less than significant impact to land ownership but significant impacts to agricultural use and to consistency with FPPA" Page 10-23 "Once more details are developed for the training operations on Tinian, the Navy would review the decision to terminate leases and retain those that are determined compatible with military mission requirements for the area."
Comment: These lease lands are used for grazing cattle. The grass grows quite well and provides a steady income to those who manage cattle ranches. The impact is significant to Tinian.
Solution: Those ranches that are directly impacted by training should be relocated to other sites within the Lease Back Area, possibly west of 8th Avenue. Only those permits affected by the firing zone should be terminated. These permit holders should be offered equal leases on other lands within the Lease Back Area.

F-001-016 16. Section 2.5.1, page 2-23
Issue: Impact clarification: Definition of range area
Quote: As shown in Figure 2.5-1, all four ranges associated with Alternative 1 are in the south-central portion of the MLA within the area delineated by 8th Avenue, 90th Street and Broadway.
Comment: 90th Street is not identified on any of the maps.
Solution: The north side of 86th Street and the east side of 8th Avenue form the southern and western boundaries of the range.

Management Plan that would be developed to guide range operations. A cooperative agreement would have to be established between the DoD and Tinian Emergency Services to coordinate appropriate responses. The DoD may provide supplements/grants to Tinian Emergency Services to ensure that they are capable of meeting the increased demands that military training may present. Fire prevention and management for training on Tinian will occur as described within the MIRC biological opinion (USFWS 2010, 96 pp.) In addition, a new Fire Management Plan will be prepared to address the potential for fires on Tinian as the result of live-fire training activities on the proposed ranges (DoN 2010, p. 129). Though the plan developed due to MIRC will cover all planned training on Tinian, except the new live-fire ranges, the new Fire Management Plan will address the existing training, the increased training, and the new live-fire ranges on Tinian in one comprehensive Fire Management Plan. The Fire Management Plan will include protocols for monitoring fire conditions and adjusting training as needed (e.g., firing may be disallowed under certain fire conditions), location and management of fuels reductions (DoN 2010, p. 36), fire breaks, fire fighting roads, fire fighting water systems, burn hazard assessment response, on-call helicopter fire suppression, protocols for using units to be briefed by range control on requirements suitable to the conditions of the day, and protocols that will be implemented should a fire occur (e.g., specifying how the range will shut down and fire suppression actions will be taken). In particular, the Fire Management Plan will provide guidance and direction to ensure fires do not encroach into vegetated areas that can be used by the bat, megapode, or moorhen. The new Fire Management Plan will be completed and fully operational on the first day of training at the new firing ranges on Tinian (DoN 2010, p. 133-134). No tracers or fire igniting devices will be used on Tinian ranges.

F-001-014

Thank you for your comment. DoD would work with citizens of Tinian to

F-001-017	<p>17. Section 2.5.1, Page 2-23 <i>Issue:</i> Impact: FAA Mitigation Zone <i>Quote:</i> "All four range footprints partially overlay the FAA Mitigation Area." Page 8-10 "There is a Federal Aviation Administration wildlife mitigation area and a no wildlife disturbance area in the LBA." <i>Comment:</i> The mitigation zone was created at the time that the airport was being planned and created <i>Solution:</i> The FAA mitigation zone must be re designated.</p>
F-001-018	<p>18. Section 3.2.2.1, page 3-13 <i>Issue:</i> Cultural impact: land clearing. <i>Quote:</i> "Although construction footprints would be minimal, it is assumed the full area would be graded or cleared of vegetation." <i>Comment:</i> The process of clearing will disturb identified archaeological sites. <i>Solution:</i> As land clearing is conducted, all identified archaeological sites must be properly excavated. All artifacts are to be recovered and curated by Historic Preservation Office, Saipan. Most important, the most distinctive artifacts are to be returned to Tinian to be housed in an appropriate museum.</p>
F-001-019	<p>19. Section 12.2.2.2, page 12-17 <i>Issue:</i> Impact: Tinian Historic Properties will be disturbed by construction and use of the firing ranges. <i>Quote:</i> "Alternative 1 would result in significant direct impacts to 10 NRHP-eligible or listed archaeological sites and indirect impacts to 55 archaeological sites, one HHL, and one traditional cultural property. Page 16-22 "CNMI could request federal financial assistance for development of a small museum dedicated to Tinian's history" <i>Comment:</i> Archaeological remains within the LBA are extremely valuable to the people of Tinian. <i>Solution:</i> CNMI Historic Preservation Officers must be present during all land clearing and construction procedures. All artifacts discovered must be curreted by the CNMI Historic Preservation Office. All distinctive artifacts are to be returned to Tinian for display in a proper museum.</p>
F-001-020	<p>20. Section 4.2.1.1, page 4-16 <i>Issue:</i> contamination for surface water from leaks or spills." <i>Quote:</i> "The storage of hazardous materials and fuels pose a continued risk of surface water contamination" <i>Comment:</i> In is important to prevent contamination of surface water resources. <i>Solution:</i> Provide a standard operating procedure for storage of hazardous materials on Tinian. Fuel storage spills can be eliminated by purchasing fuel locally in currently approved sites and locations</p>
F-001-021	<p>21. Section 8.1.2.6, page 8-10 <i>Issue:</i> Economic Impact: loss of use of Broadway for tour busses traveling to National Historic Sites at North Field. <i>Quote:</i> "There are seven points of interest within the LBA that are on the Tinian self guided tour; however, public access is restricted during training" Page 9-5 "Broadway would be closed during training. However, the public can travel up Sⁿ Avenue, check in with personnel manning the first access gate. Once cleared by range control, they can proceed up 8th Avenue, checking in with each successive guard point until clear of the training area." "No potential mitigation is suggested for Alternative 1. <i>Comment:</i> Tour busses now using Broadway, which is in good condition, will have to use Sⁿ Avenue. Portions of 8th Avenue are not paved. This will cause damage to busses and rental cars. <i>Solution:</i> As all firing ranges are north of 86th street, vehicles should be allowed to turn west on 86th Street to reach 8th Avenue, to proceed to historical sites on North Field.</p>

provide access on leaseback areas consistent with operational requirements.

