
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

ES.1 Introduction

On April 6, 2015, the Department of the Navy (DON) published a Notice of Availability for the Draft Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) Joint Military Training (CJMT) Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)/Overseas EIS (OEIS). Numerous comments were received on the Draft EIS/OEIS expressing concern about the scope and potential environmental impacts of the Proposed Action. On February 18, 2016, in response to concerns raised on the 2015 Draft EIS/OEIS, the United States (U.S.) Marine Corps (USMC) announced its intention to issue a Revised Draft EIS for proposed training on Tinian.

Beginning in 2016, and at the CNMI's request, the U.S. and CNMI governments held a series of virtual and in-person discussions pursuant to Section 902 of *The Covenant to Establish a Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands in Political Union with the United States of America*, approved in 1976. These discussions included, among other issues, concerns with the USMC expansive training proposal. During the global COVID-19 pandemic, the parties held small-group virtual meetings. The USMC re-engaged with the CNMI government on CJMT, with two virtual and seven in-person meetings between January 2020 and September 2024 to discuss changes to the Proposed Action and the Revised Draft EIS. The USMC also held public information sharing meetings in August 2023 to present a revised training proposal to the public.

In developing the Revised Draft EIS, the USMC evaluated changes in the way U.S. Armed Forces currently prepare for future conflicts and carefully considered the comments and suggestions submitted on the 2015 Draft EIS/OEIS and from the collaborative CNMI government coordination meetings. The current Proposed Action as described in this Final EIS and compared with the action proposed in 2015, eliminates training on Pagan, removes the High Hazard Impact Area from Tinian, and reduces the number of live-fire and maneuver ranges from 14 to 2. In addition, further consultations and technical studies have been performed to inform the impact analysis including for natural resources, cultural resources, and utilities. The USMC released a Revised Draft EIS on June 6, 2025, and solicited comments on the Proposed Action. This Final EIS considered and addressed, as appropriate, comments received on the Revised Draft EIS (see Appendix L). Many of the changes in the Final EIS reflect feedback from public comment received on the Revised Draft EIS as well as refinements to the Proposed Action and analysis made by the USMC.

The U.S. Indo-Pacific Command is the action proponent for the Proposed Action and has designated the U.S. Marine Corps Forces, Pacific to be the Executive Agent overseeing preparation of this Final EIS. This Final EIS has been prepared in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended (42 U.S. Code [U.S.C.] sections 4321-4347); and Marine Corps Order 5090.2, *Environmental Compliance and Protection Program*.

ES.2 Purpose and Need for the Proposed Action

The purpose of the Proposed Action is to reduce joint training deficiencies for U.S. Armed Forces in the Indo-Pacific area of operations. The development and operation of a realistic and instrumented training environment on Tinian, sized to accommodate combined joint and allied forces training and readily available for scheduling, would enable forward-deployed U.S. Armed

Forces to meet evolving operational training requirements and support U.S. training with allied nations, changes in U.S. force structure, and geographic repositioning of forces.

The Proposed Action is needed to enable U.S. Armed Forces to meet their individual mandates in Title 10 to be trained and equipped to protect U.S. national security by being ready to effectively prosecute war and defend the nation (e.g., 10 U.S.C. sections 167, 7013, 7062, 8013, 8062, 8063, 9013, 9062). U.S. forward-deployed Armed Forces in the Indo-Pacific region need training areas and supportive training infrastructure to exercise evolving tactics, training, and procedures that would enable them to deter adversary aggression. The availability of the Military Lease Area to conduct joint sustainment training events would result in ready forces prepared to act immediately to respond to a threat to national security.

ES.3 Proposed Action and Alternatives

The Proposed Action is to conduct joint military distributed operations training within the Military Lease Area on Tinian in order to support the ongoing and evolving expeditionary requirements of U.S. Armed Forces forward-deployed to the Western Pacific and U.S. allies and partners. The proposed distributed operations training and support infrastructure would leverage the capabilities of modern technology to create a realistic and integrated virtual and physical training environment on Tinian within the Military Lease Area using a combination of sensors, emitters, and communications. Proposed training would remain consistent with previously approved training activities, while incorporating updated tactics, techniques, and procedures utilizing new training infrastructure.

