



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

# GUAM AND CNMI MILITARY RELOCATION DRAFT EIS / OEIS VOLUME 3: MARINE CORPS TRAINING ON CNMI

### Focus

The Department of Defense (DoD) is required to carry out combat readiness training for the Marines relocating to Guam. The DoD does not have access to adequate land or facilities for these training needs on Guam, so the DoD leaseback property located on the island of Tinian in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) has been identified as the prime location for such training. The proposed training action overlaps with the proposed action to expand the existing Mariana Islands Range Complex [see Mariana Islands Range Complex (MIRC) Draft Environmental Impact Statement/Overseas Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS/OEIS)]. As presented in the Draft EIS, these actions will have minimal demands on infrastructure and services in CNMI. The training in Tinian will be periodic (no permanent presence) and expeditionary (the exception is wastewater, which will be managed with the DoD leach field). The action will also entail little construction, thereby minimizing both short-term and long-term impacts. The Draft EIS Volume 3 provides the analysis and summary of the impacts, the cumulative impacts and the secondary effects of the Preferred Alternatives, as well as a comparison of those impacts to the No Action Alternative. The impacts to the following resources are presented and seen as requiring mitigation measures: Land and Submerged Land; Terrestrial and Biological Resources; Cultural Resources; Visual Resources; Socioeconomic and General Services; Hazardous Materials and Waste; and Environmental Justice and the Protection of Children.

### Key Actions

#### Proposed Actions for Tinian:

- Development and Construction of Live-Fire Training Ranges: Platoon (42 Soldiers) Battle Course, Automated Combat Pistol Range, Rifle Known Distance (KD) range, and Field Firing Range, as well as designation of Surface Danger Zones (SDZs).
- Airspace Use: The vertical hazard area associated with the proposed firing ranges would be managed to ensure that aircraft could safely operate in airspace overlying the proposed firing ranges. There is no requirement for Special Use Airspace (SUA) associated with the proposed firing ranges therefore there would be no changes to designated airspace overlying the proposed ranges.

The proposed actions would allow the Marines located on Guam to carry out routine and frequent (monthly) combat readiness training on the island of Tinian. The proposed training schedule would be 200 to 400 Marines within a 1-week period, 12 times per year. Ranges will be used from 20 to 80 days out of the year. SDZs would be identified surrounding the ranges and all access would be excluded from the SDZ area of the active range for safety reasons.

These proposed training components complement the existing ground training practices undertaken on Tinian and in the CNMI as described in the MIRC DEIS/OEIS. The proposed action would increase training capabilities in the CNMI by building on the existing training infrastructure contained within the MIRC. The MIRC is a joint training complex consisting of service ranges utilized in a coordinated joint manner. The proposed action would continue development of joint training capabilities in the region by developing ranges on Tinian. The MIRC consists of three primary components: ocean surface / undersea areas, Special Use Airspace (SUA), and training land areas.

#### Proposed Actions in the Mariana Islands Range Complex (MIRC) DEIS/OEIS

The Proposed Action in the MIRC DEIS/OEIS is to use the MIRC to support and conduct current, emerging, and future training and Research, Development, Test, and Evaluation (RDT&E) activities, while enhancing training resources through investment in the ranges. Training and RDT&E activities do not include combat operations, operations in direct support of combat, or other activities conducted primarily for purposes other than training.

Three alternatives have been analyzed to determine environmental impacts:

1. No Action Alternative - Current Training Activities;
2. Alternative 1 - Increase Training Modernization, and Upgrades; and
3. Alternative 2 - Increase Major At-Sea Exercises and Training.

The No Action Alternative consists of the current training that occurs in the MIRC. Alternative 1 includes current training and additional training as a result of new major exercises and Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (ISR) / Strike actions. Alternative 2 consists of additional training above and beyond Alternative 1.