F-001-015

Thank you for your comment. The Navy has re-evaluated the need to terminate all subleases in the leaseback area and will only propose to terminate subleases in the leaseback area that are within the range footprint and associated Surface Danger Zone of the proposed firing ranges.

As to possible sites for the relocation of any leases, such actions would be under the control of Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) officials as they are responsible for non-federal land use decisions on Tinian. DoD will work with CNMI land use and natural resource officials to ensure that native forest habitat concerns for Endangered Species Act (ESA) listed species are taken into account in any relocation effort.

F-001-016

Thank you for your comment. Text and Figures in Volume 3 have been corrected to replace mention of 90th Street with 86th Street.

F-001-017

Thank you for your comment. The specific location of an area to replace the FAA mitigation area is being discussed with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The new area will be included in the final EIS.

F-001-018

Thank you for your comment. As discussed in the Volume 3, Section 12.2, the area that would be cleared of vegetation has been surveyed and data recovery would be conducted at all archaeological sites that are eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. In

F-001-022 | 22. Section 14.2.2.1, page 14-4
Issue: Economic impact: roads in MLA.
Quote: "No mitigation measures are suggested."
Comments Roads in on military leased lands were constructed by Seabees during World War II. Regular use of these roads by heavy military equipment will cause deterioration of the roadway.
Solution: An annual road maintenance program should be established. Key roads should be upgraded to handle frequent use by heavy equipment.

F-001-023 | 23. Section 17.2-1, page 17-7.
Issue: Impact: Hazardous Materials Transport/Transfer Consequences and Mitigation
Quote: Page 17-8, "Due to the projected increase in the volume of hazardous waste, Alternative 1 could result in significant impacts to human health and the environment."
Comments: No potential mitigation measures are identified. Mitigation plans should be established.
Solution: An independent party should be contracted to provide constant surveillance and inspections for full compliance with federal, local and DoD laws and regulations and implement corrective actions as necessary at the expense of the Navy.

F-001-024 | The following comments are exclusively focused on the proposed mitigation measures, which remain unclear and undefined in terms of which government entity, federal or state, will be responsible for carrying out these actions. Furthermore, the mitigation costs associated with addressing the referenced environmental impact on the affected area (Tinian) are not provided. This is a grave concern in that the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) neither has the capacity or the financial means to ease the environmental and socioeconomic impacts brought forth by the planned military exercises on the island of Tinian.
For instance, the draft study reveals that there will be no significant socioeconomic impact on the infrastructure, housing, regional employment, and income; however, "effects on commercial and recreational fishermen, divers, and boaters would be short term in nature and produce some temporary access limitations." The same also shows that "some off shore events, especially if coincident with peak fishing locations and periods" could lead to "temporary displacement and potential economic loss to individual fishermen." We agree with the preceding statement; however, we feel that the second clause in this statement needs further clarification. In other words, how short will these effects be? What measurement tool was used to make this determination? What type of survey (if any) was conducted to conclude that the financial hardships that will be experienced by fishermen as a result of the temporary access limitations will yield a minimal impact? We are concerned because given our current dismal economic situation, most of the CNMI people rely on farming and fishing for supplemental income and subsistence. Moreover, we do not think that the advance public notifications announcing the temporary closure of these affected areas would suffice in terms of making up the economic losses incurred by the fishermen. Tourism would also be affected due to closure to some premium diving spots. Perhaps, as a recommendation, the DoD should provide some monetary compensation to the affected state (Tinian and Guam) for the incurred losses.

F-001-025 | Another area of public concern involves the use of the Municipality of Tinian and Aguigan's airspace. Restricting airspace use may hinder the municipality's plan to expand its airport to allow direct international flights and this action may further exacerbate the island's local economy amid poor tourist arrivals. As with the previous recommendation, I suggest that the federal government consider providing some financial assistance to the municipality to alleviate the losses incurred by this airspace restriction.

The planned United States military buildup on Guam and the CNMI has many aspects for the benefits of the community if major preparation and mitigation are "balanced" and support will certainly harmonized the relationship of the DoD personnel with the local community. Although there are also many negative and environmental aspects of the buildup, we look upon it in with optimism for the benefit of our community.

accordance with the Programmatic Agreement, distinctive artifacts would be curated on Tinian with the remainder of materials curated with the Historic Preservation Office in Saipan.

F-001-019

Thank you for your comment. The DoD will continue to work with the CNMI Historic Preservation Officer (HPO) on the mitigation associated with the construction and land clearing on Tinian. The CNMI HPO's office will review and approve all work plans associated with this project. In accordance with the Programmatic Agreement, display quality artifacts from the excavations on Tinian would stay on the island with the remainder of the collection curated on Saipan.

F-001-020

Thank you for your comment. The DoD is committed to the protection and responsible stewardship of the environment. The DoD is committed to the safe handling and use of all hazardous substances, including lubricants, fuels, solvents, propulsion system materials, etc. In fact, when feasible, the DoD is attempts to reduce or eliminate the use of various hazardous substances to the greatest extent possible and substituting them for less toxic substances. When using hazardous substances, environmental laws and regulations (e.g., RCRA) must be followed by DoD that are designed to be protective of human health, welfare, and the environment. In order to implement these laws and regulations, DoD has developed various procedures, protocol, and directives designed to proactively eliminate or minimize the inadvertent leakage, spill or release of pollutants to the environment. These actions involve comprehensive administrative, engineering, and operations mandates, best management practices (BMPs) and controls in place to prevent or minimize the inadvertent leakage, spill, or release of hazardous/toxic substances. These BMPs and other controls are fully described in the EIS document. These actions will protect public health, welfare, and the environment from adverse impacts associated with the use of solvents,

F-001-026

As your report emphasizes the natural resources that we can provide in our community, take into account the proximity and the closeness of the northern tip of Guam and the most southern tip of the island of Rota. We are appropriately forty-seven (47) miles away.

The major development of the buildup is just in our doorstep in the northwest area of the island of Guam, which we can overlook from Rota on a clear day.

