
3.14 Public Safety

3.14 PUBLIC SAFETY

3.14.1 AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

For purposes of this Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)/Overseas EIS (Supplemental EIS/OEIS), the Region of Influence (ROI) for public safety remains the same as that identified in the March 2011 Gulf of Alaska Navy Training Activities Final EIS/OEIS and includes the Temporary Maritime Activities Area (TMAA) (the Study Area).

3.14.1.1 Existing Conditions

The United States (U.S.) Department of the Navy's (Navy's) operating procedures and current safety protocols to prevent injury and ensure the safety of the public—as described in the 2011 GOA Final EIS/OEIS—remain applicable in this Supplemental EIS/OEIS. As stated in the 2011 GOA Final EIS/OEIS, Navy training activities in the TMAA comply with numerous established safety procedures to ensure that neither participants nor non-participants engage in activities that endanger life or property. The Navy continues to do its utmost to prevent civilian and military personnel injuries from impacts that may arise directly as physical injuries from hazardous activities or indirectly as a result of exposure to hazardous materials expended during a training event. In addition to a discussion with Fleet Area Control and Surveillance Facility to inquire about range/operating area safety precautions, a recent literature search was done of local and appropriate news organizations, as well as post-training or incident reports filed by those in charge of training activities, to determine if there were any changes to military safety protocols since the finalization of the 2011 GOA Final EIS/OEIS. The research to date for this Supplemental EIS/OEIS indicate that no change to the current protocols is necessary, as there have been no reported injuries as a result of direct or indirect exposure to Navy activities.

3.14.1.1.1 Operating Areas

Because it operates and trains under a culture of safety, the Navy continually evaluates its operating procedures and safety protocols, as needed, to protect the public and military personnel involved in the training. Although the Navy has evaluated its operating procedures and safety protocols applicable to training activities in the TMAA, there have been no new significant developments.

As discussed in the 2011 GOA Final EIS/OEIS, military, commercial, institutional, and recreational activities take place in the TMAA; there are no continuously restricted zones in this area. However, as standard practice, Local Notice to Mariners (NTM) are issued each time an exercise is scheduled, informing non-participants of the types of activities being conducted, recommended avoidance distances, and other general safety concerns. The U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) utilizes a "Broadcast NTM" system, which is used to let mariners or pilots know when Navy training is scheduled or occurring.

Furthermore, as discussed in the 2011 GOA Final EIS/OEIS, in order to protect the public as much as possible, the Navy delays or cancels weapons' delivery activities if training areas are not clear of civilians or other non-participants, in accordance with Department of Defense (DoD) Instruction (DoD Directive 4540.1, *Use of Airspace by U.S. Military Aircraft and Firings Over the High Seas*).

3.14.1.1.2 Ordnance Handling

As described in the 2011 GOA Final EIS/OEIS, some training activities use ordnance; however, no new or additional ordnance are being proposed for use by the Navy in this Supplemental EIS/OEIS. As such, the procedures for handling and storing of ordnance presented in the 2011 GOA Final EIS/OEIS remain applicable and valid.

3.14.1.1.3 Public Access and Proximity

The waters of the TMAA are always available to civilian vessels; however, civilian vessels should use extreme caution when transiting an operating area and avoid potentially hazardous areas described in Broadcast NTMs. Additionally, vessels should avoid an area if a Navy vessel is flying a large red flag, which indicates hazardous or possible weapons training. Additional standard operating procedures and best management practices to ensure the public's safety are discussed in the 2011 GOA Final EIS/OEIS and this Supplemental EIS/OEIS (see Chapter 4, Cumulative Impacts) and are currently used.

3.14.1.2 Current Requirements and Practices

As stated in the 2011 GOA Final EIS/OEIS, Navy training activities in the TMAA comply with numerous established safety procedures to ensure that neither participants nor non-participants engage in activities that endanger life or property. These procedures are continually evaluated and updated as needed to protect the public and military personnel involved in the training. As such, the public safety concerns remain the same as those safety issues previously analyzed in the 2011 GOA Final EIS/OEIS. Standard operating procedures and best management practices to ensure the public's safety are discussed in detail in Chapter 5 (Standard Operating Procedures, Mitigation, and Monitoring) of this Supplemental EIS/OEIS.

3.14.2 ALTERNATIVES ANALYSIS

All three alternatives (No Action Alternative, Alternative 1, and Alternative 2), as discussed in the 2011 GOA Final EIS/OEIS, remain the same for this Supplemental EIS/OEIS. The Navy conducted a review of existing federal and state regulations and standards relevant to public safety, as well as a review of new literature, to include laws, regulations, and publications pertaining to public safety. No additional information was found that indicates an appreciable change to the existing environmental conditions as described in the 2011 GOA Final EIS/OEIS. Because the existing conditions have not changed appreciably, and no new Navy training activities are being proposed to occur in the TMAA in this Supplemental EIS/OEIS, re-analysis of the alternatives with respect to public safety is not warranted. Subsequently, the conclusions made for the alternatives analyzed in the 2011 GOA Final EIS/OEIS remain unchanged in this Supplemental EIS/OEIS.

3.14.3 CONCLUSION

As described above, there is no information on existing environmental conditions that changes the affected environment, which forms the environmental baseline of the public safety analysis in the 2011 GOA Final EIS/OEIS. Additionally, no new Navy training activities are being proposed in this Supplemental EIS/OEIS that would affect public safety in the TMAA. Therefore, conclusions for public safety impacts made for the alternatives analyzed in the 2011 GOA Final EIS/OEIS remain unchanged in this Supplemental EIS/OEIS. For a summary of effects of the No Action Alternative, Alternative 1, and Alternative 2 on public safety under both the National Environmental Policy Act and Executive Order 12114, please refer to Table 3.14-2 (Summary of Effects by Alternative) in the 2011 GOA Final EIS/OEIS.