

# Environmental Impact Statement for Divert Activities and Exercises



## Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands

### Revised Draft EIS

#### Introduction

The U.S. Air Force proposes to improve an existing airport or airports and associated infrastructure in the Mariana Islands in support of expanding mission requirements in the western Pacific. Pacific Air Forces' primary mission is to provide ready air and space power to promote U.S. interests in the Asia-Pacific region during peacetime, through crisis, and in contingency situations.

#### 2012 Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)

In June 2012, the U.S. Air Force released a Draft EIS for Divert Activities and Exercises. The 2012 Draft EIS described the Proposed Action and analyzed two alternative locations in the CNMI for the Proposed Action; Saipan International Airport and Tinian International Airport. The Draft EIS identified Saipan as the Preferred Alternative. During the public review period, the U.S. Air Force received over 200 individual comments from federal, territory, and commonwealth agencies; political stakeholders; and the general public. Many comments received on the Draft EIS recommended the U.S. Air Force consider Tinian as the Preferred Alternative. Comments also expressed concern over potential impacts related to fighter aircraft operations and munitions storage.

#### Revised Draft EIS

The U.S. Air Force's purpose of and need for the divert activities and exercises Proposed Action have not changed since release of the Draft EIS in June 2012. However, the U.S. Air Force determined the policies and objectives of the National Environmental Policy Act would be best served by preparing and releasing a Revised Draft EIS to seek additional comments on changes made as a result of comments received on the 2012 Draft EIS. This Revised Draft EIS presents modified alternatives that represent a reduced capability from that analyzed in the 2012 Draft EIS. The modified alternatives meet USAF operational selection standards presented in the 2012 Draft EIS, while incorporating input received during the 2012 Draft EIS public review period.

#### Revised Draft EIS – Modified Alternatives

The Revised Draft EIS presents three modified alternatives, which include a modified Saipan alternative, a modified Tinian alternative, and a hybrid modified alternative. The hybrid modified alternative would combine development on both Saipan and Tinian; however, it would focus most development and operations on Tinian. Both the modified Tinian alternative and the hybrid modified alternative analyze the potential for development on either the south or north side of Tinian International Airport. Details on and comparison of the modified alternatives being considered by the U.S. Air Force are provided on the back of this sheet.

Figure: Stakeholder and Public Input



## Differences between the Revised Draft EIS and the 2012 Draft EIS

In the Revised Draft EIS:

- A preferred alternative is not identified.
- Three modified alternatives are presented, which include a modified Saipan alternative, a modified Tinian alternative, and a hybrid modified alternative. The hybrid modified alternative would combine development on both Saipan and Tinian but would focus most development and operations on Tinian.
- Construction on the north side of the Tinian International Airport runway is considered under two of the alternatives (previously only the south side of the runway was considered).
- Fewer aircraft and fewer support personnel are proposed during planned training exercises
- The total number of proposed aircraft operations was reduced from 1,920 take-offs or landings to 720 take-offs or landings.
- The following elements were removed:
  - Runway extensions
  - Fighter aircraft operations; thereby eliminating the previous high noise concern and munitions storage
  - Permanent navigational aids
  - Aircraft hanger
  - Munitions storage facilities
  - Arm/disarm pad

Table: Summary of Revised Draft Alternatives Construction Elements

	Modified Saipan	Modified Tinian North	Modified Tinian South	Hybrid Saipan	Hybrid Tinian North	Hybrid Tinian South
Parking Apron	Same	New location	New location	N/A	New location	New location
Cargo Pad	Same	New location	Same	New location	New location	Same
Maintenance Facility	Same	New location	New location	Same	New location	New location
Fuel Tanks and Supporting Infrastructure	Same	New location	New location	Same	New location	New location
Fuel Hydrant System	Same	New location	New location	N/A	New location	New location
Fuel Pipeline	New	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Access Road	N/A	New	N/A	N/A	New	N/A
Taxiway	N/A	New	N/A	N/A	New	N/A
Fire Pump Building, Tanks, and Wells	N/A	New	New	N/A	New	New
Fuel Tanks at Seaport	Same	Same	Same	Same	Same	Same

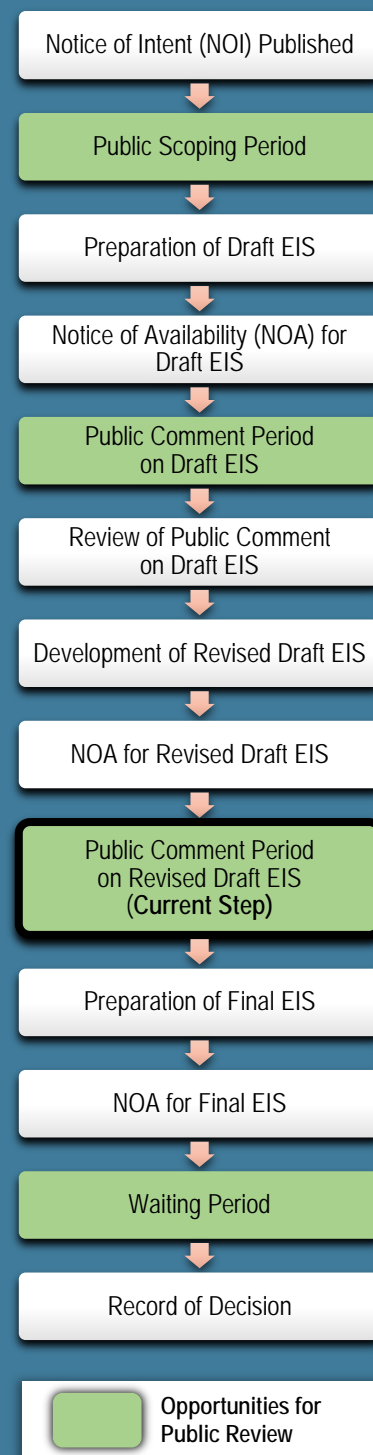
Same: The construction element is proposed in the same location as in the 2012 Draft EIS

N/A: The construction element is not included in the Alternative

New: The construction is proposed under the Alternative, but was not included in the 2012 Draft EIS

New location: The construction element was included in the 2012 Draft EIS but proposed in a different location in the Revised Draft EIS

## Divert EIS Timeline



To submit written comments, please contact:

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**All comments should be submitted no later than November 30, 2015 (EDT)/December 1, 2015 (ChST) for consideration in the Final EIS.**

For more information or to submit comments online visit [www.PACAFDivertMarianasEIS.com](http://www.PACAFDivertMarianasEIS.com)