



SITE SELECTION

1. What process did the Government use to select the site, and why is Hunt Ray/Crismer the preferred location?

The General Services Administration (GSA) and the Department of State (DoS) conducted the site selection in full accordance with federal regulations for site acquisition. A synopsis of the selection process and evaluation of the Hunt Ray/Crismer farm is as follows:

GSA posted a public notice on the Federal Business Opportunities website (fbo.gov) on June 29, 2009 outlining the requirements for a site and soliciting expressions of interest from sellers.

Thirty potential sites from five states were submitted and evaluated through a rigorous, comprehensive review based on dozens of criteria, including proximity to Washington DC, developable area, shape, topography, availability, and mission requirements of the training center.

2. Why can't you relocate this facility to Quantico or another federal facility in the capital area?

GSA researched federal properties within the required 150 miles from Washington DC, but could not locate a federally-owned site or existing facility that could accommodate all the DoS training center function requirements. Specifically, the Quantico training facility already houses training functions for Department of Defense, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Drug Enforcement Agency, and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives, and is not able to accommodate the full DoS training center program.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

3. Why couldn't GSA and DoS give more information at the public meetings in January?

The project overview and public scoping meetings in early January marked the beginning of the public participation process. The intent of those meetings was to share reasons for our selection of the preferred site, provide general background information about the purpose and need of the project, and request feedback from local residents and community groups about what issues should be studied and what areas may need to receive a greater level of attention in the Environmental Assessment.

GSA and DoS representatives could not provide more information in January about the impacts of the project because they had not yet studied those impacts in detail. The EA process, including consideration of public comments and conducting technical investigations, is now underway and is studying potential impacts in a comprehensive manner and is soliciting public involvement.

4. What exactly is the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process and what comes of it? What does the Environmental Assessment determine? When did you start and when will you finish?

The National Environmental Policy Act is a federal law that requires agencies to consider the environmental impacts of proposed projects or actions prior to taking any significant action. Public input as well as technical studies are part of the NEPA evaluation, and findings are used to guide the final decision-making process about what actions may be taken and what measures can be used to avoid, minimize, or mitigate potential impacts to the environment.

An Environmental Assessment (EA) contains relevant information necessary for GSA and DoS to make a determination on the significance of impacts the training center will have upon Queen Anne's County. Such resources include, but are not limited to, the following: Land Use, Cultural Resources, Transportation Systems, and Physical/Biological Resources.

5. What is Section 106 and what does it guarantee citizens?

Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act requires Federal agencies to take into account the effects of their undertakings on historic properties. The goal of Section 106 Consultation is to identify historic properties that may be affected by the undertaking, assess the effects of the undertaking on these historic properties, and seek ways to avoid, minimize, or mitigate any adverse effects.

GSA intends to execute a Programmatic Agreement in accordance with 36 CFR 800.14(b) that will guide compliance efforts for this multi-phase training center project, ensuring that the development preserves important historical and cultural artifacts. Consulting parties of the Section 106 process, including many federal/state/local stakeholders, will help to identify mitigation measures and will sign this binding agreement.

6. Will there be any more opportunities for public comment on this project beyond the GSA Public Meeting held January 5, 2010, and the Public Scoping Meeting for NEPA/NHPA held on January 7, 2010?

Yes. Additional public meetings are scheduled for February 6 and February 10, and the public comment period was extended from January 15, 2010 until February 19, 2010. Upon publication of the Environmental Assessment (anticipated for late March or early April), the public will have another opportunity to participate in a 30-day comment period. GSA and DoS are exploring additional opportunities to share information with community groups and to encourage additional public involvement. The public may also submit feedback on the proposed training center at any time by calling the dedicated phone line at (215) 446-4815 or emailing FASTC.info@gsa.gov.

7. Would you consider putting together a group of community folks who live near the site to be advisors and provide input during this entire process?

Public involvement is a critical and welcome part of the development and long-term success of establishing the training center in Queen Anne's County. DoS and GSA are committed to working with local residents and other stakeholders towards a successful design and operations plan for the preferred site. The public is encouraged to continue providing comments and feedback through the NEPA and NHPA/Section 106 processes as well as at public meetings. The public can also submit feedback on the proposed training center at any time by calling the dedicated phone line at (215) 446-4815 or emailing FASTC.info@gsa.gov.

