

Record of Decision

Permanent Stationing of the 2/25th Stryker Brigade Combat Team

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RECORD OF DECISION FOR THE PERMANENT STATIONING OF THE 2/25TH STRYKER BRIGADE COMBAT TEAM

1.0 BACKGROUND

The Department of the Army (Army) has embarked on a 30-year process to transform its forces. This transformation includes the modernization of its doctrine, organizational structure, training, leadership, equipment, facilities, business processes, and virtually every component of its operations. As part of this overall transformation effort, the Army has decided to transition to a modular force structure. Organizationally, this means a transition of the Army from large, fixed organizations constituted at the Division level (10,000 to 12,000 personnel) to an Army designed around smaller, standardized, self-contained, rapidly deployable Brigade Combat Teams (BCTs). As part of this transformation the Army initially developed and fielded the Stryker Brigade Combat Team (SBCT). The development and fielding of the SBCT was the Army's first step taken to upgrade its operational capabilities and modernize its force structure in response to a changing global security environment.

In April 2002, the Army completed an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for Army transformation. Decisions made in the Record of Decision (ROD) following this EIS included creation of an interim force tailored for force requirements in the future strategic environment. The 2nd Brigade, 25th Infantry Division (Light) (2/25th ID (L)) was designated in this EIS as one of the units to transform to a Stryker Brigade Combat Team.

In May 2004, the Army released the Final EIS (FEIS) for Transformation of the 2nd Brigade, 25th Infantry Division (Light), (referred to throughout this document as the 2/25th ID (L)), to an SBCT. The SBCT is a maneuver brigade that includes approximately 4,105 Soldiers (infantry, artillery, engineers, and other Army specialties) and 905 vehicles (including about 317 Strykers). In July 2004, the Army released a ROD documenting its decision to transform the 2/25th in place to an SBCT and home station it permanently in Hawaii.

The SBCT must have the proper training and support facilities at home station; such facilities include training ranges; housing, administrative, and quality of life infrastructure for the SBCT's Soldiers and their Families; and maintenance infrastructure for vehicles and equipment. In addition, the SBCT requires adequate training space to support its increased maneuver capabilities. Without these resources, the SBCT cannot attain the readiness levels needed to ensure the successful deployment as a joint force that is capable of meeting its national defense and security missions.

The 2/25th began its transformation to an SBCT shortly after completion of the 2004 FEIS and signing of the ROD to proceed with the transformation. In October of 2006, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit determined that the Army had not fully complied with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) for the transformation of the 2/25th because it did not adequately address or analyze potentially reasonable alternative locations for the transformation and training of this unit. In particular, the Court concluded that the Army had a duty under NEPA to consider locations other than Hawaii for the permanent stationing of the 2/25th SBCT, and the Court directed the Army to prepare a supplemental EIS (SEIS) to address a full range of alternatives.

The Court permitted the Army to continue specified equipment fielding and limited training to prepare the SBCT for deployment in late 2007. By November 2007, the Brigade had completed almost

all equipment fielding as an SBCT unit and had completed those training tasks in Hawaii permitted by Court ruling. The unit completed the rest of its training certifications during an extended training rotation at the National Training Center (NTC) at Fort Irwin, California and the Southern California Logistics Area. The SBCT has deployed from Hawaii to meet the ongoing operational requirements and it is scheduled to return to a permanent station in early 2009.

The Army prepared an SEIS in accordance with the Court's guidance to examine a broader range of reasonable alternatives for the Proposed Action of permanently stationing the 2/25th SBCT and published the FEIS in February 2008. The FEIS examines alternative Army installations capable of supporting the permanent stationing of the 2/25th SBCT. The FEIS incorporates the 2004 EIS and examines whether there have been changes in impacts, the Proposed Action, and the affected environment since the original EIS was prepared. The FEIS provides the Army senior leadership with a hard look at environmental impacts associated with selecting a home station for the 2/25th SBCT and it better informs the decision-making process for selecting the final stationing location. This effort includes analysis of all activities (equipment fielding, training, facilities construction, and Soldier and Family support) required to station the 2/25th permanently. The FEIS assisted the Army in arriving at a decision for the permanent stationing of the SBCT in a location that can accommodate the Brigade's training and quality of life requirements while meeting the strategic needs and national security requirements of the United States.

2.0 PURPOSE AND NEED

2.1 Purpose of the Proposed Action

The purpose of the Proposed Action is to station the 2/25th SBCT permanently at an installation that is able to meet the SBCT's training, Soldier and Family quality of life, and operational and strategic requirements. The installation must be capable of providing adequate training ranges for maneuver and live-fire training. The installation must also be able to provide the support infrastructure necessary to provide a high quality of life for Soldiers and their Families and support garrison-based operations of the SBCT. In addition, the stationing action must provide for the National Security requirements outlined in the National Security Strategy (NSS), the National Defense Strategy (NDS), and Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR) and provide the necessary strategic response capabilities to satisfy national security requirements and obligations.

2.2 Need for the Proposed Action

The need for permanently stationing the 2/25th SBCT centers on five primary areas of need that require the Army to take action. These areas of need are:

- adhering to national security and defense policy,
- furthering Army Transformation as directed by these policies,
- meeting training and operational requirements for the SBCT,
- providing for Soldier and Family quality of life requirements, and
- meeting strategic requirements to ensure adequate defense assets can be deployed in a timely manner to support national and regional security requirements.

As discussed in the FEIS, these areas of need are all explicitly or implicitly addressed throughout the guiding national security and defense policy documents and are non-discretionary elements of Army decision making for the permanent stationing of the 2/25th SBCT.

3.0 PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVES

3.1 Proposed Action

The Army's Proposed Action is to home station the 2/25th permanently in a location that meets national security and defense policy guidance, furthers Army transformation, provides for SBCT training and operational requirements, provides a high quality of life for the 2/25th Soldiers and their Families, and facilitates the rapid deployment of the SBCT to uphold U.S. security objectives and interests.

The 2/25th SBCT, with more than 4,100 Soldiers, 3,500 Family members, 905 vehicles, and all accompanying equipment, has considerable facilities requirements for conducting garrison administrative, training, and maintenance operations. Garrison operations and training ensure the successful preparation of the unit for operational deployment. These operations and supporting facilities are an integral component for implementing the Army's Proposed Action. Critical facilities for the 2/25th SBCT include office space, housing, parking and maintenance space, modernized training infrastructure, and the maneuver space to rehearse unit training tasks. In addition to these facilities, the 2/25th SBCT would require schools, medical, recreational, shopping, and other quality of life facilities.

The U.S. District Court allowed the 2/25th to complete its transformation and conduct the training necessary to prepare the Brigade for its current deployment. The brigade has deployed to Iraq and will return from that deployment in early 2009.

3.1 Alternatives

The Army evaluated its needs for stationing the 2/25th SBCT and developed screening criteria to narrow the field of installations to those capable of supporting these needs. The screening criteria include availability by early 2009 of training infrastructure, maneuver-training land, and garrison support infrastructure; installation mission compatibility with SBCT stationing; and ability to support strategic deployment requirements and considerations. These screening criteria were applied to the full range of alternatives to determine the installation locations that meet the five primary areas of need for the implementation of the Proposed Action. The Army did not arbitrarily exclude or eliminate any potential alternatives from consideration in its assessment of alternatives for permanently stationing the 2/25th. The Army began the alternative identification process with approximately 140 installations (160 separate sites), and through the process described in Chapter 2 of the FEIS, determined three installations to be reasonable alternatives that met all of the screening criteria. The reasonable alternatives for permanently stationing the 2/25th SBCT are installations in Hawaii, Colorado, and Alaska. Consequently, four alternatives were analyzed in detail:

- Alternative A — Permanently station the 2/25th SBCT at Schofield Barracks Military Reservation (SBMR), Hawaii while conducting required training at military training sites in Hawaii;
- Alternative B — Permanently station the 2/25th SBCT at Fort Richardson, Alaska while conducting required training at military training sites in Alaska and replacing the SBCT in Hawaii with the 4/25th IBCT from Alaska;
- Alternative C — Permanently station the 2/25th SBCT at Fort Carson, Colorado while conducting required training at military training sites in Colorado and replacing the SBCT in Hawaii with the 4/4th IBCT from Colorado; and
- Alternative D — No Action Alternative.

3.2 Alternative A

This is the Army's selected alternative. Under this alternative, the Army will permanently home station the 2/25th SBCT in Hawaii. This alternative will include all of the activities needed to implement the Proposed Action, including the training, garrison operations, deployment, Soldier and Family quality of life, and other needs for meeting the requirements of the 2/25th SBCT. The 2/25th SBCT will be stationed at SBMR and will conduct garrison operations at this location. SBMR includes Schofield Barracks Main Post (SBMP), South Range Acquisition Area (SRAA), and Schofield Barracks East Range (SBER). Training will be conducted at Dillingham Military Reservation (DMR), Kahuka Training Area (KTA), Kawaihoa Training Area (KLOA), and Wheeler Army Airfield (WAAF) on Oahu. On the Island of Hawaii, the SBCT will train at Pohakuloa Training Area (PTA), West PTA Acquisition Area (WPAA), and Bradshaw Army Airfield (BAAF). These training resources include an assortment of live-fire and non-live-fire maneuver training facilities, fixed-position live-fire training facilities, infantry and engineer demolition training facilities, grenade training facilities, and an urban assault course (UAC). Attainment of operational readiness by the 2/25th SBCT is not dependent on the use of Makua Military Reservation (MMR). While the MMR is an integral part of US Army Garrison-Hawaii (USAG-HI) training capabilities and historically used by other services, the units of the 2/25th could perform dismounted live-fire training at other ranges. The SBCT may use MMR if the range is available following completion of the MMR Live Fire EIS and ROD.

