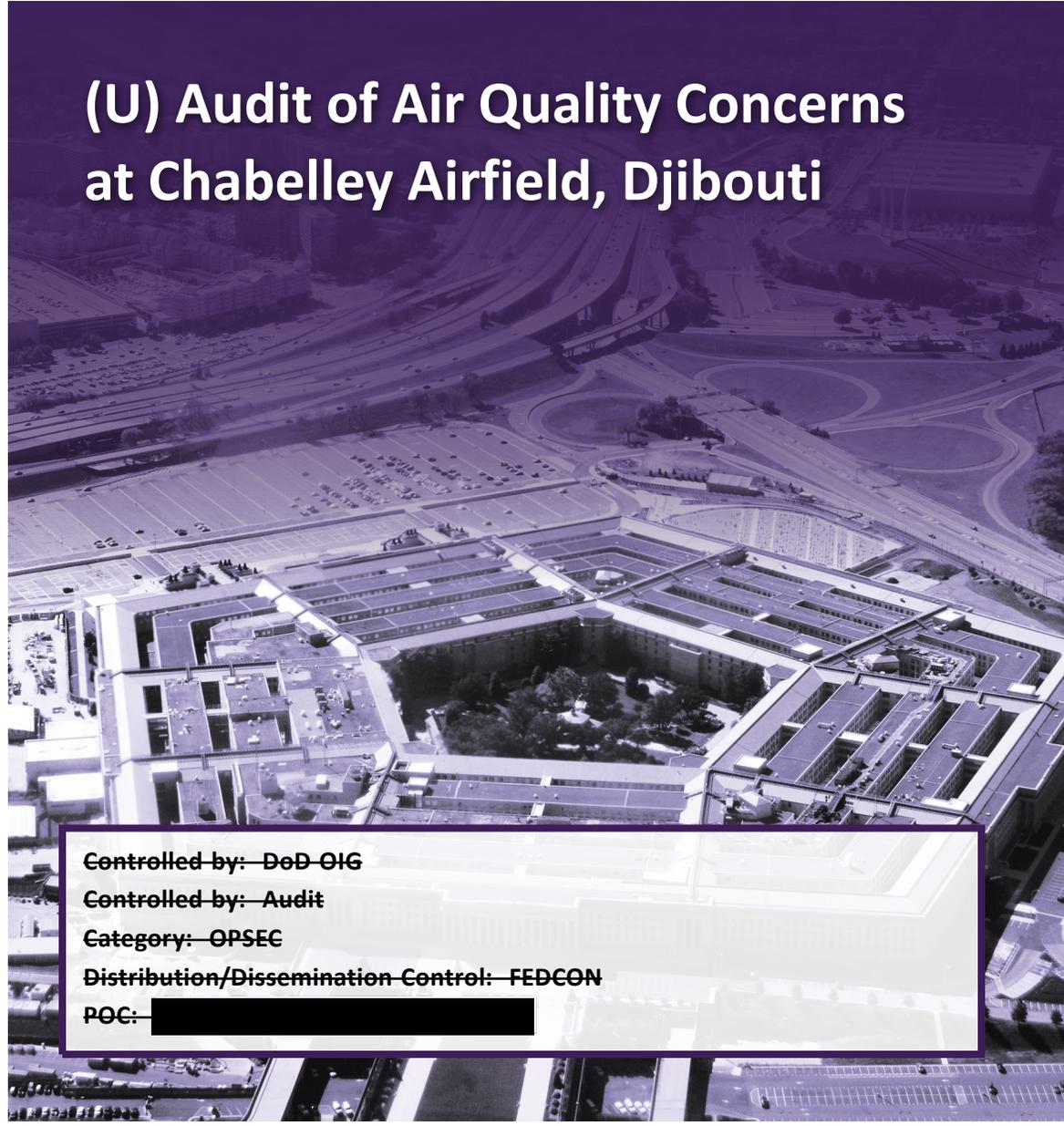


CUI

INSPECTOR GENERAL

U.S. Department of Defense

FEBRUARY 20, 2026



(U) Audit of Air Quality Concerns at Chabelley Airfield, Djibouti

~~Controlled by: DoD OIG~~

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~~POC: [REDACTED]~~

INDEPENDENCE ★ INTEGRITY ★ EXCELLENCE ★ TRANSPARENCY

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(U) Results in Brief

(U) Audit of Air Quality Concerns at Chabelley Airfield, Djibouti

February 20, 2026

(U) Objective

(U) The objective of this audit was to assess whether the U.S. Africa Command (USAFRICOM) and U.S. Air Forces Europe–Air Forces Africa (USAFE-AFAFRICA) managed the impacts of poor air quality at Chabelley Airfield, Djibouti (CADJ), in accordance with DoD policy.

(U) Background

(U) We conducted this audit in response to an allegation to the DoD Hotline that CADJ personnel were routinely exposed to smoke from trash burned at the Chabelley dump in Djibouti.

(U) Findings

(U) USAFRICOM and USAFE-AFAFRICA officials did not properly manage the impacts of poor air quality at CADJ.

- (U) USAFRICOM officials did not report the Chabelley dump as an open-air burn pit to the Joint Staff or engage with the Government of Djibouti to reduce or eliminate the use of the Chabelley dump. This occurred because USAFE-AFAFRICA officials misinterpreted the DoD definition of an open-air burn pit.
- (U) USAFE-AFAFRICA Office of the Command Surgeon officials did not implement an air quality mitigation plan or ensure air sampling included specific airborne hazards. This occurred because the 406th Air Expeditionary Wing and

(U) Findings (cont'd)

(U) 776th Expeditionary Air Base Squadron did not have dedicated staff to implement an air quality plan, and 406th Air Expeditionary Wing officials experienced challenges with obtaining sampling equipment.

~~(CUI)~~ As a result of not properly managing the impacts of poor air quality at CADJ, DoD officials did not protect [REDACTED] Service members who deployed to CADJ from November 2019 through September 2025 from the increased exposure to harmful airborne hazards.

(U) In addition, during the audit, we issued a notice of concern to inform the Commander, Naval Facilities Engineering Systems Command, of the immediate need to improve government oversight of contractor-provided solid waste management services at Camp Lemonnier, Djibouti, and CADJ.

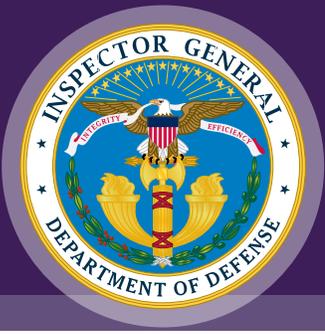
(U) Recommendations

(U) We made a total of six recommendations to the USAFRICOM Commander and USAFE-AFAFRICA Command Surgeon to address the inadequate management of air quality at CADJ. These recommendations included a recommendation to the USAFRICOM Commander to require implementation of a plan to engage with the Government of Djibouti to close or relocate the Chabelley dump.

(U) We also made three recommendations to the Naval Facilities Engineering Systems Command base operations support contracting officer at Camp Lemonnier, Djibouti, related to improving the oversight of contractor-provided solid waste management services.

(U) Management Comments and Our Response

(U) This report contains eight recommendations that we consider resolved. We will close the recommendations once we verify that management has implemented corrective actions. The USAFE-AFAFRICA Command Surgeon's response



(U) Results in Brief

(U) Audit of Air Quality Concerns at Chabelley Airfield, Djibouti

(U) Comments (cont'd)

(U) did not address the specifics of one recommendation; therefore, we consider it unresolved. We request that the USAFE-AFAFRICA Command Surgeon provide additional comments within 30 days of the final report. Please see the Recommendations Table on the next page for the status of recommendations.

(U) Recommendations Table

(U) Management	Recommendations Unresolved	Recommendations Resolved	Recommendations Closed
Commander, U.S. Africa Command	None	A.1.a, A.1.b, A.1.c, A.1.d	None
Commander, Naval Facilities Engineering Systems Command	None	B.1.a, B.1.b, B.1.c	None
Command Surgeon, U.S. Air Forces Europe– Air Forces Africa	A.2.a	A.2.b	None (U)

(U) Please provide Management Comments by March 20, 2026.

(U) Note: The following categories are used to describe agency management’s comments to individual recommendations.

- **(U) Unresolved** – Management has not agreed to implement the recommendation or has not proposed actions that will address the recommendation.
- **(U) Resolved** – Management agreed to implement the recommendation or has proposed actions that will address the underlying finding that generated the recommendation.
- **(U) Closed** – The DoD OIG verified that the agreed-upon corrective actions were implemented.





OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
 4800 MARK CENTER DRIVE
 ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA 22350-1500

February 20, 2026

MEMORANDUM FOR UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR PERSONNEL AND READINESS
 COMMANDER, U.S. AFRICA COMMAND
 COMMANDER, NAVAL FACILITIES ENGINEERING SYSTEMS COMMAND
 AUDITOR GENERAL, DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
 AUDITOR GENERAL, DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE

SUBJECT: (U) Audit of Air Quality Concerns at Chabelley Airfield, Djibouti
 (Report No. DODIG-2026-058)

(U) This final report provides the results of the DoD Office of Inspector General's audit. We previously provided copies of the draft report and requested written comments on the recommendations. We considered management's comments on the draft report when preparing the final report. These comments are included in the report.

(U) Of the nine recommendations, we consider one unresolved because the response from the Command Surgeon, U.S. Air Forces Europe–Air Forces Africa, did not fully address the recommendation. Therefore, it remains open. We will track this recommendation until management has agreed to take action that we determine to be sufficient to meet the intent of the recommendation and management officials submit adequate documentation showing that all agreed-upon actions are completed.

(U) We consider the eight remaining recommendations resolved and open because the Commander, U.S. Africa Command; Command Surgeon, U.S. Air Forces Europe–Air Forces Africa; and Commander, Naval Facilities Engineering Systems Command, agreed to address them. We will close the recommendations when management officials provide documentation showing that all agreed-upon actions to implement the recommendations are completed.

(U) DoD Instruction 7650.03 requires that recommendations be resolved promptly. Therefore, within 30 days please provide us your response concerning specific actions in process or alternative corrective actions proposed on the recommendations. Send your response to either [REDACTED] if unclassified or [REDACTED] if classified SECRET.

(U) If you have any questions, please contact [REDACTED]. We appreciate the cooperation and assistance received during the audit.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Richard B. Vasquez".

Richard B. Vasquez
 Assistant Inspector General for Audit
 Readiness and Global Operations

(U) Contents

(U) Introduction	1
(U) Objective.....	1
(U) Background.....	1
(U) Finding A. U.S. Africa Command and Air Force Officials Did Not Properly Manage the Impacts of Poor Air Quality at Chabelley Airfield	8
(U) 406th AEW and 776th EABS Officials Took Action to Address the Impacts of Poor Air Quality.....	9
(U) USAFRICOM Officials Did Not Comply with Reporting or Engagement Requirements for Open-Air Burn Pits.....	11
(U) USAFE-AFAFRICA Officials Misinterpreted the DoD Definition of an Open-Air Burn Pit.....	13
(U) USAFE-AFAFRICA Officials Did Not Implement an Air Quality Mitigation Plan.....	14
(U) USAFE-AFAFRICA Officials Did Not Ensure Air Sampling Included Key Airborne Hazards.....	15
(U) Service Members at Risk of Avoidable Toxic Exposure.....	17
(U) Management Comments on the Finding and Our Response.....	18
(U) Recommendations, Management Comments, and Our Response.....	19
(U) Finding B. Notice of Concern Summary: Improved Oversight of Contracted Solid Waste Management Services Needed	24
(U) Improper Solid Waste Dumping.....	24
(U) Recommendations, Management Comments, and Our Response.....	29
Appendixes	
(U) Appendix A. Scope and Methodology.....	32
(U) Internal Control Assessment and Compliance.....	33
(U) Use of Computer-Processed Data.....	33
(U) Prior Coverage.....	33

(U) Contents (cont'd)

(U) Appendix B. DoD Hotline Allegation.....	35
(U) Appendix C. Notice of Concern.....	36
(U) Appendix D. Our Response to the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness	41
(U) Management Comments	
(U) Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness.....	43
(U) U.S. Africa Command.....	47
(U) Naval Facilities Engineering Systems Command.....	49
(U) U.S. Air Forces Europe–Air Forces Africa.....	52
(U) Air Force Installation and Mission Support Center, Detachment 4.....	54
(U) 406th Air Expeditionary Wing.....	55
(U) Acronyms and Abbreviations.....	57



(U) Introduction

(U) Objective

(U) The objective of this audit was to assess whether the U.S. Africa Command (USAFRICOM) and U.S. Air Forces Europe–Air Forces Africa (USAFE-AFAFRICA) managed the impacts of poor air quality at Chabelley Airfield, Djibouti (CADJ), in accordance with DoD policy. See Appendix A for the scope and methodology related to the audit.¹

(U) During the audit, we issued a notice of concern on September 2, 2025, highlighting the immediate need to improve government oversight of contractor-provided solid waste management services at Camp Lemonnier, Djibouti (CLDJ), and CADJ. See Appendix C for the notice of concern.

(U) Background

(U) We conducted this audit in response to an allegation to the DoD Hotline that CADJ personnel working and living on the airfield were routinely exposed to smoke from burning trash, including DoD waste, at the Chabelley dump in Djibouti, which induced difficulty breathing. The DoD Hotline received the allegation after the publication of the DoD OIG audit of air quality issues at CLDJ.² That audit assessed whether the Navy effectively developed a plan to mitigate air quality issues on CLDJ. The DoD OIG determined that U.S. Naval Forces Africa did not develop a plan to identify air quality issues and address the risks associated with poor air quality, as required by DoD Instruction 6055.05 and Defense Health Agency (DHA) Procedural Instruction (PI) 6490.03.³ See Appendix B for details about the DoD Hotline allegation.

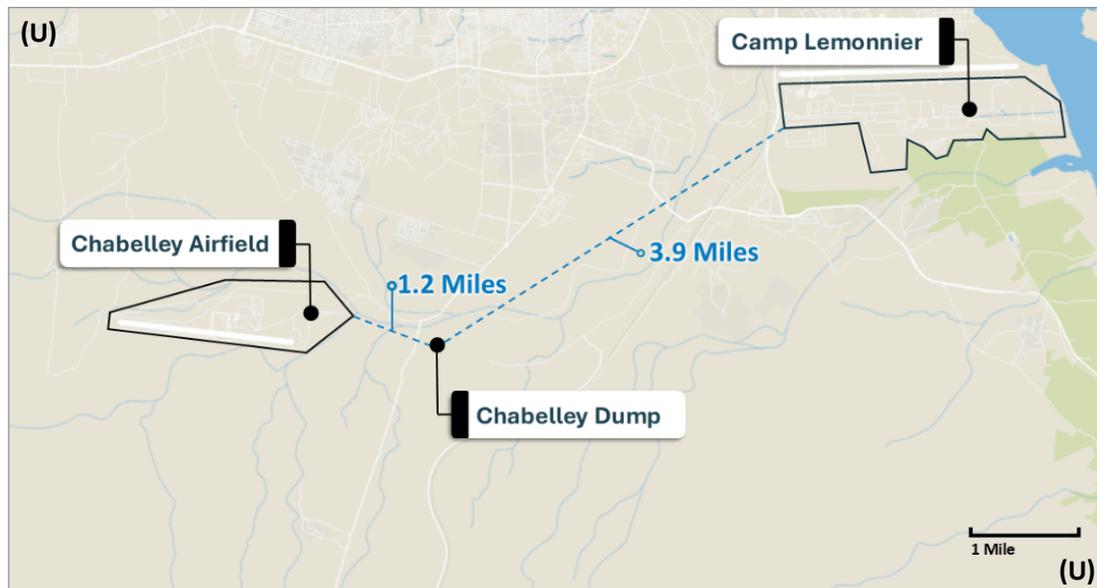
¹ (U) This report contains information that has been redacted because it was identified by the Department of Defense as Controlled Unclassified Information (CUI) that is not releasable to the public. CUI is Government-created or owned unclassified information that allows for, or requires, safeguarding and dissemination controls in accordance with laws, regulations, or Government-wide policies.

