DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
Department of the Navy

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT / FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT HARM FOR TRIDENT II (D5) LIFE EXTENSION/LIFE EXTENSION 2 (D5LE/LE2) WEAPON SYSTEMS TESTING PROGRAM AT CAPE CANAVERAL SPACE FORCE STATION (CCSFS) IN CAPE CANAVERAL, FLORIDA AND WITHIN THE BROAD OCEAN AREAS IN THE PACIFIC AND ATLANTIC OCEANS

Pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and Department of the Navy (DON) NEPA regulations (32 CFR Part 775), DON gives notice that an Environmental Assessment (EA)/Overseas Environmental Assessment (OEA) has been prepared and an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is not required for the Trident II (D5) Life Extension/Life Extension 2 (D5LE/LE2) Weapons Systems Testing Program at Cape Canaveral Space Force Station (CCSFS) in Cape Canaveral, Florida; and within the Broad Ocean Areas of the Pacific and Atlantic Oceans. This action will be implemented as set forth in the Proposed Action Alternative. The Department of the Air Force (DAF) is a cooperating agency for this action.

PROPOSED ACTION: DON proposes to conduct flight tests and fielding evaluations for inert/unarmed TRIDENT II D5LE and D5LE2 weapon systems through Calendar Year (CY) 2039. The Proposed Action includes: (1) sea-based test launches of the weapon systems from submarines within the broad ocean area (BOA) in both the Pacific and Atlantic Oceans; and (2) land-based test launches of the weapon system from Cape Canaveral Space Force Station (CCSFS) in Florida into the Atlantic BOA. All test components would land in the designated BOA at least 200 nautical miles (NM) from any landmass or islands. Most test launches would occur during daytime, but some nighttime launches may also occur.

Proposed sea-based flight tests consist of up to six tests per year during CYs 2025–2028 (for a combined total of up to 24 sea-based tests during this 4-year period), and up to eight tests per year during CYs 2029–2039 (a combined total of 88 sea-based test flights over this 11-year period). In addition, proposed land-based flight tests from CCSFS into the Atlantic BOA include up to 10 tests total between CYs 2032–2036.

PURPOSE AND NEED: The purpose of the Proposed Action is to demonstrate weapon system effectiveness, to test applicable design features, and to identify and validate effective operating procedures for deployment of the D5LE and D5LE2 weapon systems in both the Atlantic and Pacific Fleets. The Proposed Action is needed to further the DON's execution of its congressionally mandated role and responsibility under U.S.C. Title 10, Section 8062 to maintain mission readiness of the nation's submarine forces. To meet Title 10 requirements, SSP conducts flight testing throughout the service life of the TRIDENT II (D5) weapon systems to ensure that accuracy, reliability, and performance requirements continue to be met. Sea-based testing of the weapon systems is needed in both the Atlantic and Pacific study areas because both the Atlantic and Pacific Fleets must acquire and maintain proficiency with all deployed weapon systems. Land-based testing is needed to ensure the technology is safe, reliable, and effective.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED: The EA analyzes the potential environmental impacts of the following alternatives:

- The No Action Alternative: Under the No Action Alternative, the Proposed Action would not occur. Flight testing required to verify the operational performance and safety of the TRIDENT II (D5) weapon systems prior to deployment to the submarine fleet would not occur. The No Action Alternative would not meet the purpose of and need for the Proposed Action; however, as required by NEPA and DON policy, the No Action Alternative was carried forward for analysis in this EA/OEA.

- The Proposed Action Alternative: Under the sea-based testing component of this alternative each test flight of the inert TRIDENT II D5LE and D5LE2 weapon systems would be launched from a submarine at a depth of greater than 100 feet below the sea surface and from at least 50 NM offshore of the U.S. mainland. Test flights would occur within both the Atlantic and Pacific BOAs. All test components would land within the same BOA from which the launch occurred and would sink to the ocean floor. Under the land-based testing component of this alternative, the inert weapon systems would be launched from existing Space Launch Complex 46 at CCSFS, and all components would land within the same Atlantic BOA utilized for sea-based testing above.

