

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION
WESTERN-PACIFIC REGION

***Adoption of the Environmental Assessment
and
Finding of No Significant Impact***

***for the
Proposed Construction of a New Entry Control Facility
and Associated Components at
Tucson International Airport***

Tucson, Pima County, Arizona



For further information

Matthew H. Bilsbarrow
Environmental Protection Specialist
U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Aviation Administration
Western-Pacific Region, Office of Airports
Phoenix Airports District Office
3800 North Central Ave, Suite 1025
Phoenix, AZ 85012

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GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT THIS DOCUMENT

WHAT'S IN THIS DOCUMENT? This document is the Federal Aviation Administration's (FAA) Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for the proposed Entry Control Facility and associated components (the "proposed project") at Tucson International Airport (TUS). The FAA's purpose and need of the proposed project is to support a safe airport. The FAA's Federal Action on this project is providing unconditional approval of the associated Airport Layout Plan update. This document includes the FAA's determinations and approvals for its proposed federal actions described in the Final Environmental Assessment (Final EA) dated December 2019. This document discusses reasonable alternatives considered by the FAA in reaching its decision and briefly summarizes the potential environmental consequences of the Proposed Action and the No Action Alternative, which were evaluated in detail in the Final EA.

WHAT'S HAPPENED TO DATE? In June 2018, the U.S. Air Force (USAF) prepared a Draft Environmental Assessment (Draft EA) for the proposed project as well as the proposed relocation of the Taiwanese Air Force F-16 Formal Training Unit to the Tucson Air National Guard (ANG) Base, which is adjacent to TUS. The Draft EA addressed the potential environmental effects of the proposal including reasonable alternatives. The Draft EA was prepared in accordance with the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) [Public Law 91-190, 42 USC § 4321-4347], the implementing regulations of the Council on Environmental Quality (40 CFR Parts 1500-1508), and FAA Order 1050.1F titled *Environmental Impacts: Policies and Procedures* and Order 5050.4B titled *NEPA Implementing Instructions for Airport Actions*. USAF published the Notice of Availability for the Draft EA in the *Arizona Daily Star* and the *Arizona Republic* on July 1, July 11, and July 21, 2018 and the document was available for review through July 31, 2018. Subsequently, USAF decided to prepare a Final EA for the proposed project only, which has independent utility from the proposed relocation of the Taiwanese Air Force F-16 Formal Training Unit. The USAF received six comment letters to the Draft EA.

WHAT SHOULD YOU DO? Read this FONSI to understand the actions that FAA intends to take in connection with the proposed project at TUS.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT? USAF and ANG may start implementing the proposed project, and the FAA may approve the TUS Airport Layout Plan update.

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION
ADOPTION OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT AND
FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT**

**FOR THE
PROPOSED CONSTRUCTION OF A NEW ENTRY CONTROL FACILITY
AND ASSOCIATED COMPONENTS AT
TUCSON INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT
TUCSON, PIMA COUNTY, ARIZONA**

1. Introduction

The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) provides this document as its adoption of the Final Environmental Assessment (EA) and issuance of a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for its federal action of approving an Airport Layout Plan (ALP) update for Tucson International Airport (TUS) located in Tucson, Pima County, Arizona. The ALP update would reflect the proposed construction of a new entry control facility (ECF) and associated components, such as a land release (Proposed Action). The FAA based this decision on information and analysis presented in the Final EA, dated December 2019, which the FAA incorporates by reference.

The U.S. Air Force (USAF) served as Lead Agency and prepared the Final EA, which they refer to as the 2019 EA, per the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA). USAF coordinated with the Tucson Air National Guard (ANG), which operates a base adjacent to TUS and uses some airport facilities. The FAA participated as a Cooperating Agency due to its authority to approve Airport Layout Plan (ALP) updates per the Airport and Airway Improvement Act of 1982 (Public Laws 97-248 and 100-223). The USAF and FAA coordinated with the City of Tucson, which owns the airport, and the Tucson Airport Authority (TAA), which operates it.

The USAF's Final EA referenced only the portions of the Draft EA dated June 2018 pertaining to the ECF and associated components. They did not incorporate the proposed relocation of Taiwan Air Force's F-16 Formal Training Unit to Tucson ANG Base from Luke Air Force Base. For example, the airspace management analysis is not relevant to the ECF and associated components. The USAF plans to prepare a separate environmental analysis and NEPA decision document for that proposed relocation action, which they determined has independent utility and a different timeline for completion from the proposed action analyzed here.

The USAF issued its FONSI on December 16, 2019. The FAA independently issues this FONSI based on its own review under the Council on Environmental Quality Regulations at 40 CFR § 1506.3 and FAA Order 1050.1F.

