

**DRAFT FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT  
ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT  
Joint Base Andrews-Naval Air Facility, MD**

**Lead Agency:** Department of the Air Force

**Name of Action:** Consolidated Communications Center (CCC) at Joint Base Andrews-Naval Air Facility, MD

**Description of Proposed Action:** The Proposed Action is to construct and operate an approximate 79,374 square foot CCC using economical design and construction methods. The facility would be constructed with reinforced concrete foundations, steel frame and roof systems, and concrete masonry unit walls. The construction would include site work, communications support, fire detection and suppression systems, environmental controls, pavement, a parking area, exterior lighting, security systems, landscaping, emergency generators, and all other support.

Data center equipment from other mission partners at JBA would be consolidated to take advantage of the fiber optic infrastructure recently completed at the installation, including the U.S. Air Force Reserve, D.C. Air National Guard, and U.S. Army.

All major utility services are available in the proposed area, including water, sanitary sewer, natural gas, and electricity. The facility would have at least two electrical feeds from the JBA substation and communications cabling connections to maintain redundancy for the facility's operations. Approximately 1,500 linear feet (LF) of trenching for power and 2,000 LF of trenching for telecommunications would be required. Emergency generators and all necessary support for an uninterrupted power system would be required. In order to provide improved redundancy and availability, standby power would be supplied by two – 1 megawatt (MW) generators, plus one additional 1MW generator. The switchgear will also be configured to include a provision for a 1MW roll-up generator.

Buildings 1539 and 1558 (the existing facilities currently occupied by the mission partners) would remain operational throughout the construction of the new CCC. Once the new CCC was completed and certified for use, the functions in those facilities would be relocated to the new CCC, and buildings 1539 and 1558 would be demolished, including removal of electrical and communications ducts, HVAC equipment, four 25,000-gallon fuel tanks, and associated piping.

Approximately 412,078 square feet (sf) (266,587 sf impervious (asphalt and concrete) and 145,490 sf building area) would be demolished for this project. Approximately 6,392 LF for utilities (1,836 LF stormwater, 2,301 LF underground electric, 518 LF overhead electric, 1,277 LF underground telephone, and 460 LF gas) would be demolished for this project. The existing land use is categorized as Administration and Industrial and includes the current communication facilities (buildings 1558 and 1539). The total acreage of limit of disturbance would be approximately 18.49 acres. Impervious surface would be reduced by approximately 7.09 acres, which is a 38 percent decrease from existing impervious surface. Landscaping would be included with the project. No additional personnel or traffic will be introduced to the project area as the new CCC is near the existing facilities and no new personnel are associated with the Proposed Action.

The existing communications vault below building 1539 would be retained and reused as a main connection point to the installation's cabling infrastructure. Building 1531 and the adjacent parking area would be retained and reused as a cable yard and protected parking for the CCC. The existing antenna tower located between buildings 1558 and 1560 would be retained. A radio frequency enclosure and new power connection would be provided at the base of the tower to permit the continued use of that facility. An area of the proposed site would be identified for a future antenna tower to allow the existing tower to be removed by JBA in the future.

A new parking lot would be constructed north of the CCC with a capacity of approximately 350 vehicles to provide parking for 60 percent of assigned personnel.

**Alternatives Evaluated:** An Environmental Assessment (EA) is being prepared to evaluate the potential environmental, cultural, transportation and socioeconomic effects associated with the Proposed Action.

Several alternatives to the Proposed Action were considered, but were eliminated because they do not meet legal or other Department of Defense requirements.

As required, a No-Action Alternative was also included in the EA which reflects the status quo and serves as a benchmark against which federal actions can be evaluated. Under the No-Action Alternative, the CCC facility would not be constructed and the existing mission would continue to use buildings 1558 and 1539. The No-Action Alternative would not meet current and projected mission requirements due to deteriorating facility conditions that would impact health and safety (inadequate fire suppression systems in critical server rooms, electrical load distributions that do not meet current electrical code and the presence of asbestos-containing materials).

**Anticipated Impacts:** The Proposed Action is expected to result in less than significant or no effects to land use, groundwater, floodplains, cultural resources, electric and lighting, hazardous materials and waste management, environmental justice, and safety and occupational health. During construction, the Proposed Action would have temporary and minor impacts to vegetation, wildlife, surface water resources, local air quality, transportation, and existing noise levels on JBA. Short-term minor impacts to soils and topography due to the grading and filling of areas would be expected during construction. However, the reduction in the impervious surface would result in a projected net decrease in impervious area by approximately 7.09 acres, providing long-term beneficial impacts to stormwater systems and water resources.

The No-Action Alternative would have long-term adverse impacts to communications operations and socioeconomics as a result of the continued deterioration of the existing communications facilities. Safety and stormwater would also be negatively impacted by the No Action Alternative.

**Public Involvement:** Per the requirements of Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and implementing regulations (36 CFR Part 800), Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act (ESA) and implementing regulations, including the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and Coastal Zone Management Act, findings of effect and request for concurrence were transmitted to the Maryland Historic Trust (MHT) and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). Because the Proposed Action is located within Maryland's Coastal Zone, a consistency determination was submitted to

the Maryland Coastal Zone Management Program for review. JBA also initiated consultation with the following agencies for the proposed project: Maryland Department of Natural Resources, Maryland State Clearinghouse Office of Planning, Maryland Department of the Environment, Prince George's County Department of Planning, National Capital Parks-East, and National Capital Planning Commission. JBA did not coordinate with the National Marine Fisheries Service because no marine resources will be impacted from this project.

Concurrence indicating a finding of no adverse effect for the demolition of buildings 1539 and 1558 was received from the MHT on 7 November 2017. On 20 April 2018, concurrence indicating a primary finding of no adverse effect on historic properties was received from the MHT for the construction of the CCC. On 1 March 2018, a report was generated through the Information for Planning and Conservation system, the USFWS online system for searching for species protected under the ESA, which notes that no protected species occur on the proposed CCC construction site.

A Notice of Availability (NOA) was published in the Maryland Independent and to interested agencies/parties on 7 November 2018.

Following the NOA, the Draft EA and Draft FONSI were made available for public review for 30 days starting on 7 November 2018 at the Upper Marlboro Branch of the Prince George's County Memorial Library System, 14730 Main Street, Upper Marlboro, Maryland and the JBA Library, 1642 Brookley Ave and D Street, Andrews AFB, MD.

**Finding of No Significant Impact:** *Anticipated Wording: After a review of the EA, I have determined that the Proposed Action evaluated may be selected for implementation. I have concluded that implementation of the Proposed Action will have no significant impacts to the natural environment, cultural resources or human environment. Based upon the aforementioned, preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement is not required.*

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