Table 1 provides a list of construction projects that were in the 2004 EIS and will be used as part of the implementation of Alternative A. In order to maintain its combat readiness and support operational requirements, the 2/25th SBCT must have the appropriate training facilities and ranges available for use following the unit's return from deployment. The combination of existing facilities and those whose construction will begin subsequent to the issuance of the ROD will combine to provide the infrastructure for the 2/25th to meet its stationing, operational, and training requirements. Projects that have not already been completed will be completed and used by the 2/25th and other Army units as part of this alternative. Two projects were cancelled since 2004 and are no longer needed.

The FEIS and discussion of environmental and socioeconomic impacts in Chapter 5 of the FEIS supplements and updates the analysis presented in the 2004 FEIS for the Transformation of the 2/25th ID (L). The 2004 EIS covered activities that supported both Army-wide organizational transformation and the permanent stationing of the 2/25th SBCT in Hawaii. Many of the cantonment and training infrastructure construction projects that were analyzed in the 2004 EIS, however, were not facilities required solely by the stationing of the SBCT. The special focus of analysis presented in the FEIS was to provide comparative analysis of those projects that are specifically required to support the stationing of the SBCT. Nevertheless, the FEIS looks at the affected environment and anticipated impacts for all projects listed in the 2004 EIS. **Table 1** provides a list of projects from the 2004 EIS and an update on their status. It also shows those projects required in USAG-HI that are required because of the stationing of the SBCT.

Facility ¹	Location	Status	SBCT Specific ²
UAC and Training Facilities	SBMR	Complete	
Virtual Fighting Training Facility	SBMR	Cancelled	
Range Control Facility	SBMR	Not Started (enjoined ³)	
Battle Area Complex (BAX)	SBMR	Unexploded Ordnance (UXO) clearance mostly complete (enjoined ³)	✓
Motor Pool – Parking and Maintenance Shops	SBMR	To be completed in March 2008	
Motor Pool – Deployment Warehouse	SBMR	Not Started (enjoined ³)	

Tactical Vehicle Wash Facility	SBER	Complete	
Fixed Tactical Internet	SBMR	Complete	
SRAA	SBMR	Complete	
Multipurpose Qualification Training Range, McCarthy Flats (QTR 1)	SBMR	Complete	
Multipurpose Qualification Training Range, South Range Acquisition Area (QTR 2)	SBMR	80% Complete (enjoined ³)	
Multiple Deployment Facility	WAAF	Complete	
Upgrade Airfield for C-130 Aircraft	WAAF	Not Started (enjoined ³)	
Land-Easement/Construct Road SBMR/DMR	DMR	Not Started (enjoined ³)	✓
Tactical Vehicle Wash Facility	KTA	Not Started (enjoined ³)	
Combined Arms Collective Training Facility (CACTF)	KTA	UXO clearance complete (enjoined ³)	
Road Construction, SBMR to Helemano		On Hold (enjoined ³)	✓
Land Easement, SBMR to Helemano		On Hold (enjoined ³)	✓
BAX	PTA	UXO clearance complete (enjoined ³)	✓
Anti-armor Live-fire and Tracking Range	PTA	Not Started (enjoined ³)	
Land Easement for Military Vehicle Trail, PTA-Kawaihae	PTA	Not Started (enjoined ³)	
Ammunition Storage	PTA	Not Started (enjoined ³)	✓
Tactical Vehicle Wash Facility	PTA	On Hold (enjoined ³)	
WPAA	PTA	Complete	
Range Maintenance Facility	PTA	Not Started (enjoined ³)	✓
Runway Upgrade/Extension, BAAF	PTA	Cancelled	
Fixed Tactical Internet	PTA	Complete	
Installation Information Infrastructure Architecture	PTA	Partially Complete (enjoined ³)	

¹. Projects from Table 2-4 of the 2004 Transformation FEIS.
². Checked projects are unique to the 2/25th SBCT. Unchecked projects are needed for all units stationed in Hawaii.
³. Enjoined means that the U.S District Court's 2006 decision enjoined the Army from engaging in design, construction, or use of the project.
⁴. An on hold project is a project that USAG-HI would have started in 2007 had the project not been enjoined.

To implement the Proposed Action, USAG-HI will not undertake any additional cantonment facilities construction to provide for the requirements of the 2/25th SBCT. Currently, SBMR has critical facilities available to support the stationing of the 2/25th SBCT, including office space, housing, and parking and maintenance space. Adequate schools, medical, recreational, shopping, and other quality of life facilities are available for Soldiers and Families of the 2/25th SBCT in Hawaii.

To implement the Proposed Action, the SBCT will use new and existing live-fire ranges and firing points to satisfy its training requirements. Use of ranges, such as QTR 2 on the SRAA, the CACTF at KTA and BAXs (SBMR and PTA), will be required to support the 2/25th SBCT. This training use is consistent with what was proposed under the 2004 Transformation EIS. At a minimum, all Soldiers in the 2/25th SBCT will qualify on individual and crew/vehicle weapons at least twice per year. In addition, platoons and companies of the 2/25th will conduct collective live-fire training exercises on firing ranges to ensure they have rehearsed and coordinated battle procedures and are prepared to deploy to support combat operations.

Although a majority of the weapons systems and munitions will be the same, the level of live-fire training activity and number of rounds fired will increase under this alternative. The 2/25th ID (L) was authorized to fire approximately 7 million rounds of munitions prior to its transformation. The 2/25th SBCT is authorized to fire just over 13 million rounds of training ammunition annually to conduct its live-fire qualifications. A vast majority of this ordnance is small arms rifle and machine gun ammunition used for the weapons qualification of Soldiers on their individual and crew served weapons that are fired at designated live-fire training facilities.

The stationing of the 2/25th SBCT will involve an increase in the amount and scale of maneuver training that takes place in Hawaii. To fully implement the maneuver training of the 2/25th in Hawaii, the SBCT will need to train and access parcels of land acquired or otherwise used to support its increased requirements. The 2/25th SBCT will require the use of Dillingham Trail that would need to be widened and upgraded to support the SBCT so that its units can access training ranges of DMR using this trail system instead of public roads. The 2/25th SBCT will require the use of the Helemano Trail to minimize impacts to traffic on public roads. In addition, the SBCT and other units will require use of the WPAA to provide for maneuver training and the use of the SRAA to conduct training range qualification and limited, primarily on-road, maneuver training. The PTA Kawaihae trail will also be needed by the SBCT and other military units to provide military vehicle access to PTA while minimizing impacts to traffic on public roads.

The 2/25th SBCT will execute the full range of doctrinally required maneuver training tasks at designated training sites in Hawaii in order to implement the Proposed Action fully under this alternative. To do this the SBCT is anticipated to execute 104,898 Maneuver Impact Miles (MIMs) of maneuver training equivalents. A detailed definition of MIMs is provided in the Final EIS. The frequency of maneuver training events at Oahu maneuver training areas is anticipated to increase by around 25 percent. The frequency of use of PTA is anticipated to increase by 10 to 15 percent with the stationing of the 2/25th SBCT in Hawaii.

3.3 Alternative B

Under this alternative, the Army would permanently home station the 2/25th SBCT at Fort Richardson, Alaska. The 2/25th SBCT would arrive at Fort Richardson early in 2009 upon completion of its deployment. The 2/25th SBCT would conduct all activities needed to support the Proposed Action at Fort Richardson. Because of the limited availability of training land within the boundaries of Fort Richardson, unit maneuvers and live-fire collective training events above the platoon level would primarily occur at Donnelly Training Area (DTA). As part of this alternative, the modular 4/25th Infantry BCT (IBCT) (Airborne), referred to, as the 4/25th throughout this document, would be re-stationed in Hawaii as part of a coordinated exchange of units.

The stationing of the 2/25th SBCT in Alaska would result in a net increase 567 Soldiers at Fort Richardson. Major differences between the modular 4/25th and the 2/25th SBCT in their equipment include approximately 317 Stryker vehicles, increased numbers of indirect fire systems to include 12 additional 155-mm cannon, 36 120-mm Mortars, and 27 105-mm direct fire cannon systems mounted on the Stryker Mobile Gun System (MGS).

In order to accommodate the stationing of the 2/25th SBCT in Alaska, the Army would construct two additional firing ranges at Fort Richardson; a multi-purpose machine gun range and a UAC. The 2/25th SBCT could leverage the use of a BAX that is currently being constructed at DTA.

The 2/25th SBCT would conduct semi-annual individual weapons qualifications at Fort Richardson and DTA on new and existing live-fire ranges to satisfy its training requirements. In addition, platoons and companies of the 2/25th SBCT would conduct collective live-fire training exercises on firing ranges to ensure they have rehearsed and coordinated battle procedures and are prepared to deploy to support wartime operations.