Resources analyzed in this Final EIS include public access; land use and recreation; socioeconomics; biological resources; cultural resources; visual resources; transportation; noise; air quality and greenhouse gases; public health and safety; utilities; topography, geology and soils; groundwater and hydrology; and surface water and wetlands.

Two action alternatives were considered and evaluated; Alternative 1, Enhanced Training and Range Infrastructure, and Alternative 2, Training and Range Infrastructure. The No Action Alternative is also considered and evaluated.

ES.3.1 No Action Alternative

Under the No Action Alternative, military training on Tinian would continue at the current tempo and intensity and all other actions in the CNMI that were independently evaluated in other NEPA documents with their Records of Decision, and associated consultations and authorizations would still be implemented. Those independent actions include land-based training activities in the 2010 *Mariana Islands Range Complex EIS/OEIS*, which was then updated in 2015 with the *Mariana Islands Training and Testing EIS/OEIS*, along with the 2016 *Divert Activities and Exercises Final EIS* and 2020 *Tinian Divert Infrastructure Improvements Supplemental EIS* (DON 2010a, 2010b, 2015a, 2015b; U.S. Air Force 2016a, 2016b, 2020, 2022).

The No Action Alternative would not meet the purpose of or need for the Proposed Action. NEPA documents are required to evaluate the No Action Alternative because the No Action Alternative serves to establish a comparative baseline for analysis of the action alternatives.

ES.3.2 Alternative 1

Training tempo under Alternative 1 would increase by approximately 15 percent over land-based training already approved to occur on Tinian as defined in the No Action Alternative. The nature and purpose of training would remain consistent with previously approved training activities, while incorporating updated tactics, techniques, and procedures utilizing new training infrastructure. The USMC would also construct and operate new training infrastructure including two live-fire ranges (Multi-Purpose Maneuver Range, Explosives Training Range), Landing Zones, clearing between runways Able and Charlie for use as a Drop Zone, installation of an airfield surface known as AM2 matting, an expeditionary Base Camp, an aircraft shelter, ammunition holding areas, radar towers, and biosecurity facilities. The USMC would also repurpose existing communication towers on former U.S. Agency for Global Media (USAGM) sites on Tinian and Saipan (Figure ES-1). An on-island Training Area and Range Operations Command (Range Control) would be established. Range Control would schedule training and coordinate with local officials and the public.

ES.3.3 Alternative 2

Alternative 2 would include currently authorized training events identified under the No Action Alternative and infrastructure described in Alternative 1. However, the training tempo under Alternative 2 would increase by approximately 5 percent from the baseline (No Action Alternative) land-based training already approved to occur on Tinian. The difference in training tempo is the only difference between Alternative 1 and Alternative 2.

ES.4 Summary of Environmental Effects

Environmental effects that could result from implementing the Proposed Action are analyzed in Chapter 4 of this Final EIS. A summary of environmental impacts on Tinian is presented at the end of this section as Table ES-1. There would be no training or construction activities conducted at the USAGM Saipan site and the proposed activities would be the same or similar to existing use. The USMC would utilize existing communication towers on Saipan and should the towers need to be repurposed, the DoD would establish a new lease for the property with the CNMI. Therefore, there would be no impacts on Saipan.

ES.5 Cumulative Impacts

Cumulative impacts are analyzed in Chapter 4, Section 4.15. Cumulative impacts include the impact of this project with reasonably foreseeable future actions. The aggregate impacts of past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions under Alternative 1 or Alternative 2 would contribute to and increase cumulative impacts, but such cumulative impacts would be less than significant.



