

**MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST  
DETERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY FORM**

NR Eligible: yes   
no

Property Name: Building 423 Inventory Number: HA-2103

Address: Aberdeen Area City: Aberdeen Proving Ground Zip Code: 21005-5001

County: Harford USGS Topographic Map: Spesutie

Owner: U.S. Army Garrison, Aberdeen Proving Ground Is the property being evaluated a district? XX yes

Tax Parcel Number: NA Tax Map Number: NA Tax Account ID Number: NA  
Installation Information Infrastructure Modernization

Project: Program (I3MP) Agency: U. S. Army, Aberdeen Proving Ground

Site visit by MHT Staff: XX no  yes  Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Is the property located within a historic district?  yes XX no

<i>If the property is within a district</i>		District Inventory Number: _____
NR-listed district <input type="checkbox"/> yes	Eligible district <input type="checkbox"/> yes	District Name: _____
Preparer's Recommendation: Contributing resource <input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no Non-contributing but eligible in another context <input type="checkbox"/>		

<i>If the property is not within a district (or the property is a district)</i>	
Preparer's Recommendation: Eligible <u>XX</u> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no <input type="checkbox"/>	

Criteria: XXA  B XXC  D Considerations:  A  B  C  D  E  F XXG  None

Documentation on the property/district is presented in:

Description of Property and Eligibility Determination: *(Use continuation sheet if necessary and attach map and photo)*

**General Description**

Constructed in 1988 and originally called the "Bounce Test Lab," the Vibration Test Laboratory is a one-story, pre-fabricated building supported by a concrete foundation and sheathed in box-seam metal panels. It is oriented to the southeast and measures 91 by 102 feet. Defined by four bays, the two left-hand openings are double-leaf doors with a single-leaf passage door, holding a small window, in the extreme right bay. The fourth bay is a fixed sash window within a metal frame. The shallow-pitched gable roof is sheathed in metal panels. A passage door on the left elevation provides access to the west bay of the building. Blast walls surround the building on the remaining elevations. Due to operational security concerns, photography of the building was not allowed.

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Eligibility recommended <input type="checkbox"/>	Eligibility not recommended <u>X</u>
Criteria: <input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <u>XX</u> C <input type="checkbox"/> D	Considerations: <input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> D <input type="checkbox"/> E <input type="checkbox"/> F <input type="checkbox"/> G <input type="checkbox"/> None
Comments: <u>Documentation does not support "exceptional significance" under consideration</u>	
<u>Jonathan Bages</u> Reviewer, Office of Preservation Services	<u>5/5/08</u> Date
<u>Peter E. Curty</u> Reviewer, NR Program	<u>5/1/08</u> Date

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### Evaluation

Building 423 was evaluated against National Register guidelines to determine if it retained those qualities of significance and integrity to merit further consideration for eligibility to the National Register. This building is associated with the Ballistic Research Laboratory at Aberdeen Proving Ground during the Cold War Era (Criterion A). Assessing the National Register eligibility of Aberdeen Proving Ground, Cold War era resources represents a multi-stepped process. The National Register generally defines resources eligible for listing as being 50 years of age or older. Building 423 fails to meet this threshold level. Exceptions to the age requirement can be made when buildings near 50-years old contribute to a historic district. Under this exception, the building must still contribute to the significance of the National Register District and retain integrity to the period of significance. There are no identified or potentially eligible National Register Districts in the vicinity of this building. The National Register provides guidance on assessing individual resources of exceptional importance to the 50-year rule under Criteria Consideration G. Guidance provided by the *Thematic Study and Guidelines: Identification and Evaluation of U.S. Army Cold War Era Military-Industrial Historic Properties* refines the application of the National Register criteria to those properties that relate directly to the Cold War Era Military-Industrial Context (USAEC 1997).