The MIRC study area is located in the Western Pacific and consists of three primary components: ocean surface and undersea areas; SUA; and training land areas. The ocean surface and undersea areas extend from the international waters south of Guam to north of Pagan (CNMI), and from the Pacific Ocean east of the Mariana Islands to the middle of the Philippine Sea to the west, encompassing 501,873 square nautical miles of open ocean and littorals (coastal areas). The MIRC study area includes ocean areas in the Philippine Sea, Pacific Ocean, and exclusive economic zones (EEZs) of the United States and Federated states of Micronesia (FSM). The range complex

includes land ranges and training area/facilities on Guam, Rota, Tinian, Saipan, and Farrallon de Medinilla (FDM), encompassing 64 square nautical miles (nm<sup>2</sup>) (220 km<sup>2</sup>) of land.

The actions evaluated in the MIRC DEIS/OEIS and include:

- Maintaining baseline training and RDT&E at mandated levels;
- Increasing training exercises from current levels;
- Accommodating force structure changes (human resources, new platforms, and additional weapons systems); and
- Developing range complex investment strategies that sustain, upgrade, modernize, and transform the MIRC to accommodate increased use and more realistic training scenarios.

**Range and Special Use Airspace (SUA) Management**

The Range Training Area (RTA) on Tinian would be managed in accordance with Policies and Procedures for Range Training Area Management, which addresses safe, efficient, effective, and environmentally sustainable use of the range area and other applicable service regulations. Special Use Airspace is not required over small arms range. The Marine Corps would manage the airspace overlying the proposed ranges to ensure safety of nonparticipating aircraft.

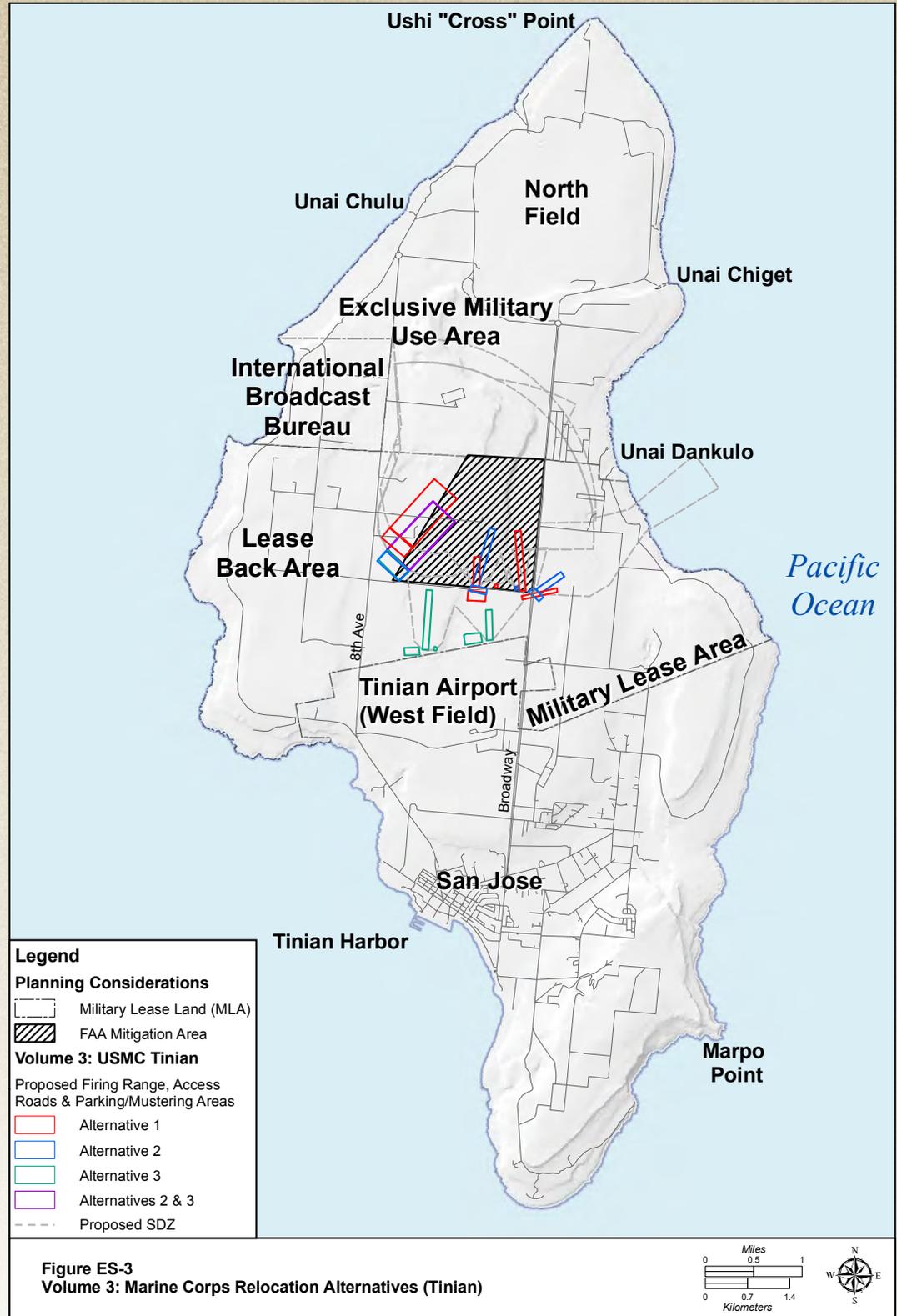
In order to manage the designated SUA, personnel at a range observation site would observe the airspace overlying the ranges and associated vertical hazard distance. The personnel would have direct communications with range control and would fly a large red flag when any portion of the RTA was in use. All firing activities would cease upon notification of impending or actual incursion of the airspace by nonparticipating aircraft.