² (U) Report No. DODIG-2025-041, “Audit of the DoD’s Management of Air Quality Issues at Camp Lemonnier, Djibouti,” November 20, 2024.

³ (U) DoD Instruction 6055.05, “Occupational and Environmental Health,” November 11, 2008 (Incorporating Change 2, August 31, 2018). DHA PI 6490.03, “Deployment Health Procedures,” December 17, 2019.

(U) CADJ is a U.S. military air base in Djibouti, Africa, about 7 miles southwest of Djibouti City, the capital. According to USAFE-AFAFRICA Office of the Command Surgeon officials, most deployments to CADJ are 6 months long and consist of 122 personnel per rotation.⁴

(U) In November 2019, after working with U.S. Embassy personnel to close the La Douda dump due to the La Douda dump's proximity to CLDJ, the Government of Djibouti designated the Chabelley dump as a temporary location for the DoD to dump solid waste generated from CLDJ and CADJ.⁵ A Government of Djibouti official stated that the Chabelley dump was temporary while waiting to fund a new landfill site. The Chabelley dump is 3.9 miles southwest of CLDJ and 1.2 miles east of CADJ. Figure 1 shows the locations and proximities of CLDJ, CADJ, and the Chabelley dump.



⁴ (U) According to USAFE-AFAFRICA Office of the Command Surgeon officials, the average count of 122 Service members who serve 6-month deployments to CADJ is specific to Air Force personnel and does not include personnel from additional Military Services that may deploy to CADJ.

⁵ (U) The La Douda dump was 1.2 miles southeast of CLDJ, and the smoke from uncontrolled open-air burning at the dump regularly impacted CLDJ and concentrated in the CLDJ housing area. The Chabelley dump serves as a local landfill for Djibouti.

(U) DoD contractors transport DoD-generated solid waste, such as products containing petroleum or metals that are prohibited from incineration at CLDJ, from CLDJ and CADJ to the Chabelley dump.⁶ However, local nationals regularly burn these contents at the Chabelley dump in uncontrolled open-air burn pits.⁷ The DoD defines an open-air burn pit as:

(U) an excavation or surface feature with berms used to dispose of solid waste by burning in outdoor locations outside of the United States. Open-air burn pits lack any air pollution controls that would minimize inhalation risk of pollutants to personnel and excludes sites where individuals are burning solid wastes generated by non-DoD sources (i.e. domestic household and/or yard waste burned by local population, for example burn barrels).⁸

(U) In November 2023, we conducted a site visit to the Chabelley dump as part of our previous audit and observed large smoke clouds emanating from several sections of the dump area. Figure 2 shows smoke from active burning at the Chabelley dump, blowing in the direction of CADJ on November 13, 2023.



⁶ (U) DoD contractors are required to transport all CADJ solid waste to CLDJ where it is sorted, along with CLDJ solid waste, for incineration. As of November 2019, DoD contractors are required to transport the solid waste that is prohibited from incineration to the Chabelley dump.

⁷ (U) Throughout Finding A of this report, we refer to the Chabelley dump as an open-air burn pit because its contents are regularly burned.

⁸ (U) Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition and Sustainment Memorandum, "Interim Policy on Solid Waste Disposal Outside the U.S.," October 13, 2022. Berms are mounds or walls of soil for containment.

(U) During a site visit to the Chabelley dump in April 2025, we observed DoD contractors disposing of solid waste transported from CLDJ, as well as the open burning of that solid waste. Our observations indicated that since the previous November 2023 site visit, open burning continued to occur within 2.5 miles of U.S. personnel living and working at CADJ. Figure 3 shows flames and smoke from the Chabelley dump on April 3, 2025.



(U) DoD Requirements for Open-Air Burn Pits

(U) In October 2022, the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition and Sustainment (USD[A&S]) issued a memorandum expanding the policy scope of DoD Instruction 4715.19 to all contingency locations and enduring installations, such as CADJ.⁹ This expansion aimed to reduce the risk of exposure to U.S. personnel located outside of the United States due to improper solid waste disposal and open-air burn pits. DoD Instruction 4715.19 states that combatant commands should strive to work with partners to ensure open-air burn pits are operated in a manner that prevents or minimizes risks to the health and safety of DoD personnel. The USD(A&S) memorandum highlights the DoD's commitment to eliminate open-air burn pits and prohibits the use of open-air burn pits to dispose of waste generated by U.S. forces, unless the Secretary of Defense grants an exemption requested by a combatant commander. Combatant commanders may only request an exemption for up to 180 days.

⁹ (U) USD(A&S) memorandum, "Interim Policy on Solid Waste Disposal Outside the U.S.," October 13, 2022.

(U) DoD Instruction 4715.19, "Use of Open-Air Burn Pits in Contingency Operations," November 13, 2018.

(U) In addition, the USD(A&S) memorandum requires the Military Service responsible for base operations support (BOS) to have qualified occupational and environmental health (OEH) personnel conduct air sampling on at least a quarterly basis at all bases located within 2,000 meters (1.2 miles) of any DoD or non-DoD open-air burn pits. The memorandum also requires operational commanders to identify any DoD or non-DoD open-air burn pits located up to 4,000 meters (2.5 miles) from U.S. personnel living, dining, or working areas. The operational commanders are required to report the open-air burn pit location to applicable combatant commanders so the Joint Staff can include the burn pit's location in a watch list. USAFRICOM coordinates open-air burn pit reporting through its Logistics directorate. According to USAFRICOM Office of the Command Surgeon and Logistic directorate officials, USAFRICOM typically relied on the Environmental Security Chief to request and consolidate open-air burn pit data quarterly from lead Service Components, such as USAFE-AFAFRICA, and then report the consolidated data to the Joint Staff.

(U) DoD Toxic Exposure

(U) Exposure to airborne hazards from open-air burn pits has been associated with multiple negative health risks.¹⁰ For example, a study published in the Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA) Network Open found that for every 100 days of burn pit exposure, DoD personnel had a 1-percent increased risk for asthma and a 4-percent increased risk for chronic obstructive pulmonary disease.¹¹

(U) Combatant commanders are responsible for maintaining records for toxic exposures experienced by Service members.¹² In addition, the "Honoring our Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxins Act of 2022" mandates the presumption of toxic exposure for veterans who performed active military service while assigned to a duty station in Djibouti on or after September 11, 2001.¹³ The Act also allows for the consideration of a veteran's records in an exposure tracking record system for any claim of a service-connected disability related to toxic exposure that occurred during active military service.

¹⁰ (U) Airborne hazard refers to any sort of contaminant or potentially toxic substance that individuals are exposed to through the air they breathe.

¹¹ (U) JAMA Network Open, "Deployment to Military Bases with Open Burn Pits and Respiratory and Cardiovascular Disease," April 25, 2024. JAMA Network Open is an online journal that consists of general medical research published by the American Medical Association.

¹² (U) The Defense Occupational and Environmental Health Readiness System–Industrial Hygiene is the DoD repository for reporting OEH exposures.

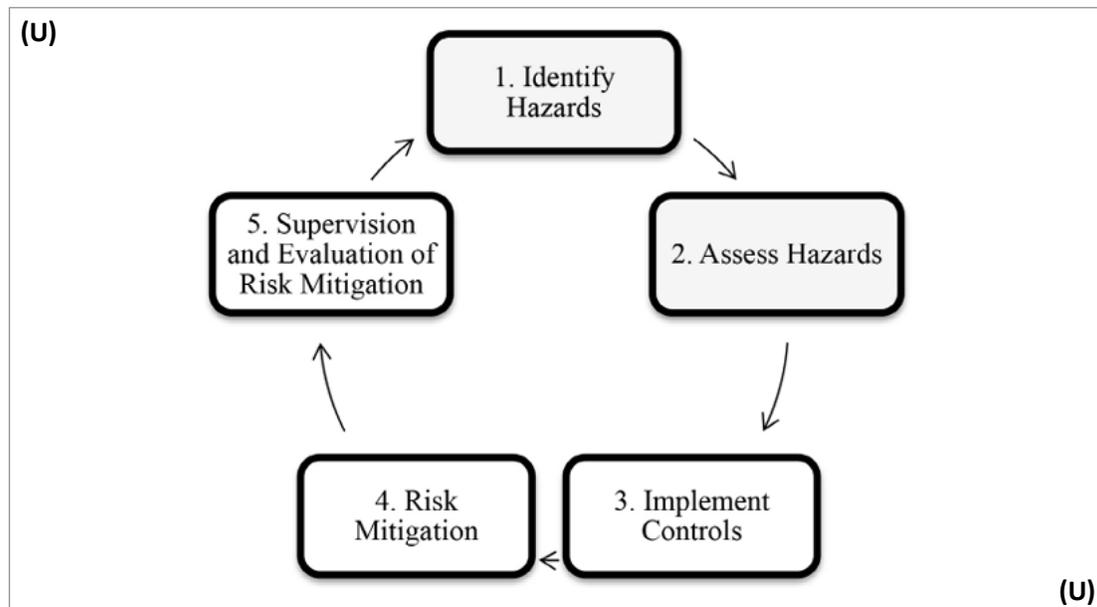
¹³ (U) Public Law 117-168, "Honoring our Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxins Act of 2022," section 302, "Presumptions of toxic exposure." The Act mandates the presumption of toxic exposure unless there is affirmative evidence to establish that the veteran was not exposed to such toxins.

(U) DoD Occupational and Environment Health Risk Management

(U) DoD Instruction 6055.05 establishes policies, procedures, and responsibilities for combatant commands regarding OEH risk management procedures for military operations and deployments. The Instruction requires combatant commanders to implement OEH risk management procedures by identifying environmental hazards and assessing their risk. Combatant commanders are also required to develop a plan to monitor, mitigate, and communicate risk information about OEH hazards to installation commanders, health care providers, and military personnel.

(U) DHA PI 6490.03 requires combatant commands to implement the OEH risk management process and ensure that risk management activities are conducted effectively at deployed locations within their area of responsibility. Figure 4 shows the OEH risk management process required by DHA PI 6490.03.

(U) Figure 4. OEH Risk Management Process



(U) Source: DHA PI 6490.03.

(U) DHA PI 6490.03 identifies the occupational and environmental health site assessment (OEHSAs) as a key element of the OEH risk assessment process that supports risk management decisions concerning OEH threats. OEHSAs document environmental conditions, identify potential OEH threats, guide OEH data collection activities and further risk assessments, and summarize needed short-term risk mitigation actions. DHA PI 6490.03 requires OEHSAs to be updated annually with new OEH surveillance information at deployed locations.

(U) Roles and Responsibilities

(U) The following organizations are responsible for the risk management of environmental hazards, such as poor air quality, at CADJ.

- (U) **USAFRICOM** is responsible for incorporating OEH risk management and health surveillance requirements (such as an air quality mitigation plan) into Annex Q of the USAFRICOM Campaign Order.¹⁴ USAFRICOM's Office of the Command Surgeon is responsible for providing coordination and oversight to establish health service support and force health protection within the USAFRICOM area of responsibility to optimize efficiency and effectiveness of scarce medical resources. In June 2025, as a result of our audit of air quality issues at CLDJ, the USAFRICOM Office of the Command Surgeon updated Annex Q to establish air sampling requirements and to require the lead Services responsible for BOS at installations within the USAFRICOM area of responsibility to develop a plan to monitor, mitigate, and communicate risk information about OEH hazards, such as poor air quality.¹⁵
- (U) **USAFE-AFAFRICA** is the air component for USAFRICOM. The USAFE-AFAFRICA Office of the Command Surgeon is responsible for supporting medical logistics and medical maintenance requirements for installations in the USAFRICOM area of responsibility where the Air Force is responsible for BOS, such as CADJ. This support includes ensuring subordinate medical staff have the training, equipment, and logistical support needed to conduct their tasks.
- (U) **406th Air Expeditionary Wing (AEW)** is assigned to the Third Air Force, acts on the behalf of USAFE-AFAFRICA, and is responsible for working with subordinate commands to ensure implementation and compliance with policies, such as OEH and force health protection policies.¹⁶
- (U) **776th Expeditionary Air Base Squadron (EABS)** is assigned to the 449th Air Expeditionary Group, is located at CADJ, and is responsible for executing USAFE-AFAFRICA's provision of occupational safety, health, and quality of life.¹⁷ In addition, 776th EABS personnel assigned to the CADJ Joint Medical Aid Station (JMAS) are responsible for supporting the health and safety of personnel working at CADJ.

¹⁴ (U) The USAFRICOM Campaign Order directs staff, components, and subordinate commands to execute planned operations, activities, and investments in support of USAFRICOM.

¹⁵ (U) Report No. DODIG-2025-041, "Audit of the DoD's Management of Air Quality Issues at Camp Lemonnier, Djibouti," November 20, 2024. USAFRICOM Campaign Order FY 2025 through 2026, Annex Q, "Health Services," June 13, 2025.

¹⁶ (U) The Third Air Force is USAFE-AFAFRICA's component numbered air force for USAFRICOM.

¹⁷ (U) The 449th Air Expeditionary Group, headquartered at CLDJ, is responsible for providing personnel recovery task forces, intra-theater airlift, intelligence, and more in support of U.S. Central Command and USAFRICOM mission requirements.

(U) Finding A

(U) U.S. Africa Command and Air Force Officials Did Not Properly Manage the Impacts of Poor Air Quality at Chabelley Airfield

(U) Officials from the 406th AEW and 776th EABS implemented initiatives, such as conducting OEHSAs and air sampling, and communicating air quality information, to address poor air quality at CADJ. Despite these efforts, USAFRICOM and USAFE-AFAFRICA officials did not properly manage the impacts of poor air quality at CADJ in accordance with DoD policy.

- (U) USAFRICOM officials did not report the Chabelley dump as an open-air burn pit to the Joint Staff or engage with the Government of Djibouti to reduce or eliminate the use of the Chabelley dump as required by the October 2022 DoD policy. The lack of reporting and engagement occurred because USAFE-AFAFRICA Office of the Command Surgeon officials misinterpreted the DoD definition of an open-air burn pit as excluding burn pits operated by the host nation.
- (U) USAFE-AFAFRICA Office of the Command Surgeon officials did not implement an air quality mitigation plan to address the potential risk of poor air quality. This occurred because the 406th AEW and 776th EABS did not have dedicated staff to finalize and implement the plan.
- (U) USAFE-AFAFRICA Office of the Command Surgeon officials did not ensure air sampling included specific airborne hazards despite at least six OEHSAs, since July 2022, recommending more specific sampling. USAFE-AFAFRICA Office of the Command Surgeon officials stated that this occurred because 406th AEW officials experienced challenges with obtaining sampling equipment.