Rota would like to benefit from this buildup and we can offer our island with its great flora and fauna or our natural resources as an alternative recreation for the DoD personnel. Below are some of the positive objectives that we would like to offer:

- -Usage of a rest and recreation facilities
- -Create an adopt-school or adopt-village program
- -DoD personnel tourism group would create additional income
- -Plan ferry type transportation for travel with the proximity of the bases
- -Create an ecotourism for DoD personnel such a "bonnie stomping"
- -More local opportunity for economic development
- -More local workforce employed
- -Create a liaison office of the DoD personnel with the local government based in Rota

These are just a few of the way Rota can balance the support of the DoD personnel based on Guam. The strategic approach is that we all benefit from revenues collected from tourism and usage of facilities within Rota. This is an added value for recreations of DoD personnel that will be unique and a big difference from Guam. We are sure the DoD personnel will appreciate what we have to offer in Rota.

The other aspect since the report is about balancing the support of DoD Guam; we feel that a great mitigation effort should be done within our island. Below are some of our concerns and issues that we want to implement in our island with the vast support of DoD Guam.

- -Continuous update of plan military exercise to inform our community
- -Information of the magnitude or impact of this exercise to our community
- -Plan an emergency alternative or program for mitigation efforts
- -Inform our community of the necessary preparation and usage of Rota
- -Coordinate at all times with our local government of events planned within our area
- -Inform and update any future unclassified plans for Rota
- -Continuous support and studies of environmental and usages of natural resources

In the economic aspects, we don't have major businesses or contractors to bid for any DoD Guam projects. Although, we would appreciate if DoD would upgrade our facilities to benefit everyone, especially DoD personnel coming to Rota for recreational purpose.

- -Providing continuous transportation between Guam and Rota
- -Help prepare our harbor area so that we can have adequate supplies from fuel to consumer goods
- -Upgrade our marina to provide more fishing or personal recreation boats to use by everyone
- -Support our farmers by purchasing our agriculture products and other domestic product we can provide to the DoD Guam

Our administration would like to tap on the vast resources of DoD Guam and to create a working relationship. We feel that Rota can accommodate some of these aspects that Guam may not be able to handle. The Mayor of Rota is prepared to fully cooperate and assist in any means necessary.

herbicides, pesticides, fertilizers, propulsion systems, explosives, or other hazardous substances.

F-001-021

Thank you for your comment. Under the preferred alternative, civilian access to 86th Street would be maintained, even while the firing range is in use.

F-001-022

Thank you for your comment. The proposed action on Tinian has very little impact to the proposed roadways. Military personnel would be required to walk to the training facilities. If other training operations are proposed in the future that would impact the roadways, mitigation would be considered as appropriate.

F-001-023

Thank you for your comment. The DoD is committed to the protection and responsible stewardship of the environment. The DoD is committed to the safe handling and use of all hazardous substances, including lubricants, solvents, propulsion system materials, etc. In fact, when feasible, the DoD is attempts to reduce or eliminate the use of various hazardous substances to the greatest extent possible and substituting them for less toxic substances.

When using hazardous substances, environmental laws and regulations (e.g., RCRA) must be followed by DoD that are designed to be protective of human health, welfare, and the environment. In order to implement these laws and regulations, DoD has developed various procedures, protocol, and directives designed to proactively eliminate or minimize the inadvertent leakage, spill or release of pollutants to the environment. These actions involve comprehensive administrative, engineering, and operations mandates, best management practices (BMPs), standard operating procedures (SOPs), and controls in place to prevent or

CLOSING:

The CNMI MIMC understands that the proposed military actions are complex projects involving multiple components of the US Marine Corps, Army, and Navy. While the Draft Environmental Impact Statement offers much needed answers to the proposed military build-up in our region, the lack of mitigation measures for the CNMI are of great concern.

The MIMC also understands that working in partnership with both the Department of Defense and the Territory of Guam are critical in reaching the ultimate goal of providing a unified plan that will provide both the freedom and security that we have come to enjoy from our association with the United States.

We welcome the military build up in our region in whatever capacity the U.S. Military deems appropriate and acceptable as long as the mitigation effects are in direct proportion to the proposed actions.

Sincerely,

Governor Benigno R. Fitial
Chairman
CNMI – Military Integration Management Committee

minimize the inadvertent leakage, spill, or release of hazardous/toxic substances. These BMPs, SOPs, and other controls are fully described in the EIS document. However, these are not considered mitigation measures since they are already being performed by law and do not represent new actions to "mitigate" hazardous substance usage issues. These actions (e.g., BMPs, SOPs, etc.) will protect public health, welfare, and the environment from adverse impacts associated with the use of solvents, herbicides, pesticides, fertilizers, propulsion systems, explosives, or other hazardous substances.

F-001-024

Thank you for your comment. The Final EIS has been updated to provide the further clarification you have requested.

The mitigation suggestion has been taken into consideration. Expanded mitigation discussion is available in the FEIS.

F-001-025

Thank you for your comment. The proposed action and alternatives for Special Use Airspace are covered in detail in the DEIS Volumes. Under the proposed actions, there are no changes to existing arrivals or departures from or to Tinian and/or Aguigan. Current flight operations would continue as before.

F-001-026

Thank you for your comment. For the proposed actions, Volume 1, Section 1.4.2.5 summarizes the site selection analysis as it relates to the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas (CNMI). Existing infrastructure and availability of DoD property for exclusive military use were key criteria and resulted in the selection of Tinian for certain proposed actions vice other locations with the CNMI.



SEVENTEENTH NORTHERN MARIANAS
COMMONWEALTH LEGISLATURE
P.O. BOX 500586, SAIPAN, MP 96950

February 17, 2010

JPGO c/o NAVFAC Pacific
258 Makalapa Drive, Suite 100
Pearl Harbor, HI 96860-3134
Attention: GPMO

Subject: Official Comments on the Guam and CNMI Military Relocation Draft Environmental Impact Statement

Dear Secretary of the Navy:

The Senate and House of Representatives of the Seventeenth Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature (CNMI Legislature) hereby submits comments as enumerated below on the Guam and CNMI Military Relocation Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS). The Commonwealth Legislature will not comment on the potential impacts to the island of Guam; however, the CNMI Legislature supports The Thirtieth Guam Legislature's request for an extension of the deadline to comment on the DEIS as set forth Substitute Resolution No. 275-30(L.S).

Nevertheless, the Commonwealth Legislature generally supports the relocation of the military to the region in the anticipation of residual economic benefits to the Commonwealth. Our concerns rest mainly with the impact the proposed training exercises will have on the island of Tinian. Therefore, the comments below will pertain only to Volume 3 of the DEIS, Marine Corps Relocation-Training on Tinian.