Additionally, the Department of State will accept invitations from local organizations and community groups for open discussions; and is also working to establish community liaison positions that will strengthen the dialogue with the local community on a more regular basis.

8. Does it matter that people don't want this here? Does that weigh in your decision whatsoever?

Yes. The DoS and GSA recognize and understand the concerns of Queen Anne's County residents regarding this proposed project. Many DoS employees come from communities similar to Ruthsburg and Centreville, MD, and appreciate the quality of life offered by a rural community. It is our goal to work in conjunction with the citizens of this community to ensure that the proposed facility benefits the surrounding area and any adverse impacts are mitigated to the fullest extent possible. Locating this facility in a community that is supportive of its development is of paramount concern.

GSA and DoS are working to ensure that we provide the public with all the information they need to understand the impacts, both positive and negative, this project could have on the community. We also are looking for detailed feedback from the community on their concerns with this project so we can plan our development to avoid, minimize, or mitigate those impacts as much as possible.

The NEPA process is the tool in which the public is invited to comment and identify impacts that they believe may result from the proposed development. Those comments will be part of the NEPA analysis that will be published in the draft Environmental Assessment (EA). Upon publication, the public can review the analysis and the findings, and participate in a 30-day comment period. These findings will also be used to modify the plans and operations for the facility to avoid or mitigate any impact. Development of the site cannot, and will not, begin until the NEPA process is completed.

9. Are GSA and DoS accepting comments on the Site Acquisition Process?

Federal regulations govern the site acquisition process. This public engagement process is focused on soliciting community feedback for the development of the proposed facility. GSA and DOS are committed to making sure that development is consistent with the values of the Eastern Shore.

SITE DEVELOPMENT

10. Is the purchase of the Hunt Ray/Crismer Farms a done deal or not?

No. GSA and DoS identified the Hunt Ray/Crismer Farms as the Preferred Site on November 30, 2009, but the site has not been purchased by the government at this time.

11. You refer to Phases in the project. What is included in Phase 1? When will all the phases be finished?

Although the final scope of Phase 1 is still being developed as part of the Master Plan development (and will be subject to available funds), the team has identified the following elements to be included as the first phase of construction:

Campus Infrastructure:

- Vegetated buffer at perimeter
- Perimeter fence
- Utility upgrades (electric, fiber, water supply, storm water/wastewater management)
- Campus entrances / access control

Hard Skills Venues:

- High speed driving tracks
- Indoor 50-meter firing ranges
- Outdoor, fully-baffled 150- and 300-meter firing ranges
- Improvised Explosive Device (IED) explosives training range (up to 1/2 pound charge)
- Related support structures (restrooms, temporary classrooms, fire/EMS)

12. What options will the government study as part of the environmental assessment since the site is already selected?

Now that the Government has identified a Preferred Site, the Environmental Assessment (EA) process is underway. The EA is a rigorous and important safeguard that calls for extensive community input. The process will study the environmental effects of the training center's program and operations on the site. Two site layouts will be evaluated for their potential beneficial and adverse impacts to the human environment.

The draft EA will be made available to the public to review the analysis and the findings, and participate in an additional 30-day comment period. These findings and public comments will be used to modify the plans and operations for the facility to avoid or mitigate any adverse impacts. Development of the site cannot, and will not, begin until the National Environmental Policy Act process is completed.

13. Why is GSA doing an Environmental Assessment (EA) and not an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)?

Under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the purpose of an Environmental Assessment (EA) is to identify potential environmental consequences and determine if a federal action (the DoS training center) would result in a "significant" impact on the man-made or natural environment. An EA is conducted to determine if a more detailed Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is required.

14. If this project does go forward in Queen Anne’s County, will you consider making the facility available for our local first responders’ (i.e., law enforcement people for their training)?

Yes. FASTC will be home to modern, state-of-the-art training venues that would most certainly benefit local law enforcement agencies and emergency services providers. As part of our pledge to be a good neighbor and valued member of the community, DoS will make every effort to make this facility available to local entities.

15. Are you planning to buy the houses that sit right along the perimeter of the preferred site? Can GSA or DoS provide assurances that the facilities currently proposed for the 2,000 acres and the level of ammunitions and explosive training will not be expanded?

