

The Navy wants to use a very small area in the state for their training, and consider it justified.

The area is said to have vegetation and a small pond. The Navy's land use request was coursed through the Office of the Veterans Affairs.

Story by Liberty Dones
Contact this reporter

Community builds ties with sailors

(DCCA) — Saipan's reputation as a port of call for U.S. Navy ships is receiving a big boost thanks to a new program that's building personal ties between island families and sailors. Under its new Sponsor-A-Service Member program, the Department of Community and Cultural Affairs put 18 visiting sailors from the USS Antietam in touch with a local family who voluntarily hosted them while the ship was in Saipan earlier this month.

"I want to thank...everyone on your island paradise for making our visit...on Saipan the best Port Call I've ever had — ever!" said Lt. Cmdr. Timothy White, ship chaplain. "Your kindness and hospitality were like nothing we had ever experienced before."

White and other sailors were welcomed into the home of Noel and Rita Chargualaf, the first of Saipan residents to sign up for the program.

"Every single man who participated has just raved about the wonderful time they had with the families," said White. "You truly live in an island paradise and the people on your island are the nicest folks I have ever met."

"For the most, they were just thrilled to be around children and families. It was like being home," said Rita Chargualaf. "We gave them the island style tour and visited the World War II historical sites, which they enjoyed. Swimming at the Grotto was a blast, they almost didn't want to leave! They all express to one day bring their families to visit."

Sponsor-A-Service Member is an ongoing DCCA program where local families can volunteer to invite service members to share a home cooked meal. The program was initiated to expand the efforts of a handful of private citizens who have opened their homes to sailors.

"We're very excited about Sponsor-A-Service Member, especially with this initial feedback from the ships," said DCCA Secretary Juan L. Babauta. "We believe one of Saipan's greatest attractions is the warmth of our people and culture, and we're trying to facilitate that exchange through this program."

While in port, volunteer sailors from the Antietam reciprocated the hospitality by performing community relations projects at Garapan Elementary School and the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

More military ships calling on NMI

By Ulysses Torres Sabuco

Variety News Staff

MORE military ships have been calling on Saipan during the past year, bringing in over 5,000 crewmembers to the island, according to Frank Cepeda, the governor's special assistant for military and veterans affairs.

"Our image as a tropical island is attractive to our brothers and sisters in the military," Cepeda said.

Cepeda said next to Guam, which hosts a military base, the CNMI is becoming one of the "favorite" destinations of military ships.

"It's because we're a safe and hospitable destination," he said.

During the past 12 months, four ships and four submarines have pulled into the island's harbor and 5,083 military personnel and officers set foot on Saipan for "R&R," Cepeda said.

Acting Gov. Diego T. Benavente said another submarine "is just getting in."

He said the administration continues to encourage more military visits to the CNMI.

"They have definitely been a big contributor to our economy. We are just very happy that they visit us," Benavente said.

The USS Chancellorsville, with a crew and officers of 900, visited Saipan twice in a span of 20 days.

Other ships that were here were the USS Denver, the USS Antietam and the USS Blueridge.

The submarines were the USS Cheyenne, the USS Tucson, the USS Olympia and the USS Bremerton which arrived Wednesday.

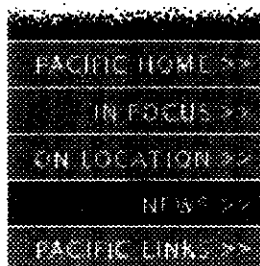
Cepeda said more military vessels would be coming in.

IB Dkt. No. 03-115
Office of the Governor
June 9, 2003

EXHIBIT F



[Pacific Home Page](#) | [Pacific Breaking News](#)



BREAKING NEWS

US military steps up activities in CNMI

Military live-fire training exercises on the island of Farallon de Medinilla in the Northern Marianas, United States' only live-fire bombing range in the western Pacific, have been steadily increasing as the United States gears up for a possible invasion of Iraq,

The emergency management office has issued an advisory for a March 24 to March 28 aerial training on FDM, which is in addition to the training now underway on the island.