Although a majority of the weapons systems and munitions would be the same when comparing munitions use of the 4/25th and that of the 2/25th SBCT under Alternative B, the level of live-fire training activity and number of rounds fired would increase in Alaska under this alternative. The 2/25th SBCT is authorized to fire just over 13 million rounds of training ammunition annually in comparison to the 4/25th's allocation to fire approximately 6.9 million rounds of training ammunition annually. A vast

majority of this ordnance is small arms rifle and machine gun ammunition used for the weapons qualification of Soldiers that would occur on designated live-fire training facilities.

The stationing of the 2/25th SBCT in Alaska would involve an increase in maneuver training at Fort Richardson and DTA. The 2/25th SBCT is projected to generate 104,898 MIMs compared to the 4/25th's projected 49,576 MIMs. This represents a 112 percent increase in anticipated maneuver impacts when comparing the 2/25th SBCT to the 4/25th. Qualitatively however, a greater percentage of vehicle mileage would be executed on roads and just off-road, in accordance with SBCT training doctrine and capabilities. Approximately 50 percent of the MIMs would be expended at Fort Richardson to support squad and platoon and limited company maneuvers. The remaining 50 percent of these MIMs would be executed by the 2/25th SBCT while performing maneuver-training tasks at DTA.

Alternative B requires the re-stationing of the 4/25th in Hawaii to vacate the garrison facilities and housing necessary to support the 2/25th SBCT. The 4/25th is currently assigned 567 fewer Soldiers than the 2/25th SBCT. The 4/25th consists of approximately 500 more Soldiers than the previous 2/25th ID (L) that was stationed in Hawaii prior to transformation. The 4/25th operates and trains using only light and medium vehicles as primary modes of transport. The stationing of the 4/25th in Hawaii would involve the same intensities and kinds of activities that would have taken place to support the 2/25th ID (L). Most vehicles, weapons systems, and equipment would be the same when comparing the 4/25th to the 2/25th SBCT prior to its transformation.

A few key differences exist, however. One of these differences is that the 4/25th possesses more unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) units and its assigned equipment includes 19 UAVs. Moreover, the 4/25th is an airborne IBCT unit. This airborne capability of the 4/25th would be retained within U.S. Army Pacific (USARPAC) as part of the 4/25th re-stationing to SBMR. The requirements to conduct UAV training and airborne training will result in an increased use of airspace in Hawaii. Additional facilities to include jump towers, parachute rigging, storage facilities, and a heavy drop zone would be needed to support the airborne training of the 4/25th.

Given the reduced manning, vehicles, and equipment of the 4/25th compared to the 2/25th SBCT, there would be limited cantonment facilities required to meet the needs of the 4/25th's re-stationing to Hawaii. Critical facilities for the 4/25th, including office space, housing, and parking and maintenance space would be on hand. Overall, the unit would be adequately supported by those existing cantonment projects that have been completed or have been planned for completion in the near future and those facilities that would be vacated by the 2/25th SBCT. A new Parachute rigging and storage facility would be sited at an existing 30,000 square foot storage warehouse at WAAF that was originally constructed as part of the multiple deployment facility for the SBCT. Training projects presented in **Table 1** that are not SBCT-specific would be constructed and utilized by the 4/25th to support the unit's training requirements. In addition to these projects, a new infantry platoon battle course (IPBC) would be constructed in the footprint of the BAX at SBMR to support up to platoon level live-fire training requirements of the 4/25th. A combined arms live-fire exercise (CALFEX) capable range would be constructed in the footprint of the BAX at PTA to support up to company-level collective live-fire training events. The ranges standard design would be adjusted to meet training requirements given the terrain available to support its construction.

To support the Airborne training requirements of the 4/25th, two additional training infrastructure projects would need to be constructed and used by the 4/25th. These projects include jump towers needed to train airborne Soldiers on airborne training tasks. Five jump towers would be sited on the SRAA. Along with the jump towers, a drop zone of approximately 2,800 by 1,800 yards in dimension would need to be sited on the WPAA to support airborne paratrooper training jumps from C-130 aircraft.

This facility would be partially sited on the footprint of a drop zone that has been used by the Army in the past to support training.

The 4/25th would be required to conduct semi-annual individual and crew-served weapons qualifications. The 4/25th would fire approximately 6.9 million rounds of munitions. Most of these rounds are used for individual weapons qualification and machine gun qualification, and most would be used on SBMR qualification ranges.

The 4/25th would conduct weapons qualification on new ranges not previously available to the 2/25th ID (L). Live fire activities would occur under Alternative B on ranges to include the QTRs, anti-armor live fire tracking range, and the IPBC to be constructed at SBMR. Additionally short range training ammunition (SRTA) training would occur at the CACTF at KTA.

The 4/25th would conduct approximately 50 percent of its maneuver training on the Island of Oahu and the other 50 percent on the Big Island of Hawaii. A majority of small unit maneuver training would occur on the Island of Oahu. Training would generally be conducted at the squad, platoon, and company level. Maneuver training at PTA would generally be conducted by larger units i.e. the battalion or brigade level.

The number of MIMs required to support the maneuver training of the 4/25th on an annual basis is 49,576. Given the existing shortfall of maneuver acreage being experienced in Hawaii, the 4/25th would need to utilize SRAA and WPAA to support maneuver-training requirements.

3.4 Alternative C

Alternative C includes the permanent home stationing of the 2/25th SBCT at Fort Carson, Colorado. The 2/25th SBCT would return to Fort Carson in early 2009 upon completion of its deployment. The 2/25th SBCT would conduct all activities needed to support the Proposed Action. Unit weapons qualifications, platoon training, equipment maintenance, and the housing and support of Soldiers and their Families would take place primarily at Fort Carson. Because of the limited availability of training land, unit maneuvers of the 2/25th SBCT above the platoon level would primarily occur at Pinon Canyon Maneuver Site (PCMS).

The stationing of the 2/25th SBCT at Fort Carson would result in a net increase of 663 Soldiers. Major differences between the equipment of the 2/25th SBCT and the 4/4th IBCT include approximately 317 Stryker vehicles and increased numbers of indirect fire systems, such as 18 155-mm cannons, 24 additional 120-mm mortars, and 27 additional 105 mm direct fire cannon systems mounted on the Stryker MGS.

In order to accommodate the stationing of the 2/25th SBCT in Colorado, the Army would construct two additional firing range facilities at Fort Carson, a multi-purpose machine gun range and an UAC. The 2/25th SBCT would use an existing Digital Multi-purpose Range Complex to satisfy collective live-fire training requirements of its units when the range was available.

Although a majority of the weapons systems and munitions would be the same when comparing munitions currently used by the 4/4th IBCT and the 2/25th SBCT under Alternative B, the level of live-fire training activity and number of rounds fired would increase at Fort Carson under this alternative. The 2/25th SBCT is authorized to fire just over 13 million rounds of training ammunition annually in comparison to the 4/4th IBCT's allocation to fire approximately 6.9 million rounds of training ammunition annually. A vast majority of this ordnance is small arms rifle and machine gun ammunition used for the weapons qualification of Soldiers. A majority of munitions expenditure would occur on designated live-fire training facilities at Fort Carson. Overall, munitions and live-fire training activi-

ties would increase minimally when analyzing the total training requirements of Fort Carson and the 5 BCTs that are scheduled to be stationed there in comparison with the increase in munitions use required to support the stationing of the SBCT.

The stationing of the 2/25th SBCT at Fort Carson would involve a slight increase in the overall amount of maneuver training that would occur at Fort Carson and PCMS following the implementation of Base Realignment and Closure Act (BRAC) legislation, Global Defense Posture Realignment (GDPR), and Army Growth and Realignment stationing decisions. To support doctrinal maneuver training requirements, a majority of training above the platoon level would have to occur at PCMS because of training land availability constraints present at Fort Carson. The Army projects an approximate 6 percent increase in the maneuver requirements for Fort Carson and PCMS as part of this alternative.

The 2/25th SBCT is projected to generate 104,898 MIMs compared to the 4/4th IBCTs annual training requirement of 49,576 MIMs. This represents an overall 111 percent increase in unit MIMs when directly comparing the maneuver requirements of the two units. Qualitatively, a greater percentage of vehicle mileage would be executed on roads and just off-road, in accordance with SBCT training doctrine and capabilities. Approximately 25 percent of the MIMs would be expended at Fort Carson to support squad and platoon maneuvers. The remaining 75 percent of these MIMs would be executed by the 2/25th SBCT while performing maneuver-training tasks at PCMS.

Several considerations need to be incorporated into the execution of maneuver training at Fort Carson and PCMS. The shortage of maneuver land available at PCMS is not an ideal solution for the 2/25 SBCT, but it is manageable. Examples of decisions that are made to address land constraints include reducing the size of the areas used for training (that is, maneuver boxes), reducing the duration of training exercises, alternating unit readiness by training less than all of the four BCTs, or a combination of these. As part of this alternative, the Fort Carson garrison commander would work with professional environmental staff and training land management staff to ensure the sustainment of the training land at Fort Carson and PCMS.

As part of this alternative, the modular 4/4th IBCT would exchange places with the 2/25th SBCT to be permanently stationed in Hawaii. It should be noted that the 4/4th IBCT does not share the Airborne designation or airborne training or facilities requirements of the 4/25th.

As detailed previously the 4/4th IBCT is assigned 663 fewer Soldiers than the SBCT. In addition, the IBCT operates and trains using only light and medium vehicles as primary modes of transport and does not possess 105 mm direct fire cannon systems or the increased artillery of the SBCT. Most vehicles, weapons systems, and equipment would be the same when comparing the 4/4th IBCT to the 2/25th prior to its transformation. One of the few differences in equipment is the 16 UAVs that the modular IBCT possesses.