~~(CUI)~~ As a result of USAFRICOM officials' failure to report the Chabelley dump and engage with the Government of Djibouti concerning the relocation or removal of the dump, USAFRICOM officials perpetuated the use of the burn pit to dispose of DoD-generated solid waste. Additionally, by not reporting the burn pit, USAFRICOM bypassed the requirement to seek an exemption from the Secretary of Defense. Ultimately, USAFRICOM's inaction hindered the DoD's initiatives to track and ensure the elimination of open-air burn pits. Furthermore, as a result of USAFRICOM and USAFE-AFAFRICA officials not properly managing the impacts of poor air quality at CADJ, DoD officials did not protect [REDACTED] Service members who deployed to CADJ from November 2019 through September 2025 from the

~~(CUI)~~ increased exposure to harmful airborne hazards, which could cause serious health conditions, such as asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, and cancer. Negative health outcomes for personnel who deploy to CADJ could degrade their current mission effectiveness, decrease their future readiness to deploy, and potentially increase costs for veteran care, which may be avoidable with proper and timely assessment, mitigation, and notification procedures.

(U) 406th AEW and 776th EABS Officials Took Action to Address the Impacts of Poor Air Quality

(U) Officials from the 406th AEW and 776th EABS implemented initiatives to address the impacts of poor air quality on installation personnel at CADJ. Specifically, the 406th AEW and 776th EABS conducted semiannual OEHSAs from July 2022 through March 2025 to assess air quality at CADJ. The OEHSAs documented significant concerns about air quality, such as how exposure levels from open-air burn pit operations near CADJ are likely to cause short and long-term negative health effects in the affected population.

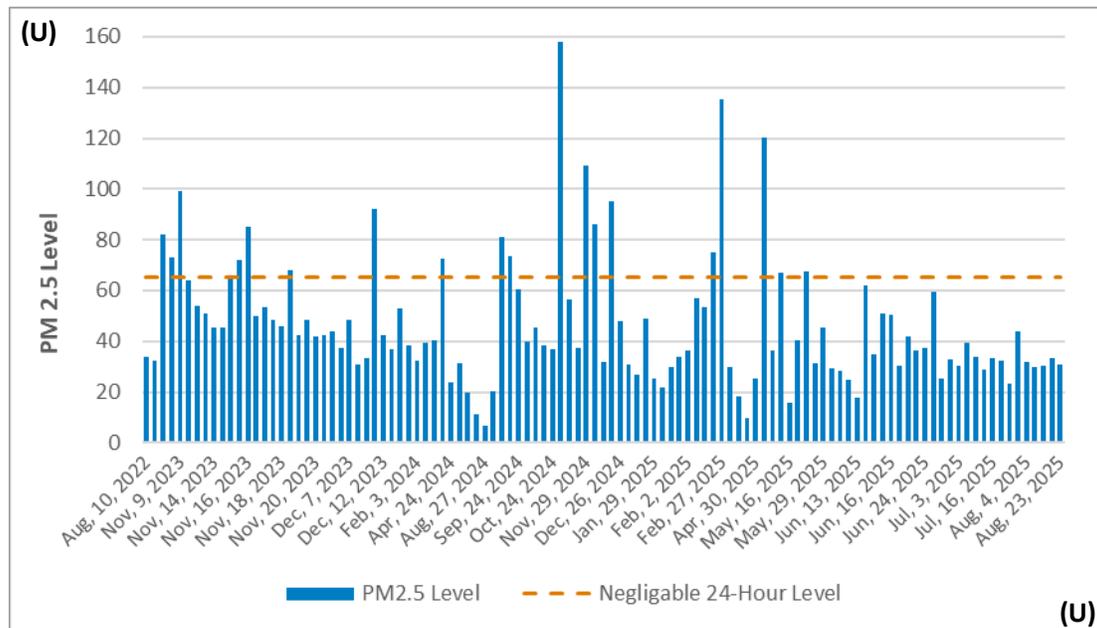
(U) Officials from the 776th EABS supplied the JMAS with N95 surgical respirator masks.¹⁸ During our site visit to CADJ in April 2025, we toured the JMAS and its medical tent and observed multiple boxes of N95 surgical respirator masks stored inside the medical tent. According to 776th EABS medical personnel, all personnel living and working at CADJ may obtain N95 masks from the JMAS. During the site visit, personnel working in the guard towers confirmed that 776th EABS medical personnel from the JMAS supplied them with N95 masks on a weekly basis.

(U) In addition, 776th EABS officials initiated the construction of permanent living quarters to mitigate the impact of poor air quality at CADJ. Specifically, during our site visit to CADJ in April 2025, we observed ongoing construction of the new living quarters. In June 2025, a 776th EABS civil engineer stated that construction for the permanent living quarters at CADJ began in January 2025 with an estimated completion date of April 2026. The civil engineer stated that the permanent living quarters will include proper air filtration equipment and will be better sealed than the existing plywood living structures and tents at CADJ.

¹⁸ (U) N95 surgical respirator masks are disposable masks that are used to protect the wearer from particles, including dusts, fumes, and mists. N95 surgical respirator masks do not protect the wearer from all airborne hazards associated with burn pits, such as volatile organic compounds or polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons.

(U) Officials from the 776th EABS also conducted air sampling to identify particulate matter (PM) less than 2.5 micrometers in diameter (PM2.5) at CADJ.¹⁹ Specifically, 776th EABS officials conducted air sampling for PM2.5 in August 2022 and September 2023. From September 2023 through August 2025, 776th EABS officials increased the frequency of air sampling and conducted sampling for PM2.5 on either a weekly, monthly, or quarterly basis. For 9 of 20 months when the air sampling occurred, the sampling results included levels of PM2.5 in the air at CADJ above the negligible 24-hour level in the Defense Centers for Public Health–Aberdeen (DCPH-A), formerly the U.S. Army Public Health Command’s, military exposure guidelines.²⁰ According to the guidelines, exposure to air pollution above the negligible 24-hour level can lead to mild eye, nose, or throat irritation and can worsen preexisting health conditions such as asthma or cardiopulmonary disease. Officials from the 406th AEW used the air sampling results to prepare exposure memorandums that each Service member could include in their individual medical record. The exposure memorandums documented exposures to PM2.5 and the associated health hazards Service members experienced while deployed to CADJ. Figure 5 summarizes levels of PM2.5 in the air at CADJ compared to the negligible 24-hour level from August 2022 through August 2025.

(U) Figure 5. PM2.5 Air Sampling Results at Chabelley Airfield from August 2022 Through August 2025



(U) Source: The DoD OIG.

¹⁹ (U) PM is a mixture of solid particles and liquid droplets found in the air. PM2.5 are inhalable, can be made up of hundreds of different chemicals, and can emit directly from a source, such as a fire or open-air burn pits.

²⁰ (U) Defense Centers for Public Health–Aberdeen Technical Guide 230, “Environmental Health Risk Assessment and Chemical Exposure Guidelines for Deployed Military Personnel,” 2013 Revision.

(U) Officials from the 776th EABS used a welcome briefing and a messaging application to communicate information and suggest mitigation actions related to poor air quality at CADJ.²¹ We reviewed the welcome briefing and confirmed it identified frequent smoke exposure at CADJ due to the Chabelley dump and recommended that installation personnel participate in outdoor physical activity early in the morning when smoke was absent. In addition, in April 2025, the 776th EABS Commander stated that when the air quality was particularly “bad” at CADJ, the command staff notified all installation personnel using a messaging application. In the same month, 776th EABS JMAS and fire department personnel confirmed that they received notifications related to poor air quality at CADJ.

(U) USAFRICOM Officials Did Not Comply with Reporting or Engagement Requirements for Open-Air Burn Pits

(U) USAFRICOM officials did not report the Chabelley dump as an open-air burn pit to the Joint Staff or engage with the Government of Djibouti to reduce or eliminate the use of the Chabelley dump as required by October 2022 DoD policy.

(U) USAFRICOM Officials Did Not Report the Chabelley Dump as an Open-Air Burn Pit

(U) Although USAFRICOM officials submitted required open-air burn pit reports from October 2022 through January 2025 to the Joint Staff, none of the reports explicitly listed the Chabelley dump as an open-air burn pit that disposed of DoD-generated solid waste and was located within 2.5 miles of CADJ. Specifically, from October 2022 through January 2025, USAFRICOM relied on Logistics directorate officials to obtain input from USAFE-AFAFRICA and submit seven open-air burn pit reports to the Joint Staff. In their input to USAFRICOM, USAFE-AFAFRICA Office of the Command Surgeon officials reported only local household open burn locations in the area and not the existence of the Chabelley dump. As a result, USAFRICOM officials did not report the Chabelley dump for five of the seven open-air burn pit reports.

(U) In November 2024, USAFRICOM requested updated open-air burn pit data, including the identification of all host nation-controlled open-air burn pits within 2.5 miles of a U.S. posture location. In the same month, USAFE-AFAFRICA Office of the Command Surgeon officials reported the Chabelley dump as a permanent host-nation controlled open-air burn pit to USAFRICOM. Specifically,

²¹ (U) In April 2025, the 776th EABS Commander stated that all installation personnel receive a welcome briefing upon arrival at CADJ, which includes a JMAS briefing related to smoke exposure.

(U) USAFE-AFAFRICA Office of the Command Surgeon officials reported “large, active host nation commercial burn pit operations ongoing located within 300-500 meters away from U.S. personnel at CADJ.” Despite this, USAFRICOM officials did not include the updated input in their submission for November 2024 and January 2025. Instead, USAFRICOM officials continued to report open-air burn pits near CADJ as “typical to the region, local household open burn locations are small, surface level piles (15-30 feet diameter), intermittent and short duration, and not continuously operating disposal locations.”

(U) USAFRICOM Officials Did Not Take Action to Reduce the Use of an Open-Air Burn Pit Impacting Service Members

(U) USAFRICOM officials did not engage with the Government of Djibouti to reduce or eliminate the use of the Chabelley dump. In October 2022, the USD(A&S) memorandum expanded the policy scope of DoD Instruction 4715.19 to all contingency locations and enduring installations, such as CADJ. DoD Instruction 4715.19 states that combatant commands should strive to work with partners to ensure open-air burn pits are operated in a manner that prevents or minimizes risks to the health and safety of DoD personnel from the use of host nation-controlled open-air burn pits, and to prohibit the use of open-air burn pits to dispose of covered waste.²² According to USAFRICOM officials, any engagement with the Government of Djibouti would occur through coordination between the USAFRICOM Strategy, Engagement, and Programs directorate and the U.S. Embassy.

(U) In July 2025, USAFRICOM Office of the Command Surgeon officials stated that USAFRICOM had not requested the U.S. Embassy’s support to engage with the Government of Djibouti to relocate or close the Chabelley dump. In addition, in May 2025, the U.S. Senior Defense Official for the U.S. Embassy in Djibouti stated that the U.S. Embassy had not engaged with the Government of Djibouti regarding air quality concerns, burning of trash, or the Chabelley dump in 2024 or 2025. As a result, USAFRICOM officials perpetuated the use of the open-air burn pit to dispose of DoD-generated solid waste, which unnecessarily increased the risk of exposure of U.S. military and civilian personnel deployed to CADJ to harmful airborne hazards.

²² (U) Covered waste includes hazardous and medical waste, tires, batteries, and plastics.

(U) USAFE-AFAFRICA Officials Misinterpreted the DoD Definition of an Open-Air Burn Pit

(U) USAFRICOM officials did not report the Chabelley dump as an open-air burn pit or engage with the Government of Djibouti to reduce or eliminate the use of the dump because USAFE-AFAFRICA officials misinterpreted the DoD definition of an open-air burn pit as excluding host nation-controlled open-air burn pits. DoD policy states that use of open-air burn pits to dispose of DoD-created waste outside the United States is prohibited, and this prohibition applies regardless of whether the open-air burn pit is operated by U.S. forces, contractors, multinational forces, or allied country forces. However, in July 2025, USAFE-AFAFRICA Office of the Command Surgeon officials stated that their understanding of the DoD definition of an open-air burn pit excluded open-air burn pit sites operated by the host nation and USAFE-AFAFRICA did not have direct ability to regulate the operations at the Chabelley dump. Due to USAFE-AFAFRICA Office of the Command Surgeon officials misunderstanding the DoD policy open-air burn pit definition, they did not report the existence of the Chabelley dump in their input to USAFRICOM from October 2022 through October 2023.

(U) After USAFE-AFAFRICA Office of the Command Surgeon officials reported the existence of the Chabelley dump in November 2024, USAFRICOM officials stated that their continued omission of the existence of the Chabelley dump in their November 2024 and January 2025 open-air burn pit reports to the Joint Staff was due to an administrative error. The USAFRICOM officials also stated that USAFE-AFAFRICA's report did not explicitly name the Chabelley dump as the open-air burn pit but instead described a "large, active host nation commercial burn pit operations ongoing located within 300-500 meters away from U.S. personnel at CADJ."

(U) However, in addition to USAFE-AFAFRICA Office of the Command Surgeon officials reporting the existence of the Chabelley dump in November 2024, six OEHSAs from July 2022 through October 2024 identified the Chabelley dump as an open-air burn pit that burns all types of trash including tires, appliances, and cars, and operates on "almost a 24/7 basis." Therefore, USAFRICOM officials should have been aware of the open burning operations at the Chabelley dump since at least July 2022, which should have prompted the officials to report the Chabelley dump to the Joint Staff and engage with the Government of Djibouti.²³ According to DoD policy, reporting the open-air burn pit to the Joint Staff ensures the location is

²³ (U) In accordance with DHA PI 6490.03 and Annex Q of the USAFRICOM Campaign Order, USAFRICOM Office of the Command Surgeon officials are responsible for using OEHSAs to develop and update periodic occupational and environmental monitoring summaries, which summarize population health risks and potential medical implications associated with major deployment sites.

(U) included on a watch list and such reporting triggers collection of data to evaluate and track the impact of the open-air burn pit on surrounding areas and potential future health concerns. USAFRICOM officials could not explain why they did not request the U.S. Embassy's support to engage with the Government of Djibouti to relocate or close the dump.

(U) To ensure the impacts of the Chabelley dump are evaluated and tracked, the USAFRICOM Commander should immediately update the USAFRICOM open-air burn pit report to the Joint Staff to accurately characterize the Chabelley dump as an open-air burn pit located within 4000 meters of CADJ. In addition, the USAFRICOM Commander should direct the USAFRICOM Strategy, Engagement, and Programs directorate to immediately develop and implement a plan to engage with the Government of Djibouti until the dump is closed or relocated to a location that is a safe distance from U.S. personnel living or working at CADJ. Lastly, the USAFRICOM Commander should review the actions of the USAFRICOM Logistics directorate officials and take appropriate action to hold the officials accountable for failing to appropriately report the Chabelley dump to the Joint Staff following USAFE-AFAFRICA's notification of the dump to USAFRICOM in November 2024.