Since the start of the year, the US Navy has conducted at least 30-days of live fire and aerial training exercises on FDM.

18/03/2003 21:05:14 | ABC Radio Australia News

LATEST STORIES

US extends Marianas bombing practice

The United States navy has extended its live-fire training exercises on the coral island of Farallon de Medinilla in the Northern Marianas.

The Emergency Management Office says the live bombing drills were due to end on Sunday, but have been extended.

The office says the general public, especially fishermen, commercial pilots and tour operators have been advised to stay away from the location.

Meanwhile, the navy on Guam has apologised to the CNMI for failing to notify the authorities before resuming live-fire training exercises on the island last week.

The island is the US military's only live-fire bombing range in the western Pacific and has been a training target for bombs, missiles and naval gunfire for more than 30 years.

24/02/2003 17:10:01 | ABC Radio Australia News

[Home](#) >> [Military](#) >> [Facilities](#) >> [Navy Ranges](#) >>

Farallon de Medinilla (FDM) 16° 01' north latitude, 146° 04' east

Environmentalists want the U.S. military to halt bombing on Farallon de Medinilla because they say it endangers wildlife. But officials from nearby Saipan don't want the range to close because it would mean a loss of millions of dollars generated by port visits.

The Farallon de Medinilla Target Range is the Pacific Fleet's only U.S.-controlled range available for live-fire training for forward deployed naval forces. Farallon de Medinilla plays a special and unique role in national defense. Its location provides access frequency that supports established training requirements. In addition, the air and sea space in the Farallon provides sufficient room for the many different attack profiles necessary to replicate training opportunities in the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas Islands [CNMI]. American fighter pilots must maintain capability and proficiency in precision-guided arms and specific target engagement. These are perishable skills that require frequent access to high fidelity, scenario-based targets. Accessibility to the Farallon de Medinilla supports these requirements.

The Farallon de Medinilla, an uninhabited 200-acre island, stands about 280 feet above sea level and its' size is approximately 3 miles by 1/2 mile. The Farallon de Medinilla Target Range is located about 150 miles north of Guam and is leased from the Government of the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas Islands. The range has been used since 1976 under an agreement between the United States and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. Farallon de Mendinilla is classified as public land that is under lease by the US military from the Commonwealth. The Commonwealth of the North Marianas has a lease agreement with the US military that allows use of the island until 2075.

The Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas Islands - - 17 major islands north of Guam -- became a self-governing commonwealth in union with the United States following the termination of the former Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, which once included the Federated States of Micronesia, the Marshall Islands and Palau. The people of the Northern Marianas are American citizens.

During the peak of Vietnam War operations, ordnance delivered on the island was estimated at 22 tons per month. This consisted primarily of air-dropped, 500 and 750-pound bombs. Also included in the total monthly figure were approximately 60 rounds of three-inch ammunition from ship guns.

Northern Marianas Islands

Units

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Official Homepage

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Our success is
outpacing
our
budget



Farallon de Medinilla enables forward-deployed airwing and surface units in Japan to conduct two and three unit level training evolutions and one large-scale exercise per year. Without this range, live-fire training would be contingent upon access to non U.S.-controlled ranges and airwing and surface unit readiness would decline to "not ready" status within six months. The range is used about five days each month by the Navy, Marines and Air Force, and provides training opportunities unmatched in the region.

The Navy had wanted to expand activities to include ground based mortar, artillery, and anti-tank training. However, the new training land use proposed cannot be implemented, as personnel are no longer allowed to land or move about on the island due to the presence of highly sensitive, unexploded cluster bombs observed in 1996.

