

## **Electronic attack: More unanswered questions**

Page 2-7 of the 2014 Environmental Assessment says the following:

“The activities of the Proposed Action center on two divisions of EW, known as electronic warfare support (ES) and electronic attack (EA).”

Then it goes on to provide this short explanation:

“Sailors aboard Navy ships, submarines, and aircraft conduct ES and EA training as they search for, intercept, identify, and locate or localize sources of intentional and unintentional radiated electromagnetic energy for the purpose of immediate threat recognition, targeting, planning, and conduct of future operations.” (EA 2-7) This sounds pretty benign.

The Environmental Assessment references [Joint Publication 3-13.1, Electronic Warfare](#), 08 February 2012 as a source document, and if you look at this publication, the short explanation above is, verbatim, the definition of electronic support. The problem is that the Environmental Assessment leaves out any explanation of electronic attack (EA).

Joint Publication 3-13.1 defines EA as follow: “EA refers to the division of EW (Electronic Warfare) involving the use of EM energy, DE (directed energy), or antiradiation weapons to attack personnel, facilities, or equipment with the intent of degrading, neutralizing, or destroying enemy combat capability...”

This is what directed energy means:

“An umbrella term covering technologies that relate to the production of a beam of concentrated electromagnetic energy or atomic or subatomic particles.” (GL6)  
“Examples include lasers, electro-optical (EO), infrared (IR), and radio frequency (RF) weapons such as high-power microwave (HPM) or those employing an EMP. (I-4.)

Now it’s getting serious.

Additionally, Joint Publication 3-13-1 also speaks to unintended consequences of EW: “Unintended Consequences. EW planners must coordinate EW efforts ... to minimize unintended consequences, collateral damage, and collateral effects. Friendly EA could potentially deny essential services to a local population that, in turn, could result in loss of life and/or political ramifications.” (III-5)

This Environmental Assessment, which only deals with the ground operations (the emitters), is addressing just a part of the impact and is totally silent on what may be the bigger concern, which is impact caused by the aircraft, ships and submarines

engaging in EW training, and particularly electronic attack training. Questions that have not been answered include:

1. What types of electronic attack will be practiced during training and testing, and where (on land, at sea or in the air) will electronic attack weapons be used?
2. What are the potential impacts, intended or otherwise, on the local population and the environment?