Foremost, the Commonwealth Legislature wants to ensure that any negative socio-economic impacts associated with the proposed action are at a minimum mitigated through federal efforts, or in the alternative outweighed by the economic benefits the military training on Tinian will bring to the CNMI. We note, however, the Summary of Impacts in Table 16.2-1 which suggests that the economic costs of the proposed action are expected to overshadow the benefits. It is therefore intent of the CNMI Legislature to recommend ways to mitigate these adverse effects. At the outset, the Legislature makes the following general comments on the DEIS:

- A. Economic Impact of the Training on Tinian. The monthly training on Tinian will have a negative economic impact on the island's tourism industry which is not addressed in the DEIS. The monthly training will require the closure of Broadway, which is the main highway leading to the northern part of Tinian where many tourist

F-002-001

Thank you for your comment. The DoD carefully considered all requests to extend the length of the comment period beyond the 45-day minimum required by NEPA. In evaluating multiple options, DoD leadership determined that a 90-day comment period best balanced the need for sufficient time to review a complex document with the requirement to reach a timely decision regarding the proposed military buildup on Guam.

F-002-002

Thank you for your comment. Restrictions to certain areas are required to maintain public safety. DoD acknowledges that maintaining access to important cultural and recreational sites is important when the firing ranges are in use. So the current plan is to access the important cultural and recreational sites in the northern portion of Tinian through 8th Avenue. Although specific plans concerning access to sites through 8th Avenue have not been specifically developed, DoD looks forward to working with stakeholders in developing plans for access that balance operational needs, public safety concerns, and the continuing public use and enjoyment of these sites.

The Navy has re-evaluated the need to terminate all subleases in the leaseback area and will only propose to terminate subleases in the leaseback area that are within the range footprint and associated Surface Danger Zone of the proposed firing ranges.

As to possible sites for the relocation of any leases, such actions would be under the control of CNMI officials as they are responsible for non-federal land use decisions on Tinian. DoD will work with CNMI land use and natural resource officials to ensure that native forest habitat concerns for ESA listed species are taken into account in any relocation effort.

F-002-002

and cultural attractions are located. The closure of Broadway for one week each month will result in a loss of visitors to the island. Moreover, the fact that there is a military presence and firing range in the area may discourage visitors from visiting the island. The closure of the Broadway will also prevent farmers and grazers from maintaining their farms and pastures for one week each month. This will result in a loss of crops and revenue for the farmers and grazers. The DEIS does not offer any mitigation to such economic losses during the monthly training schedules.

F-002-003

- B. Social and Cultural Impact of the Training on Tinian. The training on Tinian may displace farmers and grazers that have been using military lease area for decades to farm for their subsistence. The closure of the Broadway would also prohibit the residents of Tinian from accessing beaches, attractions, cultural and historic sites, and other points of interest during the one week monthly trainings. Sec. 7, vol. 3 of the DEIS focuses on the airspace around Tinian that will be affected by the proposed military actions. Sec. 7.1.2.1 alludes to the possible use of North field on Tinian for future military aircraft and exercises. This would seem to preclude the use of the area as a historical tourist site, which contradicts mitigation efforts in the DEIS to allow access to the area for visitors and residents (Table 16.2-2). The North Field and the Atomic Bomb Pits are important historical sites that have the potential to add socio-economic benefit to the CNMI. The Legislature would want to see assurances that these sites will be permanently open to the public.

Moreover, it is unclear from the DEIS if the Marines will be allowed to leave the training facility during their one week stay on Tinian; thus, Tinian's infrastructure may be unduly strained and the local community may not be prepared for the influx of 200-400 Marines each month. Furthermore, the residents of Tinian may be adversely affected by the noise discharged at the firing range during the Marines one week training. The DEIS does not offer more information or any mitigation to such negative social and cultural impacts during the monthly training schedules.

F-002-004

- C. Training on Tinian Impact to Wildlife. The Marines will have to build a training facility which will involve removal of the wildlife habitats of the area including special status or indigenous trees, plants, birds and other wildlife. Moreover, the monthly training involves fire training will negatively affect the birds and other animals located in the area. If such birds and animals are not removed to build the training facilities, they will be driven off by the noise of guns firing for one week each month. The DEIS does not offer any mitigation to such wildlife impact threats during the monthly training schedules.

F-002-005

- D. Transportation of Marines Impact to Tinian. The Marines will be transported to Tinian from Guam. This poses the threat of importing non-indigenous or invasive species to the island from Guam especially the brown tree snake which is a public health hazard. Brown tree snakes are known to kill babies, birds, and other small animals. Tinian is a small community and the invasion of the brown tree snakes will

F-002-003

Thank you for your comment. The Navy has re-evaluated the need to terminate all subleases in the leaseback area and will only propose to terminate subleases in the leaseback area that are within the range footprint and associated Surface Danger Zone of the proposed firing ranges.

As to possible sites for the relocation of any leases, such actions would be under the control of Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) officials as they are responsible for non-federal land use decisions on Tinian. DoD will work with CNMI land use and natural resource officials to ensure that native forest habitat concerns for Endangered Species Act (ESA) listed species are taken into account in any relocation effort.

Restrictions to certain areas are required to maintain public safety. DoD concurs that maintaining access to important cultural and recreational sites is important when the firing ranges are in use. So the current plan is to access the important cultural and recreational sites in the northern portion of Tinian through 8th Avenue. Although specific plans concerning access to sites through 8th Avenue have not been specifically developed, DoD looks forward to working with stakeholders in developing plans for access that balance operational needs, public safety concerns, and the continuing public use and enjoyment of these sites.

DoD's proposed project does not include additional use of North Field, and decisions regarding troop liberty on Tinian has not yet been established. Updated information, as available, has been inserted into the FEIS.

It is also noted that the Tinian Chamber of Commerce has recommended that liberty be provided to Marine training on Tinian. The businesses on Tinian would benefit from the money spent. Our response was that

F-002-005

surely harm the community. The DEIS does not offer any mitigation to such transportation concerns during the monthly training schedules.