The Navy engaged in gunnery practice during May 1997, and aerial bombardment from July 21 to August 1, 1997, on FDM, CNMI. The purpose of the activity was to allow Navy carrier aircraft and ships to participate in aircraft carrier support training including surface gunnery and bombing practice. Ships assigned to the Seventh Fleet conducted gunnery practice by firing an estimated 200 5/54 live rounds. The ammunition type for the 5/54 was high explosive with controlled variable time fused rounds that produce fragmentation air burst as well as high explosive point detonations. Navy fighter /attack aircraft assigned to the Carrier Air Group practiced delivery of live ordnance, consisting primarily of MK-80 series iron bombs which are designed to explode on impact. A variety of other ordnance were also used. An estimated total of 135 MK-82 live 500 pound (#) bombs, 50 MK-83 live 1000# bombs, 36 MK-84 live 2000# bombs, 180 BDU-4S inert bombs, and 984 MK-76 inert bombs were delivered by aircraft.

Two global power missions successfully deployed to Andersen Air Force Base, Guam, 11 February 1999, demonstrating once again the US Air Force's ability to strike targets across the globe from its home bases. Two B-2 Spirits from Whiteman AFB, Mo., and two B-52s from Minot AFB, N.D., deployed 09 February 1999, flying nearly 20 hours across the international date line to targets at the Farallon de Medinilla Island Bombing Range in the Pacific Ocean. The B-2s dropped live 2,000-pound bombs and the B-52s dropped BDU 44s, which are training bombs. After completing their mission, the aircraft landed at Andersen. The B-2s, which were on the runway for less than an hour while they were refueled and crews were switched, returned to make a second strike at the Farallon bombing range and then flew home to Whiteman. One of the B-52s departed from Andersen to the 1999 Australian International Air Show and the other B-52 will return home to Minot.

The 93rd Bomb Squadron deployed to Anderson AFB, Guam, in April 1999 to participate in exercise Tandem Thrust 99. The primary mission was to provide friendly and enemy air support for the US Navy. They deployed two aircraft and 102 personnel to train US and Australian defense force staffs in crisis action planning and execution for contingency operations whether at sea, in the air, or ashore. B-52's dropped bombs on Farallon de Medinilla. Over 500 M117's were dropped by the B-52s. Each day the aircraft were loaded internally and externally with the 750 pound bombs to be dropped 3000 feet over Farallon de Medinilla.

The island is an important nesting site for more than a dozen species of migratory birds, including some that are endangered. Farallon de Medinilla hosts colonies of great frigatebirds; masked, red-footed, and brown boobys; red- and white-tailed tropicbirds; white and sooty terns; brown and black noddys; and other species of migratory seabirds. The island is the largest known nesting site for masked boobies in the Mariana and Caroline Islands.

The 1918 Migratory Bird Treaty Act prohibits harm to migratory species without a permit from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. In 1996 The Navy asked the Service for a permit to use the island as a range, but was refused. The Navy continued to use the range, saying the treaty did not apply to federal agencies. Fish and Wildlife surveys have shown that birds are being killed when the military hits island with bombs, missiles, rockets, naval guns and other weapons. The Navy has said targets are placed away from primary bird habitat, and the Navy is budgeting \$100,000 annually to enhance bird habitats on neighboring islands. The Navy has participated in two environmental impact studies, in 1975 and 1999, regarding military activities on the island.

The Pacific Fleet's ability to conduct training on Farallon de Medinilla is subject to litigation brought by an environmental group seeking to stop live-fire training on the grounds that some migratory, but not necessarily endangered or threatened, birds are harmed in violation of the 1918 Migratory Bird Treaty

Act. The Earthjustice Legal Defense Fund, formerly the Sierra Club, argued the lawsuit on behalf of the Center for Biological Diversity, a nonprofit New Mexico corporation. The suit claims the Migratory Bird Treaty Act applies to the Navy and Defense Department and its use of the range. This lawsuit was filed on 21 December 2000 by the Earthjustice Legal Defense Fund in Washington, following a decision by Federal Court in the District of Columbia which declined to follow precedent and applied the 85-year-old act to Federal agencies.



