DRAFT FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT (FONSI)

INSTALLATION DEVELOPMENT PLAN PROJECTS – DAVIS-MONTHAN AFB

Pursuant to provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), Title 42 *United States Code* (USC) § 4321 et seq.; Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations at 40 *Code of Federal Regulations* (CFR) Parts 1500–1508; and 32 CFR Part 989, *Environmental Impact Analysis Process (EIAP),* the United States (US) Air Force (Air Force) prepared the attached Environmental Assessment (EA) to address the potential environmental consequences associated with multiple installation development projects at Davis-Monthan AFB, Arizona.

Purpose and Need

The purpose of projects identified for installation development under the Proposed Action is to support Davis-Monthan Air Force Base's (AFB's) current and future mission and training requirements by providing facilities that are compliant with current design standards, promote quality-of-life needs, provide ample space for future mission growth, and promote efficient use of facilities to allow for consolidation of similar functions and squadrons. The need for projects proposed for each planning district is outlined below.

Rescue Campus Projects

Projects identified within the Rescue Campus are needed because the three resident Guardian Angel (rescue) squadrons assigned to Davis-Monthan AFB currently have inadequate space for storage of equipment and operations. Current storage space is spread across multiple locations, making it inefficient for gathering and using equipment and materials. Some equipment is currently being stored outside in the intense desert sun, shortening the equipment life cycle. Several facilities are undersized, preventing the completion of some critical tasks (e.g., packing of all required parachutes). There are no facilities to accommodate the new 414th Combat Training Squadron as part of the Red Flag exercise requirements.

Flightline District Plan Projects

The construction of the new Communications Squadron headquarters within the Flightline District is needed to provide updated facilities with an efficient layout and space for current and future mission requirements. The Communications Squadron currently operates out of a 1945 hangar building that was converted to administrative space in 1985. The existing building is substandard, nearing end of life condition, and occupies highly desirable land space along the flightline that could be better used for flight operation functions.

Air Force Reserve Command's Facilities Operations Capability and Utilization Survey Projects

The projects identified in the Air Force Reserve Command's (AFRC's) Facilities Operations Capability and Utilization Survey (FOCUS) support the facility needs of the 943d Rescue Group, 924th Fighter Group, 610th Command and Control Squadron, and 720th Security Forces Squadron. Projects proposed in the AFRC FOCUS are needed to provide sufficient space for current and future mission requirements. Presently, the 943d Aerospace Medical Squadron lacks adequate administrative and training space for its facility functions. The 943d Maintenance Squadron needs additional indoor space for storing aircraft ground equipment; a hangar building for unscheduled maintenance of A-10 fighter aircraft; and administrative, training, and shop space for maintenance of the HH-60 helicopter and training of personnel.

Aerospace Maintenance and Regeneration Group District Plan Projects

The Aerospace Maintenance and Regeneration Group (AMARG) serves an important function in maintaining and storing all excess US military aircraft. Projects identified in the AMARG District Plan are needed to consolidate mission functions, improve operational efficiency, and facilitate communications within the organization. Currently, the Mission Support Center operates out of eight separate, substandard buildings. The AMARG packaging and fabrication function needs a consolidated facility; currently, it is served by multiple buildings, several of which are three-sided and open to the harsh desert climate. The Air Force has notified AMARG that any special tooling/special test equipment (ST/STE) requiring long-term

storage will be stored at Davis-Monthan AFB. AMARG needs a large storage warehouse for storing the ST/STE, as no facility exists for this purpose.

Other Installation Development Projects

As identified in the Dormitory Master Plan, construction of an additional dormitory is needed because Davis-Monthan AFB has insufficient on-Base housing to accommodate unaccompanied enlisted personnel.

Additionally, Davis-Monthan AFB proposes to purchase eight tracts of contiguous, privately owned land on the southeast end of Davis-Monthan AFB near the Munitions Storage Area (MSA). Because the land parcels are within Davis-Monthan AFB, the private owners cannot access the property. Several parcels overlap the explosive safety quantity distance arcs for the munition's storage units. Currently, the Air Force continues to pay rent on the land under a lease agreement; however, purchasing the parcels outright would provide cost-savings and ensure appropriate land use of the parcels in perpetuity.