2. Purpose and Need

The USAF and ANG's purpose and need is to maximize operations and maintenance facility efficiency at the Tucson ANG Base while meeting current environmental, safety, and security standards, namely those set forth by the Department of Defense (DoD) in its *United Facilities Criteria: DoD Minimum Anti-terrorism Standards for Buildings*.

The FAA's purpose and need is respond to TAA's request for the unconditional approval of changes to the current Airport Layout Plan at TUS to show the proposed facilities. The FAA's statutory authority is to ensure the safe and efficient use of navigable airspace in the United States per the Federal Aviation Act of 1958, which Congress recodified in 1994.

3. Proposed Action and FAA Action

The proposed project would entail USAF and ANG constructing a new ECF, which would require the acquisition (via lease or purchase or both) of 28 acres from the TAA, demolition of two existing facilities (a warehouse and support facility), and construction of a new check house, vehicle inspection area, and truck inspection lane. ANG would obtain and follow the conditions of an Arizona Pollution Discharge Elimination System permit issued by the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality, because construction would disturb more than one acre. Prior to demolition, ANG would examine any facilities built prior to 1978 for lead-based paint and asbestos-containing material. If detected, ANG would follow their Hazardous Waste Management Plan as well as applicable federal, state, and local regulations.

In addition, the existing Aerovation Hangar located at the ECF site would be demolished and replaced in-kind along with associated infrastructure, such as utilities, drainage culverts, paved aircraft apron, and paved vehicle parking area. The replacement hangar would be located on airport property near the existing air traffic control tower. TAA would obtain and follow the conditions associated with a Clean Water Act Section 404 Permit issued by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, because a culvert located within the Waters of the U.S. would be extended.

The FAA's federal action would entail the unconditional approval of an ALP update depicting the proposed ECF and Aerovation Hangar replacement per 49 USC § 47101(a). This would include the FAA's approval for TUS to release airport land for the Entry Control Facility.

4. Reasonable Alternatives Considered

The FAA considered two reasonable alternatives presented in the Final EA, which are the Proposed Action and the No Action Alternative. The USAF screened several locations for the ECF on the Tucson ANG Base and adjacent to it on airport property. The selection criteria included:

- Adequate space to provide S-turns to slow vehicle speeds as they enter the base;
- Accommodation of sufficient vehicle queueing space; and
- Accommodation of sufficient space for vehicle denial capabilities.

The USAF selected the only suitable location, which occurs on airport and City of Tucson property adjacent to the west side of the Tucson ANG Base, for inclusion in the Proposed Action. The FAA did not examine other alternatives, because the Proposed Action does not involve any unresolved resource conflicts.

5. Assessment

The FAA considered the Proposed Action's and the No Action Alternative's potential environmental impacts, which were identified and evaluated in the Final EA. The Final EA in Table 2-5 did not analyze in detail the following resource categories, because either they were absent or impacts were negligible:

- Climate
- Coastal Resources
- Farmlands
- Floodplains
- Geology and Soils
- Light Emissions
- Natural Resources and Energy Supply
- Section 4(f) Resources
- Socioeconomics (Children's Environmental Health and Safety Risks & Environmental Justice)
- Visual Resources
- Water Resources (Surface Waters & Groundwater)
- Wetlands
- Wild and Scenic Rivers

The Final EA analyzed the following resource categories in detail, and the Proposed Action's impacts are summarized below.

A. Air Quality. The Final EA in Section 4.2 compared the estimated total annual emissions for criteria pollutants under the Proposed Action with the *de minimis* thresholds. The analysis concluded that emissions for all applicable pollutants would be less than the general conformity *de minimis* thresholds. Construction activities would generate fugitive dust and combustion emissions. However, this increase dust in would be short-term and minimized by implementing industry-standard dust control measures. The increase in vehicle emissions would be short-term, minimal, and below the *de minimis* threshold. Therefore, the Proposed Action would not result in significant impacts to air quality.

B. Biological Resources. The Final EA in Section 4.5 stated that the majority of the Proposed Action would occur on previously disturbed land or at developed sites. These

areas lack native or suitable habitat to support federally listed or special status species. A biological survey was conducted on the currently undeveloped nine acres owned by TAA for the replacement Aerovation Hangar. The biologists did not observe any federally endangered or special status species. Therefore, the Proposed Action would have “no effect” on federally listed threatened and endangered species or critical habitat. The Proposed Action would not result in significant impacts to biological resources.

C. Hazardous Materials and Solid Waste. The Final EA in Section 4.8 noted that the Proposed Action would result in a temporary increase in the storage of hazardous materials and generation of waste during construction, which includes building demolition. The Proposed Action would occur within the boundaries of the TUS Area Superfund Site, which contains contaminated groundwater. However, construction and excavation activities would not be deep enough to encounter contaminated groundwater and would not affect ongoing remediation work. Therefore, the Proposed Action would not result in significant impacts related to hazardous materials and waste.