Observation/ Issue	Comment
<p><b>Frequency of training on Tinian</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There will be no permanent presence of Marines on Tinian. Training schedule would be 200-400 Marines within a 1-week period, 12 times per year.</li> <li>• Transportation of Marines to Tinian will be through both tactical aviation and surface transportation assets and facilities. The types of training contemplated on Tinian would be routine and frequent (monthly) in nature.</li> </ul>	<p><i>Training on Tinian will happen on a monthly basis.</i></p>
<p><b>Compatibility of uses on DoD Military Lease Area:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proposed actions will take place on the northern two-thirds of Tinian, on the two adjacent and connected training ranges within the DoD Military Lease Area (MLA); the Exclusive Military Use Area (EMUA); and the Leaseback Area (LBA).</li> <li>• The EMUA includes landing beaches, expeditionary airfield, bivouac areas (i.e., temporary camps set up during training), maneuver areas, live-fire sniper areas, and areas designated for pyrotechnics and hazardous activities.</li> <li>• The LBA, a joint military and civilian use area, is used by the DoD primarily for logistics, maneuver and other nonintrusive training requirements.</li> <li>• Marine training could compel permits within the LBA to be terminated, causing significant impacts to agricultural use and to consistency with the Farmland Protection Policy Act (FPPA) of 1981. The DoD considers such impacts unavoidable. Suggested mitigation includes relocation of agricultural uses outside of the MLA. This is not a mitigation that the DoD would implement.</li> <li>• Proposed new landfill adjacent to the proposed new wastewater treatment plant, south of the International Broadcasting Bureau (IBB), and west of 8th Avenue might be located on the MLA.</li> <li>• During training, access to the MLA would be limited. Five security gates would be constructed as part of the proposed action. The location of security gates would not vary with alternative; there would be relatively the same potential characteristics for closure and availability under all action alternatives.</li> </ul>	<p><i>The LBA agreement allows DoD full unfettered access to the LBA for military training, with appropriate notification to the CNMI government.</i></p> <p><i>Tinian is the only island within the CNMI where the DoD has a training use agreement that would allow the weapons range development.</i></p>
<p><b>Possibility of Future Range Expansion</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The proposed actions do not include future possibilities to support Marine training. If these future training actions become more tangible, they would be subject to additional National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) review.</li> </ul>	<p><i>If future range expansion does happen, it could increase the presence of the Marines and have additional positive and negative impacts.</i></p>
<p><b>Transportation of Marines</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The transport of 200-400 Marines to Tinian from Guam would be via air transport. The rotary-wing sorties would be between Andersen AFB (North Field) on Guam and Tinian Airport (West Field) on Tinian.</li> <li>• If equipment is moved by barge, a single barge would be able to carry the equipment necessary to support the Marine training evolution.</li> <li>• No new transportation infrastructure would be required for implementation of the proposed action at Tinian, except bio-security quarantine and inspection areas would be constructed at arrival locations on Tinian.</li> <li>• Alternatives 1, 2, and 3 would increase aircraft operations in the north and south portions of Tinian, but are expected to be within the capacity of existing airspace use. There would be no new SUA and there would be no changes required to existing arrival and departures from either the Tinian or Saipan airports. Access to and from the approach and departure patterns associated with the airports and airfields would not be restricted, nor would they be required to change.</li> <li>• DoD currently uses the commercial harbor, Tinian International Airport, and a staging area near San Jose Village. Although DoD acknowledges baseline conditions of the Roads, Airport and Harbor the Action Alternatives do not propose significant use of these facilities – therefore the impacts are assessed as less than significant to roads, and with no impact to the airport or to marine transportation in Tinian Harbor.</li> </ul>	<p><i>Marine training will require limited use of Tinian transportation infrastructure. This means there will be little to zero investment in the infrastructure to support the Marine use.</i></p> <p><i>Baseline conditions of infrastructure. Study referenced is from 1999 – possibly outdated.</i></p> <p><i>There is no mention of the condition of the Harbor, which is in a state of disrepair.</i></p>