- Alternatives considered but not carried forward included:
    - Testing within other BOAs
    - Testing solely in either the Pacific or the Atlantic Ocean
    - Land-based launches from the National Aeronautics and Space Administration's Wallops Flight Facility in Virginia
    - Land-based launches from Vandenberg Space Force Base in California

ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS: No significant direct, indirect, or cumulative environmental impacts will occur from implementing the Proposed Action alternatives. Certain environmental resources were not analyzed in detail in the EA/OEA because implementation of the proposed action would not be likely to result in any impacts on these resources or impacts would be negligible. Potential environmental impacts to air quality, biological resources (including noise effects on species), hazardous materials and waste management, and public health and safety (including noise effects on humans) were analyzed in detail and are summarized below.

Air Quality: The proposed action will not result in significant impacts to air quality. This includes effects associated with criteria pollutants as well as stratospheric ozone depletion. Proposed launches will accelerate and travel so rapidly that emissions in the lower troposphere will be low and limited amounts of ozone depleting substances will be emitted in the stratosphere. Because air emissions will be created in an Attainment area, the Proposed Action Alternative is exempt from General Conformity requirements. Emissions generated by test firing of Trident missiles will not occur within a Federal Clean Air Act-designated nonattainment and/or maintenance area.

Biological Resources: Implementation of the Proposed Action Alternative will not result in significant direct or indirect impacts to biological resources in the project areas. Noise from launches and component splashdowns in the BOAs could startle marine species, and injury or

mortality due to launch heat plumes and strikes from falling items are theoretically possible. However, the likelihood of these effects is so low as to be discountable due to the low density and uneven distribution of marine species, the large area of the BOAs in which these species would be distributed, the low number of annual tests, and the relatively low number of expended items. The DON has determined that launch activities may affect, but are not likely to adversely affect the Endangered Species Act (ESA)-listed species under the jurisdiction of the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) under section 7 of the ESA. Concurrence from NMFS was received on (date).

Regarding proposed land-based testing from CCSFS into the Atlantic BOA, there are no proposed construction or renovations associated with the Proposed Action, and therefore there will be no long-term impacts to vegetation or wildlife. Potential effects on terrestrial resources could result from launches, including exhaust heat plume, light, and noise. The noise associated with the D5LE2 launches may cause some startle responses from nearby wildlife. A U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service [USFWS]-approved Light Management Plan will be developed to prevent artificial lighting from altering the behavior and movement of hatchling and adult sea turtles at night. Launch impacts within the Atlantic BOA from land-based launches were included in the DON's NMFS consultation. Launch impacts to terrestrial and near-shore species under the jurisdiction of the USFWS were the subject of a separate consultation with that agency. For species under the jurisdiction of the USFWS, the DON determined that the action may affect, and is likely to adversely affect the southeastern beach mouse, the Florida scrub-jay, and the eastern indigo snake. The DON determined that the Proposed Action may affect but is not likely to adversely affect the remaining ESA listed species and will have no effect on their critical habitat. Concurrence from NMFS was received on (date) and concurrence from USFWS was received on (date).

Hazardous Materials and Waste Management: The proposed action will not result in significant impacts related to hazardous materials/waste management. Overall, hazardous materials are not expected to be generated or deposited in concentrations high enough to adversely affect environmental quality in the BOAs. No detectable chemical, physical, or biological changes are expected to occur at any one location within the BOAs. Weapon system components will not contribute to floating or suspended marine debris as they are expected to rapidly sink thousands of feet to the ocean floor following splashdown. At CCSFS, the Navy would conduct up to 10 launches total between 2032–2036. There would be no generation or disposal of industrial wastewater from flight test activities. Any residual materials produced at SLC-46 following land-based launches would be containerized and removed in compliance with applicable regulatory requirements. In addition, support vessels would adhere to all Uniform National Discharge Standards while operating in coastal and inland waters and would adhere to Navy Pollution Control Discharge Restrictions while operating in the BOAs. Implementation of the Proposed Action Alternative will not result in significant effects related to hazardous materials and waste management. A Coastal Consistency Determination was completed in accordance with Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) requirements. The Proposed Action complies with the Coastal Zone Management Act On (DATE), the FDEP concurred with the DON's determination that the Proposed Action will be consistent with Florida's Coastal Zone Management Plan.

