



Department of Energy  
National Nuclear Security Administration  
Categorical Exclusion Determination Form



**Categorical Exclusion ID#:** NV-2023-024

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**Proposed Action Title:** Remote Sensing Laboratory – Andrews Operations (RSL-A)

**Program or Field Office:** Nevada Field Office

**Location(s) (City/County/State):** Joint Base Andrews Air Force Base, Suitland, MD

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**Proposed Action Description**

The Remote Sensing Laboratory–Andrews (RSL-A) Complex is located approximately 9 miles southeast of the Washington D.C. city center and lies within the boundaries of Andrews Air Force Base (AAFB). Access to the AAFB is restricted at all times.

The mission of RSL-A is to provide a broad range of scientific, technological, and operational disciplines with core competencies in remote sensing, nuclear emergency response and support, and applied science and technologies in support of national security and the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE). To accomplish this mission, RSL-A would conduct flight operations using assets launched or deployed from facilities that support those operations (e.g., launch/landing strip, airport). Ancillary support operations would be conducted in Buildings 1783 and 1784, which are leased from AAFB. Facilities may be maintained by the Department of Defense (AAFB) and would be utilized according to their intended purpose and any site-specific guidance documents.

**Building 1783, Main Building:** This building consists of 23,600 square feet of office and lab space. Maintenance and alterations for the Main Building are performed in combination by AAFB (if they deem work to fall within their areas of responsibility), sub-contractors, or RSL-A facilities personnel. The work performed in this area includes standard office work, large volume shipping and receiving operations, facility maintenance, vehicle inspection and servicing, electronics testing and bench work, electronic component assembly, computer programming, machine shop fabrication, equipment maintenance and calibration, emergency response deployment operations, training for federal, state, and local emergency responders, and related support and logistic activities. In addition to the work performed in this building, radioactive sources are stored in approved areas, resulting in a hazard categorization level of four. The radiological sources are used to test and/or calibrate the radiological sensors/detectors used in emergency response/aerial surveys/ground surveys. Approximately 1,000 liters of liquid nitrogen is kept on site for cooling of radiological detector systems and is stored in a designated area equipped with an oxygen level monitoring system. Subcontractors are utilized to perform work on the HVAC [heating, ventilation, and air conditioning] system,



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elevator, and backup generator, consisting of electrical component replacement and troubleshooting, maintenance and inspection of hydraulic systems, and servicing with refrigerants, oil, and diesel fuel. A low pressure compressed air system is in place for utilization of pneumatic tools and servicing of vehicle tires.

**Building 1794, Hangar 2:** Hangar 2 consists of 18,298 square feet of floor space for RSL-A's aircraft and 4,033 square feet of office space leased to DOE through the Air Force. The work performed in this area includes aircraft maintenance, servicing, and flight operations, which take place on the hangar floor and flight line ramp area. Additional work performed inside the office areas of Hangar 2 includes standard office work, flight planning, machine shop fabrication, electronic bench work, electronic component assembly, software programming, and supporting administrative office functions. Compressed nitrogen gas and oxygen servicing is performed on aircraft, and low pressure compressed air systems are available for utilization of pneumatic tools.

Operations and management of the RSL-A Complex will be conducted in accordance with Federal, state, and local laws and regulations.

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**Categorical Exclusion(s) Applied**

10 CFR 1021, B1.15 Support Buildings; B3.2 Aviation Activities; B.3.6 Small-scale research and development, laboratory operations, and pilot projects

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**Regulatory Requirements in 10 CFR 1021**

For the complete DOE National Environmental Policy Act regulations regarding categorical exclusions, including the full text of each categorical exclusion, see Subpart D of 10 CFR 1021.

**To find that a proposal is categorically excluded, DOE shall determine the following:**

- (1) The proposal fits within a class of actions listed in Appendix A or B to 10 CFR Part 1021, Subpart D;
- (2) There are no extraordinary circumstances related to the proposal that may affect the significance of the environmental effects of the proposal; and
- (3) The proposal has not been segmented to meet the definition of a categorical exclusion. The proposal is not connected to other actions with potentially significant impacts (40 CFR 1508.25(a)(1)), is not related to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant impacts (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(7)), and is not precluded by 40 CFR 1506.1 or 10 CFR 1021.211 concerning limitations on actions during preparation of an environmental impact statement.



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**The classes of actions listed in 10 CFR Part 1021, Subpart D, Appendix B, include the following conditions as integral elements of the classes of actions. To fit within the classes of actions in Appendix B, a proposal must be one that would not:** (1) threaten a violation of applicable statutory, regulatory, or permit requirements for environment, safety, and health, or similar requirements of DOE or Executive Orders; (2) require siting and construction or major expansion of waste storage, disposal, recovery, or treatment facilities (including incinerators), but the proposal may include categorically excluded waste storage, disposal, recovery, or treatment actions or facilities; (3) disturb hazardous substances, pollutants, contaminants, or CERCLA-excluded petroleum and natural gas products that preexist in the environment such that there would be uncontrolled or unpermitted releases; (4) have the potential to cause significant impacts on environmentally sensitive resources, including, but not limited to, those listed in paragraph B(4) of 10 CFR Part 1021, Subpart D, Appendix B; (5) involve genetically engineered organisms, synthetic biology, governmentally designated noxious weeds, or invasive species, unless the proposed activity would be contained or confined in a manner designed and operated to prevent unauthorized release into the environment and conducted in accordance with applicable requirements, such as those of the Department of Agriculture, the Environmental Protection Agency, and the National Institutes of Health.

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**NEPA Compliance Officer Determination**

Based on my review of information conveyed to me and in my possession concerning the proposed action, as NEPA Compliance Officer (as authorized under NNSA NAP 451.1 and DOE P 451.1), I have determined that the proposed action fits within the specified class(es) of action and I have reviewed the proposal for integral elements. I have determined that there are no extraordinary circumstances present and that the proposal has not been segmented to meet the definition of a categorical exclusion. Therefore, the application of a categorical exclusion is appropriate.

NEPA Compliance Officer: Patricia Gallo

Date Determined: May 1, 2023