Figure ES-1 Proposed Action Elements

ES.6 Interagency Coordination

The USMC has actively involved other federal agencies and the CNMI government, its agencies, and local organizations as part of the NEPA process (refer to Section 1.5 for additional information). The following federal agencies have agreed to be cooperating agencies for this Final EIS:

- U.S. Department of the Interior, Office of Insular Affairs
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
- National Marine Fisheries Service

Consultation with regulatory entities will be complete and incorporated, as appropriate, into the Record of Decision. Agency consultations include:

- Endangered Species Act Section 7: U.S. Fish and Wildlife and National Marine Fisheries Service
- Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act: National Marine Fisheries Service
- National Historic Preservation Act Section 106: CNMI Historic Preservation Officer, Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, National Park Service, and the Office of the Mayor of Tinian
- Coastal Zone Management Act: CNMI Bureau of Environmental and Coastal Quality

ES.7 Public Involvement

The Notice of Availability/Notice of Public Meetings for the Revised Draft EIS was published in the Federal Register, local newspapers, and on the project website on June 6, 2025. The notice identified locations where the revised draft document was available for review, the timing of the 75-day public review and comment period, and the methods for submitting new comments. The USMC provided a 15-day extension of the public comment period for a total of 90 days, ending on September 4, 2025. Public comment meetings were held on Tinian, Saipan, and Rota as noted below:

- Tinian: Monday June 23, 2025, and Tuesday June 24, 2025, at Tinian Junior/Senior High School Cafeteria, Canal Street, San Jose
- Saipan: Wednesday June 25, 2025, and Thursday June 26, 2025, at Crowne Plaza (Hibiscus Hall), Coral Tree Avenue, Garapan
- Rota: Friday June 27, 2025, at Rota Mayor's Office

The public meetings were conducted in an open house format to encourage the sharing of information and discussion. Open house meetings provided increased flexibility for attendees, allowed for one-on-one interaction with experts and provided a casual atmosphere that encouraged more direct and comfortable participation and feedback. Each poster station presented the analysis of a key resource, and a representative was available to answer questions and direct the public to tables where individuals could submit written or oral comments. Public comments could be submitted in writing, by mail, on the website or through a court reporter at public meetings. Comments could be submitted in any language, and Chamorro and Carolinian translators were

available at the public meetings. Chamorro and Carolinian version translations of the fact sheet were available at the public meetings and on the project website. The Executive Summary in these languages was also made available to download from the project website and printed copies were available for review at the local libraries on Tinian, Saipan, and Rota. In addition, the USMC held office hours at the Commonwealth Bureau of Military Affairs Tinian Field Office for additional public engagement in August 2025 prior to the end of the public comment period. This Final EIS considers and addresses, as appropriate, comments received on the Revised Draft EIS (see Appendix L). A total of 83 comment submittals were received from individuals, community organizations, and local and federal government that contained 215 individual comments.

Table ES-1 Summary of Environmental Impacts from Training and Construction on Tinian

<i>Section and Resource</i>	<i>No Action Alternative</i>	<i>Alternative 1</i>	<i>Alternative 2</i>
4.1 Public Access	No change	Less than significant impact from controlled access and surface danger zone restrictions during training events. The subdivision of the Military Lease Area into eight smaller training areas would allow selective closure of certain areas for training while allowing public access in others at the same time. Public access would be coordinated with the community through Range Control, which would work with CNMI on allowing public access to the Military Lease Area for special festivals and other events wherever such access can be safely accommodated during training.	Similar impacts to those described for Alternative 1 from training, operation and maintenance of the Military Lease Area Range Complex, and during construction but with a decrease in training tempo when compared to Alternative 1.
4.2 Land Use and Recreation	No change	<p><u>Land Use</u> No impact from training in the Military Lease Area as no land use changes would occur. Training events and the operation and maintenance of the Military Lease Area Range Complex would be compatible and consistent with existing land use plans, policies, and agreements. Less than significant impact from construction in the Military Lease Area, which would be compatible and consistent with existing land use plans and policies. Construction of proposed biosecurity facilities at the Port of Tinian and the aircraft shelter at TNI would be subject to development of appropriate agreements with the Commonwealth Ports Authority.</p> <p><u>Recreation</u> Less than significant impact from controlled access and surface danger zone restrictions during training. Access for recreation would be coordinated through the establishment of on-island Range Control and subdivided training areas. Less than significant impact from intermittent and temporary construction activities.</p>	<p><u>Land Use and Recreation</u> Similar impacts to those described for Alternative 1 from training, operation and maintenance of the Military Lease Area Range Complex, and during construction but with a decrease in training tempo when compared to Alternative 1.</p>
4.3 Socioeconomics	No change	<p><u>Population, Economic Activity, and Public Services</u> Temporary activation of surface danger zones in waters north of Tinian during live-fire training at the Multi-Purpose Maneuver Range would significantly affect fishing and boating, as boaters may have to travel longer distances when the surface danger zone is active. There would be a modest economic and employment benefit from training, operation and maintenance of the Military Lease Area Range Complex and construction. All other socioeconomic impacts would be less than significant under Alternative 1.</p>	<p><u>Population, Economic Activity, and Public Services</u> Similar impacts to those described for Alternative 1 from training, operation and maintenance of the Military Lease Area Range Complex, and during construction but with a decrease in training tempo when compared to Alternative 1.</p>
4.4 Biological Resources	No change	<p><u>Terrestrial Plant Communities</u> Less than significant impact from construction-phase clearing of approximately 343 acres of predominantly non-native dominated vegetation to later be maintained (mowed/trimmed), with no impact to limestone coastal scrub, limestone native forest, and wetland habitats. Biosecurity protocols would be consistent with the existing Joint Region Marianas biosecurity program and applied to reduce the spread of non-native</p>	<p><u>Terrestrial Plant Communities</u> Identical impact as Alternative 1.</p> <p><u>Terrestrial Wildlife and Special Status Species; Marine Communities and Marine Special Status Species</u></p>

