



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF  
**ENERGY**

# **Republic of the Marshall Islands Special Medical Care and Logistics Program Activities**

## **Fiscal Year 2024**

**Report to Congress  
May 2025**

**United States Department of Energy  
Washington, DC 20585**



# Message from the Director, Office of Environment, Health, Safety and Security

Per Title 48 of the United States Code Section 1933(k), this report details how the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) spent funds during the previous fiscal year for the special medical care and logistical support program for Rongelap and Utrik and provides anticipated needs for the current and following fiscal years. Pursuant to statutory requirements, this report is being provided to the following members of the Congressional Committees on Appropriations of the House and Senate:

- **The Honorable Susan Collins**  
Chair, Senate Committee on Appropriations
- **The Honorable Patty Murray**  
Vice Chair, Senate Committee on Appropriations
- **The Honorable Tom Cole**  
Chairman, House Committee on Appropriations
- **The Honorable Rosa L. DeLauro**  
Ranking Member, House Committee on Appropriations
- **The Honorable John Kennedy**  
Chairman, Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development  
Senate Committee on Appropriations
- **The Honorable Patty Murray**  
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development  
Senate Committee on Appropriations
- **The Honorable Chuck Fleischmann**  
Chairman, Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development  
House Committee on Appropriations
- **The Honorable Marcy Kaptur**  
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development  
House Committee on Appropriations

Questions regarding the information provided in this report may be directed to Dr. Michael (Josh) Silverman, Acting Director, Office of Health and Safety, at (202) 586-6535, or Ms. Meg Roessing, Deputy Director for External Coordination, Office of Budget, Office of the Chief Financial Officer, at (202) 586-3128.

Sincerely,

Stephanie K. Martin  
Acting Director  
Office of Environment, Health, Safety and Security

## Executive Summary

Per Title 48 of the United States Code (U.S.C.) Section 1933(k), this report details how the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) spent funds during the previous fiscal year for the special medical care and logistical support program for Rongelap and Utrik and provides anticipated needs for the current and following fiscal years.

The DOE Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI) Special Medical Care and Logistics Program (SMCP) is administered by the DOE Office of Environment, Health, Safety and Security, Office of Health and Safety, via a cooperative agreement with International Outreach Services, a Hawaii-based 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. The SMCP provides medical care and logistical support thereto for the remaining members of the population of Rongelap and Utrik who were directly exposed to radiation resulting from the 1954 United States thermonuclear weapons test “Bravo,” as required by 48 U.S.C. Section 1985(g).

SMCP funding provides the remaining members of the population of Rongelap and Utrik who were directly exposed to radiation annual medical screening examinations focused on detecting radiation-related cancer, and referrals to specialists for further testing, cancer treatment, and follow-up examinations, as needed, as well as transportation within and outside the RMI and per diem for patients and their escorts. SMCP funding also provides for the maintenance of a medical clinic on the Majuro Atoll, an office and clinic space at the United States Army Garrison on Kwajalein Atoll, and salaries, training, travel, and insurance for the program’s medical and administrative staff.

At the beginning of fiscal year FY 2024, 62 RMI individuals were eligible for participation in the SMCP.

In FY 2024, annual medical screening examinations were provided to 47 (76 percent) of the eligible RMI individuals. The remaining individuals were not examined for various reasons, which are detailed in this report. In addition, SMCP staff conducted 133 home patient care visits, 78 deliveries of personal care supplies, and 122 prescription refill deliveries.

There were five referrals in FY 2024 including three patients referred for follow-up care. No unusual or unanticipated logistics support costs were incurred in FY 2024.

FY 2025 expenditures are projected to increase due to inflation and the projected need for referrals, cancer treatment, and follow-up services.

At the end of FY 2024, there were 59 remaining individuals eligible to participate in the SMCP.



**Department of Energy  
Republic of the Marshall Islands  
Special Medical Care and Logistics Program Activities  
Fiscal Year 2024  
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## I. Legislative Language

The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) is directed by Title 48 U.S. Code (U.S.C.) Section 1933(k) to:

*“...provide the Committees on Appropriations of the House and Senate with a report by December 1 of each fiscal year detailing how funds were spent during the previous fiscal year for the special medical care and logistical support program for Rongelap and Utrik ... as referenced in Section 103(h) of Public Law 99-239 [48 U.S.C. 1903(h)]. The report shall also specify the anticipated needs during the current and following fiscal years in order to meet the radiological health care and logistical support program for Rongelap and Utrik....”<sup>1</sup>*

## II. Introduction

This report details how the DOE spent funds during the previous fiscal year (FY) for the special medical care and logistical support program for Rongelap and Utrik, per 48 U.S.C. Section 1933(k). The report also provides anticipated needs for the current and following fiscal years.