Observation/ Issue	Comment
<p><b>Dependence on Local Utilities and Services</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are no supporting facilities proposed for the Tinian ranges, therefore no demand for utility services.</li> <li>• No utilities systems would be required as commercial portable sanitation units would be utilized. Septage from the port-a-potties would be emptied by the on-island portable toilet rental company into the existing DoD septic tank/ leach field, and treated.</li> <li>• No construction of utility infrastructure or tie-ins to public utilities are proposed to support the firing ranges. Potable water from the municipal water supply would be provided via a water truck. The existing municipal water supply is adequate to support the proposed military demand.</li> <li>• Proposed training activities would have no impact on public power and minimal impact on the wastewater utilities on Tinian. Solid waste would be back-hauled to Guam, and the DoD would not dispose of solid waste at the open dump operated by the CNMI Department of Public Works.</li> </ul>	<p>No additional facilities will be constructed (other than ranges). Marines will be expeditionary (completely self sufficient).</p> <p>Even wastewater generated by training activities can be self-managed.</p> <p>Need for local service with toilet rental company.</p>
<p><b>Impacts to Wildlife</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The potential introduction and establishment of the brown tree snake on Tinian represents a potentially significant environmental justice impact because of the potential effects on the economy and public health, which would disproportionately impact disadvantaged populations (minority and low-income) and children. This potential impact would be mitigated to a less than significant level with the implementation of a comprehensive non-native species program.</li> <li>• Wildlife will likely be impacted due to removal of habitat for native birds, removal of habitat for the CNMI-listed Tinian monarch. Other possible impacts could result from termination of grazing leases and movement of grazing animals to other areas are possible.</li> <li>• The following are measures that would be taken to minimize potential impacts to special-status species: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bird Surveys;</li> <li>• Tinian Monarch Management Plan;</li> <li>• Establish Reforestation;</li> <li>• Designate Forest Mitigation Areas;</li> <li>• Wildland Fire Management Plan and Resources; and</li> <li>• Develop a Micronesian Biosecurity Plan (BSP).</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>Significant mitigation measures. Same for all Alternatives.</p>
<p><b>Recreational and Cultural Resources</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Potentially, denial of access would occur north of the existing Tinian Airport (West Field) and south of the Shinto Shrine American Memorial Circle on Broadway including all lands to the east, and east of 8th Avenue north of the Airport and south of Unai Chulu. This restricted access would include restricting access to certain beaches, and the blowhole which are located within the SDZs, plus lanchos used by local farmers. However, access to the North Field National Historic Landmark (NHL) would still be able to occur during training activities.</li> <li>• The range layouts were sited to avoid impacting the majority of historic properties on the island. Another attempt to design around the specific sites would be made as plans progress. Direct impacts to archaeological sites exist in and around the firing range projects.</li> <li>• Archaeological sites, one NHL, and one traditional cultural property will be impacted by construction and operations; however they are presented as mitigable to less than significant levels.</li> <li>• Marines will try to avoid training on local holidays.</li> </ul>	<p>As part of Military Operations Area (MOA) developed in 1994, the Navy mitigated inaccessibility of cultural resources by developing an interpretive program and trail for north Tinian.</p> <p>Impacts to cultural resources could impact tourism.</p>