(U) USAFE-AFAFRICA Officials Did Not Implement an Air Quality Mitigation Plan

(U) Despite preparing a draft air quality mitigation plan, USAFE-AFAFRICA Office of the Command Surgeon officials did not implement an air quality mitigation plan to address the potential risk of poor air quality at CADJ. In April 2024, USAFE-AFAFRICA Office of the Command Surgeon and 406th AEW officials developed a draft air quality mitigation plan, known as an air quality monitoring program guide, which included guidance for monitoring, mitigating, and communicating risk information related to poor air quality. In addition, 776th EABS officials executed some of the requirements outlined in the draft plan at CADJ, such as obtaining PM2.5 samples and notifying installation personnel of instances of increased poor air quality. However, deployments to CADJ are rotational and without an implemented air quality mitigation plan, future 776th EABS officials that deploy may not always take the appropriate action to address poor air quality.

(U) In March 2025, USAFE-AFAFRICA Office of the Command Surgeon and 406th AEW officials updated the draft plan to establish a required daily air quality monitoring tracker and air quality risk categories for notifying installation personnel of recommended activities, such as limiting or avoiding outdoor activity.²⁴ However, despite preparing an appropriate draft air quality mitigation plan, USAFE-AFAFRICA Office of the Command Surgeon officials did not formally implement the plan until May 2025.

(U) The delay in fully implementing the air quality mitigation plan occurred because the 406th AEW and 776th EABS did not have dedicated staff to finalize and implement the plan. Specifically, USAFE-AFAFRICA Office of the Command Surgeon officials stated that the goal for developing and implementing the plan was April 2024. However, according to the USAFE-AFAFRICA Office of the Command Surgeon officials, from April 2024 to May 2025, the turnover of 406th AEW and 776th EABS personnel delayed completion and implementation of the plan.

(U) In May 2025, USAFE-AFAFRICA Office of the Command Surgeon and 406th AEW officials finalized and implemented an air quality mitigation plan, and 776th EABS officials began completing the required daily air quality monitoring tracker. The 776th EABS officials monitored the air quality at CADJ every 2 hours and documented the levels of PM2.5 in the tracker. After documenting the measurements, the tracker automatically populated the air quality risk categories and identified whether notifying installation personnel of poor air quality was necessary. Because USAFE-AFAFRICA Office of the Command Surgeon and 406th AEW officials took action to finalize and implement an appropriate air quality mitigation plan, and 776th EABS officials executed the plan, we are not making a recommendation.

(U) USAFE-AFAFRICA Officials Did Not Ensure Air Sampling Included Key Airborne Hazards

(U) USAFE-AFAFRICA Office of the Command Surgeon officials did not ensure air sampling included specific airborne hazards associated with open-air burn pits. Specifically, while 776th EABS officials conducted air sampling at CADJ for PM2.5, they did not conduct sampling to measure known airborne hazards associated with burn pits, such as polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons, volatile organic compounds, and dioxins.²⁵ USAFE-AFAFRICA Office of the Command Surgeon officials

²⁴ (U) Officials from the 406th AEW began updating the draft guide in October 2024, before we announced this audit.

²⁵ (U) The list of known airborne hazards in this report is not all inclusive. Location-specific OEHSAs since 2022 continually recommended testing for the three hazards identified in this report. The Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness also recommend testing for nitrous oxides, sulfur oxides, carbon monoxide, and particulate matter of 10-micrometer size (PM-10).

(U) did not ensure air sampling included polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons, volatile organic compounds, and dioxins despite at least six OEHSAs, since July 2022, recommending more specific sampling for those airborne hazards. Also, for locations with open-air burn pits, DoD policy requires evaluation of the surrounding areas, including wind pattern studies and air samples, to monitor the environmental impact and track the information for potential future health concerns. The lack of sampling for key airborne hazards associated with open-air burn pits prevented USAFRICOM and USAFE-AFAFRICA officials from accurately identifying exposures to those hazards and responding to risks that exposure could pose to U.S. personnel at CADJ. In addition, inaccurate identification of exposure to airborne hazards associated with open-air burn pits prevented the proper documentation of those exposures in the medical records of Service members who served at CADJ, potentially delaying targeted treatment and benefit considerations.

(U) The USAFE-AFAFRICA Office of the Command Surgeon officials stated that they did not ensure air sampling included specific airborne hazards because 406th AEW officials experienced challenges with obtaining sampling equipment. The USAFE-AFAFRICA bioenvironmental engineering deployment guide includes procedures for obtaining sampling equipment from the DCPH-A.²⁶ Despite this, USAFE-AFAFRICA Office of the Command Surgeon and 406th AEW officials stated that the DCPH-A equipment needed for sampling known airborne hazards associated with burn pits was available only in the United States and was difficult to transport to CADJ. For example, the necessary equipment for sampling polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons and dioxins is located at the DCPH-A laboratory in Maryland. According to a DCPH-A physical scientist in March 2025, the DCPH-A experienced challenges with keeping the equipment for sampling volatile organic compounds in stock, and the equipment for sampling polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons and dioxins was large and difficult to ship to a location intact.

(U) However, the DCPH-A physical scientist also explained to a 406th AEW bioenvironmental engineer that they believed transporting the equipment needed to sample for volatile organic compounds, polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons, and dioxins could be accomplished with time and planning. Because the USAFE-AFAFRICA Office of the Command Surgeon is responsible for supporting medical logistics support at CADJ, such as ensuring subordinate medical staff have the equipment needed to conduct their tasks, the USAFE-AFAFRICA Command Surgeon should review USAFE-AFAFRICA's medical logistics support and update procedures to include a plan for securing the equipment needed to sample for known airborne hazards associated with open-air burn pits at CADJ.

²⁶ (U) The 406th AEW has an agreement with the DCPH-A where the DCPH-A agreed to provide sampling equipment through September 2028.

(U) In addition, in June 2025 the USAFRICOM Office of the Command Surgeon updated Annex Q of the USAFRICOM Campaign Order to require quarterly air sampling to include volatile organic compounds and dioxins. Due to the proximity of the Chabelley dump to CADJ, air quality sampling at CADJ should also include polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons. Therefore, the USAFE-AFAFRICA Command Surgeon should also update procedures to include a plan for routinely conducting air sampling at CADJ for known airborne hazards associated with open-air burn pits, including polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons, volatile organic compounds, and dioxins.

(U) Service Members at Risk of Avoidable Toxic Exposure

~~(CUI)~~ As a result of USAFRICOM and USAFE-AFAFRICA officials not properly managing the impacts of poor air quality at CADJ, DoD officials did not protect [REDACTED] Service members who deployed to CADJ from November 2019 through September 2025 from the increased exposure to harmful airborne toxins associated with open-air burn pits, which could develop into serious health conditions, such as asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, and cancer.²⁷ The study published in JAMA Network Open on burn pit exposure found that for every 100 days of deployment to installations with burn pit exposure, DoD personnel had a 1-percent increased risk for asthma and a 4-percent increased risk for chronic obstructive pulmonary disease.

(U) In addition, according to U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, presumptive conditions for airborne hazards and open-air burn pit exposures include multiple types of cancer, such as brain, kidney, and lymphatic cancers.²⁸ Negative health outcomes for personnel who deploy to CADJ could degrade their current mission effectiveness, decrease their future readiness to deploy, and potentially increase costs for medical care that could be avoided with proper and timely assessment, mitigation, and notification procedures. During our site visit to CADJ in April 2025, multiple Service members stated that they experienced eye and throat irritation, difficulty breathing, and nausea while working and living at CADJ when smoke from the Chabelley dump was present.

(U) USAFRICOM's lack of engagement with the Government of Djibouti regarding the Chabelley dump enabled prolonged use of the open-air burn pit to dispose of DoD-generated solid waste. Additionally, not reporting the Chabelley dump as an open-air burn pit limited the DoD's initiatives to track and ensure the

²⁷ (U) According to USAFE-AFAFRICA Office of the Command Surgeon officials, most deployments to CADJ are 6 months long and consist of 122 personnel per rotation. The count of 122 Service members is specific to Air Force personnel and does not include personnel from additional Military Services that may deploy to CADJ.

²⁸ (U) U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, "Airborne Hazards and Burn Pit Exposures – Public Health," last updated August 13, 2025.

(U) elimination of open-air burn pits. The USD(A&S) memorandum states that open-air burn pit disposal of DoD-generated solid waste outside of the United States is prohibited unless the Secretary of Defense grants a temporary exemption, and that the prohibition applies to all open-air burn pits, regardless of who operates them. Exemptions for the use of open-air burn pits are valid for 180 days and combatant commanders are required to submit a justification for continued use of open-air burn pits for each 180-day period. Therefore, not reporting the dump allowed USAFRICOM to bypass obtaining an exemption from the Secretary of Defense, which would have allowed the DoD to track USAFRICOM efforts to comply with their ongoing initiative to ensure the elimination of open-air burn pits. To comply with DoD initiatives, the USAFRICOM Commander should request an exemption from the Secretary of Defense to use the Chabelley dump to dispose of DoD-generated solid waste in accordance with DoD Instruction 4715.19 and the USD(A&S) memorandum.

(U) Management Comments on the Finding and Our Response

(U) Director, Occupational and Environment Health for the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness Comments

(U) Although not required to comment, the Director, Occupational and Environment Health for the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness, agreed with the overall report findings and recommendations. The Director provided technical comments, which we included in Appendix D along with our response to each comment detailing report revisions where appropriate.

(U) Installation Management Branch Chief, Department of the Air Force, Air Force Installation and Mission Support Center, Detachment 4 Comments

(U) Although not required to comment, the Installation Management Branch Chief for the Air Force Installation and Mission Support Center, Detachment 4, reviewed and endorsed the draft report and stated that they will actively support USAFE-AFAFRICA, the 406th AEW, and the 776th EABS with the implementation of all the recommendations.

(U) Recommendations, Management Comments, and Our Response

(U) Recommendation A.1

(U) We recommend that the Commander of the U.S. Africa Command:

- a. **(U) Immediately update the U.S. Africa Command open-air burn pit report to the Joint Staff to accurately characterize the Chabelley dump as an open-air burn pit located within 4000 meters of Chabelley Airfield.**

(U) U.S. Africa Command Comments

(U) The Chief of Staff, USAFRICOM, responding for the Commander, USAFRICOM, agreed with the recommendation and stated that USAFRICOM will provide the Joint Staff an updated open-air burn pit report by February 6, 2026, that specifically identifies the Chabelley dump as part of broad open-air burning in the vicinity of CADJ.

(U) Our Response

(U) The comments from the Chief of Staff, USAFRICOM, addressed the specifics of the recommendation. Therefore, it is resolved but will remain open. We will close this recommendation once we receive verification that USAFRICOM submitted an updated open-air burn pit report that identifies the Chabelley dump as an open-air burn pit to the Joint Staff.

- b. **(U) Direct the U.S. Africa Command Strategy, Engagement, and Programs directorate to immediately develop and implement a plan to continuously engage with the Government of Djibouti until the Chabelley dump is closed or relocated to a location that is a safe distance from U.S. personnel living or working at Chabelley Airfield.**

(U) U.S. Africa Command Comments

(U) The Chief of Staff, USAFRICOM, responding for the Commander, USAFRICOM, agreed with the recommendation and stated that USAFRICOM is working with the U.S. Embassy in Djibouti to formalize a plan by June 2026 for continued engagement with the Government of Djibouti. The Chief of Staff stated that the engagement plan will include a resolution that enhances the health and safety of U.S. personnel through mutually beneficial and feasible solutions. Additionally, the Chief of Staff stated that USAFRICOM is working with other Department components to explore options to assist the Djiboutian government with reducing the amount of solid waste sent to the Chabelley dump.

(U) Our Response

(U) The comments from the Chief of Staff, USAFRICOM, addressed the specifics of the recommendation. Therefore, it is resolved but will remain open. We will close this recommendation once we receive USAFRICOM's formal plan for continuously engaging with the Government of Djibouti regarding open-air burning at the Chabelley dump and verification that USAFRICOM has implemented the newly developed engagement plan in a manner that results in increased health and safety of U.S. personnel at CADJ.

- c. **(U) Review the actions of the U.S. Africa Command Logistics directorate officials and take appropriate action to hold the officials accountable for failing to appropriately report the Chabelley dump to the Joint Staff following U.S. Air Forces Europe–Air Forces Africa's notification of the dump to U.S. Africa Command in November 2024.**

(U) U.S. Africa Command Comments

(U) The Chief of Staff, USAFRICOM, responding for the Commander, USAFRICOM, agreed with the recommendation and stated that USAFRICOM will review the actions of their Logistics directorate officials and take appropriate action. The Chief of Staff stated that, when taking action, USAFRICOM will consider factors such as potential confusion, ambiguities in the reporting requirement, and any demonstrable harmful effects caused by the reporting oversight.

(U) Our Response

(U) The comments from the Chief of Staff, USAFRICOM, addressed the specifics of the recommendation. Therefore, it is resolved but will remain open. We will close this recommendation once we receive documentation to verify that USAFRICOM completed its review and determined the appropriate course of action.

- d. **(U) Request an exemption from the Secretary of Defense to use the Chabelley dump to dispose of DoD-generated solid waste in accordance with DoD Instruction 4715.19 and the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition and Sustainment Memorandum, "Interim Policy on Solid Waste Disposal Outside the U.S.," October 13, 2022.**

(U) U.S. Africa Command Comments

(U) The Chief of Staff, USAFRICOM, responding for the Commander, USAFRICOM, agreed with the recommendation and stated that USAFRICOM will submit the request for an exemption to provide Department-level visibility on the critical force health protection issue. However, the Chief of Staff did not agree that open-air burning at the Chabelley dump met the requirements for requesting an exemption under DoD policy.

(U) Our Response

(U) Although USAFRICOM did not agree with our interpretation of DoD policy, the comments from the Chief of Staff addressed the specifics of the recommendation. The USD(A&S) memorandum states that open-air burn pit disposal of DoD-generated solid waste outside of the United States is prohibited unless the Secretary of Defense grants a temporary exemption, and that the prohibition applies to all open-air burn pits, regardless of who operates them. USAFRICOM does not operate the Chabelley dump. However, since November 2019, the CLDJ BOS contract has required DoD contractors to transport DoD-generated solid waste at CLDJ and CADJ to the Chabelley dump. USAFRICOM officials know that the contents of the Chabelley dump are regularly burned, which includes the DoD-generated solid waste. Even though USAFRICOM personnel do not directly operate the open-air burning at the Chabelley dump, the CLDJ and CADJ solid waste management practices contribute to the open-air burning for which the USD(A&S) memorandum requires an exemption granted by the Secretary of Defense. Because USAFRICOM agreed to request the required exemption, the recommendation is resolved but will remain open. We will close this recommendation once we receive documentation to verify the Secretary of Defense's decision regarding the USAFRICOM exemption request.

(U) Recommendation A.2

(U) We recommend that the Command Surgeon for U.S. Air Forces Europe–Air Forces Africa review U.S. Air Forces Europe–Air Forces Africa's medical logistics support and update sampling procedures to include a plan for:

- a. **(U) Securing the equipment needed to sample for known airborne hazards associated with open-air burn pits.**

(U) U.S. Air Forces Europe–Air Forces Africa Comments

(U) The Command Surgeon, USAFE-AFAFRICA, agreed with the recommendation and stated that the USAFE-AFAFRICA Command Surgeon has reviewed and will continually monitor their medical logistics support through routine sync meetings between USAFE-AFAFRICA, USAFRICOM, and the 406th AEW. The Command Surgeon, USAFE-AFAFRICA, stated that they are focused on meeting the monitoring requirements for airborne hazards associated with open-air burn pits at CADJ.

