

NATIONAL AERONAUTICS AND SPACE ADMINISTRATION

National Environmental Policy Act; Finding of No Significant Impact for the Proposed Construction and Operation of the Flight Dynamics Research Facility

AGENCY: National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) Langley Research Center (LaRC)

ACTION: Finding of No Significant Impact

SUMMARY: Pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended (NEPA; 42 U.S.C. 4321 *et seq.*), the Council on Environmental Quality Regulations for Implementing the Procedural Provisions of NEPA (40 CFR Parts 1500 – 1508), NASA's regulations (14 CFR Part 1216 Subpart 1216.3), and NASA Procedural Requirements (NPR) 8580.1A, *Implementing the National Environmental Policy Act and Executive Order 12114*, NASA has made a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for the proposed construction and operation of the Flight Dynamics Research Facility (FDRF) at NASA LaRC, located in Hampton, Virginia. The Proposed Action in the Supplemental Environmental Assessment (EA) includes constructing and operating the FDRF between Buildings 1200 and 1208 on LaRC's campus, utilizing a commercial off the shelf design to cost-effectively achieve required flight dynamics research capabilities. The Proposed Action is needed to support a growing Agency demand for highly reliable Computational Fluid Dynamics predictions of advanced vehicle flight mechanics/stability and control characteristics. Construction of the FDRF is fundamental to ensuring that LaRC remains a critical research and development Center for NASA and the Nation into the 21st Century.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mr. Wesley Miksa, LaRC NEPA Manager, NASA Langley Research Center, Hampton, Virginia 23681, (757) 864 – 7762, wesley.e.miksa@nasa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION: NASA has reviewed the Supplemental EA prepared for the proposed construction and operation of the FDRF and has determined it represents an accurate and adequate analysis of the scope and level of the associated environmental impacts. The Supplemental EA is incorporated by reference in this FONSI.

The Supplemental EA addressed the environmental impacts associated with the Proposed Action and the No-Action Alternative. Under the No-Action Alternative, LaRC would not retire the existing 75-year-old flight dynamics facilities and would not construct and operate the new FDRF. Associated aging buildings and infrastructure would be operated under a "run to failure" maintenance approach. The No-Action Alternative would not facilitate LaRC's goal of improving current and future mission performance capability.

The Supplemental EA addressed environmental impacts in the areas of Coastal Zone Management; Visual Resources/Viewshed; Cultural Resources; and Public Health and Safety, including Airspace and Noise. No adverse effect is anticipated on cultural resources as a result of the Proposed Action. Adverse impacts of the Proposed Action on Visual Resources/Viewshed, Airspace, and Noise would be minor and short-term, with negligible long-term adverse impacts.

On the basis of the information provided in the Supplemental EA, NASA has determined that the environmental impacts resulting from the Proposed Action will not individually or cumulatively have a significant effect on the quality of the human or natural environment. Therefore, the issuance of a FONSI is warranted, and preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement, pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, is not required.



David E. Bowles
Director, NASA Langley Research Center



Date