The stationing of the 4/4th IBCT in Hawaii would require the completion of those transformation construction projects in Table 1 that were not specific to the needs of the Stryker unit, but are required to implement Army transformation. In addition to non-Stryker specific projects, the 4/4th IBCT would require the construction of an additional IPBC in the footprint of the BAX at SBMR to support IBCT collective live fire training events. A CALFEX capable range would be constructed in the footprint of the BAX at PTA to support up to company-level collective live-fire training events. The ranges standard design would be adjusted to meet training requirements given the terrain available to support its construction.

The 4/4th IBCT would be required to conduct semi-annual individual and crew-served weapons qualifications. The 4/4th IBCT would fire approximately 6.9 million rounds of munitions. Most of these rounds are used for individual weapons qualification and machine gun qualification and most would be used on SBMR qualification ranges.

The 4/4th IBCT would conduct weapons qualification on new ranges in Hawaii. Live fire activities would occur under Alternative C on ranges to include the QTRs, anti-armor live fire tracking range, and the IPBC to be constructed at SBMR. Additionally SRTA training would occur at the CACTF at KTA.

The 4/4th IBCT would conduct approximately 50 percent of its maneuver training on the Island of Oahu and the other 50 percent on the Big Island of Hawaii. A majority of small unit maneuver training would occur on the Island of Oahu. Training would generally be conducted at the squad, platoon, and company level. Maneuver training at PTA would generally be conducted by larger units i.e. the battalion or brigade level. The total increase in frequency of maneuver area training resulting from the stationing of the modular 4/4th in comparison to the 2/25th ID (L) would represent a less than 10 percent increase for all USAG-HI training areas.

The number of MIMs required to support the 4/4th IBCT would be 49,576. Given the existing shortfall of maneuver acreage being experienced in Hawaii, the 4/4th IBCT would need to utilize SRAA and WPAA to support maneuver-training requirements.

3.5 Alternative D

The No Action Alternative is the environmentally preferred alternative. The No Action Alternative shows the scenario of what would occur if the agency were not to carry out the Proposed Action and serves as a benchmark or baseline of the existing condition against which the predicted effects of the Proposed Action and alternatives can be evaluated. The No Action Alternative is to return the 2/25th SBCT to its original structure as a non-modular infantry brigade in Hawaii as it existed prior to its transformation. The No Action Alternative would not involve any unit stationing moves and would not include any actions to transform the structure of the 2/25th to an SBCT.

The No Action Alternative assumes the 2/25th SBCT would revert to the structure and equipment of the 2/25th ID (L) as it existed in 2004 without changes resulting from modularity. The brigade would train in the same manner and on the same facilities as the 2/25th ID (L) had conducted training in 2004. For land and facilities, it is important to have a real baseline against which to compare the impacts of the Proposed Action, however. Therefore, the baseline for facilities includes the actual conditions as they existed at the time of this analysis, including land ownership. This is further discussed below.

The No Action Alternative does not meet the objectives of Army Transformation or the stated Purpose and Need of this EIS because it would create a brigade that could not be properly trained, deployed, supported, and integrated into Army operations. Implementation of the No Action Alternative is not feasible. The Army is well into the process of organization-wide transformation. The Army no longer fields non-modular BCT configurations, such as the original structure of the 2/25th ID (L), and it would be impossible to support the unit logistically as it existed in 2004.

The No Action Alternative assumes that USAG-HI, Fort Richardson and DTA, and Fort Carson and PCMS have facilities that are currently in existence. Projects proposed in the 2004 Transformation FEIS that are complete or are in their final stages of completion and whose availability for use is assumed as part of the baseline condition for this analysis include:

- 1) UAC (SBMR)
- 2) Motor Pool and Maintenance Facilities (SBMR)
- 3) Tactical Vehicle Wash Facility (SBMR- East Range)
- 4) QTR 1 (SBMR)
- 5) Multiple Deployment Facility
- 6) Upgrade of Firing Range 11T (PTA)
- 7) Fixed Tactical Internet (SBMR and PTA)

In addition, several training projects from the 2004 FEIS have been completed or are partially complete though their use is currently enjoined. The baseline conditions used for analysis and comparison of alternatives in this document include these current existing conditions. The No Action baseline includes the following projects from the 2004 FEIS that have begun or are nearing completion to the extent that construction has occurred:

- 1) QTR 2 (SRAA) – 80 percent construction complete
- 2) BAX (SBMR) – UXO clearance mostly complete
- 3) Installation Information Infrastructure (PTA) – partially complete

The No Action Alternative does not include the completion of these projects or their use.

The No Action Alternative also assumes Army ownership of the Keamuku Parcel and SRAA because acquisition of these areas is complete. The No Action Alternative does not include use of these areas except to the extent that the SBMR motor pool and QTR 2 have already been sited and constructed in SRAA. The No Action Alternative includes the use of the Motor Pool. It does not include the use of QTR 2.

At the other installations in Alaska and Colorado, existing facilities, BRAC, GDPR, and construction plans for Army transformation are used for the baseline assessment of construction impacts for the continued stationing of the 4/25th and the 4/4th IBCT.

The Soldiers and Families of the 2/25th ID (L) would not require any additional construction in the cantonment area of SBMR to support the No Action Alternative. There is adequate housing, office space, combat vehicle parking, and other key cantonment facilities that are on hand to meet the requirements of the 2/25th ID (L) in addition to the other units at SBMR.

The No Action Alternative would not require construction of additional training infrastructure in Hawaii to support the training of the 2/25th ID (L). Furthermore, no additional training infrastructure would need to be constructed to support the 4/25th in Alaska or the 4/4th IBCT in Colorado outside of those projects that have already been planned as part of BRAC, GDPR, or transformation, for which impacts have already been analyzed.

The No Action Alternative includes the live-fire training activities at facilities currently in existence and being used by the 4/4th IBCT, 4/25th and that would be available for use by the 2/25th ID (L). Munitions fired to meet the training strategies of the 2/25th ID (L) would be used. The respective brigades in Hawaii (2/25th ID (L)), Alaska (4/25th) and Colorado (4/4th IBCT) would qualify using the appropriate weapons qualifications standards for live-fire to complete doctrinal live-fire training re-

quirements. The No Action Alternative assumes that the 2/25th ID (L) would train in the same manner and on the same facilities as they had prior to their transformation.

The live-fire training activities include the use of approximately 7 million rounds of training ammunition per year for each of the modular IBCTs. The 2/25th ID (L) had a requirement to fire about 7 million rounds of ammunition per year. Table 2-9 from the 2004 Transformation EIS depicts the amount of ammunition authorized to be fired to meet the training requirements of units in the garrison to include the 2/25th ID (L). Slightly less than half of the approximately 15 million rounds of ammunition depicted in this table were needed to support the 2/25th ID (L). As part of the No Action alternative, live-fire training activities to the appropriate doctrinal standards would take place on existing training range facilities.

The No Action Alternative includes the maneuver training activities required to maintain the operational training readiness of the 2/25th ID (L) in Hawaii, the 4/25th in Alaska, and the 4/4th in Colorado. Under the No Action Alternative, the respective units would conduct maneuver training at the crew/squad, platoon, company, battalion, and BCT levels. The 2/25th ID (L) would only use lands that were available for maneuver training in 2004.

3.6 Alternatives Considered but Not Studied in Detail

A) Permanently Home Station the SBCT at Fort Lewis, Washington – Under this alternative, the Army would permanently home station the 2/25th at Fort Lewis upon completion of its deployment in early 2009. This alternative was screened out of the Army's decision-making process for further consideration for several reasons that were articulated in the screening criteria section of the FEIS. Because of the receipt of a considerable number of public comments inquiring as to the suitability of Fort Lewis as a potential stationing location further elaboration and details are provided in this Record of Decision.

Fort Lewis is currently home to two of the Army's seven SBCTs, with a third in the process of standing up there. Fort Lewis was the first location to test and train an SBCT, and it possesses most of the training facilities needed to accommodate the training requirements of the SBCTs currently stationed there. The addition of a fourth SBCT, however, would not be possible by early 2009. Fort Lewis lacks the necessary garrison facilities, training infrastructure, and the Soldier and Family quality of life accommodations needed to support a fourth SBCT.

As articulated in section 2.4 of the FEIS, construction of new facilities would take 3-5 years to plan, fund, design, and build. The only locations that are able to provide for a majority of SBCT facilities required to support the 2/25th are those that can exchange an existing BCT. The exchange of a BCT frees up a majority of the training and garrison facilities required by the SBCT while preserving the Army's force structure. Fort Lewis does not have a BCT, other than the SBCTs currently stationed there, to exchange back to Hawaii to ensure the 2/25th SBCT will have the necessary garrison infrastructure.