DoS does not have an operational need to expand beyond the identified approximately 2,000 acres located at the Hunt Ray/Crismer Farms, and is not planning to solicit additional property. The “Test Fit Plan” presented at the January 2010 meetings includes all phases of the project, with no plans to expand beyond what is shown.

Phase 1 is only a portion of the Test Fit Plan, and subsequent phases will be constructed as funding is made available. Total build-out is expected to occur over several years, and any expansion of training or operations has already been considered as part of the program development.

16. Will there be helicopter training and heavy weapons training envisioned for this project? Will there be any aircraft used in any training now or in future plans for the facility?

No. There are not now, nor have there ever been, plans for this facility to have helicopter training or heavy weapons training.

On December 22, 2009, GSA and DoS informed the Queen Anne’s county Commission in writing that DoS would not conduct live fire medium machine gun, heavy machine guns, 40mm grenade launcher or helicopter operations training at the facility. The preferred site in Queen Anne’s County is too small to accommodate the required safety zones that are mandated by federal regulations for this kind of training. These training requirements will have to be completed at much larger facilities.

17. Will there be a no fly zone for general aviation over this facility?

DoS has no plans to establish a ‘no fly zone’ over the facility, nor to pursue fly over restrictions.

18. The hard skills training on the site will occur right next to Tuckahoe State Park. Would you consider switching where this training takes place?

The design/layout of the site will be influenced by the public comments received during National Environmental Policy Act scoping as well as by the results of geotechnical, acoustical, transportation and cultural resource studies currently being carried out by the architecture/engineering team.

There is not enough information at this time to determine how or if the training center will impact Tuckahoe State Park. The findings of the National Environmental Policy Act process will help to determine where best to locate various building components.

19. What will a typical day be like at the training center?

A typical day at the training center will begin with assigned personnel arriving between 6:30 and 7:45 am. Instructors will begin in the classroom even if the students are engaged in a class involving hard skills training. Those engaged in hard skills training will fire on the weapons ranges, practice skills on the driving tracks, observe small explosive demonstrations and then return to the classroom for further instruction before engaging in additional practice. Students and instructors will have periodic breaks and will also break for lunch. Depending on the class, the students may complete a course module and/or move to a lab or project using online resources in computer labs. The day will normally end for students between 4:30 and 5:00 p.m. The regular staff have an eight hour day and typically begin leaving at 3:30 pm. Instructors typically leave by 5:30 pm.

NOISE

20. What will the noise impacts be in respect to this action?

The Architecture/Engineering team recently completed a two-day site noise assessment to measure the background and existing noise levels at the proposed training center site. Measurements were made at key locations on and around the site as well as at other locations identified as potentially sensitive based on our research and from comments received. The existing background day time noise levels measured were in the range of 32 to 40 decibels (dBA) away from the highways. With passing traffic the noise levels increase to 50-70 dBA depending on the location of the vehicle and other events. Gunfire noise was in the range of 60-70 dBA depending on the location.

Preliminary estimates of the daily noise at the Training Center, not including mitigation, are in the range of 60-103 dB depending on training activity. The infrequent explosives demonstrations for the 1.5 lb and 3 lb charges are estimated at 110 and 124 dB, respectively. With mitigation efforts, these sound levels are expected to decrease once the Training Center is designed.

The final results of this analysis will be published in the draft Environmental Assessment (EA). Upon publication, the public can review the EA analysis and the findings, and participate in a 30-day comment period. These findings will also be used to modify the plans and operations for the facility to avoid or mitigate any adverse impact. Development of the site cannot, and will not, begin until the National Environmental Policy Act process is completed.

21. What will the noise mitigation efforts be in respect to this action?

The National Environmental Policy Act process will address the proposed training center programs with respect to time of day and frequency of use. Some areas of the facility may be in use for the full training day, while other specific events may only occur daily or perhaps weekly, making their noise level considerations different with respect to the overall noise impact assessment. The assessment will address the expected noise levels as comparisons to other more commonly experienced events. The assessment will also identify and include the use of possible mitigation solutions that can be used to minimize any impacts. These mitigation approaches may be physical constructions, landscaping or vegetation, potential modifications to site plan layouts, or perhaps operational limitations such as time of day for particular functions or events.