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<http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/facility/farallon-de-medinilla.htm>

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IB Dkt. No. 03-115
Office of the Governor
June 9, 2003

EXHIBIT G

HOME
SEARCH
ABOUT US
CONTACT US



Reporting Tomorrow's
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Saturday 08 March 2003

<http://www.tribune.co.mp>

SITE INDEX

Home Page

Local News

Local News

Local News

Local News

Local News

Local News

Local News

Local News

LOCAL NEWS

Rota may play vital role in security crisis

By Edith G. Alejandro
Staff Reporter

Rota Mayor Benjamin Manglona emphasized that the island may play a vital role should the United States figures in a security crisis in the Asian region, thus underscoring the need for a quality air transport facility on the island.

Manglona, who asked that funding assistance be extended to Rota, told Federal Aviation Administration officials that in the event of an Asian security crisis, Rota will serve as one of the vital transportation links of the U.S. military.

“Presently, the military from Guam uses our runway for touch and go exercises. In the event of an Asian security crisis, Rota will serve as one of the vital transportation links in our military’s forward presence strategy. FAA investment in Rota is a national security investment,” Manglona said in his letter to U.S. Department of Transportation Airports District official Daniel S. Matsumoto.

Citing the Commonwealth Ports Authority’s recent request to the FAA for the CNMI airports’ capital improvement project, Manglona said it is welcome news that funding assistance has been asked to carry out major projects.

However, the mayor said Rota has yet to see its vital runway extension and it has yet to receive FAA funding for it. “Runway extension is the make or break factor to create a viable Rota economy. Our tourism is going nowhere without jet flights. Without a jet-friendly airport, Rota will cease to grow and its economy will decay,” said the mayor in his letter.

He added that Rota’s lack of export cargo

LOCAL NEWS

- [Rota may play vital role in security crisis](#)
- [BOE open to House inquiry](#)
- [NMI to greet top US officials in October](#)
- [What is the NMI Council for the Humanities?](#)
- [NMC-DOLI tie-up seen for gateway project](#)
- [Retiring judge showered with honors](#)
- [CUC men back from Guam emergency work](#)
- [NMI Crime Stoppers seek community aid](#)
- [WWII veterans visit Iwo Jima, Saipan](#)
- [Car crash sends one to ICU](#)
- [EMO assures no danger in FDM exercise](#)
- [Special flag flies over the CNMI](#)
- [Saipan resident enters Naval Academy](#)
- [ITR forms ready for pick-up](#)

FRONT PAGE

- [House: Lift Medicaid cap](#)
- [Community to be trained in emergency response](#)
- [Senate backs the creation of taxicab. CRM authorities](#)
- [Some PSS teachers to be evaluated](#)

combine to create extremely expensive shipping rates, making it prohibitively expensive to bring an automobile from Saipan down to Rota.

“An improved airport will help bridge the shipping gap and allow economic development, something denied to us by our shipping crunch. We respectfully ask FAA for assistance for the long awaited and crucially needed Rota International Airport runway extension program,” said Manglona.

Earlier, the CPA disclosed that it has requested \$21.6 million in federal assistance from the FAA to ensure that major capital improvement projects at all CNMI airports are carried through.

CPA Executive Director Carlos H. Salas said that, for fiscal year 2003, the ports authority has asked \$21.6 million from the FAA to guarantee the expeditious completion of various projects at the Saipan, Tinian, and Rota airports.

The FAA has already included this request in its budgetary proposal, which will be officially submitted to the U.S. Congress.

