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FARALLON DE MEDINILLA

1. PURPOSE. The US Government requires the continued use of this small island for bombing and gunnery training for the foreseeable future.
2. BACKGROUND. Farallon de Medinilla is a small, rocky, uninhabited and inaccessible island located 45 miles north of Saipan.
 - It encompasses 229 acres in a plateau-like formation with sheer sides, no water and little vegetation.
 - Since 1970 the Department of Defense has leased and used the island as a target.
 - An Environmental Assessment was developed but a full Environmental Statement was not considered necessary at the time.
 - Increasing restrictions on training sites near populated areas, plus the increased training requirements stemming from larger numbers of forces operating from and around Guam and Tinian emphasize the need for this island.
 - Additionally, it was determined to be the only island in the Northern Marianas which was available, would not be in the path of civil aviation or normal shipping, and was within radar range of Guam.
3. FREQUENCY OF USE. Present use is light, only a few times each month; however, the frequency of use by both ships and aircraft is expected to increase considerably.
 - With the activation of the Tinian base it is estimated that the island will be used over half of the days each year.
4. SAFETY. US forces have considerable experience with target facilities of this sort and there are extensive regulations and procedures in effect to ensure that it is used safely.
 - Air and surface navigation charts are appropriately marked.
 - Warnings are broadcast to both seamen and aviators well in advance of any dangerous activity around the island.
 - The officer in command of each unit preparing to use the island is responsible for following a series of strict range regulations designed to ensure there are no aircraft or boats in the danger area.

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- Should a boat or aircraft be detected entering the danger area, all firing or bombing must be stopped until it has cleared the area.

5. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT. An Environmental Statement will be issued by the Navy in the Spring of 1974, in compliance with the National Environmental Protection Act.