D. Historical, Architectural, Archaeological, and Cultural Resources. The Final EA in Section 4.5 noted that the Proposed Action would demolish buildings constructed between 1953 and 1968. In 2018, ANG sponsored an architectural study, and the architectural historians recommended that the buildings did not have historical significance. In 2007, the FAA sponsored an archaeological survey that covered the hangar relocation area, and the archaeologists did not report any archaeological sites. The USAF and ANG determined that the buildings were ineligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places and found that the Proposed Action would have “no historic properties affected.” The Arizona State Historic Preservation Officer concurred on May 18, 2018. Therefore, the Proposed Action would not result in significant impacts to historical resources.

E. Land Use. The Final EA in Section 4.4 discussed how the Proposed Action would meet current DoD Anti-Terrorism/ Force Protection standards and would meet ANG’s planning policies and guidelines. The Proposed Action would improve vehicle traffic flow at the base entrance thereby improving the uses of the surrounding land. Therefore, the Proposed Action would not result in significant impacts to land use.

F. Noise and Noise-Compatible Land Use. The Final EA in Section 4.3 stated that the Proposed Action would generate minor, temporary noise increases during normal working hours due to the operation of construction equipment. This activity would occur within the Day-Night Average Noise Level of 65 decibels or greater noise contours at TUS. Therefore, the Proposed Action would not result in significant impacts related to noise and noise-compatible land use.

G. Socioeconomic (Traffic). The Final EA in Section 4.6 discussed that the Proposed Action would have minor temporary impacts to traffic during construction and beneficial long-term impacts during operation. The delivery of construction materials and the road closures needed to construct the facilities would temporally affect traffic

flow. The ECF's operation would allow more space for vehicle queuing and inspection, thus improving traffic flow at the base entrance. The Proposed Action would not cause a disruption of local traffic patterns that substantially reduce the level of service of roads serving the airport and its surrounding community. Therefore, the Proposed Action would not result in significant impacts to traffic.

H. Safety. Although not an FAA resource category, the Final EA in Section 4.9 also discussed that the Proposed Action's newly constructed buildings would be located to avoid the extended runway protection zones at TUS and would meet all applicable airfield safety criteria. The Proposed Action's design would meet current DoD Anti-Terrorism/ Force Protection standards, which would improve safety. Therefore, the Proposed Action would not result in significant impacts to safety.

I. Cumulative Impacts. The Final EA in Section 5 discussed the past, present, and reasonably foreseeable projects at TUS and the Tucson ANG Base. These projects would have air quality, noise, safety, and socioeconomic (traffic) impacts and when added to the Proposed Action's impacts would not exceed significance thresholds. Therefore, the Proposed Action would not result in significant cumulative impacts.

6. Public Participation

The USAF made the Draft EA available to the public for a 30-day-long review period from July 1, through July 31, 2018. The USAF published a Notice of Availability for the Draft EA in the *Arizona Daily Star* and the *Arizona Republic* on July 1, July 11, and July 21, 2018. The USAF placed a review copy of the Draft EA at local libraries and on ANG's website at <http://www.162wing.ang.af.mil/About-Us/Environmental/>. In addition, USAF sent agencies listed on scoping mailing list a copy of the Draft EA on June 29, 2018. The USAF received six comments related to the Proposed Action. The USAF described them and responded to the substantive ones in an errata sheet format included in the Final EA.

7. Inter-Agency Coordination

The FAA found that no further coordination with the U.S. Department of the Interior or the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is necessary per 49 USC § 47101(h). The Proposed Action does not involve construction of a new airport, new runway, or major runway extension that has a significant impact on:

- natural resources including fish and wildlife;
- natural, scenic, and recreational assets;
- water and air quality; or
- another factor affecting the environment.

8. Reasons for the Determination that the Proposed Action will have No Significant Impacts

In the Final EA, the USAF examined the environmental resources that could be present at the Proposed Action's location or impacted by the Proposed Action. The Final EA showed that Proposed Action would not involve any environmental impacts that exceed the threshold of significance as defined by FAA Orders 1050.1F and 5050.4B. Based on the information contained in this FONSI and supported by the detailed discussion in the Final EA, the FAA selected the Proposed Action alternative as described in Section 3 of this FONSI.

9. Finding of No Significant Impact

I carefully and thoroughly considered the facts contained in the Final EA. Based on that information, I find the proposed federal action is consistent with existing national environmental policies and objectives of NEPA's Section 101(a). I also find the proposed federal action will not significantly affect the quality of the human environment or include any condition requiring any consultation pursuant to NEPA's Section 102(2)(C). As a result, the FAA will not prepare an Environmental Impact Statement for this action.

APPROVED:

Mike N. Williams
Manager
Phoenix Airports District Office

Date

DISAPPROVED:

Mike N. Williams
Manager
Phoenix Airports District Office

Date