<i>Section and Resource</i>	<i>No Action Alternative</i>	<i>Alternative 1</i>	<i>Alternative 2</i>
		<p>vegetation during training and construction. A Range Wildland Fire Management Plan is being finalized to guide prevention and suppression of fire from training.</p> <p><u>Terrestrial Wildlife and Special Status Species</u> Less than significant impact on federally and CNMI-listed species, migratory birds, and other wildlife from habitat removal or modification, direct strike, noise (from construction, aircraft, live-fire, and vehicular activity), human presence and/or habituation, introduction of invasive species, fire, night lighting, and radio frequency radiation. The USMC is consulting with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service under Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act. The consultation will be complete and incorporated, as appropriate, into the Record of Decision.</p> <p><u>Marine Communities and Marine Special Status Species</u> Less than significant indirect impacts to marine special-status species and no impact to marine protected areas due to no in-water training or construction activities; unlikelihood of projectiles leaving primary targets on ranges and entering coastal waters; and most sound energy from explosive detonations reflecting off the water’s surface. The USMC is consulting with the National Marine Fisheries Service under Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act and the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act. The consultation will be complete and incorporated, as appropriate, into the Record of Decision.</p>	<p>Similar impacts to those described for Alternative 1 from training, operation and maintenance of the Military Lease Area Range Complex, and during construction but with a decrease in training tempo when compared to Alternative 1.</p>
4.5 Cultural Resources	No change	<p>Less than significant impact on cultural resources from training, operation and maintenance activities, and construction. The division of the Military Lease Area into eight smaller training areas would allow for selective closures, enabling training in specific areas while maintaining public access to cultural resources where safety permits. The USMC is consulting with the CNMI Historic Preservation Officer, Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, National Park Service, and the Office of the Mayor of Tinian under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. The consultation will be complete and incorporated, as appropriate, into the Record of Decision.</p>	<p>Similar impacts to those described for Alternative 1 from training, operation and maintenance of the Military Lease Area Range Complex, and during construction but with a decrease in training tempo when compared to Alternative 1.</p>
4.6 Visual Resources	No change	<p><u>Training Activities and Support Infrastructure</u> Less than significant impact on visual resources from land-based training activities, which are the same or similar to those currently being conducted on Tinian. In limited locations where night lighting would be required, it would be rated to limit light trespass and thus minimize potential for impaired night sky viewing. The proposed surface radar tower and support infrastructure at Puntan Taddong (also known as Ushi Point) would not present a visual barrier that would block or otherwise obscure views to the ocean particularly from the Ushi Point Fisherman’s Memorial. Potential impacts</p>	<p>Similar impacts to those described for Alternative 1 from training, operation and maintenance of the Military Lease Area Range Complex, and during construction but with a decrease in training tempo when compared to Alternative 1.</p>

