FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
TRANSITION FROM C-2A TO CMV-22B
AIRCRAFT AT FLEET LOGISTICS CENTERS
NAVAL AIR STATION NORTH ISLAND AND
NAVAL STATION NORFOLK AND
SECONDARY AIRFIELD TRAINING AT
JOINT BASE LANGLEY EUSTIS –FORT
EUSTIS, FELKER ARMY FIELD, VIRGINIA

Pursuant to provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), 42 United States Code (USC) 4321 to 4347, implementing Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) Regulations, 40 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 1500-1508, and 32 CFR Part 989, Environmental Impact Analysis Process, the U.S. Air Force (Air Force) assessed the potential environmental consequences associated with transient CMV-22B (herein referred to as "Navy V-22") flight operations in and out of Felker Army Airfield (FAAF) at Joint Base Langley-Eustis – Fort Eustis.

The Department of the Navy (Navy) prepared an Environmental Assessment (EA) to evaluate potential impacts from the proposed transition from C-2A to CMV-22B Aircraft at Fleet Logistics Centers (Naval Air Station [NAS] North Island and Naval Station [NS] Norfolk). The EA is incorporated by reference into this Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI). The Proposed Action described in detail in the EA occurs primarily at the Navy's west coast and east coast Fleet Logistics Centers (NAS North Island and NS Norfolk, respectively). However, aircraft based at the home Fleet Logistics Center airfields are proposed to conduct flight training operations not only at the home airfields, but at several secondary airfields within the greater region. One of these secondary airfields on the east coast is FAAF. The Air Force joined the Navy as a cooperating agency in developing the EA with regard to evaluating potential impacts at FAAF.

The next several sections provide background on the overall proposed action and alternatives, including specific activities proposed to occur at FAAF. This is followed by a summary of the findings related to proposed transient Navy V-22 flight operations at FAAF.

PURPOSE AND NEED FOR THE PROPOSED ACTION

The purpose of the Proposed Action is to provide the logistics support community the facilities and functions needed to support the replacement of the fixed-wing C-2A aircraft with the Navy V-22 tilt-rotor aircraft to meet the operational requirements and enhance the logistics support mission. The Proposed Action is needed to support the Navy's national defense requirements under Title 10 United States Code Section 5062 as the older C-2A aircraft has reached the end of its service life. Increasing maintenance requirements limit the use of the aging C-2A for the aircraft carrier on-board delivery mission. The Proposed Action would provide the facilities needed to efficiently transition the C-2A to the Navy V-22 aircraft without interruption of the time critical logistics support mission for carrier strike groups at sea.

The EA analyzes the potential consequences to the human environment from activities associated with the proposed aircraft transition at Fleet Logistics Centers. Moreover, the EA discusses environmental protection measures to avoid or reduce adverse environmental impacts. Additionally, the EA considers cumulative environmental impacts with other reasonably foreseeable future actions, including cumulative environmental impacts from greenhouse gas emissions.

PROPOSED ACTION

The Navy proposes to provide facilities and functions to support the replacement of C-2A aircraft with the Navy V-22 Osprey at existing West and East Coast logistics support centers NAS North Island, California and NS Norfolk, Virginia. Under the Proposed Action, the Navy would replace 27 legacy C-2A aircraft operated by existing logistics support squadrons with 38 Navy V-22 aircraft operated by fleet logistics support multi-mission squadrons; establish a Navy V-22 training squadron to train pilots and aircrews, and a maintenance school for maintenance personnel; construct, renovate, and maintain facilities to accommodate Navy V-22 squadron aircraft, aircraft maintenance, and personnel; and conduct Navy V-22 flight training operations.

The Proposed Action would be implemented over a 10-year period beginning in 2018 with facility renovations and some personnel actions at NAS North Island and NS Norfolk. Eventually, the Navy V-22 training squadron and maintenance school would be established, either on the West Coast or the East Coast, to fully support Navy training requirements. The transition is expected to be complete in the 2028 timeframe.

ALTERNATIVES ANALYZED

The Navy considered three alternatives: the No Action alternative and two action alternatives (Alternative 1 and Alternative 2).

NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE

Under the No Action Alternative, the Navy would not provide facilities and functions to support the replacement of C-2A aircraft with the Navy V-22 at existing West and East Coast logistics support centers that service aircraft carriers. The carrier on-board mission would continue to be performed

by the fleet logistics support squadrons at NAS North Island and NS Norfolk using the C-2A aircraft. The No Action Alternative would not meet the purpose and need for the Proposed Action; however, the conditions associated with the No Action Alternative serve as reference points for describing and quantifying the potential impacts associated with the action alternatives.