(U) 406th Air Expeditionary Wing Comments

(U) Although not required to comment, the Commander, 406th AEW, agreed with the recommendation and stated that CLDJ has loaned the 776th EABS PM2.5 reading instruments that alert commanders and personnel at CADJ of periods of excessive poor air quality. The Commander stated that the 406th AEW requires \$20,000 to secure its own system.

(U) Our Response

(U) Although the Command Surgeon, USAFE-AFAFRICA agreed with the recommendation, the plan to continually monitor their medical logistics support would not secure the equipment needed to sample for known airborne hazards associated with open-air burn pits. In addition, the 776th EABS PM2.5 reading instruments do not have the capability to sample for known airborne hazards associated with open-air burn pits. Therefore, the recommendation is unresolved. We request that the Command Surgeon, USAFE-AFAFRICA, provide additional comments that identify a specific plan of actions necessary to secure the equipment required to sample for known airborne hazards associated with open-air burn pits at CADJ within 30 days of the final report.

- b. (U) Routinely conducting air sampling at Chabelley Airfield for known airborne hazards associated with open-air burn pits, including polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons, volatile organic compounds, and dioxins.**

(U) U.S. Air Forces Europe–Air Forces Africa Comments

(U) The Command Surgeon, USAFE-AFAFRICA, agreed with the recommendation and stated that USAFE-AFAFRICA follows the June 2025 USAFRICOM Campaign Order, Annex Q air sampling plan, which includes routinely conducting air sampling at CADJ for known airborne hazards, including polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons, volatile organic compounds, and dioxins.

(U) 406th Air Expeditionary Wing Comments

(U) Although not required to comment, the Commander, 406th AEW, agreed with the recommendation and stated that the 406th AEW updated pre-deployment training requirements to include sampling training. Additionally, the Commander stated that while the 406th AEW did not meet the air sampling requirements for polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons, volatile organic compounds, and dioxins in the first quarter of FY 2026, it is postured to meet sampling requirements going forward.

(U) Our Response

(U) The comments from the Command Surgeon, USAFE-AFAFRICA, addressed the specifics of the recommendation. We verified that the June 2025 USAFRICOM Campaign Order, Annex Q, requires its components, including USAFE-AFAFRICA, to perform quarterly air quality sampling for known airborne hazards associated with open-air burn pits. Therefore, the recommendation is resolved but will remain open. We will close this recommendation once we receive documentation to verify that USAFE-AFAFRICA is consistently conducting air sampling at CADJ in accordance with the air sampling plan outlined in USAFRICOM Campaign Order, Annex Q.

(U) Finding B

(U) Notice of Concern Summary: Improved Oversight of Contracted Solid Waste Management Services Needed

(U) On September 2, 2025, we issued a notice of concern to inform the Commander, Naval Facilities Engineering Systems Command (NAVFAC), of the immediate need to improve government oversight of contractor-provided solid waste management services at CLDJ and CADJ. We found evidence that the Navy's inadequate surveillance of these services could impact the health of U.S. military and civilian personnel deployed at CLDJ. See Appendix C for the notice of concern.

(U) The notice of concern included three suggested actions for the CLDJ BOS contracting officer, NAVFAC. On September 23, 2025, NAVFAC officials provided an unofficial draft response to the suggested actions; however, NAVFAC officials stated that they required additional time to provide an accurate and complete response. Therefore, we converted the three suggested actions to recommendations in this report. The three recommendations aim to strengthen oversight of the contractor's execution of non-incinerated solid waste disposal, ensure the Navy collects the documentation necessary to hold the contractor accountable in substantiated instances of contract noncompliance, and eliminate health risks from unauthorized burning of DoD waste. As a result of including these recommendations in this report, we received an official response from NAVFAC officials.

(U) Improper Solid Waste Dumping

(U) According to NAVFAC contracting officials, they routinely found non-incinerated solid waste, which could only originate from CLDJ, dumped outside the perimeter of CLDJ. NAVFAC contracting officials were aware of at least 10 unauthorized dumpsites, 5 of which were around the immediate perimeter of CLDJ and contained U.S. Government and its contractors' trash. On two occasions—December 2024 and April 2025—NAVFAC contracting officials observed the subcontractor's trash trucks departing CLDJ and dumping contents from the trucks outside of the CLDJ perimeter.

(U) In April 2025, we accompanied NAVFAC contracting officials to several unauthorized dump sites a short distance from the CLDJ perimeter and found trash that appeared to originate from CLDJ, as shown in Figure 6.²⁹ We found items such as plastic bottles, containers, and bags still intact with labels from the Navy Exchange and fast-food establishments that NAVFAC contracting officials confirmed were only available on CLDJ. In addition, several discarded items included the names, ranks, and titles of U.S. Service members. For example, we found an email from a U.S. Service member that included names, email addresses, and phone numbers of CLDJ personnel. When notified of what we found, the Combined Joint Task Force–Horn of Africa (CJTF-HOA) Inspector General (IG) immediately informed the CJTF-HOA and the CLDJ Installation Commander of the issue. The CJTF-HOA IG stated that the commander addressed the issue directly with the individual still at CLDJ through direct counseling, reinforcing the installation’s 100-percent shred policy. Furthermore, the CLDJ Installation Commander updated the installation “welcome brief” to ensure all CLDJ personnel were aware of the shred policy.



(U) Figure 6. Photo of Likely CLDJ Trash on Back Roads Outside CLDJ Perimeter on April 2, 2025

(U) Source: The DoD OIG.

(U) To address the improper disposal of solid waste, NAVFAC contracting officials issued two letters of concern to the contractor in December 2024 and April 2025 directing the contractor to discontinue using unauthorized disposal sites and gain accountability of its solid waste management services. In response to the December 2024 letter of concern, the contractor refuted NAVFAC’s claim

²⁹ (U) In addition to the trash the audit team inspected at several (at least four) unauthorized dump sites, the route between the dump sites—CLDJ to the Chabelley dump and the Chabelley dump to CADJ—were each littered with solid waste, some of which could have only originated from CLDJ, such as from the fast-food establishments available only on the installation.

(U) and requested detailed evidence including specific locations, truck, and driver information. NAVFAC contracting officials stated that although the contents of the dumped solid waste included trash that could only originate from CLDJ, they were unable to provide sufficient evidence to demonstrate with certainty who was responsible for the unauthorized dumping and considered the matter closed.

(U) Subsequently, in conjunction with the April 2025 letter of concern, NAVFAC contracting officials provided video and photographic evidence of the subcontractor's improper disposal of non-incinerated solid waste. As a result, the contractor agreed to pay for Djiboutian police escorts of their subcontracted garbage trucks from CLDJ to the Chabelley dump. NAVFAC contracting officials stated that despite this being the second letter of concern involving noncompliant solid waste management services, they did not reduce the payments as of April 2025 to the contractor. Instead, the NAVFAC contracting officials notified the contractor during their weekly meeting that performance assessment representatives (PARs) would increase their surveillance of the solid waste management services. However, as of July 2025, NAVFAC contracting officials did not add surveillance of the contractor's transport of non-incinerated solid waste. The NAVFAC contracting officer stated that the PARs were aware of the contractor's performance issues and could monitor solid waste pickup and transport. However, neither the contracting officer nor the contracting officer's representative updated the functional assessment plan to include procedures on how to monitor solid waste transport, or the evidence needed if a PAR observed poor performance, such as improper disposal of non-incinerated solid waste.

(U) In addition, the PAR responsible for managing the solid waste services at CADJ stated that they did not conduct surveillance of the trash truck leaving CADJ to ensure the truck went to CLDJ without dumping its contents at unauthorized locations. Like the solid waste CLDJ functional assessment plan, the solid waste CADJ functional assessment plan also does not include any objectives associated with tracking the movement of the trash trucks between CADJ and CLDJ. The contracting officer's representative and alternate contracting officer's representative acknowledged that before the announcement of our audit, neither of them considered conducting surveillance of the transport of solid waste from CADJ to CLDJ. However, a civil engineer from CADJ stated that the road between CADJ and the Chabelley dump went from relatively clear in November 2024 to filled with trash as of April 2025. Without adequate contractor oversight, the contractor may also be improperly disposing of CADJ solid waste before reaching the incinerator plant at CLDJ where it would be properly sorted for either incineration or transport to the Chabelley dump.

(U) To ensure both the oversight of solid waste transport and that contract oversight procedures produce the documentation needed to hold the contractor accountable in the event of poor performance, the CLDJ BOS contracting officer, NAVFAC, should direct the contracting officer's representative to update oversight procedures requiring the PARs to conduct oversight of the transport of solid waste to the CLDJ incinerator plant and non-incinerated solid waste to the Chabelley dump. The updated procedures should reflect an increased oversight level and outline what sufficient evidence the PARs must obtain to hold the contractor accountable in the event of poor performance. The CLDJ BOS contracting officer, NAVFAC, should also monitor documentation from the PARs' increased oversight and, if non-incinerated solid waste dumping is substantiated, take immediate action commensurate with the severity and frequency of the noncompliance to hold the contractor accountable to include requiring the contractor to clean up any dumped waste.

(U) Improper disposal of non-incinerated solid waste from CLDJ poses health, environmental, and security concerns and has the potential to strain relationships with our host nation partners. According to an Air Force OEHSA completed in March 2025, local nationals burn trash daily outside the base and along the route from CLDJ to CADJ, including tires, appliances, cars, and residential trash. The site assessment also noted that exposure levels from these localized open-air burn pit operations will likely cause short and long-term adverse health effects as they regularly exceeded the military exposure guidelines for particulate matter less than 2.5 micrometers in diameter (PM2.5). NAVFAC officials stated that open burning regularly occurs at or adjacent to these unauthorized dump sites. For example, in April 2025, the audit team observed an unauthorized dump site where solid waste that appeared to be from CLDJ was burning in the open. In another instance, the audit team observed what appeared to be evidence of recent opening burning at an unauthorized dump site. Figure 7 shows the audit team's two observations from April 2025.



(U) To eliminate health risks from unauthorized burning of DoD waste, the CLDJ BOS contracting officer, NAVFAC, should review the evidence supporting their December 2024 and April 2025 letters of concern to determine whether solid waste found at the unauthorized dump sites surrounding CLDJ contained trash generated from CLDJ. If confirmed, the contracting officer should use the results of this review to reconsider whether they can direct the contractor to clean up the dumped waste.

(U) In addition to increased risk of health issues to U.S. military and civilian personnel, without corrective action, the Navy risks paying the contractor for solid waste management services that do not comply with the CLDJ BOS contract. From November 2024 through June 2025, the Navy paid the contractor an estimated \$111,304 for non-incinerated solid waste disposal.

(U) Strengthening its oversight of the contractor's execution of non-incinerated solid waste disposal services will ensure the Navy pays only for contractually compliant services. In addition, it ensures the Navy collects the documentation necessary to hold the contractor accountable for the cleanup of improperly disposed of non-incinerated solid waste, limiting the DoD's potential responsibility to the Government of Djibouti for disposing of waste outside of the Government authorized dumping location and eliminating health risks from unauthorized burning of DoD waste.

(U) Recommendations, Management Comments, and Our Response

(U) Recommendation B.1

(U) We recommend that the Camp Lemonnier, Djibouti base operations support contracting officer, Naval Facilities Engineering Systems Command:

- a. **(U) Direct the contracting officer's representative to update oversight procedures to require the performance assessment representatives to conduct oversight of the transport of solid waste to the Camp Lemonnier, Djibouti incinerator plant and non-incinerated solid waste to the Chabelley dump. The updated procedures should reflect an increased oversight level and outline what sufficient evidence the performance assessment representatives must obtain to hold the contractor accountable in the event of poor performance.**

(U) Naval Facilities Engineering Systems Command Comments

(U) The NAVFAC Inspector General (IG), responding for the NAVFAC Commander and the CLDJ BOS contracting officer, agreed with the recommendation and stated that increased oversight procedures of the transport of waste are necessary. The NAVFAC IG stated that the contracting officer's representative, the alternate contracting officer's representative, and other personnel in the facility support contracts branch follow the waste truck convoy off base twice monthly at random times to verify contractor compliance. In addition, the NAVFAC IG stated that NAVFAC will continue the increased oversight until the contracting officer determines and verifies through contract performance documentation that off-base oversight is no longer needed.

(U) The NAVFAC IG also stated that any future noncompliance will be documented in both the contract file, as an issuance of a notice of noncompliance, and in the contractor's regular performance assessments under the contract. Procedures for the government oversight of the contract are documented in the contract's performance and functional assessment plans and in DoD guidance regarding use of the Contractor Performance Assessment Reporting System. The NAVFAC IG stated that NAVFAC considers their actions to address the recommendation complete.

(U) Our Response

(U) Comments from the NAVFAC IG addressed the specifics of the recommendation. However, we have not verified that the agreed-upon corrective actions were implemented. Therefore, the recommendation is resolved but will remain open.

(U) We will close this recommendation once we receive the contract's performance assessment documentation to verify that the contracting officer added oversight procedures outlining the increased oversight of solid waste transport.

- b. (U) Monitor documentation from the performance assessment representatives' increased oversight and, if non-incinerated solid waste dumping is substantiated, take immediate action commensurate with the severity and frequency of the noncompliance to hold the contractor accountable to include requiring the contractor to clean up any dumped waste.**

(U) Naval Facilities Engineering Systems Command Comments

(U) The NAVFAC IG, responding for the NAVFAC Commander and the CLDJ BOS contracting officer, agreed with the recommendation and stated that the contractor will be held accountable for contract performance. The NAVFAC IG stated that the PAR provides a monthly performance assessment summary of all services performed under the contract to the contracting officer. Additionally, the NAVFAC IG stated that if dumping of waste under the BOS contract is substantiated, the contracting officer will hold the contractor accountable commensurate with the severity and frequency of the substantiated noncompliance. The NAVFAC IG stated that NAVFAC considers their actions to address the recommendation complete.

(U) Our Response

(U) Comments from the NAVFAC IG addressed the specifics of the recommendation. However, we have not verified that the agreed-upon corrective actions were implemented. Therefore, the recommendation is resolved but will remain open. We will close this recommendation once we verify that the contracting officer is consistently reviewing the contracting officer's representative's and PAR's monthly performance assessment reports.

- c. (U) Review the evidence supporting their December 2024 and April 2025 letters of concern to determine whether solid waste found at the unauthorized dump sites surrounding Camp Lemonnier, Djibouti contained trash generated from Camp Lemonnier, Djibouti. If confirmed, the contracting officer should use the results of this review to reconsider whether they can direct the contractor to clean up the dumped waste.**

(U) Naval Facilities Engineering Systems Command Comments

(U) The NAVFAC IG, responding for the NAVFAC Commander and the CLDJ BOS contracting officer, agreed with the recommendation and stated that while the origin of the non-incinerated waste could be from CLDJ, the contracting officer

(U) could not determine whether the waste was collected under the CLDJ BOS contract. The NAVFAC IG also stated that NAVFAC will continue to conduct increased oversight of the waste removal required in the CLDJ BOS contract. If unauthorized solid waste dumping is substantiated, the contracting officer will hold the contractor accountable in a manner commensurate with the severity and frequency of the substantiated noncompliance. The NAVFAC IG stated that NAVFAC considers their actions to address the recommendation complete.