F-002-006

- F. Air Space Surrounding Training Facility. Private and commercial aircrafts regularly fly over Tinian particularly the military land lease in order to land on Tinian and Saipan. The FAA raised concerns regarding the firing range and the air space surrounding the area. According to the DEIS (vol. 3, sec. 2.4), the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) will not require the establishment of Special Use Airspace (SUA) over the proposed training area. However, in recent meetings with the Legislature, the FAA has raised serious concerns about the likely need to designate the area as SUA. This would have a profound and negative impact on commercial aircraft operating in and around Saipan and Tinian. Moreover, the section referred to above concedes that "it is possible that SUA may be designated to overlie the proposed ranges in the future." The FAA has suggested that at a minimum the military mitigate this impact by providing radar equipment on the island of Saipan or Tinian, as at present all inbound and outbound aircraft in the area below 4000 feet are invisible to Guam radar. The Legislature further recommends that the military work closely with the FAA in the future to ensure that the proposed actions do not impede commercial aircraft in the CNMI. The DEIS does not offer information or any mitigation to such air space issues during the monthly training schedules.

Volume 3 Marine Corps Relocation - Training on Tinian of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement

In addition to the foregoing general and broad concerns regarding the Marine Relocation – Training on Tinian, the CNMI Legislature raises several issues with regard to specific sections of Volume 3 Marine Corps Relocation - Training on Tinian of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement as follows:

F-002-007

1. Section 2.3.1.2, page 2-11

Issue: Economic benefit: possibility for local contract

Quote: "Grass cutting and landscaping maintenance is required to keep range lines of sight and access intact ... (Section 2.3.5.I states, "Presently, ranges on Tinian are maintained by contract and agreements with the Municipality of Tinian. These contractual agreements would be updated to include maintenance of the proposed ranges.)

Comment: There is no existing contract between the local government and the Navy for maintenance of the Tinian Leased Lands. Providing opportunities for local employment is critical to a continuing positive working relationship between the local and military communities on Tinian. The following action is needed by the military to ensure positive relationships are established and maintained:

Solution: 1. Negotiate a new contract. Provide that all grass cutting and landscape maintenance on Tinian leased lands is bid to local contractors.

the FEIS cannot confirm that liberty would be provided to the Marines training on Tinian. Liberty is granted by the commanders and may or may not be granted depending on the training schedule, number of personnel, and other considerations.

Noise impacts are discussed in the Chapter 6 of Volume 3, section 6.2 of the DEIS.

F-002-004

Thank you for your comment. The Navy in coordination with the FAA and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) would revise the existing FAA Mitigation Area to encompass the central escarpment associated with Mt. Laso to protect some of the largest remaining areas of intact native limestone forest on Tinian. In addition, a Forest Enhancement Plan and associated implementation is being conducted by the USFWS.

F-002-005

Thank you for your comment. Numerous measures are proposed to prevent the brown treesnake from being transported to Tinian. These are described in Volume 3, Section 10.2.2.3 and there are additional measures described in Volume 2, Chapter 10. In addition to specific inspections currently performed, these sections describe a Micronesia Biosecurity Plan (MBP) that is under development. This plan will have additional procedures to prevent the brown treesnake from being transported off of Guam. Additional description of the contents of the plan has been added to the FEIS and a statement has been added that the Navy is committed to the DoD-related portion of the plan.

F-002-006

Thank you for your comments. While it is possible that future military

F-002-007

2. Section 2.3.1.3, page 2-11

Issue: Economic benefit: possibility for local contract.

Quote: "Sanitary facilities would be provided through portable means."

Comment: Providing opportunities for local employment is critical to a continuing positive working relationship between the local and military communities on Tinian. The following action is needed by the military to ensure positive relationships are established and maintained:

Solution: 1. Provide that all portable sanitary facilities needed for military operations on Tinian leased lands are bid to local contractors.

3. Section 2.3.3.1, page 2-13

Issue: Economic benefit: possibility for local contract.

Quote: Table 2.3.3-1. "3,280,000 rounds of ammunition will be expended on Tinian annually.

Comments: 3,280,000 rounds of lead will contaminate Tinian soils. This does not count use during MIRC exercises. Every effort must be made to pick up the expended lead. Providing opportunities for local employment is critical to a continuing positive working relationship between the local and military communities on Tinian. The following action is needed by the military to ensure positive relationships are established and maintained:

Solution: 1. Provide that the removal of all expended lead needed for military operations on Tinian leased lands are bid to local contractors.

4. Section 2.3.5.1, page 2-19

Issue: Economic benefit: possibility for local contract

Quote: "In order to properly maintain the range berms, the Marine Corps would periodically shut down the ranges and sift the expended rounds (i.e., ammunition fired from the weapons) from the soil on site, place the soil immediately back on the berm face, and contain and transport expended rounds to a local recycling contractor or smelter in accordance with all applicable regulations."

Comment: The term periodically is inadequate.

Solution: The period of time between times of clearing away the spent shells should be set by appropriate authorities so that the recycling can be accurate bid locally.

F-002-008

5. Section 2.3.3.2, page 2-13

Issue: Impact: Protection against invasive species

Quote: "The transport of 200-400 Marines to Tinian from Guam for the proposed 1 week per month company level training exercise would be via air transportation."

Comment: Serious agricultural pests exist on Guam that might be introduced to Tinian. US Wildlife Services is predicting that MIRC exercises may be bringing troops from Asia. Because the Brown Tree Snake, the Coconut Rhinoceros Beetle and other invasive species do not now exist on Tinian, every aircraft landing on Tinian must be inspected by a CNMI Quarantine Inspector, who has been trained and certified by USDA, APHIS-PPQ.

activities would require changes to the existing airspace surrounding Tinian and Saipan, under this proposal, there would be no requirements for Special Use Airspace or changes to the current flight activities into and out of the airports located on Saipan and Tinian. Any changes to the airspace for the CNMI area would require close coordination with the FAA and comply with all NEPA requirements for FAA rule-making procedures. The FAA would have the final authority on any decisions to modify existing airspace in this area. Since there would be no changes to existing airspace management for Saipan IAP or Tinian, there would be no mitigation required.

F-002-007

Thank you for your comment. Contracts for range maintenance would be awarded in accordance with Federal Acquisition Regulations. Local contractors would be eligible to compete for these contracts.