The DOE Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI) Special Medical Care and Logistics Program (SMCP) is administered by the DOE Office of Environment, Health, Safety and Security, Office of Health and Safety, via a cooperative agreement with International Outreach Services, a Hawaii-based 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. The SMCP provides medical care and logistical support thereto for the remaining members of the population of Rongelap and Utrik who were exposed to radiation resulting from the 1954 United States thermonuclear weapons test “Bravo,” as required by 48 U.S.C. Section 1985(g).<sup>2</sup>

There were 253 people on the Rongelap and Utrik Atolls during the “Bravo” test. At the beginning of FY 2024, 62 RMI individuals were eligible for participation in the SMCP.

## III. Medical Services

The medical services portion of the SMCP provides eligible participants annual medical screening examinations focused on detecting radiation-related cancer, and referrals to specialists for further testing, cancer treatment, and follow-up examinations, as needed.

Funding provides for:

- Annual Medical Screening Examinations:
  - Laboratory, imaging, and physician services,

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<sup>1</sup> The citation is edited to illustrate only the requirements applicable to DOE.

<sup>2</sup> 48 U.S.C. § 1985(g) requires DOE to continue to provide the special medical care and logistical support program contained within the Compact of Free Association Amendments Act of 2003, P.L. 108-188, Section 103(f)(1), codified at 48 U.S.C. § 1903(h)(1).

- Medical supplies and equipment,
- Pharmaceuticals,
- Charter aircraft and vessels for transportation inside the RMI,
- Patient and escort travel, lodging, and per diem outside the RMI,
- SMCP staff travel related to medical services,
- SMCP healthcare and administrative staff salaries, and
- Medical malpractice insurance.
- Referral, Cancer Treatment and Follow-up Services, as needed:
  - Testing and laboratory services,
  - Specialist examinations,
  - Cancer treatment,
  - Follow-up care,
  - Patient and escort travel, lodging, and per diem outside the RMI, and
  - Other travel-related costs.

SMCP annual medical screening examinations, referral examinations, and cancer treatment services are conducted at clinics, hospitals, and other medical facilities throughout the RMI, Hawaii, and the continental United States (CONUS). The SMCP also provides for home visits by physicians and staff to patients unable to travel to a medical facility.

In FY 2024, SMCP staff conducted 133 home patient care visits, 78 deliveries of personal care supplies, and 122 prescription refill deliveries.

The annual medical screening examinations generally consist of a review of medical records and personal history and a physical examination including the following tests and procedures, as applicable:

- Thyroid palpation,
- Mammograms,
- Complete blood count,
- Comprehensive metabolic panel,
- Hemoglobin A1c,
- Urinalysis,
- Liver cancer screening,
- Chest x-ray/computerized tomography lung cancer screening,
- Thyroid ultrasound, and
- Colonoscopy.

Some imaging services, e.g., thyroid ultrasound, mammogram, and colonoscopy are not always available in the RMI due to equipment maintenance or scarcity of medical specialists. In those cases, participants are offered partial annual medical screening examinations.



Patients receive additional examinations and testing when the annual medical screening examination results indicate the presence of potential radiation-related cancer. If verified, cancer treatment is initiated. Patients are fully engaged in the development and implementation of their treatment plans and provided with access to additional services such as counseling. Cancer treatment is provided until patients are in remission or have reached end of care.

Patients are referred to other healthcare programs, such as the Section 177 Healthcare Program and the RMI National Healthcare Program, when annual medical screening examination results identify abnormalities not indicative of radiation-related cancer.

## **Annual Medical Screening Examinations**

In FY 2024, 47 of 62 eligible individuals (76 percent) received annual medical screening examinations (29 complete and 18 partial). The remaining eligible individuals were not examined due to personal schedules, refusal of the examination, relocation without providing a forwarding address, or death.

