
Chemical and Biological Defense Program

Final

Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement



Prepared by
U.S. Army Medical Research
and Materiel Command
Frederick, Maryland

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Chemical and Biological Defense Program

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**Programmatic Environmental
Impact Statement**

May 2004

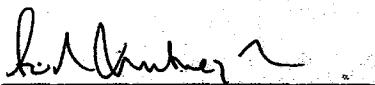
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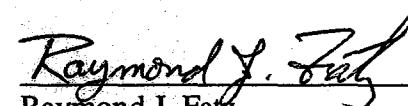
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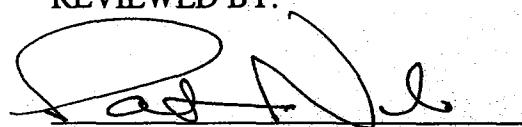
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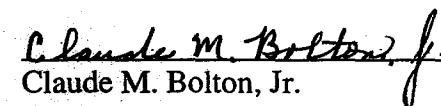
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ABSTRACT: The proposed action is the execution of an integrated program designed to protect our soldiers, sailors, marines, and airmen from the evolving chemical and biological threats they may encounter on the battlefield. The "No-Action" alternative is the continuation of current Chemical and Biological Defense Program (CBDP) operations as described in and covered by existing environmental analyses. Both were evaluated, and neither would reasonably result in the occurrence of significant adverse environmental impact. The PEIS was prepared for an ongoing program. It will facilitate future government decision making as the program grows to meet the evolving threats. It will have further benefits as an information source for other government agencies at all levels and for the public, sharing information on CBDP features that demonstrate DoD's commitment to protect the environment and to ensure public safety during execution of this operationally mandated program.

The analysis concludes that current and proposed CBDP research, development, and acquisition (RDA) activities have been and will likely continue to be performed without significant environmental impacts. The most severe potential effects associated with CBDP RDA activities are predicted to be minor; to date, all observed effects have been insignificant. Potential risks to CBDP laboratory workers, public health, and the environment are and will be mitigated by adherence to benchmark guidelines, regulations, and standard operating procedures.

Executive Summary

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 these threats, the consequences could be devastating. CBW threats also include chemical and/or biological terrorism, and the Department of Defense (DoD) mission has expanded to cover military capability to operate in the face of threats to homeland security. 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 (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.

On that basis, the PEIS finds that the most severe potential effects associated with CBDP RDA activities are predicted to be minor; to date, all observed effects have been insignificant.

Potential risks to CBDP laboratory workers, public health, and the environment are and will be mitigated by adherence to the benchmark guidelines and regulations identified in this PEIS and by developing and following appropriate standard operating procedures similar to those identified for the selected example sites in this PEIS.

The principal conclusions of this PEIS are:

- (1) 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 Proposed Action) will not result in significant unmitigable adverse environmental impacts. As the program grows to meet evolving threats, this PEIS will be beneficial for the CBDP as a single reference source for up-to-date NEPA documentation, providing information on and analyses of both the biological and the chemical defense programs. It will provide a basis for tiering of future environmental analyses under the CBDP, which will facilitate future government decision making. It will have further benefits for the public, sharing information on features of the CBDP that demonstrate DoD's commitment to protect the environment and to ensure public safety during the execution of this operationally mandated program.
- (2) Continuation of current CBDP operations as described in and covered by existing environmental analyses (the No Action Alternative) cannot reasonably be expected to improve the efficiency of analyzing future CBDP activity environmental impacts and would not inform the public about government decision making as well as the Proposed Action.
- (3) Neither the Proposed Action nor the No Action Alternative is likely to cause significant adverse environmental impacts. However, the Proposed Action is preferred to achieve the benefits cited above for the integrated program, designed to protect against evolving threats.
- (4) The impacts of existing CBDP activities at the example sites on environmental attributes all were found to be negligible to minor, and mitigable. This suggests that the scale of the enumerated activities can be increased without causing significant, unmitigable environmental and health impacts. However, NEPA considerations will continue to be addressed as necessary for site-specific proposed actions, including both construction and operations that are part of the CBDP. Also, future activities not identified in this PEIS may require both site-specific and programmatic NEPA documentation.

On June 4, 2001, the U.S. Army announced its intention to prepare this PEIS. To identify concerns germane to this PEIS and to afford the affected public and government agencies opportunities for meaningful input, the Army conducted scoping activities, including disseminating information packages to the public and government activities, publishing notices in local newspapers, coordinating with public-interest groups, and establishing a public *CBDP PEIS* website (<http://chembioeis.detrick.army.mil>).

Subsequent to the scoping activities and data collection, the U.S. Army prepared the Draft PEIS (DPEIS) and announced its availability in the Federal Register on May 5, 2003. Concurrent with the Federal Register notice, the DPEIS was announced to example site representatives, to identified potential stakeholder organizations, and in newspapers of major circulation in and

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around example sites. Further, the DPEIS was posted on the CDPD PEIS website, sent to local libraries, and submitted to federal and state agencies, potentially impacted Indian tribal groups, citizen advisory groups, and individuals upon request for review and comment. Written comments on the DPEIS were received from federal and state agencies through August 13, 2003. All comments were addressed and changes were made to the DPEIS in preparation of the Final PEIS.

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