22. Three grams of black powder makes a loud noise. What is the amount of damage a 3 lb. bomb can make? How are you going to contain the sound of a 3 lb. charge?

The noise and damage associated with a 3 lb. charge is currently being studied as part of the National Environmental Policy Act process by the Architecture/Engineering Blast Engineering and Acoustical Engineering consultants. These studies will analyze the different charges planned and their impacts. The approaches that the project may use to for noise mitigation will likely include physical constructions, landscaping or vegetation, advance notification/scheduling with the community, potential modifications to test-fit layouts, or operational limitations such as time of day for particular functions or events.

In order to fulfill its training requirements, detonations of 3 lb charges will need to occur no more than six (6) times per calendar year and will be scheduled between the hours of 8:00 am and 5:00 pm, Monday through Friday.

TRAFFIC | TRANSPORTATION

23. What happens to public access to Damsontown Road, which goes through the proposed training facility property?

Public access to Damsontown Road (Route 481) will not be prohibited, and the segment of that goes through the proposed training center facility will remain open to the public. There are no plans to close or restrict any portion of this road.

24. One of the most dangerous intersections in the Queen Anne's County is at Route 301 and Route 304. How will additional traffic be addressed? Are there plans in Phase 1 to address surrounding infrastructure -- specifically this intersection -- to ensure the safety of local residents?

We are aware of the safety concerns regarding the Route 301/304 intersection and the potential impact of this project on the surrounding area. We are coordinating with the state of Maryland to study traffic impacts and will identify potential improvements and set a strategy for their implementation. Additionally, strategies to minimize traffic volume to/from the site (e.g., shuttles, commuter bus service, etc.) will also be evaluated as part of the Master Plan development.

The result of this analysis will be published in the draft Environmental Assessment (EA). Upon publication, the public has the opportunity to review the EA analysis and proposed mitigation measures, and to provide comments during a 30-day comment period. Community feedback received during that review period will be used to modify the plans and operations for the facility to further avoid or mitigate any negative impacts. Development of the site cannot, and will not, begin until the National Environmental Policy Act process is completed.

SAFETY

25. Will the bullets from the firing ranges be a threat to those who live next to or those who drive by the site? Will all lead from range be kept out of the ground (cleaned up regularly)?

The bullets from the firing ranges will not be a threat to the neighbors or people passing by the site. All firing ranges, including outdoor ranges, will be designed to fully contain the ammunition through the use of bullet traps and baffling. The federal government is bound by all the federal regulations regarding the management of hazardous materials and hazardous waste, to include containment of lead. The firing ranges will be designed with bullet traps that capture the ammunition, thereby containing the lead. The bullet traps will be cleaned on a regular basis and the captured ammunition/lead will be collected from the site and recycled in an environmentally safe manner. All lead collection will be carried out in accordance with Environmental Protection Agency, OSHA and Department of Transportation standards.

26. Will DoS be testing biological and chemical warfare weapons at this site?

No. Neither biological nor chemical weapons will be involved, in any capacity, with the training functions conducted at the proposed facility.

27. My son has asthma. How much dust and other hazardous materials will go into the air and in my backyard because of this Center? How will you dispose of waste generated by arms testing?

Both construction and long-term operation of the proposed facility will be conducted in strict accordance with EPA and OSHA environmental, health and safety laws and regulations including specific requirements for noise control, pollution abatement, waste management and personal protection. These regulations require controlling dust during construction and proper management of construction waste and debris, including recycling. Periodic assessments and monitoring of environmental conditions will be conducted and the results will be reported to EPA and OSHA as required.

The National Environmental Policy Act process will study the potential impacts to the human environment, including the effects to air quality. The result of this analysis will be published in the draft Environmental Assessment.

28. What terrorist threat will this bring to the eastern shore of Maryland?

There are many other training facilities such as this one around the country for state, local, and federal law enforcement officials. DoS has not found any evidence that existing training facilities are targeted by terrorist organizations or terrorists. We have no reason to believe that the DoS training center would be any different than other civilian and federal training facilities throughout the country.