<p><b>Economic Impacts</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use of the alternatives being considered would not meet the expectations of Tinian residents in terms of economic benefits, facilities, and infrastructure. Restrictions on access to historic sites and natural resources in the MLA would have a significant but mitigable adverse impact on the Tinian economy. Since even the No Action Alternative would play against Tinian expectations and damage military-civilian relations, the possible mitigation measures could assume added importance.</li> <li>• Access to some recreational and cultural resources on leased lands would be restricted during training activities, but the most popular tourist destinations would be accessible.</li> <li>• The recent federalization of the CNMI's immigration system is likely to change the source, if not the pattern, of immigrant labor in the Commonwealth.</li> <li>• To enhance economic benefits and compensate for economic costs for local businesses, the Marine Corps would consider granting trainees some liberty at the end of every training mission so that they might spend money in local establishments and interact with local residents.</li> </ul>	<p>Federalization of immigration could threaten the viability of the casino remaining on Tinian.</p>
<p><b>Environmental Justice</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Racial or ethnic minority groups (as defined by the U.S.) comprise almost all of the Tinian population, and the proportions of people living in poverty or who are under 18 years of age are also substantially higher than in the general U.S. population. Tinian is a relatively small and isolated island, and certain types of impacts would be experienced island-wide.</li> <li>• The potential introduction and establishment of the brown tree snake on Tinian represents a potentially significant environmental justice impact because of the effects on the economy and public health, which would disproportionately impact disadvantaged populations (minority and low-income) and children. This impact would be mitigated to a less than significant level with the implementation of a comprehensive non-native species program.</li> </ul>	<p>Given the demographics and the nature of the action it is difficult to disaggregate low-income and disadvantaged persons from the general population of Tinian.</p> <p>Mitigation measures relate almost exclusively to ensuring inclusion in NEPA meetings.</p>

**Assessment**

In discussing the impacts, the Draft EIS identifies very few significant adverse impacts when compared to the No Action Alternative. This is caused by the minimal footprint of the proposed actions, which are projected to have little to no demand for local services or infrastructure. However, due to the relatively small size of the CNMI, most of the anticipated socioeconomic impacts of the proposed action are expected to affect the Commonwealth as a whole. The Draft EIS finds the greatest impacts to be in the areas of wildlife and special species, the disruption of archaeological resources, handling and transportation of hazardous waste and materials and limited access to cattle-grazing, agricultural and cultural sites. In general the mitigation measures are minimal and relate best management practices. There is a definite bias that the preferred alternative will have minimal to no impact on Tinian and throughout CNMI.



Tom Linden  
 Military Integration Management Committee (MIMC) Coordinator  
 CNMI Department of Commerce  
 Caller Box 10007, CK  
 Saipan, MP 96950  
 670-989-3000 or [cnmi.mimc@commerce.gov.mp](mailto:cnmi.mimc@commerce.gov.mp)

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Definitions for terms and acronyms used in this and other related reports can be found in the *Acronym Guide and Glossary* at [www.one.guam.gov](http://www.one.guam.gov).