



Range Sustainability Environmental Program Assessment Process (RSEPA)

RSEPA Fact Sheet

May 2008

Background:

The US Navy maintains and operates training and testing ranges around the world to prepare our sailors to use a variety of weapons systems. These ranges are crucial to our national defense because they provide realistic training for our sailors. Navy ranges include both individual active ranges and operating areas in the ocean where routine testing and training takes place.

The Navy's Range Sustainment Program is designed to ensure our ranges remain operational and that we are protecting human health and the environment for nearby communities while we train. The Range Sustainment Environmental Program Assessment (RSEPA) Process is designed to assess environmental impacts of testing and training operations and to implement measures to protect the environment when needed. RSEPA was developed in response to a proactive Navy initiative, and is not driven by any federal or state regulatory requirements.



El Centro Range

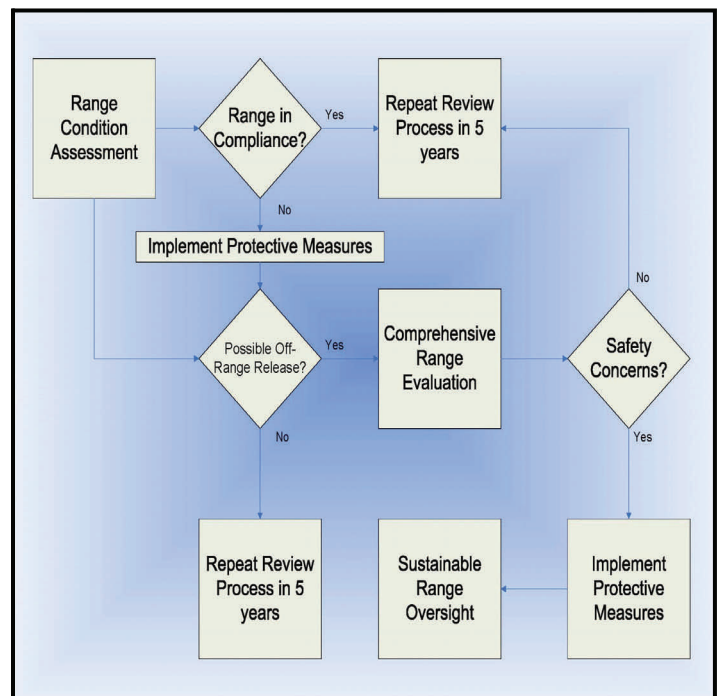
The three potential steps in RSEPA include the **Range Condition Assessment**, the **Comprehensive Range Evaluation**, and **Sustainable Range Oversight**. The RSEPA process is repeated every five years even if previous studies identified no potential off-site release. The diagram below shows the three RSEPA steps and the major decision points in the process.

The RSEPA Process:

- ✓ Examines range compliance with environmental laws and regulations.
- ✓ Assesses potential for an off-range release of any munitions related constituents.
- ✓ Identifies actions needed to protect human health and the environment.

RSEPA – Process Overview:

The RSEPA assessment process can include up to 3 main steps, but not all ranges will require all three steps. There are decision points worked into the process to determine if more study or action is needed to ensure the protection of human health and the environment.



Range Condition Assessment

The first step of RSEPA is the Range Condition Assessment, or RCA. It is primarily an information gathering process to answer 2 questions:

1. ***Is the range in full compliance with environmental laws and policies?***
2. ***Is there a threat of an off-range release of munitions constituents?***

Information collected during the RCA includes:

- How was the range used (past & present)?
- What types of munitions were used?
- Are there existing environmental permits?
- What policies apply?

A conceptual site model of the range is created during the RCA to assist in the analysis of potential off-range migration of munitions constituents. Munitions constituents are defined as; ***“...materials originating from munitions, including explosive, non-explosive, emissions, degradation or breakdown elements...”***



Target at Rodman Range

Sustainable Range Oversight

If the CRE determines that munitions constituents are migrating off-range at levels that may pose safety concerns for human health or the environment, the Navy will use a specified system of oversight known as Sustainable Range Oversight. This Process addresses off-range releases through environmental cleanup, informing regulators and the public throughout the process. Any environmental clean-up that is needed will be conducted in accordance with the Navy's environmental restoration program and the Comprehensive Environmental Response Compensation and Liability Act.

Comprehensive Range Evaluation

A Comprehensive Range Evaluation (CRE) is a detailed investigation of the range. A CRE is conducted if:

- there is not enough information from the RCA to determine if munitions constituents could be moving off site, or
- the RCA finds evidence that munitions constituents could potentially be moving off site.

Most CREs involve sampling and they can include risk assessments. The sampling strategies are designed to examine only potential off-range releases of munitions constituents.

The CRE sampling results are used to:

- assess the potential for a release of munitions constituents off-range and
- determine if the potential off-range levels could pose a threat to human health or the environment.

Protective Measures

Protective measures can be implemented at any point during the RSEPA process to ensure public safety, sustain range operations, and maintain environmental compliance. Some examples of protective measures may include: relocating targets, posting warning signs or erecting fences, and modifying actual use of the range.

**For more information contact:
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