[Back](#)

EDITORIAL

OPINIONS

SPORTS

- [Kashiwagi bombs away for 72 as PDI wins](#)
- [Man Amko see action in Ground Golf Tourney](#)
- [NMITFF to hold St. Patrick's run](#)
- [Club Elan to hold fun run](#)
- [Refalawasch Golf Association tourney tomorrow](#)
- [Sports Briefs](#)

[Front Page](#) | [Local News](#) | [Editorial](#) | [Opinions](#) | [Sports](#) | [Weather](#) | [Archives](#)
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MPLA: Military wants to hold exercises on Pagan

By Gemma Q. Casas

Variety News Staff

BESIDES Anatahan, the U.S. military has also asked the Marianas Public Lands Authority to allow the nation's armed forces to conduct exercises on Pagan, according to MPLA Commissioner Henry Hofschneider.

Hofschneider met last week with Navy Cmdr. Edward Lynch to discuss the matter.

"Their original request was for one on Anatahan and one on Pagan. The board approved the one-year temporary use of a particular site in the crater away from the village on Anatahan. On Pagan, the military hasn't identified which area they want to use for their training,"

Hofschneider said.

He said the temporary permit for Anatahan is revocable and the same policy will be applied to Pagan once the board decides on the military's request.

"It's a temporary revocable permit and it's good for a year only," he said.

He said the training would not pose any danger to the environment and vegetation on Anatahan.

"A helicopter is going to fly over Anatahan, touch the ground where there are no trees, no moving objects, no nothing. They won't bring any equipment, not even a tent," he said.

"The helicopter will just land and unload personnel. This is what the commander explained to me. Then the helicopter takes off. As soon as that is done then the helicopter picks them up," he added.

There are existing airport and seaport facilities on Pagan but they were damaged when the volcano erupted on the island in 1981.

Pagan is one of the few volcanic islands in the world with rich deposits of pozzolanic ash — an adhesive ingredient in cement.

- US military build-up on Mariana island of Tinian
- MORE MILITARY DUMPSITES BEING DISCOVERED IN NORTHERN MARIANAS
- SUIT TARGETS RANGE ON MARIANAS ISLANDS...Group Wants To Protect Birds

CNMI- US: PACNEWS PACNEWS 1: Thurs June 3 1999 8.30

US military build-up on Mariana island of Tinian

SAIPAN (Pacnews) ---- Northern Marianas may see US military build-up on Tinian should political unrest in Asia persist, although Governor Pedro Tenorio said the Pentagon is yet to indicate plans to use portion of the island leased to the Department of Defence, under the treaty which established the Commonwealth in 1976.

A military build-up on Tinian could be fuelled by the increasing animosity between the US and China on espionage, as well as the alleged Chinese invasion of the disputed Spratly Islands, being claimed by the Philippines, a long-time ally of the United States.

Japan and South Korea have also expressed concerns on the alleged ongoing build-up of nuclear arsenal by North Korea, in addition to the animosity between Pakistan and India on their disputed border.

Air Force Commander Colonel Mark Gehri has noted the strategic importance of the Marianas to maintain peace and freedom in the region. He even mentioned the \$US80 million investments by the US Military on Guam as part of efforts to maintain strong military presence in the Pacific.

Gehri pointed out that the Marianas is the farthest the US Military can go in the region, and its location is important because it allows America to strike anyone who would challenge the Pacific.

Tenorio said at least two-thirds of the island of Tinian had been leased to the US Military but has not been used the Covenant was reached between Washington and the Commonwealth in 1976.

Any move by the US to finally utilise its military bases on Tinian is a welcome development to the CNMI because it is seen to perk up the local tourism industry, which has been heavily impacted by the downfall of mighty economies in Asia.

CNMI officials are expecting to entice US military officials to move American servicemen who will be pulled out of Okinawa to Tinian. The island is seen as a resettlement post for the imminent uprooting of the American military bases in Japan.

But Tinian will have to compete with Guam, which is also a possible relocation site for American troops who may be uprooted from Okinawa. At least 75 percent of American bases in Japan are in Okinawa.

Rear Admiral Martin Janczak, who is former commander in chief of the Navy Pacific Command, previously mentioned the possibility of the US military pulling out of Okinawa in at least 10 years.