Public Health and Safety: The proposed action will not result in significant impacts to public health and safety. It is highly unlikely that weapon system components would be directly encountered by

civilian watercraft and aircraft in the BOAs. Notifications to avoid affected areas will be issued before each test launch and will remain in effect until tests are completed. Navy personnel will verify that the project area is clear of non-participants before initiating any activity that could be potentially hazardous to the public. Because there would be such a low likelihood of any human receptors in the Atlantic and Pacific BOAs, public exposure to noise generated during testing would not be reasonably foreseeable. Sea-based launches will occur from undersea naval vessels and applicable safety procedures will be followed to avoid safety risks. In addition, the weapon systems will not carry any payload or explosive devices that could potentially increase safety risks. The land-based test launches of the D5LE2 system are consistent with and would generate lower noise levels than other launch activities conducted at CCSFS. The proposed test launches from CCSFS will generate sonic booms but they would occur over the Atlantic Ocean and not affect receptors on land. Noise levels at sensitive off-installation locations would be below levels associated with significant noise effects. Therefore, implementation of the Proposed Action will not result in significant effects to public health and safety.

MITIGATION MEASURES: The analysis contained in the EA/OEA determined the Proposed Action will not result in significant environmental impacts. Therefore, no mitigation measures are needed. Several best management practices and proactive impact avoidance and minimization measures will be implemented as part of the Proposed Action Alternative as discussed in Section 2.5 of the Final EA/OEA.

PUBLIC OUTREACH: The DON made the Draft EA/OEA available to the public to allow the opportunity for review and comment. Input from this public and agency review was incorporated into the analysis of potential impacts in the Final EA/OEA and FONSI, as appropriate.

A Notice of Availability of the Draft EA/OEA, including information about how to access the document and provide comments during a 30-day public comment period, was published on May 25-27, 2025, in the Florida Times-Union, Florida Today, and the San Diego Union-Tribune. The announcement was also published in five local editions of the weekly Hometown News (Brevard County Florida) on three consecutive Fridays (May 30, June 6, and June 13) during the 30-day comment period and in the Honolulu Star-Advertiser on May 26-27, 2025. The Draft EA/OEA was made available on the DON's website, https://www.nepa.navy.mil/TRIDENTII-EA. The public was invited to submit comments on the Draft EA/OEA electronically via a comment form on the project website or by mail. A total of XX comments were received during the public comment period. These comments were thoroughly analyzed and, where appropriate, changes were incorporated into the Final EA/OEA and FONSI.

The DON consulted with the USFWS and NMFS regarding the Proposed Action, as discussed above under Environmental Effects. A Coastal Consistency Determination was prepared and submitted to FDEP in accordance with the Coastal Zone Management Act.

FINDING: Based on the analysis presented in the EA/OEA, which has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of NEPA and DON policies and procedures (32 CFR Part 775), and in coordination with the USFWS, NMFS, and FDEP, the DON finds that implementation of the

proposed action as set forth in the Proposed Action Alternative will not significantly impact the quality of the human environment and will not significantly harm the environment of the global commons (high seas). Therefore, an Environmental Impact Statement /Overseas Environmental Impact Statement will not be prepared.

Electronic copies of the Final EA and FONSI may be obtained by download from the project website: https://www.nepa.navy.mil/TRIDENTII-EA.

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