



# Revised Draft Environmental Impact Statement for Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands Joint Military Training

## Hafa Adai, Tirow, and Welcome

On **June 6, 2025**, the United States (U.S.) Marine Corps initiated a **75-day public review and comment period for the Revised Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) Joint Military Training**. The Marine Corps is accepting public comments on the Revised Draft EIS and potential effects to historic properties per Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. The public review and comment period will continue through **August 20, 2025**.

## Proposed Action

In developing this Proposed Action, the Marine Corps evaluated the 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/Overseas EIS by elected officials and government agencies of the CNMI, federal agencies, and the public. The Marine Corps' revised proposed training concept for the Military Lease Area on Tinian fully supports military training requirements and recognizes the importance of minimizing the impacts of military training on the residents of Tinian. First, the training concept was purposefully designed to locate live-fire ranges within the northern portion of the island, away from the village of San Jose, recreational beaches, tourism areas, and cultural and natural resources. Second, understanding that public access to the Military Lease Area is important to the community, the Marine Corps would establish an on-island Training Area and Range Operations Command (Range Control) to foster communication between the community and the military to allow access to the Military Lease Area when it may safely be accommodated, even during ongoing training events.

After developing this training concept, between January 2020 and September 2024, the Marine Corps engaged the CNMI government in a series of virtual and in-person discussions on the revised training concept and revised environmental analysis. In August 2023, the Marine Corps held public information sharing sessions on the islands of Tinian, Saipan, and Rota to inform the public at large of the revised training concept.

- **For more information on the Proposed Action and its purpose and need, review Section 1.2 and Section 2.1 of the Revised Draft EIS on the project website listed below.**



<https://www.cnmijointmilitarytrainingeis.com>

## Proposed Action (continued)

This revised training concept, or Proposed Action, is assessed in the Revised Draft EIS. The Proposed Action would support land-based expeditionary ground and aviation warfare training for all service components within lands leased by the military on Tinian. New training infrastructure would create a physical and virtual training environment on the island to include:

- ▶ Two live-fire ranges (Multi-Purpose Maneuver Range and Explosives Training Range).
- ▶ Two surface radar towers.
- ▶ Landing Zones throughout the Military Lease Area to be used for ground or aviation training.
- ▶ Improvements to North Field including a drop zone between runways Able and Charlie.
- ▶ Two ammunition holding areas.
- ▶ The former U.S. Agency for Global Media facility on Tinian would be repurposed into an expeditionary Base Camp. Existing communications towers on Tinian and Saipan would also be repurposed to allow communications during training.

In addition, subject to CNMI approvals, a biosecurity facility would be constructed at the Port of Tinian and an aircraft shelter would be constructed on U.S. Air Force Divert leased property at the Tinian International Airport. To ensure the safety of military training units and the public during training events, the on-island Range Control would schedule training and coordinate with local officials and the public.

## Purpose and Need

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 Proposed Action is needed to enable U.S. Armed Forces to meet their individual mandates in federal law (Title 10) to be trained and equipped to protect U.S. national security.

## Alternatives

### Alternative 1 (Preferred Alternative)

Under Alternative 1, land-based military training on Tinian, including live-fire training at two ranges, would be conducted. The training tempo under Alternative 1 would increase by approximately 15 percent over the No Action Alternative. New training infrastructure would create a physical and virtual training environment on the island.

### Alternative 2

Alternative 2 would include the same land-based training on Tinian as described for Alternative 1, but the training tempo would only increase by 5 percent over the No Action Alternative. The same infrastructure proposed under Alternative 1 would be constructed.

### No Action Alternative

Under the No Action Alternative, land-based military training on Tinian would continue at the current tempo and intensity identified for actions previously analyzed under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). No construction is associated with the No Action Alternative.

