

**South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control  
Bureau of Air Quality**

**Response to Comments  
Public Notice #14-008-TV-RE  
Marine Corps Air Station (MCAS) Beaufort Title V Operating Permit  
Beaufort, Beaufort County, South Carolina  
Permit No. TV-0360-0004**

The following is the SC Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC) Bureau of Air Quality's (Department) response to the comment made during the formal comment period held January 28 – February 26, 2014, regarding the draft renewed Title V operating permit for the Marine Corps Air Station (MCAS) Beaufort (facility) at US Highway 21 in Beaufort, Beaufort County. The written comment received regarding the draft permit is available for viewing at the SC DHEC Columbia office located at 2600 Bull Street, Columbia, SC 29201, or on the SC DHEC webpage <http://www.scdhec.gov/environment/baq/PermittingDecisions>, or a hardcopy can be requested by contacting our Freedom of Information Office at (803) 898-3882.

One comment was received during the comment period. It has been dissected into the following items below.

**1. Permit Term:** The commenter requested that a permit be approved for no longer than 5 years.

**Response:** Each permit issued under the SC Regulation 61-62.70 Title V Operating Permit Program shall be issued for a fixed term not to exceed 5 years. Permits being renewed are subject to the same procedural requirements that apply to the initial permit issuance, including those for public participation and review by affected States and the United States Environmental Protection Agency (US EPA). A Title V Operating Permit was initially issued to this facility on August 3, 1999. This permit will have a 5-year expiration date of June 30, 2019.

**2. Another Study of the Air Quality and Environmental Impact:** The commenter requested that another study of the air quality and environmental impact be conducted after the F-35 jet squadrons are in place and training.

**Response:** The Department manages South Carolina's air quality permitting program and is the US EPA-delegated permitting authority. The Title V renewal process includes a facility-wide review of air quality requirements to ensure the appropriate emission limitations, monitoring, recordkeeping and reporting requirements are included in the permit. The Title V operating permit regulations do not have any requirements to conduct an environmental impact statement (EIS).

Although no EIS was required for this permit process, the facility did provide the following information: An EIS was prepared in accordance with the National

Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) due to the anticipated impacts on the human and natural environment from the proposed action of replacing the FA-18 fleet of aircraft with F-35B coupled with the decision to base two training squadrons at the facility. Contract support was procured for the organization/distribution of the document and required surveys, etc. The EIS analyzed fourteen different resource categories for impacts: Noise; Air Quality; Hazardous Materials, Toxic Substances, Hazardous Waste, and Contaminated Sites; Safety; Land Use; Socioeconomics; Environmental Justice/Protections of Children; Community Services; Utilities and Infrastructure; Transportation and Ground Traffic; Biological Resources; Geology, Topography and Soils; Water Resources; Cultural and Traditional Resources; and Coastal Zone Management. The EIS process allowed for many components of public participation, including public, outside party and federal agency input concerning the preparation of the EIS. The facility assessed a list of interested stakeholders and kept them abreast of the process. These groups subsequently commented on the draft EIS. The public comment period was May 28-July 12, 2010. The United States Marine Corps established a website for viewing and commenting on the EIS. There were a total of five public meetings held in North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia. The EIS for the facility has demonstrated that there are no net changes to stationary source emissions due to the arrival of the F-35B aircraft. In light of this, the facility has stated there will not be any subsequent analysis unless something unexpected arises or changes that triggers NEPA. The Final United States Marine Corps F-35B East Coast Basing EIS analysis was published in October 2010 and can be found at [http://www.beaufort.marines.mil/Portals/53/Docs/Volume\\_I\\_Final\\_EIS.pdf](http://www.beaufort.marines.mil/Portals/53/Docs/Volume_I_Final_EIS.pdf).

**3. Repealing a Permit:** The commenter stated that permits should be repealed if circumstances warrant.

**Response:** Once a permit is issued, the facility has a duty to comply with all conditions of the permit. The Department's local field office routinely conducts unannounced, comprehensive inspections of the facility to review all required records and ensure that the facility is operating in compliance with the permit requirements. The Department also reviews all required reports submitted by the facility and verifies that the facility's reported emissions do not exceed the permitted limits. Any noncompliance may result in enforcement actions, which could lead to permit termination, permit revocation and reissuance, permit modification, or denial of future permit renewal applications. Any proposed changes at the facility that involve permitted sources require a permit review. Additionally, the facility is required to comply with any new applicable air quality regulation. Permits, facility reports, inspection reports, testing protocols, test results, and any final enforcement actions are all available to the public. Please contact the Freedom of Information office by telephone at (803) 898-3882 or by fax at (803) 898-3816 to place a request.

**4. Sense of confidence:** The commenter stated that the community needs a sense of confidence in maintaining a healthy community of people, animals and marine life.

**Response:** The Department has reviewed the facility's renewal application and other documentation to determine the regulatory requirements, including monitoring, recordkeeping, and reporting requirements that must be adhered to in order to comply with the regulations. The Department reviews all required reports and regularly inspects facilities to ensure that the facility is operating in compliance with permit requirements. Any complaints from citizens are also investigated by the Department's local field office.

It is the Department's mission “to conserve and enhance South Carolina air resources in a manner that promotes quality of life.” In this regard, the Department welcomes and appreciates the comments regarding the renewed Title V Operating Permit for MCAS Beaufort. In addition, the United States Marine Corps has stated that the Marine Corps is committed to protect and enhance the natural resources and environment at MCAS Beaufort and the surrounding community.