Governor Tenorio said the issue was never brought up in any of his meetings with US military officials, but admits CNMI is expected to reap economic gains should Washington start utilising their bases on Tinian....PNS

PACIFIC ISLANDS REPORT

Pacific Islands Development Program/East-West Center

Center for Pacific Islands Studies/University of Hawai'i at Manoa

MORE MILITARY DUMPSITES BEING DISCOVERED IN NORTHERN MARIANAS

IB Dkt. No. 03-115
Office of the Governor
June 9, 2003

EXHIBIT H



Wednesday 29 January 2003

<http://www.tribune.co.mp>

SITE INDEX

[Home Page](#)[Local News](#)[Business](#)[Sports](#)[Opinion](#)[Weather](#)[Calendar](#)[About Us](#)[Contact Us](#)

LOCAL NEWS

US Army speaks of 'potential dangers'

U.S. Army Pacific Commanding General Lt. Gen. James L. Campbell said the Pacific plays a major role to the overall effort of the U.S. Department of Defense, as soldiers are deployed to other parts of the world.

Speaking before guests and government officials during the investiture ceremony for Superior Court Judge Edward Manibusan Monday, Campbell said that, as attention focuses on Iraq and Korea, the U.S. Army would not take its eye off the Pacific region, citing potential threats.

"This is a busy time for the entire Armed Forces. As I speak, our soldiers are engaged in operations in India, Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Philippines. We will be in Japan for a special military exercise that is part of a bilateral relationship. Potential dangers abound but we can handle the crisis that faces this region," said the commanding chief during his investiture ceremony speech.

Because of all these efforts, Campbell said civilian aides like Manibusan would play a major role by giving the U.S. Army feedback in its operations. He added that Manibusan would have a direct line to the U.S. Army to tell them how the community perceives them.

"The Army's presence continue to make an impact and we continue to train if needed. This region will be responsible in sending 30,000 infantrymen if the Army forces need it," said the general.

He also acknowledged the support of the CNMI to the U.S. Army and for responding to any contingency. He added that Manibusan will bring forward the CNMI's concerns and thoughts to the U.S.

LOCAL NEWS

- [DLNR loosens embargo on chicken imports](#)
- [Special panel studying 'crimes vs tourists' bill](#)
- [BoR: Spare NMC from politics](#)
- [Kumoi contests 'removal' from panel](#)
- [Manglona: Focus on the issue](#)
- [User fee totals \\$7.8M in 1st Quarter](#)
- [No delisting of students, NMC assures](#)
- [Sex education to focus on 6th graders](#)
- [MPLA to construct own building](#)
- [US Army speaks of 'potential dangers'](#)
- [Coast Guard inspects Saipan seaport](#)
- [Anti-cancer group strikes new direction](#)
- [TREES agrees to grow roots on Saipan](#)
- [NMASH kicks off safety training](#)

FRONT PAGE

- [Tug-of-war in BoS license renewal Commerce denies application to renew; court asked to intervene](#)
- [Atalig: No need for court intervention](#)
- [Local homeland security office backed](#)

Army as he officially represents the Commonwealth in the multi-state Continental U.S. Armies. (*Edith G. Alejandro*)

[Back](#)

- [DPS crafting plans to protect tourists](#)

EDITORIAL

OPINIONS

- [The American family: A quarter for all](#)

SPORTS

- [Nasuhara, Kabiriel top 10k run](#)
- [Fast Eddie strikes again in 8-ball](#)
- [Sports Briefs](#)

[Front Page](#) | [Local News](#) | [Editorial](#) | [Opinions](#) | [Sports](#) | [Weather](#) | [Archives](#)
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U.S. repositioning bombers near N. Korea

WASHINGTON (AP) — The United States is basing more heavy bombers near North Korea and will formally protest the communist nation's "reckless actions" in using MiG fighters to intercept a U.S. surveillance plane, officials said.