In addition to this primary reason, there are several other secondary reasons why Fort Lewis is not suitable for the stationing of the 2/25th SBCT. Fort Lewis will be at its maximum capacity in supporting the three SBCTs to be permanently stationed there. Accommodating the full requirements of an additional SBCT would require an additional 192 acres of space within the cantonment area, temporarily discounting the fact that facilities could not be constructed in time to meet the needs of the Proposed Action. To accomplish the necessary facilities construction, Fort Lewis would be required to demolish an existing housing area, as there is no unused buildable space in the cantonment area. Fort Lewis is currently experiencing a 1,100-unit shortfall in family hous-

ing and the surrounding community is critically short on housing availability to meet these needs. An additional SBCT would increase the requirement for married and family housing by approximately 2,000 units while reducing the housing currently available. That demand would place considerable stress on the ability of Soldiers and Families to find suitable available housing. This would in turn degrade quality of life for all of the units at Fort Lewis to unacceptable levels.

Training infrastructure availability at Fort Lewis would also become an issue with the addition of a fourth SBCT. Many of the existing training ranges and facilities would not have the scheduling capacity to support an additional SBCT. The Army conducted initial analysis into what would be required to accommodate the training infrastructure requirements of the 2/25th, on top of those requirements of units already stationed there. Although USAG-HI, Fort Carson, and Fort Richardson have a majority of the training range infrastructure and scheduling capacity required to support the 2/25th, Fort Lewis would require seven additional training ranges to meet its requirements. This shortfall in training range capacity would not allow the 2/25th and other units at Fort Lewis to meet their training requirements as required by Army Doctrine. Range shortfalls brought on by the permanent stationing of the 2/25th would include Rifle Marksmanship Zero Range, Sniper Qualification Range, the Multi-purpose Machine Gun Range (MPMG), the Multi-purpose Training Range (MPTR), BAX, ISBC, and an UAC.

Finally, in order to meet the Army's rapid deployment intent to deploy a Stryker anywhere in the world in 96 hours there must be some geographic dispersion of Stryker units. Stacking four Stryker units at one location would tie up deployment facilities allowing only one SBCT to deploy at a time. This lack of geographic distribution and limitation on the capability of deployment facilities would not be an optimal situation for supporting the strategic needs of the Army.

B) Permanently Station the SBCT at an Installation in Exchange for a Heavy Brigade Combat Team (HBCT) – Under this alternative, the Army would permanently station the SBCT at an installation such as Forts Bliss and Hood in Texas, or Stewart in Georgia and return a HBCT to Hawaii. While this alternative would preserve the force structure and number of BCTs in the Army and provide for most of the necessary facilities, it is not tenable from either training or sustainability perspectives. The separate training sites of Hawaii are not ideal for conducting HBCT maneuvers and training exercises. Logistically, transporting tanks and heavy armored vehicles between sites could only be done at considerable cost and time to the Army and at the expense of available training time for the unit and Soldiers. Transportation networks would have to be reengineered to accommodate larger and heavier equipment transportation vehicles to ensure public safety during transportation of the HBCTs oversized vehicles. In addition, several of the training areas are not conducive to cross-country HBCT training because of topographical constraints. This would increase the concentration of HBCT training in select areas that would limit its availability to meet continued training maneuver requirements.

C) Permanently Station the SBCT at Fort Bliss or Fort Stewart Exchanging a Grow the Army IBCT back to Hawaii – In December 2007, the Army announced a decision to establish six new IBCTs in the U.S., provided Congressional approval and funding. The first new brigades to be added will be at Fort Stewart and Fort Bliss. The IBCT at Fort Stewart will gradually replace an existing HBCT and will not be able to begin establishing itself until 2010; it will not be able to reach full strength until 2011. This is because facilities will only slowly become available. At Fort Bliss, the new IBCTs' facilities will be constructed from scratch. It will not be able to reach full strength until permanently constructed facilities are available at the beginning of 2011. The SBCT, currently a fully manned and equipped unit, would not be able to return to either of these locations in 2009 upon completion of its deployment. Because of the lack of cantonment infra-

structure needed to support the daily operations and maintenance of the SBCT, these locations have been eliminated from further consideration by the Army as alternatives for further analysis.

- D) Permanently Station the SBCT at a National Guard or Reserve Installation** – Under this alternative the Army would station the 2/25th SBCT at an Army National Guard (ARNG) or Reserve installation. ARNG and Reserve installations are designed to accommodate the needs of National Guard and Reserve Army units and Soldiers. The 2/25th SBCT is an Active Duty unit with requirements for garrison operations, deployment, training, and permanent housing and quality of life facilities for Soldiers and their Families. These requirements, and the facilities needed to support them are considerably different for Active versus Reserve component forces.

As discussed in Chapter 2 of the FEIS, the Army is in the process of conducting significant modernization of its training range infrastructure (FEIS 2-3). Because of resource limitations, only a select few ARNG and reserve mobilization sites have undergone significant range modernization that could support the training requirements of an active duty SBCT. These installations, such as Camp Shelby and Fort Dix, are fully engaged in training and mobilizing Soldiers for on-going operations. Furthermore, these mobilization facilities provide only basic temporary housing and dining facilities for reservists to conduct pre-deployment training. These facilities are designed to different standards and do not meet Active Duty stationing requirements for permanently stationed Soldiers and their families.

Although the 56th BCT did transform to an SBCT in Pennsylvania, this ARNG SBCT does not require permanent housing, garrison support, utilities, or the full range of facilities required to support the Soldiers and Families of an active duty BCT, such as the 2/25th. Any conversion of an ARNG or Reserve facility would require hundreds of millions of dollars in infrastructure expenditure and five to ten years to complete to meet the full measure of permanent facilities required for the 2/25th SBCT. Because this set of alternatives is not capable of meeting the permanent stationing for the 2/25th SBCT, it has not been carried forward for detailed analysis.

- E) Permanently Home Station the SBCT with an Overseas Host Nation** – Under this alternative, the Army would permanently station the 2/25th SBCT at an overseas installation on foreign soil. National security and defense policy has prescribed through the NDS, QDR, and other documents that the U.S. will rely on the rapid projection and deployment of units from within the U.S. In this way, the U.S. can fully control the availability and readiness of its units without having to rely on host nation support. In accordance with this defense policy guidance, the Army is in the process of bringing 44,500 Soldiers home from overseas stationing locations in Europe and Korea. The Army will not be stationing any additional combat brigades overseas. Stationing the 2/25th at a foreign overseas location is not in accordance with security and defense policy directives and decisions of the NDS and QDR. The consideration of overseas stationing locations is therefore not included in this document.

- F) Acquire Land to Support the Training Requirements of the SBCT** – Under this alternative, the Army would acquire land at Fort Knox, Fort Drum, Fort Riley, or Fort Polk to mitigate land shortfalls to meet the training needs of the SBCT. The military land acquisition process is a lengthy process that is very similar to military construction. To complete the process would take a minimum of five to ten years. A military land acquisition project must first be approved and funding must be appropriated. In addition, the Department of Defense (DoD) must approve a waiver of its policy that places a moratorium on major land acquisition. Environmental surveys and studies must be completed before any real estate transaction may begin. The entire process would take too long to meet the permanent stationing needs and requirements of the 2/25th SBCT. In addition to the time constraints of the process, there are land availability constraints. Discount-

ing the fact that the land acquisition process takes too long to support the maneuver training needs of the 2/25th, lack of available land would preclude land acquisition as a viable solution to meet the training space needs of the 2/25th SBCT. Because of these limitations, the Army did not consider land acquisition at installations such as Fort Knox, Fort Polk, Fort Drum, and Fort Riley a viable alternative to carry forward for analysis.

While it is true that the Army has proposed expanding Fort Polk, Louisiana and has received endorsement from Louisiana public officials, the process is just beginning. The expansion must be approved by the Department of Defense before any planning can begin (to include NEPA analysis). That approval has not occurred. The length of time this alternative would take is materially different from that required for the three action alternatives given full consideration. Limitations discussed as part of this alternative are fully applicable to Fort Polk and its suitability for stationing of the 2/25th SBCT.

G) Permanently Headquarter the 2/25th in Hawaii but Conduct Stryker-specific Maneuver and Live-fire Training Events at Locations other than Hawaii – Training locations could include training centers such as Fort Irwin, California and Fort Polk, Louisiana. This alternative would require very frequent movements of Soldiers and equipment. This would be both time-consuming and expensive. The deployment would also be very disruptive to Soldiers and their Families. Finally, alternative training areas are heavily used by other Army units, making it difficult to schedule the 2/25th requirements. For these reasons, this alternative does not meet the purpose and need for the Proposed Action. It was therefore not carried though for full evaluation as a reasonable alternative.

H) Station the 2/25th in Hawaii Temporarily, and then Permanently Station the 2/25th SBCT in another Location when Facilities Construction is Completed – The 2/25th has deployed to support current operations and is scheduled to complete its current deployment in early 2009. Under this alternative, the 2/25th would be stationed in Hawaii for several years until an additional set of SBCT facilities were constructed at an alternate location. As discussed as part of the Proposed Action, the 2/25th would need to be stationed in a location that provides for SBCT training and operational requirements upon its return from deployment. It would take approximately 3-5 years or more through the military construction process to appropriate funding to build additional SBCT facilities at another installation location. Even if programmed funding could be accelerated, it would take a minimum of 3-4 years to implement project construction and have facilities ready for the SBCT. This would leave the SBCT without adequate training facilities for an extended period of time. This would not allow the SBCT to prepare fully for operational deployments without deploying to other installations in the continental US to train, which adds increase stress on Soldiers and their Families.