F-002-008

Thank you for your comment. DoD will work with CNMI and USDA APHIS to meet the inspection requirements on Tinian for the troops and equipment that will be arriving there under actions being proposed. All DoD personnel traveling to Tinian under the proposed action will be briefed on biosecurity issues. Issues related to the MIRC training are covered under a separate EIS and are not included in this EIS.

F-002-008

Solution: Fully adopt the plan outlined on page 2-14, "Biosecurity risk assessment and biosecurity plan, non-native species plan." Fully qualified entomologists must be assigned full time to Tinian to monitor invasive species.

6. Section 2.3.3.3, page 2-14

Issue: Impact: Biosecurity procedures

Quote: "Biosecurity training would be coordinated through informal consultations with USDA, WS, CNMI Department of Fish and Wildlife, and DAWR through regional training authority 1 week prior to training event." Page 10-25 "A BSP with Risk Analysis is currently being developed by the National Non-native Species Council in conjunction with the USFWS, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Guam Division of Aquatic and Wildlife Resources, CNMI Department of Fish and Wildlife, and other interested parties to facilitate a comprehensive approach to control non-native species export, import and spread"

Comment: Training and maintenance of the biosecurity plan must be constant and on-going.

Solution: The following action is needed by the military to ensure positive relationships are established and maintained: Complete the comprehensive Biosecurity Plan. A qualified federally funded official should be stationed permanently on Tinian with responsibility of preventing the introduction of invasive species to Tinian.

F-002-009

7. Section 2.3.3.2, page 2-13

Issue: Impact: Tinian Harbor usage

Quote: "If equipment is moved by barge, a single barge would be able to carry the equipment necessary to support the estimated 200-400 Marine training evolution."

Comment: Tinian Harbor, particularly the breakwater, needs repair. It is clear that eventually the Navy will require the use of Tinian Harbor to maximize its utilization of DoN Tinian Leased Lands. Sooner or later, the harbor will have to be repaired. The CNMI does not have adequate funding to support the reconstruction of Tinian Harbor.

Solution: The DON should coordinate with the Office of Economic Adjustment to identify sufficient funding to complete a comprehensive reconstruction study, including the dredging of the access channel and the inner harbor to the original World War II depth. The Department of the Interior should participate in this process.

F-002-010

8. Section 2.3.3.3, page 2-14

Issue: Impact: Lack of adequate advance planning on Tinian for training exercises

Quote: "Training activity would be scheduled and notice provided in newspapers and via public service announcements on radio and TV at least 1 week prior to training."

Comment: In the past, Tinian has often not received notice of military arrivals until after the plane arrived. Tinian needs long range forecasting to ensure proper coordination during training exercises. Communications between the training officers on Guam and Tinian must be direct.

Solution: The U.S. Marine Corps should establish a community relations/recruiting office on Tinian with direct communications to headquarters, Guam.

F-002-009

Thank you for your comment. No airport, harbor, or roadway improvements are required for the scale of operations in the proposed action.

F-002-010

Thank you for your comment. This comment is a good suggestion and the DoD will working closely to coordinate its activities with local stakeholders to minimize any adverse impacts from the proposed military relocation program.

9. Section 2.3.3.3, page 2-14

Issue: Economic benefit: Cultural resource education

Quote: "Cultural resource briefing would be completed prior to departure."

Comment: Cultural resource briefings regarding Tinian should be made on Tinian. Providing opportunities for local employment is critical to a continuing positive working relationship between the local and military communities on Tinian.

Solution: The following action is needed by the military to ensure positive relationships are established and maintained: Every Marine that visits Tinian should receive a cultural resource briefing on Tinian. This service should be bid out in the CNMI.

10. Section 2.3.3.3, page 2-14

Issue: Economic benefit: refueling ground transportation on Tinian.

Quote: "... there will be four sorties assuming two High Mobility Multipurpose Wheeled Vehicles (HMMWVs) are included in the equipment lift."

Comment: These vehicles will need refueling. Providing opportunities for local employment is critical to a continuing positive working relationship between the local and military communities on Tinian.

Solution: The following action is needed by the military to ensure positive relationships are established and maintained: Allow refueling to be done at locally owned fueling stations.

11. Section 2.3.3.3, page 2-15

Issue: Economic benefit: feeding the Marines while on Tinian

Quote: "Evening meals would be served in the Bivouac Area utilizing Meals Ready to Eat or Unitized Group Rations."

Comment: Providing opportunities for local employment is critical to a continuing positive working relationship between the local and military communities on Tinian.

Solution: The following action is needed by the military to ensure positive relationships are established and maintained: Provide that supplemental rations may be purchased from the local community, particularly fruits and vegetables.

12. Section 2.3.3.3, page 2-15

Issue: Economic benefit: liberty for the troops

Quote: "Marines would collect brass and ammunition containers for transport to Guam and the range would be secured by 3. p.m"

Comment: There is no mention of what the Marines will do after 3:00 pm, although a previous section states there will be some night training. Providing opportunities for the Marines to visit the historical sites of Tinian as well as San Jose Village is critical to a continuing positive working relationship between the local and military communities on Tinian.

Solution: The following action is needed by the military to ensure positive relationships are established and maintained: Provide for the Marines to have liberty as often as possible during their training exercise.

F-002-011

Thank you for your comment. Briefings are more effective when presented prior to actual deployment. Once in the training area or at the deployment site the focus shifts to the training at hand. If required, cultural experts from the CNMI can be flown to Guam to conduct the pre-deployment cultural awareness training.

F-002-012

13. Section 2.3.4.3, page 2-17

Issue: Social Impact: cross training for local DPS, THS and EMO personnel.

Quote: "A fire management plan that would address the proposed action at Tinian is under development by NAVFAC Pacific. Units using the proposed Tinian ranges would be required to plan for and have the capabilities to respond to fires, consistent with the fire management plan in preparation. Using units also would be responsible for their own medical service using corpsmen and would secure access to a casualty evacuation aircraft while training on Tinian." Section 2.3.5.2, page 2-20, states, "Fire condition monitoring for firefighting readiness and modification of training a appropriate as part of RTA management procedures. Unit-based fire fighting capacity to access range areas with appropriate equipment") Section 3.2.2.1, page 3-13, states, "Units using the proposed Tinian ranges would be required to plan for and have the capabilities to respond to fires consistent with the fire management plan in preparation. This would include fire condition monitoring for firefighting readiness, modification of training as appropriate as part of RTA management procedures, and unit-based firefighting capacity to access range areas with appropriate equipment.

