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necessary revisions to the PDEIS and forwards it to HQ USAF/CEV as a draft EIS for security and policy review. Once the draft EIS is approved, HQ USAF/CEV notifies the EPF to print sufficient copies of the draft EIS for distribution to congressional delegations and interested agencies. After congressional distribution, the EPF sends the draft EIS to all others on the distribution list. HQ USAF/CEV then files the document with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and provides a copy to the Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Environmental Security.

(c) *Public review of draft EIS (40 CFR 1502.19).* (1) The public comment period for the draft EIS is at least 45 days from the publication date of the notice of availability (NOA) of the draft EIS in the FEDERAL REGISTER. EPA publishes in the FEDERAL REGISTER, each week, NOAs of EISs filed during the preceding week. This public comment period may be extended an additional 15 days, at the request of the EPF. If the draft EIS is unusually long, the EPF may distribute a summary to the public with an attached list of locations (such as public libraries) where the entire draft EIS may be reviewed. The EPF must distribute the full draft EIS to certain entities, for example agencies with jurisdiction by law or agencies with special expertise in evaluating the environmental impacts, and anyone else requesting the entire draft EIS (40 CFR 1502.19).

(2) The EPF holds public hearings on the draft EIS according to the procedures in 40 CFR 1506.6(c) and (d). Hearings take place no sooner than 15 days after the FEDERAL REGISTER NOA and at least 15 days before the end of the comment period. Scheduling hearings toward the end of the comment period is encouraged to allow the public to obtain and more thoroughly review the draft EIS. The EPF must provide hearing plans to HQ USAF/CEV (or ANGRC/CEV) for SAF/MIQ concurrence no later than 30 days prior to the first public hearing. See attachment 3 of this part for public hearing procedures.

(d) *Response to comments (40 CFR 1503.4).* The EPF must incorporate its responses to comments in the final EIS by either modifying the text and referring in the appendix to where the appropriate modification is addressed or providing a written explanation in the comments section, or both. The EPF may group comments of a similar nature together to allow a common response and may also respond to individuals separately.

(e) *Seeking additional comments.* The EPF may, at any time during the EIS process, seek additional public comments, such as when there has been a significant change in circumstances, development of significant new information of a relevant nature, or where there is substantial environmental controversy concerning the proposed action. Significant new information leading to public controversy regarding the scope after the scoping process is such a changed circumstance. An additional public comment period may also be necessary after the publication of the draft EIS due to public controversy or changes made as the result of previous public comments. Such periods when additional public comments are sought shall last for at least 30 days.

§989.20 Final EIS.

(a) If changes in the draft EIS are minor or limited to factual corrections and responses to comments, the proponent may, with the prior approval of SAF/MIQ, prepare a document containing only draft EIS comments, Air Force responses, and errata sheets of changes staffed to the HQ USAF EPC for coordination. However, the proponent must submit the draft EIS and all of the above documents, with a new cover sheet indicating that it is a final EIS (40 CFR 1503.4(c)), to HQ USAF/CEV for filing with the EPA (40 CFR 1506.9). If more extensive modifications are required, the EPF must prepare a preliminary final EIS incorporating these modifications for coordination within the Air Force. Regardless of which procedure is followed, the final EIS must be processed in the same way as the draft EIS, except that the public need not be invited to comment during the 30-day post-filing waiting period. The final EIS should be furnished to every person, organization, or agency that made substantive comments on

the draft EIS or requested a copy. Although the EPF is not required to respond to public comments received during this period, comments received must be considered in determining final decisions such as identifying the preferred alternative, appropriate mitigations, or if a supplemental analysis is required.

(b) The EPF processes all necessary supplements to EISs (40 CFR 1502.9) in the same way as the original draft and final EIS, except that a new scoping process is not required.

(c) If major steps to advance the proposal have not occurred within 5 years from the date of the FEIS approval, reevaluation of the documentation should be accomplished to ensure its continued validity.

§ 989.21 Record of decision.

(a) The MAJCOM prepares draft RODs, formally staffs them to HQ USAF/CEV for verification of adequacy, and forwards them to the final decision-maker for signature. A ROD (40 CFR 1505.2) is a concise public document stating what an agency's decision is on a specific action. The ROD may be integrated into any other document required to implement the agency's decision. A decision on a course of action may not be made until 30 days after publication of the NOA of the final EIS in the FEDERAL REGISTER. EPA publishes NOAs each Friday; when Friday is a holiday, the notice is published on Thursday.

(b) The Air Force must announce the ROD to the affected public as specified in § 989.23, except for classified portions. The ROD should be concise and should explain the conclusion, the reason for the selection, and the alternatives considered. The ROD must identify the course of action (proposed action or an alternative) that is considered environmentally preferable regardless of whether it is the alternative selected for implementation. The ROD should summarize all the major factors the agency weighed in making its decision, including essential considerations of national policy.

(c) The ROD must state whether the selected alternative employs all practicable means to avoid, minimize, or mitigate environmental impacts and, if not, explain why.

§ 989.22 Mitigation.

(a) When preparing EIAP documents, indicate clearly whether mitigation measures (40 CFR 1508.20) must be implemented for the alternative selected. Discuss mitigation measures in terms of ''will'' and ''would'' when such measures have already been incorporated into the proposal. Use terms like ''may'' and ''could'' when proposing or suggesting mitigation measures. Both the public and the Air Force community need to know what commitments are being considered and selected, and who will be responsible for implementing, funding, and monitoring the mitigation measures.

(b) The proponent funds and implements mitigation measures in the mitigation plan that are approved by the decision-maker. Where possible and appropriate because of amount, the proponent should include the cost of mitigation as a line item in the budget for a proposed project. The proponent must keep the EPF informed of the status of mitigation measures when the proponent implements the action. The EPF monitors the progress of mitigation implementation and reports its status to HQ USAF/CEV on a periodic basis. Upon request, the EPF must also provide the results of relevant mitigation monitoring to the public.

(c) The proponent may ''mitigate to insignificance'' potentially significant environmental impacts found during preparation of an EA, in lieu of preparing an EIS. The FONSI for the EA must include these mitigation measures. Such mitigations are legally binding and must be carried out as the proponent implements the project. If, for any reason, the project proponent later abandons or revises in environmentally-adverse ways the mitigation commitments made in the FONSI, the proponent must prepare a supplemental EIAP document before continuing the project. If potentially significant environmental impacts would result from any project revisions, the proponent must prepare an EIS.

(d) For each FONSI or ROD containing mitigation measures, the proponent publishes a plan specifically