ALTERNATIVE 1

Under Alternative 1, Navy V-22 aircraft would replace existing C-2A aircraft at NAS North Island and NS Norfolk. The Navy V-22 training squadron and maintenance school would be established at NAS North Island. The Navy would begin to transition the C-2A to the Navy V-22 in 2020 when the first aircraft are expected to arrive at NAS North Island. For the next several years, there would be a mix of C-2A and Navy V-22 aircraft and personnel, until the transition from C-2A to the Navy V-22 is complete in the 2028 timeframe.

Under Alternative 1, Navy V-22 flight training would require the use of secondary training airfields in the regional vicinity of NAS North Island and NS Norfolk. Secondary airfield training requirements would be distributed among several West Coast and East Coast airfields. Proposed annual operations at secondary airfields would be similar to existing operations and would represent a small percentage of the operations that have already been analyzed under NEPA.

ALTERNATIVE 1 ACTIVITIES at FAAF:

Under Alternative 1, the maximum total estimated annual Navy V-22 airfield operations would be 3,700 at any one of three airfields (i.e., FAAF, NALF Fentress and MCAS New River). A distribution of the 3,700 operations across the three fields is most likely, but the Air Force conservatively conducted its FAAF analysis under a maximum operations scenario. Annual flight operations by all aircraft (e.g., UH-60, CH-53, MV-22, and various fixed wing aircraft) at FAAF averaged approximately 145,000 between 2011 and 2016. Therefore, under a maximum scenario, Navy V-22 flight operations would represent a 2.5% increase in existing FAAF operations. Ninety percent of operations would occur during the day; ten percent at night. Typical Navy V-22 training flight missions conducted at FAAF may be vertical replenishment and confined area landing.

Under Alternative 1, the Proposed Action activities at FAAF would consist solely of transient flight operations using the existing asphalt runway 14/32, and established helicopter (helo) pads, landing zones, and sling load training sites. Proposed Navy V-22 activities at FAAF involve no new construction or modification of facilities or infrastructure.

ALTERNATIVE 2

Under Alternative 2, the Navy would provide facilities and functions to support the replacement of the existing C-2A aircraft with Navy V-22 aircraft at NAS North Island and NS Norfolk. The Navy V-22 training squadron and maintenance school would be established at NS Norfolk. The Navy would begin to transition the C-2A to the Navy V-22 in 2020 when the first aircraft are expected to arrive at NAS North Island. For the next several years, there would be a mix of C-2A and Navy V-

22 aircraft and personnel, until the transition from C-2A to the Navy V-22 is complete in the 2028 timeframe.

Under Alternative 2, Navy V-22 flight training would require the use of secondary training airfields in the regional vicinity of NAS North Island and NS Norfolk. Secondary airfield training requirements would be distributed among six West Coast and six East Coast airfields. Proposed annual operations at secondary airfields would be similar to existing operations and would represent a small percentage of the operations that have already been analyzed under NEPA.

ALTERNATIVE 2 ACTIVITIES at FAAF:

Under Alternative 2, the maximum total estimated annual Navy V-22 airfield operations would be 7,700 at any one of three airfields (i.e., FAAF, NALF Fentress and MCAS New River). A distribution of the 7,700 operations across the three fields is most likely, but the Air Force conservatively conducted its FAAF analysis under a maximum operations scenario. Annual flight operations by all aircraft (e.g., UH-60, CH-53, MV-22, and various fixed wing aircraft) at FAAF averaged approximately 145,000 between 2011 and 2016. Therefore, under a maximum scenario, Navy V-22 flight operations would represent a 5.3% increase in existing FAAF operations. Ninety percent of operations would occur during the day; ten percent at night. Typical Navy V-22 training flight missions conducted at FAAF may be vertical replenishment and confined area landing.

Under Alternative 2, the Proposed Action activities at FAAF would consist solely of transient flight operations using the existing asphalt runway 14/32, and established helo pads, landing zones, and sling load training sites. Proposed Navy V-22 activities at FAAF involve no new construction or modification of facilities or infrastructure.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED BUT ELIMINATED FROM DETAILED STUDY

The Navy considered several other alternatives, but did not carry them forward for detailed analysis in the FEA because they did not meet the purpose and need for the Proposed Action or satisfy the important elements considered during the course of developing a range of action alternatives. In developing the proposed range of alternatives that meet the purpose of and need for the Proposed Action, the Navy carefully reviewed these important considerations:

- Colocation with fleet logistics centers that service aircraft carriers
- Maximization of existing facilities and support
- Colocation of Navy V-22 training squadron with fleet logistic support squadrons

Alternatives considered but not carried forward for detailed analysis included the following:

- The establishment of new home bases for the fleet logistic support aircraft in locations where there is no existing fleet logistics center
- Single siting of Navy V-22 squadrons
- Establishment of a Training Squadron and Maintenance School at both West and East Coast locations

- Establishment of a Training Squadron and Maintenance School at neither West nor East Coast location

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The Proposed Action as it pertains to FAAF has been reviewed in accordance with NEPA as implemented by the regulations of the CEQ and 32 CFR Part 989 *(Environmental Impact Analysis Process).* The Navy concluded in the EA that no significant adverse effects would result to the following resources as a result of the Proposed Action: airfields and airspace; noise; public health and safety; air quality; transportation; biological resources; water resources; infrastructure; cultural resources; hazardous materials and waste; and socioeconomics. No significant adverse cumulative impacts would result from activities associated with the Proposed Action when considered with past, present, or reasonably foreseeable future projects.

