

resource needs to process a finite group of converters.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Maureen Lewis, Technical Quality Liaison, TV Converter Box Coupon Program, mlew@ntia.doc.gov, (202) 482-1892.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: On March 15, 2007 NTIA published regulations to implement and administer a coupon program for digital-to-analog converter boxes.¹ Among other things, the Final Rule specifies that manufacturers interested in participating in the coupon program must submit a Notice of Intent (NOI) to NTIA. The regulations provide the necessary information to include in the NOI and also provide technical specifications and features required for a converter box to qualify for the coupon program.

Manufacturers' strong interest in the TV Converter Box Coupon Program has resulted in the certification of more than 125 coupon eligible converter boxes (CECBs), a third of which include the analog pass-through feature. NTIA appreciates manufacturers' efforts to offer consumers a range of product choices that will enable them to experience the benefits of the digital transition. The rapid approach of the analog shut-down, however, necessitates that NTIA redeploy some of its limited resources to other important aspects of Program administration such as resolving consumer concerns and mitigating waste, fraud, and abuse. Therefore, this Notice provides manufacturers information to facilitate their planning for further program participation.

NTIA informs manufacturers that first time manufacturers have until **September 1, 2008** to submit a Notice of Intent for their digital-to-analog converter boxes to ensure processing and certification in time to participate in the Coupon Program. Pursuant to NTIA's regulations, NOIs shall be submitted to NTIA at least three months prior to submission of the manufacturer's test report and samples.² This time is needed to complete the lengthy process to test and validate each converter box. NTIA is establishing a cutoff date for NOIs to ensure that there is enough time to complete the certification process for converter boxes before the expiration of the Coupon Program. NTIA has found that the time and resources needed to review and complete the certification process with first-time manufacturers is often much

greater than that needed to complete a technical review from a manufacturer that has successfully completed the process. By establishing September 1, 2008 as the last date for first-time manufacturers to submit NOIs, NTIA will be able to plan and anticipate resource needs to process a finite group of converters. NTIA reminds manufacturers the regulations also require that NOIs must include a brief description of the converter box, including permitted as well as required features.

Therefore, after **September 1, 2008**, NTIA will only accept NOIs from repeat manufacturers, *i.e.*, manufacturers that have, by that date, received a certification notice for one or more converters. These repeat manufacturers will have until September 30, 2008 to submit NOIs for any additional digital-to-analog converter boxes to NTIA for certification as part of the Coupon Program.

Manufacturers who have submitted NOIs that are pending with NTIA as of the date of this Notice, are requested to submit complete test results associated with each pending NOI **no later than September 30, 2008**. There are currently pending with NTIA many NOIs that indicate the manufacturer's intention to submit test results some months ago. In order to prompt manufacturers to complete and submit test results, NTIA establishes this end date. NTIA will close the file associated with any NOI which has not been followed by submission of completed test results by September 30, 2008.

Additional guidance on testing or submission procedures may be provided on NTIA's web page under Manufacturers' Frequently Asked Questions, pursuant to Section 301.5(e), www.ntia.doc.gov.

Questions about the procedure for submitting NOIs or other aspects of NTIA's technical certification process may be submitted to:

Art Wall, Technical Advisor
TV Converter Box Coupon Program
US Department of Commerce
Washington, DC 20230
awall@atlanticbb.net

Dated: July 18, 2008.

Meredith Atwell Baker,

*Acting Assistant Secretary for
Communications and Information*

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DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

Department of the Army

Notice of Availability of the Final Supplemental Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (SPEIS) for Army Growth and Force Structure Realignment To Support Operations in the Pacific Theater

AGENCY: Department of the Army, DoD.

ACTION: Notice of Availability.

SUMMARY: The Department of the Army announces the availability of the Final SPEIS for the growth and realignment of the U.S. Army to support operations in the Pacific Theater. Pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the Department of the Army has prepared a Final SPEIS that evaluates the potential environmental and socioeconomic effects associated with alternatives for implementing the growth and realignment of the Army's forces to support operations in the Pacific Theater. Potential impacts have been analyzed in the Final SPEIS at installations that are capable of supporting operations in the Pacific Theater.

DATES: The waiting period for the Final SPEIS will end 30 days after the publication of the Notice of Availability in the **Federal Register** by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

ADDRESSES: To obtain a copy of the Final SPEIS contact: Public Affairs Office, U.S. Army Environmental Command, Building E4460, Attention: IMAE-PA, 5179 Hoadley Road, Aberdeen Proving Ground, MD 21010-5401.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Public Affairs Office at (410) 436-2556 or facsimile at (410) 436-1693 during normal business hours Monday through Friday 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Eastern Daylight Time or e-mail APGR_USAECPublicComments@conus.army.mil.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Army's Proposed Action and analysis within the Final SPEIS covers those activities the Army may undertake from 2008 through 2013 to grow, realign, and transform its forces to support operations in the Pacific Theater. Implementation of the Proposed Action will ensure the proper capabilities exist to sustain operations and regional security in the Pacific Theater now and into the foreseeable future. The implementation of the Proposed Action will better meet military operational needs, national and regional security requirements, and the needs of the Army's Soldiers and their Families. To

¹ See Rules to Implement and Administer a Coupon Program for Digital-to-Analog Converter Boxes (final Rule), 72 FR 12097 (March 15, 2007).

² 47 C.F.R. § 301.5(a).

implement the Proposed Action, new units with critical military skills must be stationed at locations that are capable of supporting strategic deployment and mobilization requirements to support operations in the Pacific Theater. These stationing locations must be capable of accommodating unit training, garrison operations, maintenance activities, and the needs of Soldiers and their Families.