The 2/25th was able to be deployed in 2007, but the conditions were less than optimal. Training facilities for the SBCT were not available and the unit had to make do with other facilities and conduct 20 days of additional training away from home station just prior to a 15-month deployment. While this had to be done to meet deployment schedules, this lack of ability to train the SBCT to training readiness standards at home station is not considered sustainable or feasible for the Soldiers and Families of the 2/25th SBCT. Army deployments have taxed and stressed Soldier and Family relationships Army wide.

To move ahead with construction of required training projects in Hawaii and then station the SBCT at another location would also be unacceptable. A second set of SBCT facilities would need to be built at another location to support the eventual permanent stationing of the SBCT. The construction of a duplicate set of SBCT facilities in Hawaii as well as a second set in another

location would represent a waste of project funding on two sets of facilities. Given the inefficiencies inherent in such an alternative, it is not carried forward as a reasonable alternative for analysis in this document.

The BAX is specifically designed for SBCT training with appropriate instrumentation needed for such training. The BAX is larger than the facility that would be built for an IBCT. In addition, the BAX is almost twice as expensive. Building a BAX to support an IBCT would not make sense, both in terms of size and expense.

- D) Drop the 2-25th from the Army inventory and constitute the Army with one less SBCT-** Under this alternative, there would be only one Army BCT in Hawaii, the 3-25th IBCT. The current 2-25th SBCT would be disbanded once it completed its current combat mission. Its personnel would be sent elsewhere and its equipment placed in storage or distributed to other units. This alternative would reduce the Army's combat forces at a time when those forces are under considerable strain. This alternative would not meet the Army's force requirements to support global and regional security requirements. For these reasons, this alternative does not meet the purpose and need for the Proposed Action. It was therefore not carried though for full evaluation as a reasonable alternative.

4.0 DECISION

I have reviewed the FEIS for the Permanent Stationing of the 2/25th SBCT. On behalf of the Army, I have decided to proceed with all facets of Alternative A, which is to station the 2/25th SBCT permanently at SBMR while conducting the required training at military training sites in Hawaii. This alternative is summarized in the ROD and described fully in Chapter 2 of the FEIS. The FEIS assessed the potential environmental consequences of the alternatives on the biological, physical, and cultural environments. The FEIS is incorporated by reference.

Under Alternative A, the Army will permanently home station the 2/25th SBCT in Hawaii upon completion of its current deployment to Southwest Asia. This alternative will include all of the activities needed to implement the Proposed Action, including the training, garrison operations, deployment, support of Soldier and Family quality of life, and other needs for meeting the requirements of the 2/25th SBCT. The 2/25th SBCT will be stationed at SBMR and will conduct garrison operations at this location. SBMR includes SBMP, SRAA, and SBER. Training will be conducted at a number of other training areas in Hawaii, including DMR, KTA, KLOA, and WAAF on Oahu. On the Island of Hawaii, the SBCT will train at PTA, Keamuku parcel also referred to in this document as WPAA, and BAAF. Training resources that will be used by the SBCT include an assortment of live-fire and non-live-fire maneuver training facilities, fixed-position live-fire training facilities, infantry and engineer demolition training facilities, grenade training facilities, and an urban assault course.

The EIS states categorically that use of MMR is not part of the proposed action. The SBCT can be fully trained in all its mission essential tasks without the use of MMR. For purposes of this stationing decision, MMR has been determined to be unavailable for the live fire training of the SBCT.

The use of MMR for live fire training is currently enjoined by a federal court pending completion of a separate EIS. Should this EIS result in a decision to resume live fire training at MMR, it would be possible that the SBCT could perform some dismounted live-fire training and convoy live-fire training there. I have therefore taken into account the information contained in the June 2005 Draft EIS (DEIS) for Military Training Activities at MMR as well as the June, 2007 Biological Opinion for that

action. I understand that it will be at least six months before an FEIS for that action is issued. The stationing decision for the 2/25th SBCT cannot wait for the MMR decision.

Another issue involving MMR needs clarification. Both alternatives B and C of this EIS state that for an IBCT coming to Hawaii, "a CALFEX capable range would be constructed in the footprint of the BAX at PTA to support up to company-level collective live-fire training events." It is important to understand that if there were two IBCTs stationed in Hawaii, there would be no reason to build the BAX at PTA. The statement in the EIS should not be misunderstood to mean that the PTA BAX location is the only place on PTA on which a CALFEX site could be located, or that stationing of the SBCT in Hawaii in any way forecloses possibility of a PTA alternative for the training proposed for MMR. To the contrary, I understand that the public has suggested a PTA alternative to MMR and that such an alternative (other than the BAX location) will be included in the FEIS for Military Training Activities at MMR. Stationing an SBCT in Hawaii does not make the resumption of live fire at MMR a foregone conclusion.

5.0 RATIONALE FOR THE DECISION

My decision to implement Alternative A is based on consideration of the analyses contained in the FEIS, comments provided during formal public comment and review periods, and an evaluation of the ability of each alternative to meet the Purpose and Need for the Proposed Action. Thus, I balanced the relative strengths and weaknesses of each alternative to meet the Army's need for the Proposed Action.

Based on my review of these components of the decision, I selected Alternative A for implementation. I selected Hawaii primarily because it is best able to meet the Army's strategic defense and national security needs in the Pacific theater. In making my decision, I was fully informed as to the limitations in Hawaii in terms of training ranges, maneuver land, and impacts to sensitive environmental and cultural resources. I also considered the conditions of training ranges and maneuver land at the alternate stationing locations.

In part, my decision was based on the fact that the U.S. is a nation with vital interests in the Pacific Rim and Southeast Asia. Both the NMS and the QDR provide decisions and directives to reorient and focus additional combat power in the Pacific Region. To support national security goals and objectives, the U.S. Pacific Command (PACOM) must be prepared to handle contingencies involving a number of potential conflict scenarios. Strategic concerns in the region include:

- The U.S. commitment to the defense of Taiwan
- The U.S. commitment to Japan and South Korea in containment of North Korean aggression
- The U.S. commitment to deterring North Korean nuclear advancement
- The U.S. commitment to deterring sanctuary for terrorist organizations and preventing the growth of safe harbor for terrorist organizations and growing insurgency in Indonesia, the Philippines, and other areas of growing unrest in Southeast Asia
- The U.S. commitment to allaying ethnic conflict in Indonesia
- The U.S. commitment to supporting democracy in Southeast Asia

One of the primary areas of need for the Proposed Action is to further Army Transformation as directed by the QDR and defense policies outlined above and in the FEIS. To implement the decisions in the QDR, the Army has developed the Army Campaign Plan (ACP). The ACP serves as the

Army's roadmap to accomplishing the goals set forth in the QDR and is the overarching planning document that guides Army Transformation. The QDR directed the Army to transform to a highly expeditionary force, or one that is capable of supporting itself in a combat environment without depending on continual supply and logistics support, while being highly mobile, deployable, and agile in response to decentralized contingencies and unconventional enemy operations. Additionally, the QDR directed the Army to integrate with the capabilities of our sister services to provide greater inter-operability and communication. The SBCT accomplishes the mission that the QDR envisioned—providing lethality, mobility, enhanced communications capability and greater interoperability from a self-supporting armored combat/combat service support platform requiring reduced logistical support requirements and greater protection on the battlefield.

The Stryker vehicle is the most advanced weapon system used by any country in the southeastern Pacific Rim. It therefore can provide a dominant force for contingency deployments. Although an SBCT cannot be deployed as rapidly as an IBCT, it can be deployed much more quickly than an HBCT.

PACOM conducts contingency planning to support the goals of the NSS and NDS to ensure the Army can fulfill its operational obligations to carry out the NMS in the Pacific Region of Interest. The rapid deployment capabilities of the SBCT currently represent the Army's most credible threat of projecting force in the Pacific region to shape the U.S.' strategic national security interests and therefore enable the Army to carry out its operational requirements. Deployment times for SBCTs from various spots in the United States to regions around the world appear similar. These deployment times, however, are based on a significant number of aircraft being available to transport the SBCT to its destination (GAO-03-801). In reality, there would probably be far fewer aircraft available and the same planes would have to make several trips. In this case, seemingly small differences in deployment times would multiply as the aircraft turned around to make additional trips. This is a much more realistic scenario and increases the value of forward stationing of the SBCT in Hawaii to support Pacific Rim contingencies. Furthermore, having SBCT units stationed in different locations permits the Army to rapidly and effectively deploy critical elements of multiple SBCT units at the same time. This alternative will also permit the Army to deploy a SBCT in the event that circumstances prevent the deployment of a SBCT from another location.

Stationing the 2/25th in Hawaii provides the Army with two distinct sets of deployment facilities strategically forward positioned at locations outside of the continental United States from which to deploy an SBCT to support national security requirements and operations in the Pacific Theater. Hawaii provides strategic flexibility, in conjunction with Alaska, for deploying forward positioned elements of an SBCT to support operations in the Pacific. This flexibility allows the military to deploy an SBCT to support contingencies even when the inclement weather or cold temperatures of Alaska's winter season prevent the air deployment of C-17 aircraft. The selection of Hawaii as the stationing location for the 2/25th will allow the Army the flexibility to deploy two SBCTs, or elements thereof simultaneously, if the Army is required to do so. This is especially true because both Hawaii and Alaska have C-17 aircraft permanently based at each location. During Alaska's extended winter season, SBCT vehicles must be winterized for cold weather operations, with special chains and lubricants that would not allow the unit's equipment to function properly if required to deploy to tropical climates of the South Pacific. Stationing an SBCT in Hawaii would require less pre-deployment preparation of vehicles, Soldiers, and equipment to countries in the Pacific with warmer climates. In addition, Hawaii is much closer to countries of the South Pacific, and the Army could respond much more rapidly than with troops stationed in either Alaska or Colorado if they were needed for peace support, stability, or wartime operations.