Munitions Storage Area Projects

The proposed projects in the MSA are needed because the munitions storage facilities at Davis-Monthan AFB were initially constructed more than 60 years ago and are antiquated. The older MSA facilities do not meet requirements for personnel quality of life due to lack of indoor cooling, adequate work and administrative space, and adequate rest rooms. The 355th Munitions Squadron (MUNS) Airmen are also outside in extreme weather, particularly during the summer months when Davis-Monthan AFB is exposed to high temperatures and constant sunshine. In addition, testing has revealed that some facilities in the MUNS compound have asbestos and lead paint. Current lighting is limited and creates potential safety issues during night munitions operations. Localized flooding during summer monsoon rains makes pedestrian access difficult and unsafe.

In addition, the existing facilities 355 MUNS facilities are poorly configured for current operations, resulting in inefficient operations and potentially unsafe work conditions. Several MUNS operations cannot be performed concurrently because they are co-located within existing buildings and the operations are incompatible due to safety requirements. The 355 MUNS has outgrown its administrative facilities with some current administrative facilities inside the secured MSA requiring unnecessary access to secured areas.

Description of Proposed Action and Alternatives

The Air Force is proposing to implement multiple installation development projects throughout Davis-Monthan AFB. The projects include five new facilities for the Rescue Squadron (RQS) mission to support operations, storage, and training and consolidate occupied space for more efficient operations. A new Communications Squadron headquarters facility would replace the existing facilities in an antiquated building that occupies valuable space along the flightline. Four projects identified in the AFRC FOCUS, would be constructed to support the facility needs of the 943d Aerospace Medical Squadron and 943d Maintenance Squadron. These would include expansion of training facilities, aircraft ground equipment storage, and maintenance hangars. Three projects in the AMARG Planning District would be constructed to support the AMARG needs for updated and consolidated facilities and expansion for long-term storage of the ST/STE. To address the shortage of on-Base housing for unaccompanied enlisted personnel, a new dormitory would be constructed in the Main Base District. The proposed acquisition of eight tracts of contiguous private land inside Davis-Monthan AFB located along Yuma Road near the MSA through a purchase agreement would be implemented to eliminate private in-holdings within the Base and eliminate annual lease agreement payments.

The proposed actions in the MSA would address the deficiencies, operational limitations, and safety concerns with the existing facilities. The extent to which facilities would be upgraded would depend on the Proposed Action Alternative selected for implementation.

Alternative 1

Alternative 1 would include all the projects supporting the RQS, Communications Squadron, 943d Aerospace Medical Squadron, 943d Maintenance Squadron, and the AMARG. In addition, the dormitory would be constructed, and the private land holdings would be acquired through a purchase agreement.

The projects in the MSA would be a full optimization of MSA through construction of new facilities, renovation of existing facilities, reconfiguration of operations, and address all quality-of-life and safety issues. These would include construction of a new chaff/flare operations building, a new conventional munitions operations building, new precision guided missile building, new headquarters building, munitions inspection facility, new munition storage facilities, retrofitting the old earth covered magazines with wider doors that can accommodate the larger, modern weapons, new storage pads for explosives and inert material, new munitions loading dock, and safety improvements such as shade structures, lighting, paved pedestrian paths, and new entry access control point.

Alternative 2

Alternative 2 also would include all the projects supporting the RQS, Communications Squadron, 943d Aerospace Medical Squadron, 943d Maintenance Squadron, and the AMARG. In addition, the dormitory would be constructed, and the private land holdings would be acquired through a purchase agreement.

The projects in the MSA would represent a transformation of the MSA and would address many, but not all identified needs within the MSA. The proposed projects would include many of the same new facilities, renovation of existing facilities, reconfiguration of operations, and address quality-of-life and safety issues as Alternative 1. The configuration of operations would be slightly different than under Alternative 1. Most notably, the new guard house outside the MSA entry control point would not be constructed, the munitions unloading dock would be smaller and remain outside the secured area, and the narrow 8-foot-wide doors on the older earth covered magazines would not be retrofitted and widened.

Alternative 3

Alternative 3 also would include all the projects supporting the RQS, Communications Squadron, 943d Aerospace Medical Squadron, 943d Maintenance Squadron, and the AMARG. In addition, the dormitory would be constructed, and the private land holdings would be acquired through a purchase agreement.

The projects in the MSA would represent an enhancement of the MSA or modernization for current missions but would not address future growth at Davis-Monthan AFB. The projects would include those under Alternative 2 with the following exceptions. The three new multi-bay aboveground magazines along the northern boundary of the MSA would not be constructed. The multi-cubes currently used for storage in the operations area would not be removed and adjacent Building 265 would not be demolished. The explosives storage pad for 1.3/1.4 explosives would not be built on the site of the multi-cubes as in Alternatives 1 and 2, thus reducing the space available for storage of higher-grade (1.1) explosives. The new inspection building for inspection and surveillance of munitions would not be constructed. A new precision guided missile (PGM) building would not be constructed, and PGM operations would remain in Building 187. Alternative 3 would achieve the segregation of the chaff/flare, conventional munitions, and PGM operations into separate facilities and alleviate issues with incompatible operations in the same building.