The SPEIS supplements the Army's Final Programmatic EIS for Army Growth and Force Structure Realignment (2007). The Final SPEIS evaluates installations that are capable of supporting operations in the Pacific Theater. The Final SPEIS includes analysis of actions that will need to be taken (such as the construction of housing and quality of life facilities, the construction of new training ranges and infrastructure, and changes in the intensity of use of maneuver land and firing ranges) to station new units as part of the Army's overall efforts to grow and realign the force in the Pacific Theater.

The Army has considered a full range of sites for implementing the Proposed Action. Alternative stationing locations that the Army has considered for supporting the Proposed Action include the major training installations the Army considered in its 2007 Programmatic EIS as well as four additional installations in Hawaii and Alaska. Additional installations include Schofield Barracks Military Reservation (SBMR), HI; Fort Shafter, HI; Fort Richardson, AK; and Fort Wainwright, AK. Each of these installations could receive additional Soldiers as part of alternatives being examined.

Alternatives in the Final SPEIS include stationing of additional Combat Support (CS) or Combat Service Support (CSS) units or new support brigades. The following alternatives were analyzed in the SPEIS: (1) Support operations in the Pacific Theater by implementing Army-wide modular force and transformation recommendations within U.S. Army Pacific. This alternative involves the stationing of approximately 1,500–2,000 Soldiers at Army installations in Hawaii and in Alaska; (2) In addition to Army growth under Alternative 1, Alternative 2 includes growth and transformation of Army forces to support operations in the Pacific Theater by stationing additional CS and CSS units in locations capable of supporting these operations. The Army would station approximately 1,500–2,500 additional CS and CSS Soldiers beyond Alternative 1; (3) In addition to Army 3 growth under Alternatives 1 and 2, as part of Alternative 3 the Army would grow,

transform, and realign forces by stationing additional support brigades in locations capable of supporting operations in the Pacific Theater. Support brigades could include the stationing of an additional Maneuver Enhancement Brigade (approximately 570 Soldiers), a Combat Aviation Brigade (approximately 2,800 Soldiers), and/or a Fires Brigade (approximately 1,600 Soldiers).

In addition to the above alternatives, the No Action Alternative was considered and used as a baseline for comparison of alternatives. It is not a viable means for meeting the current and future strategic security and defense requirements of the nation. The No Action Alternative would retain U.S. Army forces in their current end strength and force structure. The No Action Alternative includes the implementation of stationing actions directed by Base Realignment and Closure legislation in 2005, Army Global Defense Posture Realignment, Army Modular Forces initiatives, and Army Growth and Force Structure Realignment decisions published in January 2008.

The Army's preferred alternative identified in the Final SPEIS is to implement Alternative 3. This alternative allows for full support of those activities the Army may undertake from 2008 through 2013 to grow, realign, and transform its forces to support operations in the Pacific Theater. Under this alternative, the Army is projecting that it would station approximately 4,100 new Soldiers at locations that are capable of supporting the strategic and operational needs in the Pacific Theater. The implementation of the Proposed Action does not involve 4 the stationing of additional Army Brigade Combat Teams (BCT5). As part of the preferred alternative, the Army would station approximately 2,090 Soldiers in Alaska which includes an additional Maneuver Enhancement Brigade. In addition, the Army would station approximately 2,055 new Soldiers in Hawaii to implement Army-wide modularity and increase critical support capabilities in the Pacific Theater. No Fires Brigade or Aviation Brigade would be stationed to support the Proposed Action as part of the Preferred Alternative.

Analysis within the Final SPEIS covers those activities required to implement unit stationing actions associated with Army growth and force structure realignment to support operations in the Pacific Theater. Actions the Army will take to support unit stationing include the construction of housing and quality of life facilities

(i.e., gymnasiums, hospitals, shopping areas), the construction of new training ranges and infrastructure, and changes in the intensity of use of maneuver land and firing ranges associated with the increased frequency of training events.

The Final SPEIS identifies the environmental and socioeconomic impacts associated with various unit stationing actions that could be implemented to support the Proposed Action. As the programmatic decision made at the Army Headquarters-level is implemented, follow-on NEPA documentation may be prepared to evaluate the specific environmental impacts likely to result from alternative means of carrying out the stationing actions, as well as identify any potential means for mitigating those impacts associated with the stationing decision.

A copy of the Final SPEIS can be accessed through the U.S. Army Environmental Command Web site at <http://www.aec.army.mil>.

Dated: July 18, 2008.

John E. Tesner, Jr.,

Assistant for Restoration, Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Army (Environment, Safety, and Occupational Health).

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DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Advisory Committee on Student Financial Assistance: Meeting

AGENCY: Advisory Committee on Student Financial Assistance, Education.

ACTION: Notice of Upcoming Teleconference Meeting.

SUMMARY: This notice sets forth the schedule and proposed agenda of a forthcoming teleconference meeting of the Advisory Committee on Student Financial Assistance. Individuals who will need accommodations for a disability in order to attend the teleconference meeting (i.e., interpreting services, assistive listening devices, and/or materials in alternative format) should notify the Advisory Committee no later than Monday, August 11, 2008, by contacting Ms. Tracy Jones at (202) 219–2099 or via e-mail at tracy.deanna.jones@ed.gov. We will attempt to meet requests after this date, but cannot guarantee availability of the requested accommodation. The teleconference site is accessible to individuals with disabilities. This notice also describes the functions of the Advisory Committee. Notice of this hearing is required under Section