Comment: Fires in the training area occur annually. Live fire practice will increase the probability of range fires. The Tinian Fire Department has had to respond to grass fires begun by live fire exercises in the past. Unless the Marine Corps is planning on moving fire equipment to Tinian for each exercise capable of controlling and extinguishing wild fires during the windy-dry season, the Tinian Fire Department will be forced to respond. It is also possible that an aircraft crash or ordnance explosion might cause multiple serious injuries. Tinian has experienced an aircraft crash during a training exercise when the Tinian THS was called to respond.

Solution: The following action is needed by the military to ensure positive relationships are established and maintained: The Marine Corps should provide continuous cross training activities with Tinian DPS, THS and EMO personnel. During exercises the Tinian Health Center and Tinian Department of Public Safety should be alerted.

F-002-013

14. Section 2.3.4.4, page 2-17

Issue: Economic impact: Closure of Broadway.

Quote: "Broadway would be closed during training."

Comment: The lands north of West Field and east of Broadway are currently used by local ranchers according to the leaseback agreement. If Broadway is closed, ranchers will not be able to water their cattle.

Solution: The following action is needed by the military to ensure positive relationships are established and maintained: One of the old roads to the east of the leaseback ranches could be opened to provide ranchers with access to their cattle ranches.

15. Section 8.2.2.1, page 8-15

Issue: Economic impact: termination of leaseback grazing permits.

F-002-012

Thank you for your comment. While it is likely that cross training and other such agreements would continue, it will be a decision that is made by the Marine command.

F-002-013

Thank you for your comments. Many mitigation measures were recommended during the DEIS public comment period. An expanded discussion on mitigation measures has been provided in the FEIS.

The Navy has re-evaluated the need to terminate all subleases in the leaseback area and will only propose to terminate subleases in the leaseback area that are within the range footprint and associated Surface Danger Zone (SDZ) of the proposed firing ranges.

As to possible sites for the relocation of any leases, such actions would be under the control of Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) officials as they are responsible for non-federal land use decisions on Tinian. DoD will work with CNMI land use and natural resource officials to ensure that native forest habitat concerns for Endangered Species Act (ESA) listed species are taken into account in any relocation effort. Regarding access, the current plan is to access the important cultural and recreational sites in the northern portion of Tinian through 8th Avenue. Although specific plans concerning access to sites through 8th Avenue have not been specifically developed, DoD looks forward to working with stakeholders in developing plans for access that balance operational needs, public safety concerns, and the continuing public use and enjoyment of these sites.

F-002-013

Quote: "Alternative 1 would affect 35 agricultural/grazing permits, totaling approximately 2,552 ac (1,032 ha) as shown on Figure 8.2-1. There is little cropland and the soil types on Tinian do not meet the requirements for prime farmland (Young 1989, USDA 2009)." ". .. This would safeguard the public by keeping them out of any areas where there are potential dangers while simultaneously maintaining access to areas where training is not being conducted." "Existing leases within the LBA would be reviewed and potentially terminated." Page 8-17 "Permits within the LBA would be terminated, causing less than significant impact to land ownership but significant impacts to agricultural use and to consistency with FPPA" Page 10-23 "Once more details are developed for the training operations on Tinian, the Navy would review the decision to terminate leases and retain those that are determined compatible with military mission requirements for the area."

Comment: These lease lands are used for grazing cattle. The grass grows quite well and provides a steady income to those who manage cattle ranches. The impact is significant to Tinian.

Solution: Those ranches that are directly impacted by training should be relocated to other sites within the Lease Back Area, possibly west of 8th Avenue. Only those permits affected by the firing zone should be terminated. These permit holders should be offered equal leases on other lands within the Lease Back Area.

F-002-014

16. Section 2.5.1, page 2-23

Issue: Impact clarification: Definition of range area

Quote: As shown in Figure 2.5-1, all four ranges associated with Alternative 1 are in the south-central portion of the MLA within the area delineated by 8th Avenue, 90th Street and Broadway.

Comment: 90th Street is not identified on any of the maps.

Solution: The north side of 86th Street and the east side of 8th Avenue form the southern and western boundaries of the range.

17. Section 2.5.1, Page 2-23

Issue: Impact: FAA Mitigation Zone

Quote: "All four range footprints partially overlay the FAA Mitigation Area."

Page 8-10 "There is a Federal Aviation Administration wildlife mitigation area and a no wildlife disturbance area in the LBA."

Comment: The mitigation zone was created at the time that the airport was being planned and created

Solution: The FAA mitigation zone must be re designated.

F-002-015

18. Section 3.2.2.1, page 3-13

Issue: Cultural impact: land clearing.

Quote: "Although construction footprints would be minimal, it is assumed the full area would be graded or cleared of vegetation."

Comment: The process of clearing will disturb identified archaeological sites.

Solution: As land clearing is conducted, all identified archaeological sites must be properly excavated. All artifacts are to be recovered and curated by Historic

F-002-014

Thank you for your comment. Changes to figures have been made to include roadway labels. Conservation measures associated with the proposed action involve potential reconfiguration of the FAA Mitigation Area.

F-002-015

Thank you for your comment. As discussed in the Volume 3, Section 12.2, the area that would be cleared of vegetation has been surveyed and data recovery would be conducted at all archaeological sites that are eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. In accordance with the Programmatic Agreement, display quality artifacts from the excavations would stay on Tinian with the remainder of the collection being curated on Saipan.

F-002-015

Preservation Office, Saipan. Most important, the most distinctive artifacts are to be returned to Tinian to be housed in an appropriate museum.

19. Section 12.2.2.2, page 12-17

Issue: Impact: Tinian Historic Properties will be disturbed by construction and use of the firing ranges.

Quote: "Alternative 1 would result in significant direct impacts to 10 NRHP-eligible or listed archaeological sites and indirect impacts to 55 archaeological sites, one HHL, and one traditional cultural property. Page 16-22 "CNMI could request federal financial assistance for development of a small museum dedicated to Tinian's history"

Comment: Archaeological remains within the LBA are extremely valuable to the people of Tinian.