SITE FENCE

29. How will the property be fenced in? How high will the fences be?

The perimeter fence has not yet been designed, but the initial concept is that the perimeter will be designed with an aesthetically pleasing boundary in public areas to that includes fencing, vegetation and open space. Current site plan alternatives include a 300 foot vegetated buffer at all edges, and with fence set back between 100 and 200 feet from the property line. Interior areas and areas not viewed by the public are anticipated to be a standard U.S. Government perimeter fence. The height of all fencing is currently planned to be eight to nine feet.

CULTURAL | NATURAL RESOURCES

30. What effect will this have on our livestock and wildlife in the area?

The National Environmental Policy Act process studies the natural environment, which includes potential impacts to livestock and wildlife.

Review of several scientific research studies on livestock and wildlife at comparable facilities is underway, and this issue will be addressed in greater detail through the Physical/Biological resources category in the Environmental Assessment. Measures may also be developed, when and where appropriate, to mitigate noise impacts to wildlife and livestock.

31. What will the impacts on historic resources be and what will the mitigation efforts be in respect to this action?

Cultural resources are analyzed in the Environmental Assessment (EA) and as part of the National Historic Preservation Act Section 106 review process. A specific cultural resources assessment of the training center property and surrounding area of potential effect (APE) will be conducted within the next few weeks. This will identify any historic properties or prehistoric resources within the APE. Identified cultural, historic, or prehistoric resources will be discussed in the EA and appropriate mitigation measures developed. The Section 106 process and the cultural resources assessment will be done in cooperation with the Maryland Historical Trust and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation.

GSA intends to execute a Programmatic Agreement in accordance with 36 CFR 800.14(b) that will guide compliance efforts for this multi-phase undertaking, ensuring that our development preserves important historical and cultural artifacts. Findings from the cultural resource investigations will be shared with the public. The public will have an opportunity to comment on the identification of historic resources and assessment of effects from the proposed development upon those resources. Members of the public also will be asked to help identify mitigation measures. Findings from the cultural resource investigations will be also used in the development of the master plan, construction plans, and operations plan for the proposed facility to avoid, minimize, or mitigate adverse effects to historic resources.

32. The land is low there and doesn't perk consistently. How would you handle the sewage needs?

Infrastructure demands and capabilities of the preferred site will be fully evaluated. A preliminary geotechnical investigation that observed soil conditions and ground water levels at 20 locations across the site was recently completed. While a more detailed consideration of sewage handling is planned, it appears that an ecological approach to sewage discharge is a viable option for the site as long as poorly draining areas are avoided.

The result of the National Environmental Policy Act analysis, which will be published in the draft Environmental Assessment, will be used to modify the plans and operations for the facility to avoid, mitigate, or minimize any potential negative impacts.

POTENTIAL BENEFITS: JOBS

33. What type of jobs will be available to the local residents? Will local business owners have a chance to bid parts of this project (i.e. landscape design, maintenance for the property)?

Long-Term: The preliminary estimate for the total number of permanent part-time and full-time staff that will be needed to operate the training center is approximately 850 - 1000 at full build-out. Current staffing totals at the training facility locations to be consolidated are 538, so this reflects a potential growth of approximately 400 jobs. Increases in staffing are the result of program expansion as well as from transitioning from contracted facilities to the consolidated facility.

New jobs will be created in the following areas: buildings and grounds, range operations, emergency medical services (EMS), administrative, custodial, vehicle maintenance, security, telecommunications, and food service.

Short-Term: A preliminary estimate of construction-related jobs has been prepared based on prevailing wages and the estimated funding available for Phase 1 of the training center development. The projection indicates approximately 350 - 550 jobs will be created as part of the first phase of construction. This estimate does not include secondary jobs and economic-related benefits that will likely result.

All federal procurement opportunities are open to competition from qualified companies. Local businesses are encouraged to bid on contracts, either as prime contractors or subcontractors, related to facility construction, operations, and maintenance.

34. What type of cleared jobs will be at this site?

Most jobs will require applicants to be eligible for security clearance, although the level of clearance will be based on the nature and sensitivity of the position. Possession of an existing active security clearance will not typically be a requirement for applying for a job.

35. How do local Queen Anne’s County contractors get the necessary information for submitting timely bids to GSA for future design and construction business opportunities for the FASTC project?