The U.S. Army guidance identifies associations in four areas or sub themes within Cold War Military history. Properties that relate directly to the Cold War Military-Industrial context are "defined as those that meet any or all of the following qualifications:

1. They were specifically constructed or used prior to 1989 to
  - Meet the perceived Soviet/communist military threat;
  - Project a force designed to influence Soviet policy; and
  - Affect global opinion of the relationship between the superpowers.
2. Through their architectural or engineering design, they clearly reflect one of the Cold War themes.
3. They are directly related to the United States/Soviet relationship through association with a milestone event of the period.
4. They are directly related to a United States/Soviet relationship through association with the life of a person during the Cold War period (USAEC 1997:89)."

In addition to meeting the qualifications of the Cold War Military-Industrial context, a resource must also satisfy National Register criteria and applicable Criteria Considerations. Building 423 was evaluated against National Register of Historic Places criteria for significance and integrity for the closing years of the Cold War era.

The property was evaluated under Criterion A for its association with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history. As designed and constructed originally, the building would achieve significance under Criterion A, and the Cold War Military-Industrial context under Qualification 3 within the theme of basic research. The building continues in use as a vibration test facility and houses the controls, computers, and monitoring equipment of the five vibration test cells located north of the control building. It continues in use for the same purpose as its Cold War association

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although some electronic equipment was modernized and upgraded. Testing completed in Building 423 contributed to the development of improved propellants and weapons systems during the Cold War era.

The building was evaluated under Criterion B for association with individuals linking the research at the Ballistics Research Laboratory with the United States/Soviet relationship during the Cold War period. Archival research yielded no specific information about the activities or impact of a person with Cold War relationships and no scholarly judgement can be made about historic importance. Building 423 does not possess association with individuals significant in local, state, or national history to merit further consideration for eligibility to the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion B.

In order to merit further consideration for eligibility to the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C, a property must achieve significance within a historic context and retain integrity. The method of construction of the building is typical of those constructed throughout Aberdeen Proving Ground with concrete and concrete block construction, pre-fabricated metal panels, utilitarian doors and windows, and minimal ornamentation, and the use of concrete for live-fire areas. Building 423 does not possess significant physical design or construction and does not merit further consideration for eligibility to the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C.

Building 423, the vibration test facility control building, retains those qualities of significance and integrity to merit consideration for eligibility to National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A for its association with the Ballistics Research Laboratory at Aberdeen Proving Ground. The building contributed significantly to the successful completion of the basic research mission at Aberdeen by providing test facilities for all facets of military hardware. The test facility offered climatically controlled environments for the testing of munitions, electronics equipment, and other devices during the late-Cold War period. The building retains integrity of materials, design, location, setting, association, feeling, and workmanship. The replacement of electronic components does not diminish integrity significantly as the building continues to be used for its designed purpose (Advisory Council on Historic Preservation 1991:33).

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**Bibliography**

Aberdeen Proving Ground

1971 Pamphlet, Aberdeen Proving Ground, Maryland.

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1991 *Balancing Historic Preservation Needs with the Operation of Highly Technical or Scientific Facilities.* Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, Washington, D.C.

Department of the Army

1997 *Cultural Resources Management.* DA Pamphlet 200-4, Department of the Army, Washington, D.C.

Dunne, Tracy F.

1998 *Cold War Era Building Survey.* Draft report prepared for Cultural Resources Manager, Directorate of Safety, Health and Environment, Aberdeen Proving Ground, Maryland.