(U) Our Response

(U) Comments from the NAVFAC IG addressed the specifics of the recommendation. However, we have not verified that the agreed-upon corrective actions were implemented. Therefore, the recommendation is resolved but will remain open. We will close this recommendation upon receipt of supporting documentation recording the results of the contracting officer's review, such as meeting minutes or subsequent correspondence with the contractor.

(U) Appendix A

(U) Scope and Methodology

(U) We conducted this performance audit from March 2025 through November 2025 in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain sufficient, appropriate evidence to provide a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives. We believe that the evidence obtained provides a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives.

(U) We reviewed the following criteria to obtain an understanding of DoD air quality sampling and mitigation, open-air burn pit reporting and engagement, and toxic exposure tracking requirements.

- (U) Public Law 117-168, “Honoring our Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxins Act of 2022”
- (U) DoD Instruction 6055.05, “Occupational and Environmental Health,” November 11, 2008 (Incorporating Change 2, August 31, 2018)
- (U) DHA PI 6490.03, “Deployment Health Procedures,” December 17, 2019
- (U) DoD Instruction 4715.19, “Use of Open-Air Burn Pits in Contingency Operations,” November 13, 2018
- (U) USD(A&S) Memorandum, “Interim Policy on Solid Waste Disposal Outside the U.S.,” October 13, 2022

(U) We interviewed officials from the following organizations to understand the roles and responsibilities for managing the impacts of air quality at CADJ.

- (U) USAFRICOM Office of the Command Surgeon; Stuttgart, Germany
- (U) USAFRICOM Logistics directorate; Stuttgart, Germany
- (U) USAFE-AFAFRICA Office of the Command Surgeon; Ramstein Air Base, Germany
- (U) 406th AEW; Ramstein Air Base, Germany
- (U) 776th EABS; Chabelley Airfield, Djibouti

(U) We also reviewed air quality mitigation plans, open-air burn pit reports, OEHS reports, air sampling results, and air quality mitigation activities carried out on CADJ to gain an understanding of the environmental conditions at CADJ and to determine the extent of the efforts made to identify, assess, mitigate, and communicate the risks related to air quality at CADJ.

(U) We conducted a site visit to CADJ in April 2025 to observe air quality assessment and mitigation efforts, and to interview CADJ personnel. We also visited the Chabelley dump to conduct observations of the dump, including open burning operations.

(U) This report was reviewed by the DoD Components associated with this oversight project to identify whether any of their reported information, including legacy FOUO information, should be safeguarded and marked in accordance with the DoD CUI Program. In preparing and marking this report, we considered any comments submitted by the DoD Components about the CUI treatment of their information. If the DoD Components failed to provide any or sufficient comments about the CUI treatment of their information, we marked the report based on our assessment of the available information.

(U) Internal Control Assessment and Compliance

(U) We assessed internal controls and compliance with laws and regulations necessary to satisfy the audit objective. In particular, we assessed control environment, risk assessment, information and communication, and risk assessment controls significant to managing the impacts of poor air quality at CADJ. However, because our review was limited to these internal control components and underlying principles, it may not have disclosed all internal control deficiencies that may have existed at the time of this audit.

(U) Use of Computer-Processed Data

(U) We did not use computer-processed data to perform this audit.

(U) Prior Coverage

(U) During the last 5 years, the DoD OIG issued two reports related to air quality. Specifically, the DoD OIG issued one report on air quality issues at CLDJ and one report on reporting non-DoD solid waste burning at or near DoD-occupied locations. Unrestricted DoD OIG reports can be accessed at <http://www.dodig.mil/reports.html/>.

(U) DoD OIG

(U) Report No. DODIG-2025-041, "Audit of the DoD's Management of Air Quality Issues at Camp Lemonnier, Djibouti," November 20, 2024

(U) The DoD OIG found that U.S. Naval Forces Africa officials did not develop a plan to identify air quality issues and address the risks associated with poor air quality, as required by DoD Instruction 6055.05 and DHA PI 6490.03. Specifically, U.S. Naval Forces Africa officials did not create an OEH management plan for CLDJ, which should have included identifying environmental issues impacting CLDJ; assessing, monitoring, and mitigating identified risks; and communicating information about identified risks to installation commanders, health care providers, and military personnel.

(U) Report No. DODIG-2024-107, "Management Advisory: Non-DoD Solid Waste Burning At or Near DoD-Occupied Sites," July 11, 2024

(U) This report discussed concerns over the insufficient process for identifying and reporting non-DoD solid waste burning at or near DoD-occupied sites. Specifically, DoD officials did not develop policy requiring operational commanders to identify and report non-DoD-controlled burn pits disposing of non-DoD-generated waste to combatant commands and the Joint Staff. DoD policy only requires the identification and reporting of burn pits that are burning solid waste generated by the DoD. The omission of a reporting requirement for non-DoD solid waste burning creates the potential for U.S. Service members' exposure to burn pit toxins not being captured in their health records.

(U) Appendix B

(U) DoD Hotline Allegation

(U) Background

(U) In November 2019, the Government of Djibouti identified the Chabelley dump as a temporary solid waste disposal location for the DoD. Local nationals regularly burn the contents of the Chabelley dump in uncontrolled open-air burn pits.

(U) Allegation

(U) The DoD OIG audit of air quality issues at CLDJ mentioned the closure of the La Doua dump but did not address the air quality concerns at CADJ from the Chabelley dump.³⁰ CADJ personnel working and living on the CADJ airfield were routinely exposed to a thick fog of smoke from burning trash at the Chabelley dump, which induced difficulty breathing. The smoke from the Chabelley dump encompasses the airfield and appears as fog over the entire CADJ installation.

(U) Results

(U) The allegation was substantiated. Service members who deployed to CADJ from November 2019 through September 2025 were at an increased risk of exposure to harmful toxins associated with the Chabelley dump open-air burn pits, which could develop into serious health conditions. In April 2025, multiple Service members stated that they experienced eye and throat irritation, difficulty breathing, and nausea while working and living at CADJ when smoke from the Chabelley dump was present.

³⁰ (U) Report No. DODIG-2025-041, "Audit of the DoD's Management of Air Quality Issues at Camp Lemonnier, Djibouti," November 20, 2024."

(U) Appendix C

(U) Notice of Concern



OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
4800 MARK CENTER DRIVE
ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA 22350-1500

September 2, 2025

MEMORANDUM FOR COMMANDER, U.S. AFRICA COMMAND
COMMANDER, NAVAL FACILITIES ENGINEERING SYSTEMS
COMMAND
AUDITOR GENERAL, DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
AUDITOR GENERAL, DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE

SUBJECT: Concerns Identified During the Audit of Air Quality Concerns at
Chabelley Airfield, Djibouti (Project No. D2025-D000RJ-0083.000)

This memorandum is being issued from an ongoing audit that is being conducted in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards. We are providing this memorandum before the completion of the audit to highlight the immediate need to improve government oversight of contractor provided solid waste management services at Camp Lemonnier, Djibouti (CLDJ) and Chabelley Airfield, Djibouti (CADJ). We found evidence that the Navy's inadequate surveillance of these services could impact the health of U.S. military and civilian personnel deployed at CLDJ. We identified these concerns during our current audit of air quality concerns at CADJ.¹ The objective of the audit is to determine whether the U.S. Africa Command and U.S. Air Forces Europe-Air Forces Africa managed the impacts of poor air quality at CADJ in accordance with DoD policy. The work conducted on this audit is preliminary and additional work is ongoing to satisfy the audit objective. We will include this memorandum and management comments on the suggested actions in the final report.

Background

CADJ and CLDJ are U.S. military installations in Djibouti that support more than 5,000 individuals, including deployed U.S. Service members, allied military personnel, and DoD civilians and contractors. CADJ is operated by the Air Force and CLDJ is operated by the Navy. The Navy provides base operations support (BOS) for both CADJ and CLDJ through the CLDJ BOS contract. The CLDJ BOS contract required the contractor to collect and transport solid waste from both CADJ and CLDJ to the CLDJ incinerator plant. At the CLDJ incinerator plant, the contractor is required to sort the solid waste by removing items prohibited from incineration, such as products containing petroleum or metals. To dispose of the non-incinerated solid waste, the contractor is required to transport it to the Chabelley dump. The Chabelley dump is the Government of Djibouti's authorized dump site to dispose of all non-incinerated solid waste from CADJ and CLDJ.

¹ Project No. D2025-D000RJ-0083.000, "Audit of Air Quality Concerns at Chabelley Airfield, Djibouti," announced on March 17, 2025.

(U) Notice of Concern (cont'd)

2

Naval Facilities Engineering Systems Command (NAVFAC) officials provide contract oversight for the CLDJ BOS contract. Specifically, NAVFAC appointed a primary contracting officer's representative (COR) whose duties included supervising three performance assessment representatives (PARs). These PARs were responsible for providing oversight of the CLDJ BOS contract solid waste management services, one PAR at CADJ and two PARs at CLDJ.

To ensure contractually compliant solid waste management services, the PARs use a functional assessment plan (FAP), which requires the PARs to assess the contractor's performance of solid waste management services using periodic sampling, unscheduled visits, and validated customer complaints three times a month.

Improper Solid Waste Dumping

According to NAVFAC contracting officials, they routinely found non-incinerated solid waste, which could only originate from CLDJ, dumped outside the perimeter of CLDJ. NAVFAC contracting officials were aware of at least 10 unauthorized dumpsites, 5 of which were around the immediate perimeter of CLDJ and contained U.S. Government and its contractors' trash. On two separate occasions—December 2024 and April 2025—NAVFAC contracting officials observed the subcontractor's trash trucks departing CLDJ and dumping contents from the trucks outside of the CLDJ perimeter.

In April 2025, the audit team accompanied NAVFAC contracting officials to several unauthorized dump sites a short distance from the CLDJ perimeter and found trash that appeared to originate from CLDJ, as shown in Figure 1.² We found items such as plastic bottles, containers, and bags still intact with labels from the Navy Exchange and fast-food establishments that NAVFAC contracting officials confirmed were only available on CLDJ. In addition, several discarded items included the names, ranks, and titles of U.S. Service members. For example, the audit team found an email from a U.S. Service member that included names, email addresses, and phone numbers of CLDJ personnel. When notified of what we found, the Combined Joint Task Force-Horn of Africa (CJTF-HOA) Inspector General took immediate action to inform the CJTF-HOA and the CLDJ Installation Commander of the issue. The CJTF-HOA Inspector General stated that the commander addressed the issue directly with the individual still at CLDJ through direct counseling, reinforcing the installation's 100 percent shred policy. Furthermore, the CLDJ Installation Commander updated the installation "welcome brief" to ensure all CLDJ personnel were aware of the shred policy.

² In addition to the trash the audit team inspected at several (at least four) unauthorized dump sites, the route between the dump sites—CLDJ to the Chabelley dump and the Chabelley dump to CADJ—were each littered with solid waste, some of which could have only originated from CLDJ, such as from the fast-food establishments only available on the installation.

(U) Notice of Concern (cont'd)

3

Figure 1. Photo of Likely CLDJ Trash on Back Roads outside CLDJ Perimeter



Source: The DoD OIG.

To address the improper disposal of solid waste, NAVFAC contracting officials issued two Letters of Concern to the contractor in December 2024 and April 2025 directing the contractor to discontinue using unauthorized disposal sites and gain accountability of its solid waste management services. In response to the December 2024 Letter of Concern, the contractor refuted NAVFAC's claim and requested detailed evidence including specific locations, truck, and driver information. NAVFAC contracting officials stated that although the contents of the dumped solid waste included trash that could only originate from CLDJ, they were unable to provide sufficient evidence to demonstrate with certainty who was responsible for the unauthorized dumping and considered the matter closed.

Subsequently, in conjunction with the April 2025 Letter of Concern, NAVFAC contracting officials provided video and photographic evidence of the subcontractor's improper disposal of non-incinerated solid waste. As a result, the contractor agreed to pay for Djiboutian police escorts of their subcontracted garbage trucks from CLDJ to the Chabelley dump. NAVFAC contracting officials stated that despite this being the second Letter of Concern involving noncompliant solid waste management services, they did not reduce the payments as of April 2025 to the contractor. Instead, the NAVFAC contracting officials notified the contractor during their weekly meeting that the PARs would increase their surveillance of the solid waste management services. However, as of July 2025, NAVFAC contracting officials did not add surveillance of the contractor's transport of non-incinerated solid waste. The NAVFAC contracting officer stated that the PARs were aware of the contractor's performance issues and could monitor solid waste pickup and transport. However, neither the contracting officer nor the COR updated the FAP to include procedures on how to monitor solid waste transport, or the evidence needed if a PAR observed poor performance, such as improper disposal of non-incinerated solid waste.

In addition, the PAR responsible for managing the solid waste services at CADJ stated that they did not conduct surveillance of the trash truck leaving CADJ to ensure the truck went to CLDJ without dumping its contents at unauthorized locations. Similar to the solid waste CLDJ FAP, the solid waste CADJ FAP also does not include any objectives associated with tracking the movement of the trash trucks between CADJ and CLDJ. The COR and alternate COR

(U) Notice of Concern (cont'd)

4

acknowledged that before the announcement of our audit, neither of them considered conducting surveillance of the transport of solid waste from CADJ to CLDJ. However, a civil engineer from CADJ stated that the road between CADJ and the Chabelley Dump went from relatively clear in November 2024 to filled with trash as of April 2025. Without adequate contractor oversight, the contractor may also be improperly disposing of CADJ solid waste before reaching the incinerator plant at CLDJ where it would be properly sorted for either incineration or transport to the Chabelley dump.

Improper disposal of non-incinerated solid waste from CLDJ poses health, environmental, and security concerns and has the potential to strain relationships with our host nation partners. According to an Air Force occupational and environmental health site assessment completed in March 2025, local nationals burn trash daily outside the base and along the route from CLDJ to CADJ, including tires, appliances, cars, and residential trash. The site assessment also noted that exposure levels from these localized open-air burn pit operations will likely cause short and long-term adverse health effects as they regularly exceeded the military exposure guidelines for particulate matter less than 2.5 micrometers in diameter (PM_{2.5}).³ NAVFAC officials stated that open burning regularly occurs at or adjacent to these unauthorized dump sites. For example, in April 2025, the audit team observed an unauthorized dump site where solid waste that appeared to be from CLDJ was burning in the open. In another instance, the audit team observed what appeared to be evidence of recent opening burning at an unauthorized dump site. Figure 2 shows the audit team's two observations from April 2025.

Figure 2. Photo Evidence of the Scorched Ground and Smoldering Trash Indicating Recent Burning Activity on Back Roads Outside the CLDJ Perimeter



Source: The DoD OIG.

In addition to increased risk of health issues to U.S. military and civilian personnel, without corrective action, the Navy risks paying the contractor for solid waste management services that do not comply with the CLDJ BOS contract. From November 2024 through June 2025, the Navy paid the contractor an estimated \$111,304 for non-incinerated solid waste disposal.