- ▶ **For more information on the existing environment that would be affected by the Proposed Action on Tinian and the discussion of potential environmental impacts, review Chapters 3 and 4 of the Revised Draft EIS on the project website at: <https://www.cnmijointmilitarytrainingeis.com>**



## Resources Analyzed in the Revised Draft EIS

The Revised Draft EIS provides an analysis of the potential impacts of the Proposed Action and alternatives on the following environmental resource areas:

- Public Access
- Land Use and Recreation
- Socioeconomics
- Biological Resources
- Cultural Resources
- Visual Resources
- Transportation
- Noise
- Air Quality
- Public Health and Safety
- Utilities
- Topography, Geology and Soils
- Groundwater and Hydrology
- Surface Water and Wetlands

### Key Environmental Impacts

**Minimizing Public Access Restrictions:** Recognizing the importance of community access to the Military Lease Area, the Marine Corps worked with CNMI leadership to site live-fire ranges and implement training concepts to enhance public accessibility. For scheduling purposes, the Military Lease Area would be divided into 8 smaller training areas, allowing the public safe access in areas where training activities would not be occurring. For safety, during some training events public access may be limited. However, some training could be conducted without any access controls. When possible, public access to recreational beaches and tourism areas (e.g., Ushi Point and the Tinian North Field National Historic Landmark) would continue to be available even when training may be occurring.

**Range Control:** To ensure training unit and public safety during training events, 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, providing advance notifications to help the public plan their activities. Information would be updated in real time so that the public can gain access to desired areas within the Military Lease Area as soon as it is safely feasible. Additionally, the Marine Corps would work with the CNMI government to identify holidays, festivals, or other important days for which public access to the Military Lease Area may be accommodated.

**Noise:** The potential for noise generated during ground and aviation training events to affect human populations on Tinian was modeled using approved Department of Defense noise modeling software. The results of this modeling effort show that new sources of noise, primarily from live-fire training at the two proposed ranges and from different types of aircraft at North Field and proposed Landing Zones, would occasionally be audible beyond the Military Lease Area (for example, at residential, education, or commercial areas in San Jose or the southern tip of Saipan). Noise from these training activities would be temporary, occur intermittently over the course of any given year, and be interspersed with quieter times where less noise-producing activities or even no military training would be audible. Training-related noise may cause annoyance, but would be unlikely to interrupt conversations, cause classroom learning interference, or disrupt sleep. Effects may vary over time depending on individual sensitivity to noise or under changing weather conditions when it is possible a sound source may be barely detectable one day, but very loud the next.





## Key Environmental Impacts (continued)

**Biological Resources:** The Proposed Action was designed to avoid and minimize direct impacts to federally listed species. Noise generated as part of training events and construction would pose temporary, intermittent, and infrequent impacts that may induce behavioral and/or physiological shifts to Mariana fruit bats. These impacts would be brief and dispersed throughout the year. Consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service on Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act is pending.



**Cultural Resources:** Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 requires federal agencies to consider the effects of their undertakings on historic properties. Working through Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, the Marine Corps has collaborated with consulting parties, including the CNMI Historic Preservation Officer and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, to minimize the impacts of training on Tinian's historic properties and to continue to allow public access to historic properties.



**Water Resources:** Potential impacts to groundwater were evaluated by modeling historic and future community demand with the addition of proposed demand from training, operation and maintenance, and construction under the Proposed Action. Based on the modeling results, the Proposed Action would not impact groundwater availability nor would the proposed new potable and non-potable water wells impact water quality or salinity.

### Where can the EIS be found?

The Revised Draft EIS can be downloaded from the project website:

<https://www.cnmijointmilitarytrainingeis.com>

Copies are also available for review at the following local libraries:

**Tinian Public Library**  
**Joeten-Kiyu Public Library, Saipan**  
**Antonio C. Atalig Memorial Rota Public Library**



The Marine Corps appreciates your feedback on the Revised Draft EIS, potential effects to historic properties per Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, and your time and interest in the environmental review process.

### How do I comment?

Submit your comment online through the project website, fill out a comment form at a public meeting, or mail your comment to:

CJMT Project Manager  
Naval Facilities Engineering Systems Command  
Pacific c/o AECOM  
415 Chalan San Antonio Road, Suite 112  
Baltej Pavilion Building  
Tamuning, Guam 96913



For more information scan the QR Code, or visit:  
<https://www.cnmijointmilitarytrainingeis.com>