The stationing of an SBCT in Hawaii provides the Combatant Commander of U.S. forces in the Pacific with a unique capability to support military operations in the theater. The SBCT is highly de-

ployable and its armaments, firepower, and digital communications capabilities are superior to the equipment of nations in the Southeast Pacific. The 2/25th demonstrates the U.S. commitment to allies in the Southeast Pacific and provides key strategic deterrence presence that other stationing alternatives of this FEIS do not provide.

In addition to these reasons, Alternative A minimizes disruption to Soldiers and Families in Hawaii, Alaska, and Colorado that would be affected by the selection of Alternatives B or C. The Families of the 2/25th, 4/4th, and 4/25th are currently living in Hawaii, Colorado, and Alaska; respectively, and the selection of Alternative A allows these Families to remain in their current stationing locations.

The selection of Alternative A also allows the Army to provide better housing and quality of life infrastructure for the Soldiers and Families of the 2/25th. Furthermore, many of the Soldiers of the 2/25th have long-term reenlistment contracts in place to remain in Hawaii and Alternative A ensures the Army would be able to honor these commitments to its Soldiers. Many of these Soldiers have military occupational specialties that are specifically tied to the Stryker system. If there were no SBCT in Hawaii, they would be assigned elsewhere.

As discussed in detail in Chapter 2 of the FEIS and outlined above, the advantages of stationing the 2/25th in Hawaii outweigh the limited advantages of stationing the 2/25th in Alaska or Colorado and have led to my selection of Alternative A.

6.0 PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

The public's participation has been carefully considered throughout this NEPA process. The Army has provided several opportunities for the public to participate and has considered the public's comments in reaching this decision. These include issuing in the *Federal Register* a Notice of Intent (NOI) to prepare an EIS, a public scoping process, a 45-day public review period for the DEIS, and publication of the FEIS, accompanied by a 30-day waiting period before a final decision was made and a ROD issued.

Following publication in the *Federal Register* of the NOI on January 4, 2007, public notices were published in the major newspapers on the Islands of Hawaii and Oahu announcing the times and locations of five public scoping meetings to solicit input and to obtain comments on the scope and desired content of the EIS. Public notices were also published in Colorado, Alaska, Washington, and Kentucky announcing the times and locations of nine public scoping meetings in these four states. The 45-day scoping period began on January 4, 2007 and ended on February 20, 2007. Fourteen scoping meetings were held between January 29 and February 16, 2007. For residents and groups in Hawaii, public scoping meetings were held in Waianae, Honolulu, Haleiwa, Waikoloa, and Hilo. For residents and groups in Colorado, public meetings were held in Colorado Springs, Trinidad, and La Junta. For residents and groups in Alaska, public meetings were held in Anchorage and Delta Junction. For residents and groups in Kentucky, public meetings were held in Shepherdsville and Radcliff. Finally, for residents and groups in Washington, public meetings were held in Lakewood and Yakima. A total of 284 people signed in at the 14 meetings.

At the public scoping meetings, 69 individuals and persons representing organizations provided oral comments via court reporters and video camera for the Army's consideration. The Army also received written comments from 199 individuals and organizations in the form of e-mails, facsimiles, individual letters, and form letters. The Army compiled a scoping report, identifying and assessing the issues brought forth through the scoping process. The major concerns and issues expressed during the scoping process that were determined to be within the scope of the EIS are as follows:

Hawaii

- Not enough resources (land area, water, housing, etc.) exist on Hawaii to support more troops.
- Contamination of air, soil, and water, especially depleted uranium (DU) concerns.
- Monitoring of air, soil, and water.
- Impacts to cultural sites.
- Impacts to natural resources, including sensitive geologic areas.
- Need to assess cumulative impacts of all military activities in Hawaii.
- Identification and impacts of actions on true landowners and tenants.
- Alternatives where armored units already train were not fully considered (Forts Hood, Bliss, Benning, and Stewart), also why not Korean peninsula?
- Better to put SBCT close to major airfields that are larger than those on Hawaii. Proximity to air-lift is more relevant than geographic location.
- Increase in wildfire risk.
- Expansion of Hawaiian facilities with the potential of inadequate training in the future when communities develop to the property line.
- Traffic and noise impacts.
- Mainland locations have more area and are more distant from communities.

Alaska

- The Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between US Army Alaska (USARAK) and Delta Junction needs to be considered.

Colorado

- Monitoring impacts to the restricted PCMS.
- Impacts to soil and grassland.
- Effects to historic aspects of the Santa Fe Trail.
- Natural resource and archeological resource concerns.

The comments and concerns of the public and agencies were used to determine the focus of analysis and selection of alternatives. A summary of the comments received during the scoping process is included in the project record, organized by location, meeting date, and subject.

In addition, following publication of the DEIS, the Army held multiple meetings in Hawaii, Alaska, and Colorado following an extended 100-day public comment period that started on July 20th and closed on October 30, 2007. Comments received from these meetings have been presented to Senior Army Leadership to provide additional information to decision makers and they have been used to help shape discussion presented in this FEIS.

In addition to comments collected at the public meetings, 228 comments were received by mail, facsimile, and e-mail. Of that total, 212 pertained to the Proposed Action in Hawaii, 11 pertained to the

Proposed Action in Colorado, two were not location specific, and three were from Federal agencies commenting on the project as a whole.

Comments on the DEIS are summarized below.

Hawaii:

- Opposition to the military occupying more land.
- Spread of DU off contaminated ranges via water and dust; Health effects of DU; Decontamination of overseas equipment.
- The Army has not cleaned up contamination of the Hawaiian Islands from past activities.
- Insufficient land area to support expansion of Army training.
- Negative impacts to the tourist industry.
- The DEIS does not address the United Nation's Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.
- Concerns that funding will be available for mitigation.
- SBCT training will increase dust and noise impacts off-post.
- The Army is occupying land on Oahu and Hawaii Island illegally.
- Project will destroy known and unknown cultural resources.
- Religious access to resources has been cultural restricted and will be further restricted.
- Concerns of the Army's ability to identify cultural resources.
- The project will increase the cost of living, strain public services and schools, and increase competition for housing and jobs.
- Army use of the Superferry in Hawaii.
- Use of Strykers in Makua Valley.
- Basing the 2/25th SBCT in Hawaii would have more significant effects than either the Alaska or Colorado alternatives.
- Impacts to subsistence were not considered in Hawaii.
- Impacts to the large number of threatened, endangered, and sensitive species.
- The project will spread non-native invasive species.
- Impacts to surface and groundwater quality and quantity.
- Use of areas of cultural and religious importance for military training.
- Increase risk of wildfire.

Alaska:

- Ensure cumulative effects of the Army's Eagle River Flats Proposal and Alternative B are accurately captured.

Colorado:

- Stationing of the 2/25th SBCT at Fort Carson will increase social problems in Colorado Springs and adjoining communities, such as transience and violence.

- The project will justify future expansion of the PCMS.
- PCMS encompasses undisturbed, pristine natural areas with important ecological, archaeological, and historical values that must be protected.
- Training activities at PCMS will impact air quality.
- Archaeological, historic, and paleontological resources at the PCMS.
- Effects to Native Americans. Eleven federally recognized tribes have some cultural affiliation with the PCMS region.
- Effects on the rural communities surrounding PCMS.
- Impacts to the fragile grassland ecosystem.

7.0 ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

The tables below provide a comparative summary of the potential impacts of implementing each alternative for the permanent stationing of the 2/25th SBCT. The tables exhibit the composite impact (direct and indirect impacts and cumulative impacts) for each Valued Environmental Component (VEC) resulting from implementation of each alternative.

The composite impact incorporates the impacts from four activity groups that were analyzed (Cantonment Construction, Range Construction, Live-Fire Training, and Maneuver Training) occurring in all specific areas that would be affected in Hawaii, Alaska, and Colorado. To summarize these impacts comparatively, the highest impact level to each VEC that would be realized from any of the four activity groups in any of the impacted areas is used as the single impact rating for each alternative. Likewise, for the No Action alternative (Alternative D), the composite impact rating incorporates the impacts that would occur in all three locations (Hawaii, Alaska, Colorado) under the No Action alternative.

As noted in Section 5.2.5.4 of the FEIS and in response to public comments, the Army will continue to provide Native Hawaiians with access to traditional religious and cultural properties, in accordance with the American Indian Religious Freedom Act (AIRFA) and executive order 13007, on a case-by-case basis. This access program would be expanded to include SRAA and WPAA. The SBCT Programmatic Agreement (PA) also indicates that the installation will generally look favorably on affording access to historic sites to Native Hawaiians, subject to military operational requirements, security conditions, and other pertinent circumstances, such as safety.