No Action Alternative

Analysis of the No Action Alternative provides a benchmark, enabling decision-makers to compare the magnitude of the potential environmental effects of the Proposed Action. NEPA requires an EA to analyze the No Action Alternative. No action means that an action would not take place at this time, and the resulting environmental effects from taking no action would be compared with the effects of deciding to move forward with the proposed activity. No action for this EA reflects the status quo, where no facility improvements would occur, and no existing safety and quality-of-life issues would be addressed at Davis-Monthan AFB. Over time, the mission support capabilities of the Installation would diminish along with its ability to support the future missions and requirements of its tenant activities.

Summary of Findings

Potentially affected environmental resources were identified through communications with state and federal agencies and review of past environmental documentation. Specific environmental resources with the potential for environmental consequences include; land use; air quality; earth, water, biological, and cultural resources; noise; hazardous materials and wastes, toxic substances, and contaminated sites; infrastructure, transportation, and utilities; safety; socioeconomics; environmental justice and protection of children.

Land Use

No significant adverse effects to land use would be expected to result from implementation of the Proposed Action Alternatives. Under the Proposed Action, construction of new facilities would occur within the existing boundaries of the Installation and would occur on land with designated compatible land use. None of the proposed projects would create restrictions or prohibitions of specific uses on adjacent lands. The existing explosive safety quantity distance (ESQD) arcs identified surrounding the MSA would not change. Any existing land use restrictions based on the ESQD arcs would remain as currently defined.

Earth Resources

Geology – No direct or indirect impacts to geology would be expected to occur with implementation of the Proposed Action.

Topography – None of the projects would occur in areas that would require large-scale alteration of topography to accommodate construction. Any alteration of ground surfaces would be limited to basic construction activities such as compacting and excavating to prepare the ground for siting of a structure. After placing and compacting reuse or fill soils, superficial soils would be graded to match the local topography or create swales to maintain or improve efficient stormwater drainage. Therefore, only short-term, negligible impacts to topography are expected.

Soils – Potential adverse effects on soils, including soil loss, contamination, and structural alteration, would be managed at an individual project level. Projects that would disturb 1 or more acres of land would require a Construction General Permit from the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality, Arizona Pollution Discharge Elimination System program. These projects would also require the preparation and implementation of a site-specific Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan to be reviewed by Base Civil Engineering Squadron personnel prior to construction, which must include Best Management Practices (BMPs) and erosion and sediment control requirements. Implementation of BMPs would minimize impacts to soil resources, and projects would be designed and implemented in accordance with United Facilities Criteria 3-210-10 (as amended in 2016) to minimize impacts to soil resources. With proper implementation of BMPs and adherence to applicable permits and regulations, adverse impacts to soils from the Proposed Action Alternatives would be expected to be short term and minor.

Air Quality

No significant effects to air quality would be expected to result from implementation of the Proposed Action Alternatives. The estimated total annual emissions of the Proposed Action would not exceed the *de minimis* or Prevention of Significant Deterioration permitting thresholds for any criteria pollutant or precursor. The proposed net changes in criteria pollutants and/or precursors would be less than the indicator of significance threshold of 250 tons per year for all the criteria pollutants and 25 tons/year for lead. Therefore, it is unlikely these increases would cause significant impacts.

While emissions for all pollutants would increase with implementation of the Proposed Alternatives, the net changes would be less than the *de minimis* thresholds. Because the emissions associated with the Proposed Action would be below the General Conformity *de minimis* thresholds, the requirements of the General Conformity Rule are not applicable, as documented in the detailed air conformity analysis performed for this EA and available in the Project Administrative Record.

Water Resources

Approximately 29 acres of soil would be disturbed during construction activities under the Proposed Action. Construction activities would take place on previously disturbed land adjacent to existing buildings and infrastructure. No activities associated with the Proposed Action would occur within or intersect any surface waters. However, these activities would have the potential to increase erosion and sedimentation of nearby surface waters during construction and for a brief period after due to temporary disturbance of soils.