<i>Section and Resource</i>	<i>No Action Alternative</i>	<i>Alternative 1</i>	<i>Alternative 2</i>
		<p>would be further minimized by painting the structure using a color palette consistent with existing landscape.</p> <p><u>Construction</u> Less than significant impact on visual resources during construction of training and support infrastructure to be intermittently phased over approximately 10 to 15 years. Impacts would be temporary and localized to the footprint of each construction project, which are distributed throughout the Military Lease Area. Construction workers and equipment, fencing, and newly cleared areas may be visible to members of the public using the Military Lease Area, but the presence of extensive and dense intervening vegetation and the low height profile of newly constructed project elements would provide screening from most public viewpoints.</p>	
4.7 Transportation	No change	<p>Less than significant impact to ground, water, and air transportation from increased training events and construction activities. Training would not affect commercial aircraft operations at TNI or Saipan International Airport because radar and/or spotters would continuously monitor the airspace during live-fire training to detect approaching aircraft. If an aircraft is observed, live-fire training would be suspended until the aircraft has safely passed. Potential transportation impacts would be further minimized due to the establishment of an on-island Range Control that would coordinate with the CNMI to allow public access to the Military Lease Area for special festivals and other events wherever such access can be safely accommodated during training, and Range Control would provide advanced notification to the public for any areas where temporary access controls, including roadway closures, are required in the Military Lease Area.</p>	<p>Similar impacts to those described for Alternative 1 from training, operation and maintenance of the Military Lease Area Range Complex, and during construction but with a decrease in training tempo when compared to Alternative 1</p>
4.8 Noise	No change	<p><u>Training</u> Less than significant impact to human populations from proposed ground and aviation training activities under Alternative 1. Range Control would apply temporary access restrictions in the Military Lease Area when needed to preserve safety; this would reduce the potential for human exposure to loud noise levels (e.g., aircraft take-offs and landings, small arms firing, and explosives detonations). Considering thresholds for both long-term cumulative exposure and single event noise levels, the public would not experience sound levels that would have the potential to cause hearing loss. However, new sources of noise would occasionally be audible beyond the Military Lease Area during some training events (e.g., at residential, education, or commercial areas in San Jose or the southern tip of Saipan), primarily from live-fire training at the Multi-Purpose Maneuver Range and Explosives Training Range and from use of different types of aircraft at North Field and proposed Landing Zones. Noise from training would be temporary, occur intermittently over the course of any given year, and be</p>	<p>Similar impacts to those described for Alternative 1 from training, operation and maintenance of the Military Lease Area Range Complex, and during construction but with a decrease in training tempo when compared to Alternative 1.</p>

<i>Section and Resource</i>	<i>No Action Alternative</i>	<i>Alternative 1</i>	<i>Alternative 2</i>
		<p>interspersed with quieter times where less noise-producing activities or even no military training would be audible. Training-related noise may cause effects such as annoyance, but would be unlikely to interrupt conversations, cause classroom learning interference, or disrupt sleep. Effects may vary over time based on environmental factors (i.e., under changing weather conditions, it is possible a sound source may be barely detectable one day but annoying the next) and individual sensitivity to noise.</p> <p><u>Construction</u> Less than significant impacts from temporary construction-generated noise during daytime hours at different construction locations over a 10-15-year period.</p>	
4.9 Air Quality	No change	Less than significant impact on air quality from training events, construction emissions, operational emissions, and fugitive dust. Emissions would be dispersed away from sensitive receptors.	Similar impacts to those described for Alternative 1 from training, operation and maintenance of the Military Lease Area Range Complex, and during construction but with a decrease in training tempo when compared to Alternative 1.
4.10 Public Health and Safety	No change	<p><u>Training and Construction</u> Less than significant impact from ground and aviation training events and construction activities, including electromagnetic radiation. Potential impacts to the public would be minimized or avoided with establishment of Range Control, surface danger zones, subdivided training areas, and adherence to range safety protocols and best management practices. There would be no increased risk of wildfires from training due to development and implementation of a Range Wildland Fire Management Plan and no increase in flood zones or flood risks.</p> <p><u>Protection of Children</u> The Proposed Action would not result in environmental health risks or safety risks that may disproportionately affect children. In addition to the large distance between populated areas and construction and training events, active controls at construction sites and controlled access during training events would further reduce the potential for impacts. Potential impacts would be avoided by distances of construction and training events from populated areas, active controls at construction sites, and controlled access during training events to protect the public.</p>	Similar impacts to those described for Alternative 1 from training, operation and maintenance of the Military Lease Area Range Complex, and during construction but with a decrease in training tempo when compared to Alternative 1.
4.11 Utilities	No change	<p><u>Potable Water, Wastewater, Solid Waste, Hazardous Waste, Green Waste, Stormwater, Electrical Power, Communications</u> Less than significant impact on utilities from increased training and construction activities. New water wells and septic system for wastewater would be installed to accommodate increased demand. Storage, handling, and disposal of hazardous</p>	Similar impacts to those described for Alternative 1 from training, operation and maintenance of the Military Lease Area Range Complex, and during construction but