GSA posts all federal contracting solicitations on the Federal Business Opportunities (www.fbo.gov) website. Contractors are encouraged to register on that website in order to receive notification of DoS training center related solicitations. GSA will also organize outreach efforts at the local level, with job fairs and other events aimed at facilitating networking opportunities for small businesses and other prospective bidders. GSA is dedicated to expanding opportunities to small businesses through their Office of Small Business Utilization. For more information, please visit www.gsa.gov/smallbusiness or call 215-446-4918 to speak with a regional small business representative.

All awarded contractors for ARRA projects are required to frequently document and report on the number of jobs retained and/or created.

POTENTIAL BENEFITS: ECONOMIC

36. Is there a standard procedure for enticing large hotels and/or restaurants to support the staff of this facility given its rural location? After our restaurants and lodging gear up to accommodate you, squeezing out tourists and regulars, what happens when the DoS students no longer take their meals or sleep there because FASTC will provide meals and lodging?

Early stages of the training center development will not include lodging or cafeterias to house and feed students or staff. Therefore, there will be a dependency on local hotels and restaurants to fill this need. To solicit interest from possible service providers, the DoS will post a Request for Proposals (RFP) on the Federal Business Opportunities (www.fbo.gov) website. Currently, the DoS books approximately 25,000 hotel room nights per year through multiple contracts with hotels in proximity to the various training venues currently used, and anticipates similar relationships to be established at the new training center.

The current program includes dormitory lodging for up to 450 students, which is the average student population anticipated at full build-out. While there will be a transition to on-site services as future phases are constructed, however, it is anticipated that there will be a perpetual need to house a portion of the student population at local hotels. Additionally, families of students will not be housed at the training center and some may seek short-term accommodations in the area. While a cafeteria is also planned as part of the later phases of the development, students and staff will be encouraged to experience the cultural and recreational activities the Eastern Shore has to offer.

37. What is the annual number of visitors and how long will they stay? Can you give me an estimate of hotel nights?

Current training operations at DoS contracted facilities last from between one day and 13 weeks, resulting in an average of 25,000 hotel night bookings annually. Students are provided an additional allowance to cover costs of meals and incidentals (M&IE) based on established rates for federal travel. The FY 2010 per diem rate for Queen Anne’s County is \$116 per day for lodging and M&IE expenses.

38. Will our community receive a tax break if FASTC moves into Queen Anne's County?

While the federal government does not pay property taxes, federal spending can have a measurable effect on the local economy. The NEPA environmental review process will examine positive and negative socio-economic and fiscal impacts that could arise from project construction and operation. Specifically, the analysis will address direct and indirect federal spending in terms of both initial expenditures and the multiplier effect.

The results of these economic and fiscal analyses will be published in the draft Environmental Assessment in late March/early April. Upon publication, the public has the opportunity to review the analyses and findings, and participate in a 30-day public comment period.

39. What is the most comparable site to FASTC? What is the relationship like with the surrounding community?

The Federal Law Enforcement Training Center (FLETC), located in Brunswick, GA, is comparable to the proposed FASTC facility in size, operational activities, scope of training, and location. FLETC, which operates on approximately 1,200 acres, is located in close proximity to residential neighborhoods and is bordered to the south by single-family residences. The facility provides venues for firearms, driving and explosives training to a wide array of federal agencies, to include the DoS. An estimated 25,000 students are trained at FLETC each year. As evidenced by recent news articles in both the Chestertown Spy and Maryland Star-Democrat, the relationship between FLETC and the local community has been positive. FLETC has been in operation for approximately thirty-five years, during which the facility has become a welcomed member of the local community. It has received high praise from local officials and local interest groups for its positive impacts, primarily the economic boost it provides to the area.

POTENTIAL BENEFITS: PROPERTY VALUE

40. What will happen to my property value?

A socio-economic resource assessment study is being prepared and studies the potential impacts to property value resulting from the proposed development. Property values are analyzed in a general sense, not individually (i.e., individual property values of the residences and farmland will not be assessed). This analysis will include studying general property values trends in neighborhoods surrounding similar facilities (or as similar as possible) and the effects, both beneficial and adverse, that those developments had. Those findings will be analyzed for comparison to similar trends expected near the training center.

The result of this analysis will be published in the draft Environmental Assessment (EA). Upon publication, the public can review and provide input to the EA during a 30-day comment period.