Davis-Monthan AFB would be required to obtain a Construction General Permit under its General Permit with the Arizona Department of Air Quality, which regulates the Base's stormwater outfalls. This permit requires various controls and BMPs to reduce impacts on surface water through pollution prevention and includes sedimentation and erosion controls, soil stabilization, and pollutant management. These BMPs would be implemented to prevent sediments and other pollutants from potentially entering nearby surface waters via Davis-Monthan AFB's stormwater conveyance system. Therefore, impacts to surface water resources on Davis-Monthan AFB from ground-disturbing activities associated with the Proposed Action would be anticipated to be short term and minor.

Under the Proposed Action Alternatives, 850,000 to 920,000 square feet of new, impervious surface area would be added to the Base from the construction of new facilities. This increase in impervious surface area would be anticipated to result in a negligible, long-term increase in stormwater runoff at Davis-Monthan AFB.

No impacts to groundwater or floodplains are expected from the implementation of any of the Proposed Action Alternatives.

Biological Resources

The areas designated for construction activities under the Proposed Action have limited suitable habitat for wildlife. Native vegetation would not be disturbed. The developed portion of Davis-Monthan AFB, in which the projects proposed would be located, supports relatively common wildlife species such as small mammals. No federally listed threatened or endangered species have been observed on Davis-Monthan AFB, nor does critical habitat exist within Davis-Monthan AFB. No significant impacts to biological resources would be expected to occur under Project Action Alternatives. The Air Force has determined that the Proposed Action Alternatives would have "no adverse effects" on threatened or endangered species.

Cultural Resources

No significant effects to cultural resources would be expected to result from implementation of the Proposed Action.

Archaeological Sites – Under the Proposed Action, four projects are within the 50-meter direct Area of Potential Effect for several archaeological sites. These sites are not eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places, and all construction would occur on land that has been disturbed from past and ongoing mission activities. Most of the archaeological sites within 50-meters are associated with the proposed land purchase of private land holdings and would not involve any construction or other physical disturbing activity. This would provide a long-term, minor, beneficial impacts by allowing consistent management of this area. No significant adverse impact to cultural resources is expected.

Historic Architectural Properties – Several buildings within the MSA that would be demolished are not eligible for historic preservation because they qualify for the Program Comment for World War II and Cold War Era Ammunitions Storage Facilities issued by the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation. Buildings outside of the MSA that would be demolished are not eligible for historic preservation. The Proposed Action Alternatives would not have significant adverse impacts on historic properties.

Traditional Cultural Properties – No sacred sites, human remains, associated grave goods, unassociated grave goods, sacred objects, or objects of cultural patrimony have been identified on Davis-Monthan AFB.

The Proposed Action would not impact archaeological sites, historic properties, or Native American resources.

Noise

Short-term, localized noise impacts would be expected during individual construction, demolition, and renovation projects from the operation of heavy equipment and typical construction activity. However, these projects would be short term, implemented over time, and distributed throughout Davis-Monthan AFB, and therefore would not significantly contribute to the long-term baseline noise environment. No off-Base sensitive noise receptors would be affected by project construction sound because of the distance and existing sound levels from airfield operations.

Hazardous Materials and Wastes, Toxic Substances, and Contaminated Sites

Existing Davis-Monthan AFB plans and procedures are sufficient if hazardous materials were generated or found during construction, demolition, or renovation and require disposal. Any generation of hazardous waste would be short term during construction. The proposed projects in the MSA involve reconfiguration of existing operations in new facilities rather than new operations that would generate additional hazardous waste. Therefore, no impacts from the generation and disposal of hazardous waste would be expected from the Proposed Action Alternatives.

Demolition or renovation of existing facilities would include buildings known to contain asbestos-containing material (ACM) and/or lead-based paint (LBP). Management of ACM and LBP during demolition or renovation would follow established Davis-Monthan procedures such as those in the Asbestos Management Plan and Air Force Instruction 32-1001, *Civil Engineer Operations*, and United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) regulations. Friable asbestos building materials that could become airborne if disrupted would pose the greatest potential for adverse impacts. Buildings to be demolished without known sources of ACM and LBP would be re-inspected prior to demolition or renovation. With implementation of existing management practices for handling and disposal of ACM and LBP waste and compliance with USEPA regulations, potential adverse impacts from ACM and LBP would be expected to be short term and minor. Adverse impacts to the environment from potential release of ACM and LBP would be expected to be negligible. Minor, long-term, beneficial impacts would be anticipated to result from the demolition of older buildings because potential ACM and LBP hazards would be permanently removed from the Davis-Monthan AFB work environment.

No construction activities would occur within identified active Environmental Restoration Program sites; therefore, there would be no impacts to those sites.

Infrastructure, Transportation, and Utilities

No significant adverse effects to infrastructure, transportation, or utilities would be expected to result from implementation of the Proposed Action Alternatives.