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		<p>materials generated under Alternative 1 would occur in accordance with all applicable laws and regulations, including during training, operation and maintenance of the Military Lease Area Range Complex, and construction. Military and construction-related solid waste would only be disposed of in permitted and compliant landfills authorized to accept the types of wastes being generated (i.e., solid waste would be transported to Marpi Landfill on Saipan or other off-island facility(ies) authorized to accept DoD waste until a permitted and compliant landfill is available on Tinian). Green waste would be processed by chipper and stockpiled for later use as mulch. Best management practices would be applied during construction, and low-impact design measures developed for proposed training support infrastructure would reduce potential for stormwater runoff impacts. The existing electrical power capacity on Tinian is sufficient to meet demand under training and construction. Small, short-term service interruptions would occur during connections to communications systems, and construction impacts would be minimized by repurposing existing towers on Tinian and Saipan.</p>	<p>with a decrease in training tempo when compared to Alternative 1.</p>
4.12 Topography, Geology, and Soils	No change	<p>Less than significant impact to topography, geology, and soils during training, operation and maintenance of the Military Lease Area Range Complex, and from clearing of vegetation and minor grading during construction. Best management practices would be applied to control erosion during construction. There would be no permanent loss of prime farmland soils.</p>	<p>Similar impacts to those described for Alternative 1 from training, operation and maintenance of the Military Lease Area Range Complex, and during construction but with a decrease in training tempo when compared to Alternative 1.</p>
4.13 Groundwater and Hydrology	No change	<p>Less than significant impact to groundwater availability and quality. Groundwater modeling evaluated potential impacts by considering historic and future community demand with the addition of proposed demand under Alternative 1 (e.g., during training events, operation and maintenance of the Military Lease Area Range Complex, and construction). Based on the modeling results, the proposed new potable and non-potable water wells would not impact water quality or salinity.</p> <p>New proposed ranges would be managed in accordance with the USMC's Range Environmental Vulnerability Assessment program. The program includes conducting a baseline assessment to gain a better understanding of the potential transport of munitions constituents from the use of the proposed live-fire range areas. This assessment will include modeling scenarios for munitions constituents migration to off range areas including where pathways could reach groundwater.</p> <p>In addition to installing four groundwater monitoring wells, at the request of CNMI, the USMC has agreed to fund a one-time hydrogeological study to establish baseline data that could be used to support monitoring of Tinian's aquifer.</p>	<p>Similar impacts to those described for Alternative 1 from training, operation and maintenance of the Military Lease Area Range Complex, and during construction but with a decrease in training tempo when compared to Alternative 1.</p>

<i>Section and Resource</i>	<i>No Action Alternative</i>	<i>Alternative 1</i>	<i>Alternative 2</i>
4.14 Surface Water and Wetlands	No change	Less than significant impact to surface waters and wetlands from ground disturbance during construction and training. Training and construction sites are at least 1,400 feet from wetlands with no established stream flow to wetlands.	Similar impacts to those described for Alternative 1 from training, operation and maintenance of the Military Lease Area Range Complex, and during construction but with a decrease in training tempo when compared to Alternative 1.