

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY
FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT
AMMUNITION STORAGE FACILITY AT THE SAVANNAH RIVER SITE
AIKEN, SOUTH CAROLINA**

AGENCY: U.S. Department of Energy

ACTION: Finding of No Significant Impact

SUMMARY: The Department of Energy (DOE) has prepared an Environmental Assessment (EA), DOE/EA-0810, for the proposed construction and operation of an Ammunition Storage Facility at the Savannah River Site (SRS), Aiken, South Carolina. Based on the analyses in the EA, DOE has determined that the proposed action is not a major Federal action significantly affecting the quality of the human environment, within the meaning of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969. Therefore, the preparation of an environmental impact statement is not required and DOE is issuing this Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI).

PUBLIC AVAILABILITY:

Copies of the EA and FONSI are available from:

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BACKGROUND: DOE maintains an armed and uniformed protective force at SRS to provide security support services which include patrol, guard, and monitoring activities. A safe, secure facility is needed for the storage of weapons, small arms ammunition, and explosives. The present facility does not comply with the applicable requirements and has been cited with seven occupational safety violations by DOE safety engineers.

PROPOSED ACTION: The proposed action involves the construction and operation of a new, safe and secure weapons, small arms ammunition and explosive storage facility to replace the existing facility, the Building 217-F vault. The proposed Ammunition Storage Facility would be constructed on a two-acre site adjacent to the southwest corner of B-Area, located approximately three miles from the nearest SRS site boundary.

Munitions would be stored in shipping containers within the proposed facility and include live and blank small arms ammunition (.45 caliber or less), smoke and tear gas grenades, fuses and high explosives (less than 50 pounds). The proposed facility would provide three small 500 square-foot, earth covered, corrugated steel, arch-type reinforced concrete ammunition storage magazines and one small 220 square-foot weapons storage building. The facility would be fenced and surrounded by a 250- to 500-foot buffer zone. The maximum planned munitions storage of the new facility would be 177 pounds net explosive weight and 29,000 pounds total physical weight; however, it would be designed to a storage capacity of 500,000 pounds net explosive weight.

ALTERNATIVES: In addition to the proposed action, DOE considered the following alternatives to the proposed action of constructing and operating an Ammunition storage Facility at SRS: (1) no action; (2) construct the storage facility using aboveground, prefabricated metal structures permanently installed on concrete pads; and (3) construct the proposed facility at an alternate SRS location.

The no action alternative would encompass continuing the storage of munitions and explosives in an existing building not designed for that use, thereby resulting in a failure to meet DOE requirements for storage of such materials. The second alternative would require maintaining approximately twice the amount of buffer zone to achieve the same level of safety as the proposed earth-covered concrete design. The last alternative would not be as desirable or efficient as the proposed action of locating the storage facility adjacent to the existing operations and training facilities.

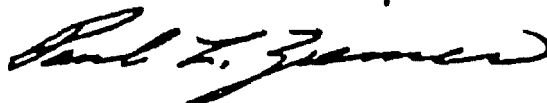
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS: The proposed action would take place in an already cleared, level area adjacent to a previously developed area on SRS. Standard best management practices and construction materials would be utilized in the facility's construction. No environmental permits would be required for this action. No environmentally sensitive areas or natural resources such as historical or archaeological sites, endangered species or their habitats, or wetlands would be affected.

The proposed action would provide the safe, secure storage of closed DOT-approved shipping containers holding weapons, small arms

ammunition, and explosives in a small SRS facility. This action would be beneficial with respect to safety since it would reduce the potential hazards resulting from continued use of the existing storage facility. The proposed facility design would adhere to strict occupational safety and physical security criteria to mitigate the potential for accidental explosion, sabotage, or theft. The proposed facility would have no permanent personnel and be sited so that no adjacent facilities would be affected should the unlikely event of an explosion involving all of the stored material occur.

DETERMINATION: Based on the information and analyses in the EA, DOE has determined that the proposed construction and operation of the Ammunition Storage Facility at SRS does not constitute a major Federal action significantly affecting the quality of the human environment within the meaning of NEPA. Therefore, an environmental impact statement for the proposed action is not required.

Issued at Washington, D.C., this 18th day of Nov. 1992.



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 Assistant Secretary
 Environment, Safety and Health