

KC-46A MOB 6 Beddown Public Scoping

Introduction

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) was enacted to address concerns about federal actions and their effects on the environment. An Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is the most detailed analysis prescribed by regulations implementing NEPA.

The U.S. Department of the Air Force (DAF) has published a Notice of Intent to prepare an EIS, pursuant to NEPA, for the KC-46A Main Operating Base #6 (MOB 6) Beddown. The Proposed Action is to recapitalize (restructure and replace) the existing 1950s-era KC-135 Stratotanker (KC-135) aircraft and associated mission through basing of the modern KC-46A Pegasus (KC-46A) aircraft at active duty Air Force Bases (AFBs) within the continental United States (CONUS).

“Tanker aircraft” are planes that have storage for aviation fuel and are capable of transferring the fuel to other aircraft during flight. This procedure allows the receiving aircraft to remain airborne for a longer period of time. Tanker aircraft also have storage compartments that can be used to transport passengers, cargo, or medical patients.

Background

In April 2006, the DAF completed an Analysis of Alternatives to determine the most appropriate strategy for modernizing the existing aerial refueling tanker aircraft fleet. Based on that analysis, the DAF concluded that a tanker derived from a commercial aircraft would result in the best value. In 2009, the DAF selected the KC-46A to replace the aging refueling tankers in the fleet. Since then, Congressional authority funded the purchase of 179 KC-46A aircraft to be phased into DAF operation by 2029 to modernize the fleet, enhance operations, and increase mission effectiveness. To date, the DAF has completed EISs for the KC-46A Formal Training Unit and MOB 1, MOB 2, MOB 3, and MOB 4 missions addressing basing of KC-46A aircraft at CONUS AFBs in Oklahoma, New Hampshire, California, and New Jersey. An EIS to address the MOB 5 mission is anticipated to begin later in 2022. The MOB 6 EIS addresses the proposal to recapitalize the KC-135 aircraft and base the KC-46A aircraft at either MacDill AFB in Florida or at Fairchild AFB in Washington State.



The KC-46A Pegasus Tanker deploys the centerline boom for the first time. The boom is the fastest way to refuel aircraft at 1,200 gallons per minute.

What is the Public Scoping Process?

The public scoping process begins with publication of a Notice of Intent in the *Federal Register* stating an agency's intent to prepare an EIS. Public scoping is an early and open process, conducted in compliance with NEPA, for identifying issues and alternatives to be addressed in an EIS and determining who (e.g., public and government agencies) is interested in the proposed action. General project information is provided to the public as a part of the public scoping process and comments on the Proposed Action and alternatives are requested from interested parties. Comments received during the public scoping process are considered in the preparation of the Draft EIS. See the EIS Timeline on the back of this page for additional information regarding steps in the EIS process.



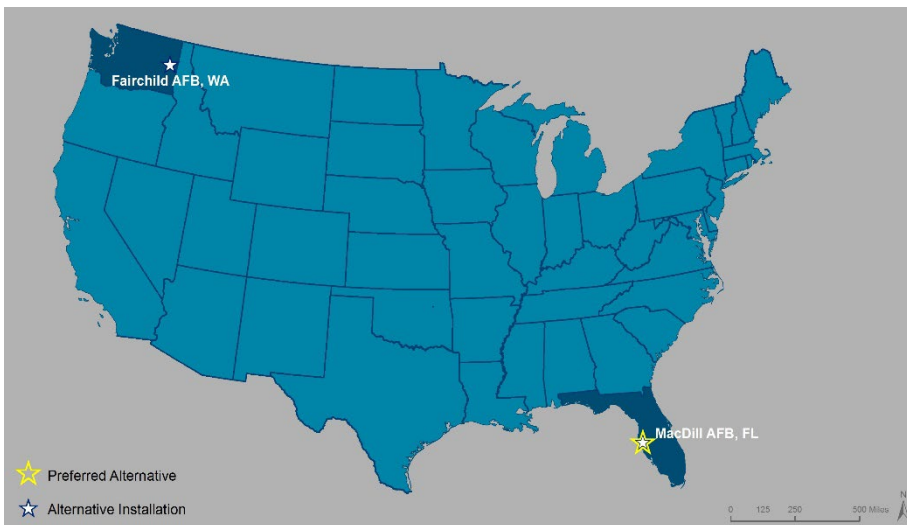
Proposed Action

The Proposed Action is to base 24 KC-46A tanker aircraft at MacDill AFB. The basing action would require infrastructure, facilities, airfield operations, training activities, and personnel to support the KC-46A mission. All flight operations would take place within existing airspace and additions to or alterations of airspace are not proposed. Installation dependent, the 24 KC-46A would replace 24 KC-135 aircraft when those aircraft are relocated or retired from the selected installation. The associated KC-46A training mission would result in an increase in overall tanker operations at that installation. The Proposed Action would be implemented in two stages:

- **Beddown Stage:** Construction/retrofit of facilities and infrastructure, which could include renovation, alteration, and demolition. Also includes preparing support facilities for new personnel to support the mission.
- **Operational Stage:** Conduct day-to-day activities (operational missions, maintenance, etc.) at the base, including base flight operations, training in the regional airspace, and use of airfields.

Alternatives

The DAF is considering MacDill AFB, Florida (Preferred Alternative), and Fairchild AFB, Washington, two active duty installations with KC-135 aerial refueling missions, as the reasonable alternatives for implementing the KC-46A MOB 6 Beddown.



Submit written comments:



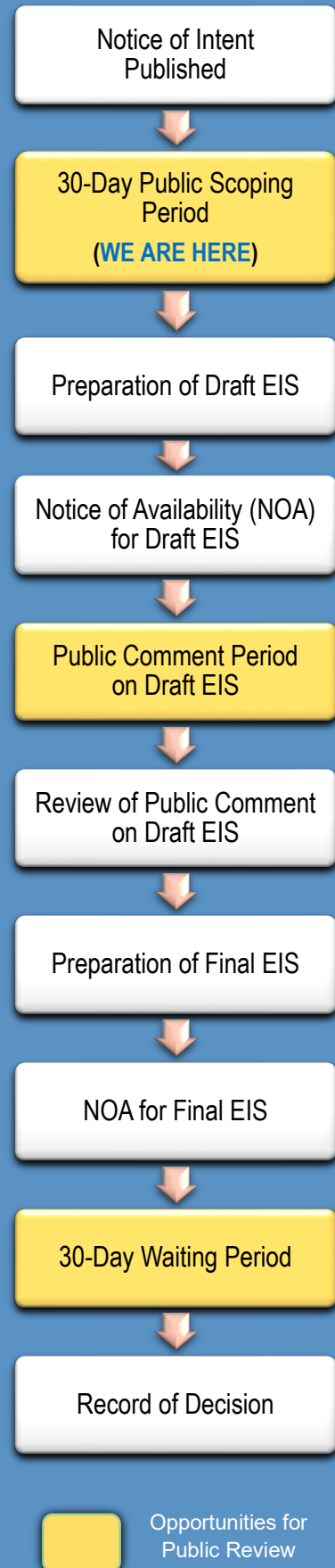
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To ensure the DAF has sufficient time to consider public input in the Draft EIS, please submit comments within the 30-day public scoping period.