## **Referrals, Treatment, and Follow-up Services**

Five referrals for suspected radiation-related cancer, cancer treatment, or follow-up services were required in FY 2024, as detailed below:

- One referral to Honolulu for routine follow-up on previous breast cancer treatment and reported pain in the region. No evidence of recurrence of cancer was found and the patient received pain management counseling.
- One referral to Honolulu for routine follow-up on previous mandibular cancer treatment. No recurrence of cancer was found.
- One referral to Honolulu for a routine follow-up on previous colon cancerous polyps removal. No recurrence of cancer was found.
- One referral to Honolulu for a suspicious pancreatic mass found during ultrasound examination in Majuro. No evidence of cancer was found.
- One referral for a patient residing in Honolulu for a suspicious cervical mass. The patient was diagnosed with two types of cancer. The patient underwent two surgeries which successfully removed the cancers. A fine needle aspiration of the thyroid was also performed with negative results. The patient was recovering satisfactorily at the end of FY 2024.
- A patient residing in Arkansas went outside the SMCP for a throat mass biopsy. Program physicians were informed the mass was found to be positive for cancer and the patient underwent surgery to remove the cancer. Efforts to contact the patient are ongoing so that any expenses borne by the patient can be addressed along with the patient's current well-being.

## Additional Medical Support Services

DOE provided the RMI Ministry of Health and Human Services (MOHHS) with medical support in addition to that which was required to attend to SMCP participants. In FY 2024, DOE provided MOHHS with 625 hours of additional clinical support from a physician and a nurse, and these services were utilized where MOHHS had the greatest need to improve access to care.

## IV. Logistics Support

The logistical support portion of the SMCP provides for infrastructure and operations support. In the RMI, medical operations are conducted at and from a clinic located in a commercial center in the Uliga Village on the Majuro Atoll, an office in the Ebeye Hospital on the Kwajalein Atoll, and a clinic space at the United States Army Garrison on Kwajalein Atoll.

Funding provides for:

- Lease/rent for the Majuro clinic,
- Utilities for the Majuro clinic,
- Facility maintenance and repair services for the Majuro clinic,
- Vehicle maintenance and repair services,
- Office supplies, equipment, and maintenance,
- SMCP staff travel not related to medical services, and
- Continuing medical education and certifications for SMCP staff.

No unusual or unanticipated logistics support costs were incurred in FY 2024.

## V. Program Expenditures

SMCP expenditures for FY 2024 and projected FY 2025 costs are presented in the following table.

**Special Medical Care and Logistics Program Costs**

| <b>Program Element</b>                              | <b>FY 2024<br/>Actual Cost</b> | <b>FY 2025<br/>Projected Costs</b> |
|---|--------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| <b>Medical Services</b>                             |                                |                                    |
| • Annual Medical Screening Examinations             | \$287,597                      | \$369,124                          |
| • Referral, Cancer Treatment and Follow-up Services | \$146,300                      | \$192,223                          |
| <b>Subtotal, Medical Services</b>                   | <b>\$433,897</b>               | <b>\$561,347</b>                   |
| <b>Logistics Support</b>                            | \$743,227                      | \$825,121                          |
| <b>Subtotal, Logistics Support</b>                  | <b>\$743,227</b>               | <b>\$825,121</b>                   |
| <b>Total SMCP</b>                                   | <b>\$1,177,124</b>             | <b>\$1,386,468</b>                 |

The annual medical screening examination costs for FY 2025 and subsequent years are anticipated to increase due to increased costs for medical services and supplies, travel, and labor. Additionally, it is anticipated that the number of program participants traveling to Hawaii and CONUS for medical referrals, cancer treatment, and follow-up services will increase as the population ages. Logistics support costs are projected to increase in FY 2025 and subsequent years due to inflation.

## **VI. Conclusion**

In FY 2024, DOE continued operations of the SMCP, as required by 48 U.S.C. Section 1985(g).

At the beginning of FY 2024, 62 RMI individuals were eligible for participation in the SMCP.

Annual medical screening examinations were provided to 47 (76 percent) of eligible individuals. The remaining individuals were not examined due to personal schedules, refusal of the examination, relocation without providing a forwarding address, or death.

SMCP staff conducted 133 home patient care visits, 78 deliveries of personal care supplies, and 122 prescription refill deliveries.

Five referrals, cancer treatment, or follow-up care were required in FY 2024.

No unusual or unanticipated logistics support costs were incurred in FY 2024.

FY 2025 expenditures are projected to increase due to inflation and projected need for referrals, cancer treatment, and follow-up services.

At the end of FY 2024, there were 59 remaining individuals eligible to participate in the SMCP.