³ U.S. Army Public Health Center Technical Guide 230, "Environmental Health Risk Assessment and Chemical Exposure Guidelines for Deployed Military Personnel," 2013 Revision, defines particulate matter air pollution as a complex mixture of extremely small particles and liquid droplets found in the air.

U.S. Air Forces in Europe – Air Forces Africa, 406th Air Expeditionary Wing, "Air Quality Monitoring Program Guide," March 2025, states PM_{2.5} are inhalable, can be made up of hundreds of different chemicals, and can emit directly from a source, such as a fire or open-air burn pits.

(U) Notice of Concern (cont'd)

5

Strengthening its oversight of the contractor's execution of non-incinerated solid waste disposal services will ensure the Navy pays only for contractually compliant services. In addition, it ensures the Navy collects the documentation necessary to hold the contractor accountable for the cleanup of improperly disposed of non-incinerated solid waste, limiting the DoD's potential responsibility to the Government of Djibouti for disposing of waste outside of the Government authorized dumping location and eliminating health risks from unauthorized burning of DoD-waste.

Suggested Actions

We suggest that the CLDJ BOS Contracting Officer, NAVFAC:

- a. Direct the COR to update oversight procedures to require the PARs to conduct oversight of the transport of solid waste to the CLDJ incinerator plant and non-incinerated solid waste to the Chabelley Dump. The updated procedures should reflect an increased oversight level and outline what sufficient evidence the PARs must obtain to hold the contractor accountable in the event of poor performance.
- b. Monitor documentation from the PARs' increased oversight and, if non-incinerated solid waste dumping is substantiated, take immediate action commensurate with the severity and frequency of the noncompliance to hold the contractor accountable to include requiring the contractor to clean up any dumped waste.
- c. Review the evidence supporting their December 2024 and April 2025 Letters of Concern to determine whether solid waste found at the unauthorized dump sites surrounding CLDJ contained trash generated from CLDJ. If confirmed, the Contracting Officer should use the results of this review to reconsider whether they can direct the contractor to clean up the dumped waste.

Please respond to these suggested actions and provide all planned or executed actions taken by September 10, 2025. If you have any questions, please contact [REDACTED]



Richard B. Vasquez
Assistant Inspector General for Audit
Readiness and Global Operations

(U) Appendix D

(U) Our Response to the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness

(U) Comment Number	Final Report Page	Paragraph	Comments, Justification, and Recommendation	DoD OIG Response
1	11	Figure 5	<p>Coordinator Comment and Justification: The air sample results in Figure 5 are helpful to see, but the y-axis does not list units of measurement.</p> <p>Coordinator Recommended Change: Recommend listing units of measurement in the y-axis label.</p>	No Change. The y-axis of Report Figure 5, contains the unit of measurement.
2	11	1st full sentence on page	<p>Coordinator Comment and Justification: The reference to US Army Public Health Command [PHC] military exposure guidelines [MEGs] is helpful but the US Army PHC has changed names after the DHA transition, and the MEGs get updated somewhat regularly.</p> <p>Coordinator Recommended Change: Recommend listing the publication date of the referenced MEGs with the actual “negligible” level. Also recommend using the most current title of the organization formerly known as US Army PHC, which is “Defense Centers for Public Health-Aberdeen.”</p>	<p>No change to the publication date. The publication date is identified in footnote 20, and therefore, does not need to be duplicated in the report body.</p> <p>Updated the title of the referenced report to reflect the current title for the Defense Centers for Public Health-Aberdeen. (U)</p>

(U) Our Response to the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness (cont'd)

(U) Comment Number	Final Report Page	Paragraph	Comments, Justification, and Recommendation	DoD OIG Response
3	16	First full paragraph, 2nd sentence	<p>Coordinator Comment and Justification: We appreciate the list of some possible burn pit hazards listed in the OEHSAs such as PAHs, VOCs and dioxins. But is this list exhaustive? There are other potential hazards associated with burning materials that we recommend for consideration.</p> <p>Coordinator Recommended Change: Recommend adding nitrous oxides, sulfur oxides, carbon monoxide, and PM-10 or listing, non-exhaustive.</p>	<p>Added footnote 25 to state that the airborne hazards listed in our report are not all inclusive and included that the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness recommends testing for these additional potential hazards.</p>
4	22	Recommendation A.2.b	<p>Coordinator Comment and Justification: We appreciate the list of some possible burn pit hazards listed in the OEHSAs such as PAHs, VOCs and dioxins. But is this list exhaustive? There are other potential hazards associated with burning materials that we recommend for consideration.</p> <p>Coordinator Recommended Change: Recommend adding nitrous oxides, sulfur oxides, carbon monoxide, and PM-10.</p>	<p>No change. In response to comment #3, we added footnote 25 to identify that our list is not all inclusive.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">(U)</p>

(U) Management Comments

(U) Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness

**SELECT A CLASSIFICATION
DoD ISSUANCE COORDINATION RESPONSE**

COMPONENT COORDINATOR RESPONSE

[Click here to enter a date.](#)

SUBJECT: Proposed Choose an item. Audit of Air Quality Concerns at Chabelley Airfield, Djibouti, Project No. D2025-D000RJ-0083.000

On behalf of my Component, my formal response to this issuance is: Concur with comment. Below are comments for your consideration.

My point of contact for this action is [REDACTED],
[REDACTED]

12/23/2025

X [REDACTED]

Double-click the 'X' to insert a digital signat...
or print and sign a hard copy.
Signed by: USA

Coordinating Official's Name: [REDACTED]
Coordinating Official's Position Title: Director, Occupational and Environmental Health
Coordinating Official's Component: USW(P&R)/ASW-Readiness

(U) Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness (cont'd)

SELECT A CLASSIFICATION						
DoD ISSUANCE COORDINATION RESPONSE: Issuance Type and Number, "Title"						
CLASS	#	PAGE	PARA	BASIS FOR NON-CONCUR?	COMMENTS, JUSTIFICATION, AND ORIGINATOR JUSTIFICATION FOR RESOLUTION	COMPONENT AND POC NAME, PHONE, AND E-MAIL
Choose an item.		11	Figure 5	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Coordinator Comment and Justification: The air sample results in Figure 5 are helpful to see, but the y-axis does not list units of measurement.</p> <p>Coordinator Recommended Change: Recommend listing units of measurement in the y-axis label.</p> <p>Originator Response: Choose an item.</p> <p>Originator Reasoning:</p>	<p>USW(P&R)/ASW-Readiness ,</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>
Choose an item.		11	1 st full sentence on page	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Coordinator Comment and Justification: The reference to US Army Public Health Command military exposure guidelines is helpful but the US Army PHC has changed names after the DHA transition, and also the MEGs get updated somewhat regularly.</p> <p>Coordinator Recommended Change: Recommend listing the publication date of the referenced MEGs with the actual "negligible" level. Also recommend using the most current title of the organization formerly known as US Army PHC, which is "Defense Centers for Public Health-Aberdeen"</p> <p>Originator Response: Choose an item.</p> <p>Originator Reasoning:</p>	<p>USW(P&R)/ASW-Readiness ,</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>
Choose an item.		16	First full paragraph, 2 nd	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Coordinator Comment and Justification: We appreciate the list of some possible burn pit hazards listed in the OEHSAs such as PAHs, VOCs and dioxins. But is this list exhaustive? There are other potential hazards associated with burning materials that we recommend for consideration.</p>	<p>USW(P&R)/ASW-Readiness ,</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>

DD FORM 818, AUG 2016

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(U) Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness (cont'd)

SELECT A CLASSIFICATION						
DoD ISSUANCE COORDINATION RESPONSE: Issuance Type and Number, "Title"						
CLASS	#	PAGE	PARA	BASIS FOR NON-CONCUR?	COMMENTS, JUSTIFICATION, AND ORIGINATOR JUSTIFICATION FOR RESOLUTION	COMPONENT AND POC NAME, PHONE, AND E-MAIL
			sentence		<p>Coordinator Recommended Change: Recommend adding nitrous oxides (NOx), sulfur oxides (SOx), carbon monoxide (CO), and particulate matter of 10-micrometer size (PM-10) or listing, non-exhaustive.</p> <p>Originator Response: Choose an item.</p> <p>Originator Reasoning:</p>	
		19	Recommendation A.2.b		<p>Coordinator Comment and Justification: We appreciate the list of some possible burn pit hazards listed in the OEHSAs such as PAHs, VOCs and dioxins. But is this list exhaustive? There are other potential hazards associated with burning materials that we recommend for consideration.</p> <p>Coordinator Recommended Change: Recommend adding nitrous oxides (NOx), sulfur oxides (SOx), carbon monoxide (CO), and particulate matter of 10-micrometer size (PM-10).</p> <p>Originator Response: Choose an item.</p> <p>Originator Reasoning:</p>	<p>USW(P&R)/ASW-Readiness ,</p> <p>██████████</p> <p>██████████</p>

DD FORM 818, AUG 2016

REPLACES SD FORM 818, WHICH IS OBSOLETE

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3

(U) Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness (cont'd)

SELECT A CLASSIFICATION

DoD ISSUANCE COORDINATION RESPONSE: Issuance Type and Number, "Title"

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GENERAL GUIDANCE:

- To **sort table** by page/paragraph number, hover your mouse over the top of the first cell in the "page" column until a downward arrow appears; click and drag to the right to select both page and para columns. Under Paragraph on the Home ribbon, select A-Z button, set to sort by Column 3 and then Column 4, and select "OK." To **add new rows**, copy and paste a blank row to keep consistent formatting. To **add automatic numbering to column 2**, select entire column and click on the Numbering button under Paragraph on the Home ribbon.

COORDINATING OSD AND DOD COMPONENTS:

- Do not use the DD Form 818-1.
- Fill in the memo indicating your Component's position on the issuance. Fill in the authorized coordinator's name, position, and Component. The authorized coordinator (digitally) signs the response after the comment matrix has been completed. **Making additional changes after filling in a digital signature invalidates and removes the signature.**
- Use the comment matrix to provide comments to the OSD Component that created the issuance. Complete the header and footer and Columns 1 -7:
 - COLUMN 1* Enter the classification of the comment. If any material is **classified**, follow DoDM 5200.01 guidance for marking the document. If all comments are unclassified, mark the header and footer and ignore the column.
 - COLUMN 2* Order comments by the pages/paragraphs that they apply to in Columns 3 and 4.
 - COLUMNS 3&4* Cite the page on which the paragraph appears; cite the paragraph number as it appears in the text, e.g. 2.1.a..
 - COLUMNS 5* Only mark this box if you non-concur with the issuance and the comment in the applicable row is part of the basis for that non-concur. A nonconcur is typically used only when an issuance contains: (a) a violation of the law or contradiction of Executive Branch policy or of existing policy in a DoDD, DoDI, or other instrument approved by the Secretary or Deputy Secretary of Defense; or (b) an unnecessary risk to safety, life, limb, or DoD materiel; waste or abuse of DoD appropriations; or unreasonable burden on a DoD Component's resources.
 - COLUMN 6* Place only one comment per row. Enter your comment, justification, and recommended changes in the first two areas provided. If any material is **classified or controlled unclassified information**, follow DoDM 5200.01 or DoDI 5200.48 guidance for marking the document.
 - COLUMN 7* As stated.
- Review** the comments, **resolve** any conflicting views, and **confirm** that the completed matrix accurately represents your Component's position. Upload the form to the DoD Directives Program Portal in **Microsoft Word format (.docx)**, with the signed memo representing your Component's position.

DD FORM 818, AUG 2016 **REPLACES SD FORM 818, WHICH IS OBSOLETE** 4
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(U) U.S. Africa Command

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**HEADQUARTERS
UNITED STATES AFRICA COMMAND
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF STAFF
UNIT 29951
APO AE 09154-9951**

20 January 2026

MEMORANDUM FOR DEPARTMENT OF WAR INSPECTOR GENERAL

SUBJECT: United States Africa Command Response to Department of War (DoW) Office of Inspector General Draft Report, "Audit of Air Quality Concerns at Chabelley Airfield, Djibouti" (Project No. D2025-D000RJ-0083.000)

1. Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the above-named report's recommendations. U.S. Africa Command appreciates the IG's review, and it welcomes any opportunity to further service members' health, as their welfare remains the USAFRICOM priority. USAFRICOM concurs with the report's recommendations as detailed below.
2. In coordination with the U.S. Embassy, USAFRICOM and its components will take the following actions in light of the report's recommendations:

RECOMMENDATION A.1.a: Immediately update the U.S. Africa Command open-air burn pit report to the Joint Staff to accurately characterize the Chabelley dump as an open-air burn pit located within 4000 meters of Chabelley Airfield.

RESPONSE: Concur. USAFRICOM J4 issued a task via the Task Management Tool (TMT) on 04 November 2025; the TMT directs all Lead Service components to update the status of open-air burning in the vicinity of all posture locations by 15 January 2026. Based on component reporting and any follow-on discussions, USAFRICOM will provide an updated report to the Joint Staff that specifically identifies the Chabelley Dump as part of broad open-air burning in the vicinity of CADJ, NLT 06 February 2026.

RECOMMENDATION A.1.b: Direct the U.S. Africa Command Strategy, Engagement, and Programs directorate to immediately develop and implement a plan to continuously engage with the Government of Djibouti until the Chabelley dump is closed or relocated to a location that is a safe distance from U.S. personnel living or working at Chabelley Airfield.

RESPONSE: Concur. Working with and through the U.S. Embassy in Djibouti, USAFRICOM will formalize its plan for continued engagement with the Government of Djibouti on this issue over the first six months of 2026. When engaging with the Government, USAFRICOM will seek a resolution that—while fully respecting host-nation sovereignty—enhances the health and safety of U.S. personnel through mutually beneficial and feasible solutions. For instance, USAFRICOM is working with other Department components on exploring options to assist the Djiboutian government with reducing the amount of solid waste sent to the Chabelley Dump. USAFRICOM will leverage existing working groups to deliberately

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(U) U.S. Africa Command (cont'd)

UNCLASSIFIED

SUBJECT: USAFRICOM Response to DoW Office of Inspector General Draft Report, "Audit of Air Quality Concerns at Chabelley Airfield, Djibouti" (Project No. D2025-D000RJ-0083.000)

inject and track progress of air quality and waste management initiatives across directorates, components, and interagency stakeholders.

RECOMMENDATION A.1.c: Review the actions of the U.S. Africa Command Logistics directorate officials and take appropriate action to hold the officials accountable for failing to appropriately report the Chabelley dump to the Joint Staff following U.S. Air Forces Europe-Air Forces Africa’s notification of the dump to U.S. Africa Command in November 2024.

RESPONSE: Concur. USAFRICOM will review the actions of the U.S. Africa Command Logistics directorate officials and take any appropriate action. In taking such action, USAFRICOM will consider all relevant factors, including the administrative nature of the oversight, potential confusion in subordinate reporting, and any ambiguities in the reporting requirement, as well as any demonstrable harmful effects caused by this apparent oversight.

RECOMMENDATION A.1.d: Request an exemption from the Secretary of Defense to use the Chabelley dump to dispose of DoD-generated solid waste in accordance with DoD Instruction 4715.19 and the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition and Sustainment Memorandum, “Interim Policy on Solid Waste Disposal Outside the U.S.,” October 13, 2022.