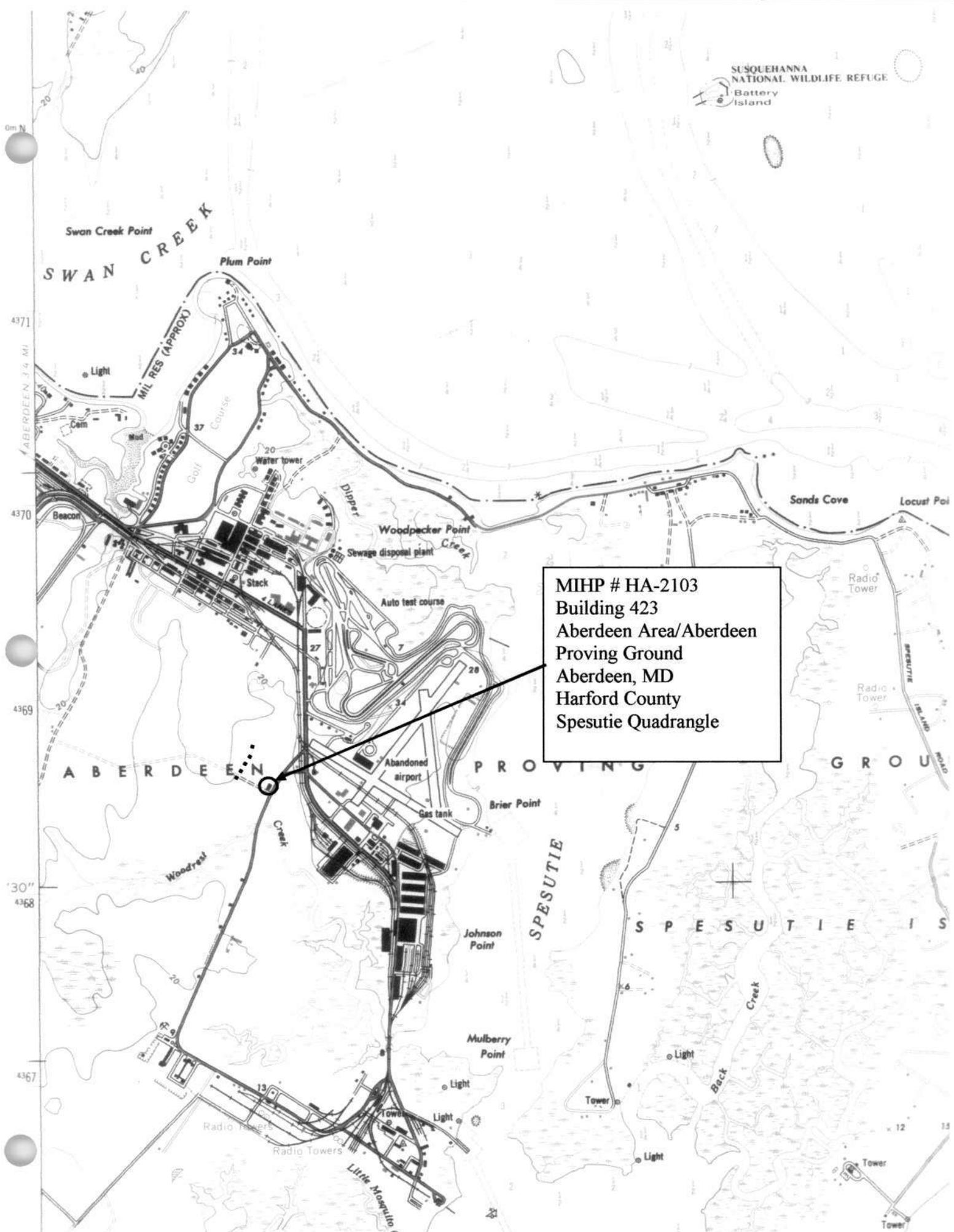
U.S. Army Environmental Center

1997 *Thematic Study and Guidelines: Identification and Evaluation of U.S. Army Cold War Era Military-Industrial Historic Properties.* Draft, AEC, Aberdeen Proving Ground, Maryland.

U.S. Department of Interior, National Park Service

1991 *National Register Bulletin 15: How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation.* Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C.

SUSQUEHANNA NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE  
Battery Island



MIHP # HA-2103  
Building 423  
Aberdeen Area/Aberdeen  
Proving Ground  
Aberdeen, MD  
Harford County  
Spesutie Quadrangle