Summary of Direct and Indirect Impacts to each VEC by Alternative

VEC	Alternative					
	A - Ha-waii	B - Alaska		C - Colorado		D - No Action
		Impacts in Alaska	Impacts in Hawaii	Impacts in Colorado	Impacts in Hawaii	
Soil Erosion	⊗	⊖	⊖	⊗	⊖	⊖
Water Resources	⊖	⊙	⊖	⊙	⊖	⊖
Wildfire Management	⊗	⊗	⊗	⊗	⊗	⊗
Cultural Resources	⊗	⊗	⊗	⊗	⊗	⊖
Land Use and Recreation	⊖	⊙	⊙	⊖	⊙	⊙
Traffic and Transportation	⊙	⊙	⊙	⊖	⊙	⊖
Socioeconomics	⊖	⊙	⊙	⊙	⊙	⊙
Hazardous Materials/ Hazardous Waste	⊖	⊖	⊙	⊖	⊙	⊙
Wetlands	○	⊖	○	○	○	⊙
Vegetation	⊙	⊖	⊙	⊖	⊙	⊙
Noxious Weeds	⊖	⊙	⊖	⊙	⊖	⊖
Threatened and Endangered Species	⊗	⊙	⊗	⊖	⊗	⊖
Wildlife and Habitats	⊙	⊙	⊙	⊙	⊙	⊙
Air Quality	⊗	⊙	⊖	⊗	⊖	⊙
Noise	⊗	⊙	⊗	⊙	⊗	⊗
Airspace	⊙	⊙	⊖	⊙	⊙	⊙
Energy Demand and Generation	⊙	⊙	⊙	⊙	⊙	⊙
Facilities	⊙	⊙	⊙	⊙	⊙	⊙
Subsistence	N/A	⊙	N/A	N/A	N/A	⊙

- ⊗ = Significant
- ⊖ = Significant but mitigable to less than significant
- ⊙ = Less than Significant
- = No Impact
- + = Beneficial Impact
- N/A = Not Applicable

In addition to these direct and indirect effects that the Army assessed for stationing of the 2/25th under different alternatives, it also conducted an assessment of cumulative impacts when looking at this proposed action in terms of past, present and reasonably foreseeable proposals in the region. The impact assessment below incorporates the impacts when viewed in the context of proposals and actions which have already occurred or which may take place in the future.

The FEIS takes into account past, present and reasonably foreseeable future actions. On 7 January 2008, the Army published the ROD for an EIS for Army Growth and Force Structure Realignment. That decision did not cover Alaska or Hawaii. Final decisions for unit stationing in Hawaii and Alaska will not be made for some time until costs and environmental impacts of the decision are understood. Stationing numbers will continue to fluctuate as the assessment of stationing needs is refined. On 13 March 2008, the Army published a Notice of Intent (NOI) for a supplement to the

Growth EIS, designed to look at changes to support operations in the Pacific Theatre including Alaska and Hawaii. This EIS will examine the potential growth to support the entire Pacific Theatre and, as noted in the NOI, will include analysis of different stationing scenarios which may include installations in the Continental U.S., not just Hawaii. My staff is responsible for determining the numbers of Soldiers that will ultimately be proposed for stationing under this supplemental EIS. When we have made final determinations of the growth required to support operations in the Pacific Theater the Supplemental Programmatic EIS for Army growth will identify and analyze the cumulative impacts of both itself and past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions (to include this Stryker Stationing EIS).

Summary of Cumulative Impacts to Each VEC for Each Alternative

VEC	Alternative			
	A – Hawaii	B- Alaska	C – Colorado	D – No Action
Soil Erosion	⊗	⊗	⊗	○
Water Resources	⊗	⊗	⊗	○
Wildfire Management	⊗	⊗	⊗	○
Cultural Resources	⊗	⊗	⊗	○
Land Use and Recreation	⊗	⊙	⊙	○
Traffic and Transportation	⊙	⊙	⊙	○
Socioeconomics	⊗	⊙	⊙	○
Hazardous Materials and Hazardous Waste	⊗	⊗	⊙	○
Wetlands	○	⊗	○	○
Vegetation	⊙	⊙	⊗	○
Noxious Weeds	⊗	○	⊗	○
Threatened and Endangered Species	⊗	⊙	⊗	○
General Wildlife and Habitat	⊙	⊙	⊗	○
Air Quality	⊗	⊙	⊗	○
Noise	⊗	⊗	⊙	○
Airspace	⊙	⊙	○	○
Energy	⊙	⊙	⊙	○
Facilities	⊙	⊙	⊙	○
Subsistence	N/A	⊙	N/A	○

- ⊗ = Significant
- ⊙ = Significant but mitigable to less than significant
- ⊙ = Less than Significant
- = No Impact
- + = Beneficial Impact
- N/A = Not Applicable

8.0 FEIS UPDATE

In addition to the resources discussed in the FEIS, the Army has sighted the nene (*Branta sandvicensis*), a native Hawaiian goose, within the WPAA. The nene maintains separate breeding and feeding areas in Hawaii. To date the species is known to occur on the Big Island of Hawaii, Maui, Molokai, Lanai, and Kauai. It is a ground nesting species that has been identified at PTA in the past during flights over the training area. In late January 2008, Army natural resource personnel sighted a pair of nene while conducting a reconnaissance near the site for a dip tank project, one of the Integrated Wildfire Management Plan (IWFMP) projects in the WPAA. The nene were spotted approximately 1 kilometer from the project. A second pair of nene was observed in the same general area, but slightly farther from the project site, a few days later. The first pair of nene may have attempted to start a nest but no eggs were observed. When personnel revisited the site approximately five days later, the nene were no longer found at the site. No nest was observed as being associated with the second pair of nene observed. PTA personnel observed another single nene in the vicinity of the site on February 20, 2008. No nene have been observed in the area since the February 20th sighting.

The Army notified the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) of the nene sightings and ceased activity on the dip tank project. Subsequent coordination with the USFWS determined that work could take place in the area if natural resource staff are present at the construction site to record observations of the species. If nene are present in the immediate area of the construction site, construction will cease until the nene leave the area. The Army is in the process of preparing a Biological Assessment to initiate formal Section 7 consultations under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) to address use of the WPAA in light of this development. The Army anticipates that it will complete consultation by September/October 2008.

On 19 March 2008, Dr. James Morrow testified before the Hawaii legislature on the risk associated with depleted uranium, focusing on PTA. His testimony concluded with a determination that the depleted uranium at PTA did not represent a significant effect on air quality or risk associated with radiation.

This new information was taken into consideration as part of this decision, and the Army intends to carry out its responsibilities under the ESA.

9.0 MITIGATION MEASURES

Mitigation actions are expected to reduce, avoid, or compensate for most adverse effects. Subject to the availability of funds, the Army shall take all necessary steps to implement the mitigation and monitoring measures referenced in the 2004 ROD, which are incorporated by reference into this ROD. These mitigation measures, including regulatory and administrative requirements, will help substantially reduce significant impacts to affected resources, and will provide a substantial benefit to the affected resources. The 2004 ROD does not include those measures that are considered standard operating procedures and best management practices, which will be integrated into and implemented as part of the proposed projects.

Several new mitigation measures were identified during the 2007 impact analysis and are included in the 2008 FEIS. All mitigation measures identified in the 2008 FEIS are adopted. These measures include:

- *Land use and Recreation Additional Mitigation 1:* Access controls will be developed and implemented to ensure the safety of all personnel; and warning signs would be posted on the boundary to prevent unauthorized use/trespass. (FEIS page 5–31).

- *Biological Resources Additional Mitigation 2:* The Army will prevent any weeds brought in from becoming established by rigorously monitoring using transects and roadside surveys and eradicating new weeds using the most effective means known specific to each of the invasive species.
 - The Army will provide education regarding cleaning vehicles and field gear. These education materials will be USFWS-approved. (FEIS page 5-48)
 - The Army will wash vehicles in wash rack facilities prior to returning from the training areas, to minimize the spread of weeds (e.g., fountain grass). (FEIS page 5-49)
 - The Army will train and require Soldiers to clean their gear and vehicles when first arriving in Hawaii and prior to moving from installation to installation, as well as when moving from island to island. (FEIS page 5-49)

All regulatory requirements will be implemented in their entirety. Implementation and monitoring plans discussed in the mitigation table ES-22 of the 2004 EIS will be developed and implemented within 365 days of the ROD signing, unless otherwise identified. All implementation plans shall define the goal and objective of the plan and shall include status report due dates, monitoring time-frames and thresholds, and contingency measures to ensure the plan meets these defined goals and objectives. The mitigation enforcement and effectiveness-monitoring program will be consistent with the guidance at 32 CFR Part 651, Appendix C.

The mitigation and monitoring measures adopted in this ROD reflect all practicable means to avoid or minimize environmental harm. Combined with existing environmental stewardship measures, full implementation of the measures will aid in avoiding, minimizing, reducing, or rectifying adverse effects over time to land use and recreation, visual resources, air quality, noise, traffic, water resources, geology, soils and seismicity, biological resources, cultural resources, human health and safety, and socioeconomic and environmental justice.

10.0 POINT OF CONTACT

If you have any questions or wish to obtain additional copies of this document, please contact: Public Affairs Office, U.S. Army Environmental Command, Building E4460, 5179 Hoadley Road, Attention: IMAE-PA, Aberdeen Proving Ground, MD 21010-5401, telephone: 410-436-2556, facsimile: 410-436-1693, email: publiccomments@aec.apgea.army.mil.



LTG James D. Thurman

11 April 2008

Date

James D. Thurman

Lieutenant General, U.S. Army

Deputy Chief of Staff, G-3/5/7