Shifting the military aircraft toward northeast Asia was described "as a prudent gesture to bolster our defense posture and as a deterrent" by Defense Department spokesman Lt. Cmdr. Jeff Davis on Tuesday.

Other Pentagon officials said the deployment includes sending B-52 bombers to the U.S. Pacific territory of Guam. The order was issued Friday, well before Sunday's incident in which North Korean jets came within 50 feet of a U.S. RC-135S surveillance plane over the Sea of Japan, they said.

LATEST DEVELOPMENTS

- **Sunday:** Four of its armed fighter jets intercept a U.S. reconnaissance plane over the Sea of Japan.
- **Feb. 27:** U.S. confirms Yongbyon nuclear reactor is operating.
- **Feb. 24:** Launches an anti-ship missile into the sea on the eve of the inauguration of South Korean President Roh Moo-hyun.
- **Feb. 6:** Says it is restarting reactor capable of producing weapons-grade plutonium.
- **Jan. 10:** Withdraws from Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty.
- **Dec. 27, 2002:** Expels U.N. nuclear weapons inspectors.
- **Dec. 21:** Begins removing monitoring seals and cameras from its nuclear facilities.
- **Nov. 11:** United States and allies halt oil shipments to North Korea promised under 1994 deal.
- **Oct. 4:** Discloses to visiting U.S. delegation that it has a covert nuclear weapons program in violation of a 1994 agreement.

"These (U.S.) moves are not aggressive in nature," Davis said.

Military officials said Tuesday the United States was reviewing its options in light of the gravity of Sunday's incident, one of the most dangerous military provocations in a monthslong standoff over North Korea's nuclear weapons program.

Those options could include having U.S. fighter jets escort similar flights, a senior military official said. The United States has not suspended the flights and does not plan to, officials said.

White House spokesman Ari Fleischer said President Bush would consult with allies to determine the best way to protest the incident. Fleischer said Bush believes the North Korean standoff can be solved through diplomacy.

"North Korea continues to engage in provocative and now reckless actions," Fleischer said. "And North Korea engages in these actions as a way of saying, 'Pay me.' That will not happen."

During Sunday's incident, four North Korean fighters neared the Air Force plane, which was flying 150 miles off the Korean coast, the Pentagon said. The North Korean fighters scanned the unarmed U.S. plane with targeting radar, Davis said.

The North Korean fighters were carrying heat-seeking missiles that did not require radar locks to hit their targets, a military official said Tuesday.

That means the MiGs could have fired on the slower U.S. plane without further warning. The North Koreans shot down a U.S. Navy EC-121 surveillance plane in 1969, killing all 31 Americans aboard.

The Pentagon has been hesitant in the past to arm or escort its surveillance flights, which military officials say always operate legally — well inside international airspace. Escorting the surveillance flights, some officials argue,

Contributing: Associated Press would undercut the U.S. assertion that the flights are not military threats.

Tensions with North Korea began to escalate in October, when the United States said North Korea had admitted having a program to enrich uranium for nuclear weapons. Since then, the United States has refused direct talks with Pyongyang and cut off fuel oil shipments under a 1994 agreement that banned North Korean nuclear weapons development.

The United States believes North Korea has one or two nuclear bombs.

North Korea has ejected United Nations nuclear monitors, withdrawn from the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and restarted a nuclear reactor that U.S. officials say was designed to produce plutonium for nuclear weapons. Pyongyang says the reactor is to generate electricity.

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CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I, Jessica Hankins, a legal assistant with the Law Offices of Thomas K. Crowe, P.C., certify that on June 9, 2003, a copy of the foregoing *Petition of the Office of the Governor of the Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands to Deny, or, In the Alternative, to Designate for Hearing*, IB Docket No. 03-115, was served by first class United States mail, postage prepaid, or by hand delivery where indicated by an asterisk (*), upon the parties listed below.

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