Transient Navy V-22 flight operations at FAAF are expected to have no impact on the following resources: transportation; water resources (including wetlands and floodplains); infrastructure; cultural resources; hazardous materials and waste; and socioeconomics. Transient Navy V-22 flight operations at FAAF are expected to have negligible impacts on the following resources:

Airfields and Airspace

Navy V-22 flight operations at FAAF, under either action alternative, would be conducted in a manner consistent with existing airfield operations and would be expected to have negligible environmental impacts to the airspace and airfield environments.

Noise

Navy V-22 flight operations at FAAF, under either action alternative, would not cause a perceptible change in the primary noise metric, Day-Night Average Sound Level (DNL). The changes in airfield operations range from 2.5 to 5.3 percent of the total airfield operations. For similar-type operations, this might be expected to account for approximately 0.1 to 0.6 decibel (dB) change in DNL. Changes to DNL of less than 1 dB would not be perceptible. Proposed operations would not result in additional noise or vibration that would affect structures at the airfields, including historic properties.

Public Health and Safety

No changes to airspace procedures would be required to accommodate the Navy V-22 aircraft performance or airfield sorties. Navy V-22 flight operations would be similar to other existing aircraft operations in airspace and at the airfields. Operations would fall within the same general types as those that currently occur and no changes to established airfield safety features would be required.

Air Quality

The Air Force's Air Conformity Applicability Model (ACAM) was used to perform an analysis to assess the potential air quality impact/s associated with the action at FAAF in accordance with the Air Force Instruction 32-7040, Air Quality Compliance And Resource Management; the Environmental Impact Analysis Process (EIAP, 32 CFR 989); and the General Conformity Rule (GCR, 40 CFR 93 Subpart B). Based on the attainment status at the action location, the requirements of the General Conformity Rule are not applicable.

Total combined direct and indirect emissions associated with the action were estimated through ACAM on a calendar-year basis for the "worst-case" and "steady state" (net gain/loss upon action fully implemented) emissions.

"Air Quality Indicators" were used to provide an indication of the significance of potential impacts to air quality. These air quality indicators are Environmental Protection Agency General Conformity Rule (GCR) thresholds (*de minimis* levels) that are applied out of context to their intended use. Therefore, these indicators do not trigger a regulatory requirement; however, they provide a warning that the action is potentially significant. It is important to note that these indicators only provide a clue to the potential impacts to air quality.

Given the GCR *de minimis* threshold values are the maximum net change an action can acceptably emit in non-attainment and maintenance areas, these threshold values would also conservatively indicate an actions emissions within an attainment would also be acceptable. An air quality indicator value of 100 tons/yr is used based on the GCR *de minimis* threshold for the least severe non-attainment classification for all criteria pollutants (see 40 CFR 93.153).

None of estimated emissions associated with proposed transient Navy V-22 flight operations at FAAF are above the GCR indicators, indicating no significant impact to air quality; therefore, no further air assessment is necessary.

Biological Resources

Navy V-22 flight operations at FAAF, under either action alternative, would be conducted in a manner consistent with existing airfield operations and in accordance with the installations' bird/animal aircraft strike hazard programs and Integrated Natural Resources Management Plan, which are implemented to minimize impacts to biological resources.

CUMULATIVE EFFECTS

This EA also considers the effects of cumulative impacts as required in 40 CFR 1508.7 and concurrent actions as required in 40 CFR 1508.25[1]. Actions announced for the region of influence that could occur during the same time period as the proposed action are: continued airfield operations, future military training activities, future clearing and maintaining vegetation in the Felker Army Airfield Clear zones, and the upcoming construction of the Aviation Complex in the general vicinity. These actions either have been or would be evaluated under separate NEPA actions conducted by the appropriate involved federal agency. Based on the best available information for these proposals, the cumulative impact analysis does consider them.

CONCLUSIONS

***Finding of* No *Significant* Impact.** Based on my review of the facts and analyses contained in the Environmental Assessment, conducted under the provisions of NEPA, CEQ Regulations, and 32 CFR Part 989, I conclude that the implementation of the Proposed Action as described in the Environmental Assessment would not have a significant environmental impact, either by itself or cumulatively with other known projects at Felker Army Airfield.

Accordingly, an Environmental Impact Statement is not required. The signing of this Finding of No Significant Impact completes the environmental impact analysis process.

DEE JAY KATZER, Colonel, USAF
Chief, Civil Engineer Division (ACC/A4C)

29 Aug 2018
Date