Transportation – Increased truck traffic and construction workers commuting to the Installation during periods of construction would be expected to cause temporary increases in traffic on local roads. At project sites, temporary lane closures would be expected during construction activities. The on-Base transportation network is sufficient to handle the existing traffic volume. Several projects in the MSA would provide long-term, beneficial impacts by improving roads, increasing parking areas, and improve the entry access point in the MSA.

Utilities – No significant adverse impacts to existing utility services or usage are expected. All utilities have sufficient capacity to handle any additional increases in demand which are expected to be minimal. The demolition of older buildings and construction of new buildings would have a long-term, beneficial impact on infrastructure by replacing old utilities (e.g., water lines, plumbing, gas lines, and electrical lines) with new utilities. Short-term, negligible impacts to utility services would be expected when existing utilities are disconnected and reconnected during demolition and construction.

Safety

Negligible, temporary, adverse impacts to ground safety would be expected under the Proposed Action during construction and demolition activities. Construction of new facilities and demolition or renovation of existing facilities would expose Air Force or contractor personnel to safety hazards from heavy equipment operation, hazardous materials, falls, construction equipment, and potentially noisy and confined environments. The safety hazards would be typical of industrial construction projects but would be short term during the construction or demolition of individual buildings. To minimize health and safety risks, contractors would be required to maintain site-specific health and safety programs that follow applicable regulations.

Long-term, beneficial impacts to ground safety are expected from removal and replacement of antiquated, poorly configured buildings that lack sufficient space and proper cooling and contain ACM and/or LBP. Projects would alleviate overcrowding of facilities, protect personnel and equipment from intense desert heat by providing climate-controlled environments. Pedestrian access through the MSA would be improved, lighting for night operations would improve safety throughout the MSA, and installation of shade structures would protect personnel from the intense desert sun.

Long-term, beneficial impacts to explosives safety would occur in the MSA from the construction of new munitions and explosives operation buildings, structures, and storage pads. This would allow the separation of incompatible operations that are currently performed in the same building creating a safer and more efficient work environment.

Socioeconomics

No significant effects to socioeconomics would be expected from implementation of the Proposed Action Alternatives. The Proposed Action would not increase personnel, demand for housing, or education resources. Therefore, no adverse impacts on employment, housing, or educational resources would occur under the Proposed Action Alternatives. Construction of the dormitory for unaccompanied airmen would have beneficial impacts on the availability of housing.

Environmental Justice and the Protection of Children

No significant effects to communities with environmental justice concerns and protection of children would be expected to result from implementation of the Proposed Action. Impacts to residents living outside Davis-Monthan AFB would not occur because the proposed activities are wholly contained within the Base. Therefore, there would be no disproportionate impacts to minority, low-income, or youth populations.

Cumulative Impacts

The EA considered cumulative impacts that could result from the incremental impact of the Proposed Action when added to other past, present, or reasonably foreseeable environmental trends and planned actions on or near Davis-Monthan AFB.

When considered in conjunction with other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable environmental trends and planned actions at Davis-Monthan AFB, no significant adverse cumulative effects would be expected to occur with implementation of the Proposed Action Alternatives. Cumulative impacts identified in the impact analysis process are noted here:

- Negligible, long-term cumulative impacts to stormwater runoff are expected.
- The removal of ACM and LBP during demolition of facilities would have a beneficial cumulative impact with other similar actions.
- Negligible cumulative impact to demand for utility usage or service.
- Beneficial impacts to explosive safety in the MSA would be cumulative with other actions to improve explosive safety.

- Beneficial cumulative effects to safety would occur with other actions to improve pedestrian safety, lighting, security, and climate-controlled facilities.
- Beneficial cumulative impacts to available housing on Base.

Mitigation

The EA analysis concluded that the Proposed Action would not result in significant environmental impacts; therefore, no mitigation measures are required. BMPs are described and recommended in the EA where applicable.

Conclusion

Finding of No Significant Impact. After review of the EA prepared in accordance with the requirements of NEPA, CEQ regulations, and 32 CFR Part 989*,* and which is hereby incorporated by reference, I have determined that the Proposed Action would not have a significant impact on the quality of the human or natural environment. Accordingly, an Environmental Impact Statement will not be prepared. This decision was made after considering all submitted information, including a review of agency comments submitted during the 30-day public comment period, and considering a full range of practical alternatives that meet project requirements and are within the legal authority of the US Air Force.

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SCOTT C. MILLS, COL, USAF DATE
Commander, 355 Wing