

Executive Summary

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This programmatic environmental impact statement (PEIS) was prepared in accordance with guidance provided in Army Regulation 200-2 and 32 *Code of Federal Regulations* 651, *Environmental Effects of Army Actions*, dated 29 March 2002, implementing the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) (42 *United States Code* 4321-4347). This PEIS, the *Chemical and Biological Defense Program Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (CBDP PEIS)*, was prepared by the U.S. Army with assistance from Science Applications International Corporation and its subcontractor, BSA Environmental Services, Inc., under Government Contract Number DAMD 17-98-D-022.

Current threats of chemical and biological warfare (CBW) and the continuing proliferation of CBW agents mandate the need to protect our soldiers, sailors, marines, and airmen who go in harm’s way. If our military forces are not fully prepared to meet this threat, the consequences could be devastating. CBW threats also include chemical and/or biological terrorism, however, the Department of Defense (DoD) does not play the lead role in countering this threat. Chemical and biological defense capabilities cover products that detect, decontaminate, or provide protection from CBW agents. Some activities conducted under the CBDP necessarily involve use of hazardous chemicals or infectious disease agents for research, development, and acquisition (RDA) purposes. The controls on and the potential environmental consequences of such activities are a primary focus of this PEIS.

The proposed action (Preferred Alternative) and subject of this PEIS is the execution of an integrated CBDP designed to protect our soldiers, sailors, marines, and airmen from evolving chemical and biological threats they may encounter on the battlefield. The Department of the Army is the executive agent for the DoD CBDP. The Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) is the executive agent for DARPA’s CBDP.

One alternative to the proposed action was considered—continuation of the current CBDP operations as described in and covered by existing environmental analyses (Alternative 2, the No Action Alternative). No other alternatives were identified during the public scoping process. This PEIS characterizes the reasonably foreseeable environmental impacts, including impacts on human health, that might result from implementing either the proposed action or the No Action Alternative.

The CBDP is a dynamic program; each year, new short- and long-term RDA activities are initiated in both existing and new locations, while others are terminated. The analysis of potential environmental impacts considered that the sites for executing CBDP activities are located at numerous military installations and contractor facilities throughout the United States and in other countries. It was not necessary, however, to examine all CBDP activities at all of these sites in detail for this PEIS. The technical approach to gauge the environmental impacts of the CBDP was to demonstrate how the environmental compliance programs within the CBDP are actually working, via detailed analyses for selected example sites.

1 On that basis, the PEIS finds that the most severe potential effects associated with CDBP RDA
2 activities are predicted to be minor; to date, all observed effects have been insignificant.
3 Potential risks to CDBP laboratory workers, public health, and the environment are and will be
4 mitigated by adherence to the benchmark guidelines and regulations identified in this PEIS and
5 by developing and following appropriate standard operating procedures similar to those
6 identified for the selected example sites in this PEIS.

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8 The principal conclusions of this PEIS are:
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- 10 (1) Execution of an integrated CDBP designed to protect our soldiers, sailors, marines, and
11 airmen from evolving chemical and biological threats they may encounter on the
12 battlefield (Alternative 1, the Preferred Alternative) will not result in significant
13 unmitigable adverse environmental impacts. As the program grows to meet evolving
14 threats, this PEIS will be beneficial for the CDBP as a single reference source for up-to-
15 date NEPA documentation, providing information on and analyses of both the biological
16 and the chemical defense programs. It will provide a basis for tiering of future
17 environmental analyses under the CDBP, which will facilitate future government decision
18 making. It will have further benefits for the public, sharing information on features of the
19 CDBP that demonstrate DoD's commitment to protect the environment and to ensure
20 public safety during the execution of this operationally mandated program.
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- 22 (2) Continuation of current CDBP operations as described in and covered by existing
23 environmental analyses (Alternative 2, the No Action Alternative) cannot reasonably be
24 expected to improve the efficiency of analyzing future CDBP activity environmental
25 impacts and would not inform the public about government decision making as well as
26 the Preferred Alternative.
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- 28 (3) Neither the proposed action nor the No Action Alternative is likely to cause significant
29 adverse environmental impacts. However, the proposed action is preferred to achieve the
30 benefits cited above for the integrated program, designed to protect against evolving
31 threats.
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- 33 (4) The impacts of existing CDBP activities at the example sites on environmental attributes
34 all were found to be negligible to minor, and mitigable. This suggests that the scale of
35 the enumerated activities can be increased without causing significant, unmitigable
36 environmental and health impacts. However, NEPA considerations will continue to be
37 addressed as necessary for site-specific proposed actions, including both construction and
38 operations that are part of the CDBP. Also, future activities not identified in this PEIS
39 may require both site-specific and programmatic NEPA documentation.