RESPONSE: Concur. Though USAFRICOM maintains the activity at the Chabelley Dump does not meet the policy's criteria for requiring an open-air burn pit exemption because the policy "...excludes sites where individuals are burning solid wastes generated by non-DoD sources", USAFRICOM will submit the request as recommended. While this administrative step alone will not resolve the poor air quality in Djibouti—which is primarily driven by some disposal practices in the host-nation—it will provide further DoW level visibility on this critical force health protection issue.

3. USAFRICOM has been, and continues to be, proactively engaged in mitigating solid waste management risks through multi-faceted measures. USAFRICOM has long maintained a comprehensive, two-pronged strategy: (1) deliberately mitigate any health impacts on our personnel from all sources of poor air quality, and (2) responsibly manage our waste streams within the constraints of the environment – and it will continue these efforts as enhanced by the recommendations contained in the IG’s report. Thank you for your review of this important matter.

4. The point of contact for this memorandum is [REDACTED], USN, USAFRICOM J4 Engineering and Logistics Support Division Chief, DSN [REDACTED], or via email at [REDACTED].

TROLLINGER.MAT [REDACTED]
THEW.G. [REDACTED]
34
MATTHEW G. TROLLINGER
Major General, U.S. Marine Corps

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(U) Naval Facilities Engineering Systems Command



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
NAVAL FACILITIES ENGINEERING SYSTEMS COMMAND
1322 PATTERSON AVENUE SE SUITE 1000
WASHINGTON NAVY YARD DC 20374-5065

7500.1
Ser 09IG/002
13 Jan 26

From: Commander, Naval Facilities Engineering Systems Command
To: Program Director for Audit Readiness and Global Operations, Department of Defense, Office of the Inspector General

Subj: NAVAL FACILITIES ENGINEERING SYSTEMS COMMAND MANAGEMENT RESPONSE TO DRAFT DOD AUDIT REPORT, AIR QUALITY CONCERNS IDENTIFIED DURING THE AUDIT OF AIR QUALITY CONCERNS AT CHABELLEY AIRFIELD, DJIBOUTI (PROJECT NO. D2025-D000RJ-0083.000)

Ref: (a) SECNAVINST 5200.34E
(b) Draft Report

Encl: (1) NAVFAC Management Response to Subject Draft Report

1. Per references (a) and (b) enclosure (1) is submitted as the Naval Facilities Engineering Systems Command (NAVFAC) management response to recommendations (1a) through (1c).

2. NAVFAC Headquarters' point of contact is [REDACTED]. You may reach [REDACTED] on [REDACTED] or by email at [REDACTED]

HARMEYER.RANDALL [REDACTED]
.ERNEST [REDACTED]

R. E. HARMEYER
By direction

Copy to:
NAVFAC Atlantic
NAVFAC EURAFCENT

(U) Naval Facilities Engineering Systems Command (cont'd)

**NAVAL FACILITIES ENGINEERING SYSTEMS COMMAND MANAGEMENT
RESPONSE TO DRAFT DOD AUDIT REPORT, AIR QUALITY CONCERNS IDENTIFIED
DURING THE AUDIT OF AIR QUALITY CONCERNS AT CHABELLEY
AIRFIELD, DJIBOUTI (PROJECT NO. D2025-D000RJ-0083.000)
DATED: 25 NOVEMBER 2025**

RECOMMENDATION B.1: We recommend that the Camp Lemonnier, Djibouti Base Operating Support Contracting Officer, Naval Facilities Engineering Systems Command:

- a. Direct the contracting officer's representative to update oversight procedures to require the performance assessment representatives to conduct oversight of the transport of solid waste to the Camp Lemonnier, Djibouti incinerator plant and non-incinerated solid waste to the Chabelley dump. The updated procedures should reflect an increased oversight level and outline what sufficient evidence the performance assessment representatives must obtain to hold the contractor accountable in the event of poor performance.
- b. Monitor documentation from the performance assessment representatives' increased oversight and, if non-incinerated solid waste dumping is substantiated, take immediate action commensurate with the severity and frequency of the noncompliance to hold the contractor accountable to include requiring the contractor to clean up any dumped waste.
- c. Review the evidence supporting their December 2024 and April 2025 Letters of Concern to determine whether solid waste found at the unauthorized dump sites surrounding Camp Lemonnier, Djibouti contained trash generated from Camp Lemonnier, Djibouti. If confirmed, the Contracting Officer should use the results of this review to reconsider whether they can direct the contractor to clean up the dumped waste.

CURRENT STATUS: NAVFAC concurs with recommendations B.1.a through B.1.c.

B.1.a. NAVFAC concurs that increased oversight procedures of the transport of waste are necessary. The Contracting Officer's Representative (COR), the Alternate Contracting Officer's Representative (ACOR), and other personnel in the Facility Support Contracts (FSC) branch follow the waste truck convoy off base twice monthly at random times to verify contractor compliance. NAVFAC will continue this level of oversight until such time as the Contracting Officer determines the BOS contractor is sufficiently ensuring performance such that off-base oversight longer needed. The evidence required to make this determination shall be verified by the Contracting Officer to be included current Performance and Functional Assessment Plan and any modifications made during the performance of this contract. NAVFAC considers this action complete.

Enclosure (1)

(U) Naval Facilities Engineering Systems Command (cont'd)

Any future non-compliance will be documented in both the contract file, as an issuance of a Notice of Noncompliance if required, and be addressed/reported by the Government in the contractor's regular performance assessments under the contract. Procedures for the government performance of the contract are documented in the contract's Performance and Functional Assessment Plans and in DOD guidance regarding use of the Contractor Performance Assessment Reporting system. NAVFAC considers this action complete.

B.1.b. NAVFAC concurs that the BOS contractor shall be held accountable for contract performance. In accordance with the contract performance and functional assessment plan, the PAR provides a monthly performance assessment summary (MPAS), inclusive of all services performed under the contract, to the Contracting Officer. If non-incinerated solid waste dumping of waste under the BOS contract is substantiated, the Contracting Officer will hold the contractor accountable commensurate with the severity and frequency of the substantiated noncompliance. NAVFAC considers this action complete.

B.1.c. NAVFAC concurs with this recommendation. In reviewing the evidence from past concerns, the Contracting Officer determined that, although the origin of the non-incinerated waste could be CLDJ, it was not clearly waste collected under the BOS contract. NAVFAC will continue increased oversight of the waste removal required in the BOS contract, and if unauthorized solid waste dumping is substantiated, the Contracting Officer will hold the contractor accountable to commensurate with the severity and frequency of the substantiated noncompliance. NAVFAC considers this action complete.

DATE COMPLETED: 23 April 2025

(U) U.S. Air Forces Europe–Air Forces Africa



**DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES AIR FORCES IN EUROPE
HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES AIR FORCES AFRICA**

23 Dec 25

MEMORANDUM FOR DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE INSPECTOR GENERAL

FROM: HQ USAFE-AFAFRICA
Unit 3275
APO AE 09094-3275

SUBJECT: Department of the Air Force Response to DoD Office of Inspector General Draft Report, "Audit of Air Quality Concerns at Chabelley Airfield, Djibouti" (Project No. D2025-D000RJ-0083)

1. This is the Department of the Air Force response to the DoDIG Draft Report, "Audit of Air Quality Concerns at Chabelley Airfield, Djibouti" (Project No. D2025-D000RJ-0083). The DAF agrees with the report as written and welcomes the opportunity to improve the management of poor air quality at Chabelley Airfield, Djibouti.
2. The USAFE-AFAFRICA has satisfied recommendations identified, and is actively monitoring progress.

RECOMMENDATION A.2.a: The DoDIG recommends that the USAFE-AFAFRICA Command Surgeon reviews the USAFE-AFAFRICA's medical logistics support and update sampling procedures to include a plan for securing the equipment needed to sample for known airborne hazards associated with open-air burn pits.

DAF RESPONSE: The USAFE-AFAFRICA Command Surgeon has reviewed and will continue to monitor USAFE-AFAFRICA's medical logistics support via routine USAFE-AFAFRICA SG and USAFRICOM SG Sync meetings with the 406 AEW MEDCELL and monthly Force Health Protection update meetings between the USAFE-AFAFRICA SG and the 406 AEW MEDCELL. USAFE-AFAFRICA SG and the 406 AEW MEDCELL are focused on meeting the monitoring requirements at Chabelley Airfield, Djibouti for airborne hazards associated with open-air burn pits. The June 2025 Annex Q to USAFRICOM Campaign Order FT25-26 Health Services (Appendix 3) is the plan being followed.

RECOMMENDATION A.2.b: The DoDIG recommends that the USAFE-AFAFRICA Command Surgeon reviews USAFE-AFAFRICA's medical logistics support and update sampling procedures to include a plan for routinely conducting air sampling at Chabelley Airfield for known airborne hazards associated with open-air burn pits, including polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons, volatile organic compounds, and dioxins.

DAF RESPONSE: The USAFE-AFAFRICA Command Surgeon has reviewed and will continue to monitor USAFE-AFAFRICA's medical logistics support. The plans and efforts discussed in DAF Response to Recommendation A.2.a (above) include routinely conducting air

(U) U.S. Air Forces Europe–Air Forces Africa (cont'd)

sampling at Chabelley Airfield for known airborne hazards associated with open-air burn pits, including polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons, volatile organic compounds, and dioxins.

3. The USAFE-AFAFRICA point of contact is [REDACTED] USAFE-AFAFRICA/SGP Bioenvironmental Engineering Branch, DSN [REDACTED] or email at [REDACTED].

STAMP.THOMA [REDACTED]
S.W. [REDACTED]

THOMAS W. STAMP, Colonel, USAF, MC, FS
Command Surgeon

(U) Air Force Installation and Mission Support Center, Detachment 4



DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
HEADQUARTERS AIR FORCE INSTALLATION AND MISSION SUPPORT CENTER
DETACHMENT 4 – RAMSTEIN AIR BASE, GERMANY

06 January 2026

MEMORANDUM FOR DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE INSPECTOR GENERAL

SUBJECT: Air Force Installation and Mission Support Center, Detachment 4 (AFIMSC Det 4) Response to DoD Office of Inspector General Draft Report, "Audit of Air Quality Concerns at Chabelley Airfield, Djibouti" (draft) (Project No. D2025-D000RJ-0083.000)

1. USAFE-AFAFRICA/AFIMSC Det 4/CEI has reviewed the tasker and concur with the report as written.
2. Although not being directly mentioned in the report nor being the OPR for the recommendations, the AFIMSC Det 4 will actively support U.S. Africa Command (USAFRICOM), U.S. Air Forces Europe-Air Forces Africa (USAFE-AFAFRICA), 406th Air Expeditionary Wing (AEW) and 776th Expeditionary Air Base Squadron (EABS) with the implementation of all recommendations contained in the DoD Office of Inspector General Draft Report, "Audit of Air Quality Concerns at Chabelley Airfield, Djibouti" (draft) (Project No. D2025-D000RJ-0083.000). AFIMSC Det 4 is fully committed to the wellbeing of the DOW service members and to compliance with all respective rules and regulations.
3. The POC is [REDACTED], Staff Environmental Manager, AFIMSC Det 4, DSN [REDACTED], or via email at [REDACTED]

ANDREWS.JEFFR [REDACTED]
 EY.A. [REDACTED]

 JEFFREY A. ANDREWS
 Det 4 (USAFE-AFAFRICA)
 Installation Management Branch Chief

(U) 406th Air Expeditionary Wing



**DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
406TH AIR EXPEDITIONARY WING (AFAFRICA)
RAMSTEIN AIR BASE GERMANY**

06 Jan 2026

MEMORANDUM FOR DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE INSPECTOR GENERAL

FROM: 406 Air Expeditionary Wing
Unit 3297
APO AE 09094-3297

SUBJECT: 406 AEW Response to DoD Office of Inspector General Draft Report, "Audit of Air Quality Concerns at Chabelley Airfield, Djibouti" (Project No. D2025-D000RJ-0083.0000)

1. This is the 406 AEW response to the DoD Office of Inspector General (DoD OIG) draft report, "Audit of Air Quality Concerns at Chabelley Airfield, Djibouti " (Project No. D2025-D000RJ.0083.0000). The 406 AEW concurs with the report as written and welcomes the opportunity to improve the management of poor air quality at Chabelley Airfield, Djibouti.
2. The 406 AEW is fully nested within the USAFE-AFAFRICA SG response and is working closely with their staff to ensure compliance with the recommendations. 406 AEW/SG and USAFE-AFAFRICA SG continue to meet monthly to sync efforts on air quality monitoring efforts

RECOMMENDATION A.2.a

Securing the equipment needed to sample for known airborne hazards associated with open-air burn pit

RESPONSE: The 406 AEW concurs with the recommendation and the 776 EABS has acquired direct reading instruments that alert commanders and base inhabitants of periods of poor air quality (excessive PM2.5 levels). The 776 EABS has also developed a PACE plan to ensure redundancy of notification for members on CADJ. N-95 masks are supplied and on hand. The PM 2.5 direct reading technology is currently on loan from the US Navy (CLDJ), the 406 AEW requires ~\$20K to secure our own system.

RECOMMENDATION A.2.b

Routinely conducting air sampling at Chabelley Airfield for known airborne hazards associated with open-air burn pits, including polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons, volatile organic compounds, and dioxins.

RESPONSE: 406 AEW concurs with the recommendation and 406 AEW/SG has updated reporting requirements of all deploying members to take required sampling training prior to deployment to avoid any future sampling shortfalls. 406 AEW did not meet the FY26 quarter 1 requirements for recommendation A.2.a & A.2.b with regards to sampling for polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons, volatile organic compounds, and dioxins due to complications from the government shutdown and subsequent funding for the

(U) 406th Air Expeditionary Wing (cont'd)

sample processing laboratory. Sample media is currently on CADJ and we are postured to meet 2nd quarter sampling requirements and meet recommendations going forward.

3. The 406 AEW/CC point of contact is [REDACTED] 406 AEW/SG, Bioenvironmental Engineer, DSN [REDACTED] or via email at [REDACTED] or [REDACTED].

BROWN.GABRIEL.CH [REDACTED]
RISTIAN. [REDACTED]
GABRIEL C. BROWN, Colonel, USAF
Commander

(U) Acronyms and Abbreviations

AEW	Air Expeditionary Wing
BOS	Base Operations Support
CADJ	Chabelley Airfield, Djibouti
CJTF-HOA	Combined Joint Task Force-Horn of Africa
CLDJ	Camp Lemonnier, Djibouti
DCPH-A	Defense Centers for Public Health–Aberdeen
DHA	Defense Health Agency
EABS	Expeditionary Air Base Squadron
IG	Inspector General
JAMA	Journal of the American Medical Association
JMAS	Joint Medical Aid Station
NAVFAC	Naval Facilities Engineering Systems Command
OEH	Occupational and Environmental Health
OEHSA	Occupational and Environmental Health Site Assessment
PAR	Performance Assessment Representative
PI	Procedural Instruction
PM	Particulate Matter
USAFE-AFAFRICA	U.S. Air Forces Europe–Air Forces Africa
USAFRICOM	U.S. Africa Command
USD(A&S)	Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition and Sustainment



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