Solution: CNMI Historic Preservation Officers must be present during all land clearing and construction procedures. All artifacts discovered must be curretted by the CNMI Historic Preservation Office. All distinctive artifacts are to be returned to Tinian for display in a proper museum.

F-002-016

20. Section 4.2.1.1, page 4-16

Issuc: contamination for surface water from leaks or spills."

Quote: "The storage of hazardous materials and fuels pose a continued risk of surface water contamination"

Comment: In is important to prevent contamination of surface water resources.

Solution: Provide a standard operating procedure for storage of hazardous materials on Tinian. Fuel storage spills can be eliminated by purchasing fuel locally in currently approved sites and locations.

F-002-017

21. Section 8.1.2.6, page 8-10

Issue: Economic Impact: loss of use of Broadway for four buses traveling to National Historic Sites at North Field.

Quote: "There are seven points of interest within the LBA that are on the Tinian self guided tour; however, public access is restricted during training" Page 9-5 "Broadway would be closed during training. However, the public can travel up s" Avcnuc, check in with personnel manning the first access gate. Once cleared by range control, they can proceed up 8th Avenue, checking in with each successive guard point until clear of the training area." "No potential mitigation is suggested for AIternative 1.

Comment: Tour buses now using Broadway, which is in good condition, will have to use 8th Avenue. Portions of 8th Avenue are not paved. This will cause damage to busses and rental cars.

Solution: As all firing ranges are north of 86th street, vehicles should be allowed to turn west on 86th Street to reach 8th Avenue, to proceed to historical sites on North Field.

22. Section 14.2.2.1, page 14-4

Issue: Economic impact: roads in MLA.

Quote: "No mitigation measures are suggested."

F-002-016

Thank you for your comment. The DoD is committed to the protection and responsible stewardship of the environment. In addition, the DoD is committed to the safe handling and use of all hazardous substances, including fuels, lubricants, solvents, munitions and explosives of concern (MEC), nuclear materials, pesticides, herbicides, PCBs, nuclear materials, and other hazardous substances. In fact, when feasible, the DoD attempts to reduce or eliminate the use of various hazardous substances to the greatest extent possible and substituting them for less toxic substances.

When using hazardous substances, environmental laws and regulations (e.g., RCRA) must be followed by DoD that are designed to be protective of human health, welfare, and the environment. In order to implement these laws and regulations, DoD has developed various procedures, protocol, and directives designed to proactively eliminate or minimize the inadvertent leakage, spill or release of pollutants to the environment. These actions involve comprehensive administrative, engineering, and operations mandates, best management practices (BMPs), standard operating procedures (SOPs), and controls in place to prevent or minimize the inadvertent leakage, spill, or release of hazardous/toxic substances. These BMPs, SOPs, and other controls are fully described in the EIS document (Volume 7). If a leak, release, or spill is suspected or confirmed, aggressive mitigation measures are used to first clean up the leak, spill, or release as quickly as possible, followed by an assessment of risks to the public and/or the environment and a plan to remediate these risk concerns to within regulatory acceptable levels. These actions generally include environmental media (e.g., groundwater, surface water, soil, air, and/or biota) sampling and monitoring to ensure that and hazards are mitigated quickly and effectively. In many cases, part of remediation plan includes the requirement to perform regularly scheduled long-term sampling and monitoring of environmental media to ensure that remedial actions have been effective. If long-term monitoring indicates that risks to human health or the environment are

F-002-017

Comments Roads in on military leased lands were constructed by Seabees during World War II. Regular use of these roads by heavy military equipment will cause deterioration of the roadway.
Solution: An annual road maintenance program should be established. Key roads should be upgraded to handle frequent use by heavy equipment.

23. Section 17.2-1, page 17-7

Issue: Impact: Hazardous Materials Transport/Transfer Consequences and Mitigation
Quote: Page 17-8, "Due to the projected increase in the volume of hazardous waste, Alternative 1 could result in significant impacts to human health and the environment."

Comments: No potential mitigation measures are identified. Mitigation plans should be established.


Solution: An independent party should be contracted to provide constant surveillance and inspections for full compliance with federal, local and DoN laws and regulations and implement corrective actions as necessary at the expense of the Navy.

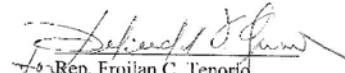
In conclusion, the CNMI Legislature generally supports the military relocation into the region, and the use of Tinian as a training area for the United States Marine Corps. However, the CNMI Legislature believes that many negative socio-economic impacts will be associated with the proposed action and recommends that concrete measures, as briefly outlined above, be in place to mitigate these impacts to the people of the CNMI.

F-002-018

It is the intent of the CNMI Legislature that this position paper serve only as a start to future discussions with the military in seeing that mitigation measures are in place so as to avoid the potentially adverse effects of the proposed action. The CNMI Legislature desires to engage in an open dialogue with the Department of Navy and the Joint Guam Program Office regarding all military matters affecting the CNMI especially Tinian in particular. Moreover, the CNMI Legislature is cognizant of the Department of Navy's authority to utilize the military land lease on Tinian for any military purpose; however, the Legislature respectfully requests Department of Navy to seriously consider all the DEIS comments made herein and from other public officials and individuals from the CNMI.

Sincerely,


Sen. Paul A. Mangiona
Senate President


Rep. Froilan C. Tenorio
Speaker of the House

cc: Senate Members
House Members

still unacceptable, more aggressive remediation approaches are considered. In fact, many such clean-up efforts are underway. As part of the clean-up process, the DoD provides various opportunities for the general public, stakeholders, and other interested parties to get involved in the process. One such opportunity is Restoration Advisory Boards (RABs) where interested party questions and concerns may be communicated. These comprehensive actions (e.g., BMPs, SOPs, etc.) will protect public health, welfare, and the environment from adverse impacts associated with the use of hazardous substances.

F-002-017

Thank you for your comment. Alternative 3 would require closure of 86th Street during training activities. For Alternatives 1 and 2 however, 86th St. would remain open to traffic after passing through established traffic control points. The Final EIS has been revised to clarify this point.

F-002-018

Thank you for your comment.