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*The complexity of future warfare drives the need for more advanced infrastructure and weapon systems that operate at the speed necessary; adapt to situations in a complex, multi-domain environment; and/or perform multiple roles while executing primary missions.*

*Prepared and Provided by*

**THE DEFENSE SUPPORT INITIATIVES COMMITTEE**  
OKALOOSA – SANTA ROSA – WALTON COUNTIES  
FLORIDA, USA



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## DSI Focus Area



### **THE DEFENSE SUPPORT INITIATIVES COMMITTEE**

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## BACKGROUND

The **Economic Development Council of Okaloosa County** (DBA One Okaloosa EDC) originated the **Defense Support Initiatives** committee as a military issues advocacy group for local military installations and their missions across the three-county region housing Eglin Air Force Base—Okaloosa, Santa Rosa and Walton Counties. EAFB is a joint service installation supporting Air Force, Army and Navy test and training units, and hosts major organizations for numerous development programs, operational units, military schools and various Federal agencies.

The **Major Range and Test Facility Base** (MRTFB) is a designated set of Department of Defense (DoD) facilities, ranges, and their associated workforce that provide the foundation, or base, for the Nation's Test and Evaluation (T&E) capabilities deemed critical to maintaining our Nation's military superiority. Concurrently, the MRTFB supports the development of rapid response solutions to technology related issues experienced by warfighters engaged in conflict. The MRTFB is regarded as a "national asset" consisting of Army, Navy, and Air Force ranges—one of which is managed by the 96<sup>th</sup> Test Wing at Eglin Air Force Base, Florida; the **Eglin Gulf Test & Training Range** (EGTTR; aka Eastern Gulf Test & Training Range).

The EGTTR connects ranges and capabilities across the eastern Gulf of Mexico (EGOMEX) extending from NW Florida to Key West. It includes 180,000 square miles of DoD controlled air-space, 724 square miles of adjacent land ranges, and 17 miles of Gulf shoreline accommodating high-altitude supersonic air combat training, air-to-air missile testing, drone targeting, hypersonic weapons testing, space launches, and other activities. The EGTTR is vital for testing the next generation of air armaments, and for training in conditions consistent with those expected in an actual conflict. The size of the EGTTR allows for the use of large-footprint weapons that could not be tested on any land-based military range, as well as the ability to execute multiple missions simultaneously in the maritime, air, and land space. Due to its tremendous capabilities, the EGTTR complex is an integral part of DoD's Training Resources Strategy.

Eglin AFB is home of the **Eglin Test and Training Complex** (ETTC) and is one of ten Air Force Materiel Command (AFMC) host bases. As a critical part of the MRTFB, the 96<sup>th</sup> Test Wing, Eglin's host wing, is the test and evaluation center for Air Force air-delivered weapons, navigation and guidance systems, Command and Control systems, and Air Force Special Operations Command systems. The wing provides expert evaluation and validation of the performance of systems throughout their lifecycle to ensure the warfighter has technologically superior, sustainable and safe systems. Protection and enhancement of the EGTTR is necessary to ensure these capabilities.



*The EGTTR provides areas of opportunities enabling multi-service test and training, and 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> generation development activities supporting our National security.*

## TOP PRIORITIES

1. Support the Eglin Gulf Test & Training Range Maximization Plan
  - a. Permanently Sustain the Military Mission Line Moratorium
  - b. Fund and Implement Gulf Range Enhancement Plan
  - c. Fund and Implement the Electronic Combat Range/Electronic Warfare Assets
  - d. Fund and Implement Telemetry Relay Infrastructure
2. Support Eglin's NexGen Whole Facility Repair by Replacement Plan
  - a. Authorize and Fund the Weapons Technological Integration Center Planning & Design
3. Support Construction of a Childcare Development Center for Northern County Capacity
4. Fund Construction of NAS Whiting Field's North Tower

## FEDERAL REQUESTS

### Eglin Gulf Test & Training Range – Maximization (EGTTR-MAX)

The 2018 Test Resource Management Center's Strategic Plan, *Test and Evaluation: Enhancing Readiness of a more Lethal Joint Force*, identified long-range flight test capability and autonomous systems test capability as **top needs**. The EGTTR provides for integrated test and training of advanced and precision strike weapons. Its usage encompasses airspace, land, water, and electromagnetic spectrum environments by test and operational units from across the continental U.S. The 2021 RAND analysis identified the EGTTR as a priority for infrastructure upgrades. The range has aging infrastructure and instrumentation that is inadequate to sync up with today's modern electronic equipment. The northern Gulf range is saturated with current mission demand. Increased demand must be supported by new instrumentation infrastructure capabilities in order to leverage the full EGTTR capacity further south.

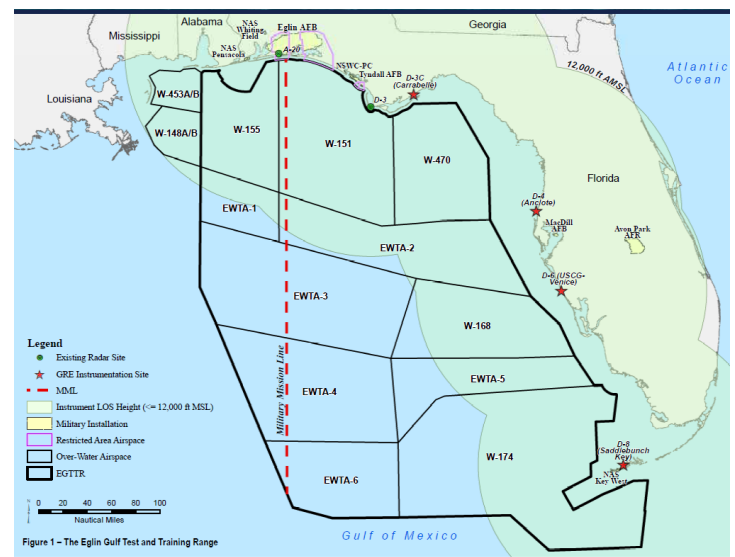


Figure 1 – The Eglin Gulf Test and Training Range

The recently completed EGTTR-MAX plan provides for range capability requirements not covered through the Gulf Range Enhancement (GRE) Improvement and Modernization (I&M) program. Additional major lines of effort include the Electronic Warfare (EW) upgrades for an Electronic Combat Range (ECR), scoring for hypersonics and activities away from the shoreline line such as the Over Water Scoring and Surveillance (OWSS) project, range surveillance/clearance and other key technologies including replacement for current Range Support Aircraft (RSA) that are past their design life. OWSS is anticipated to be funded by the Central Test and Evaluation Investment Program.

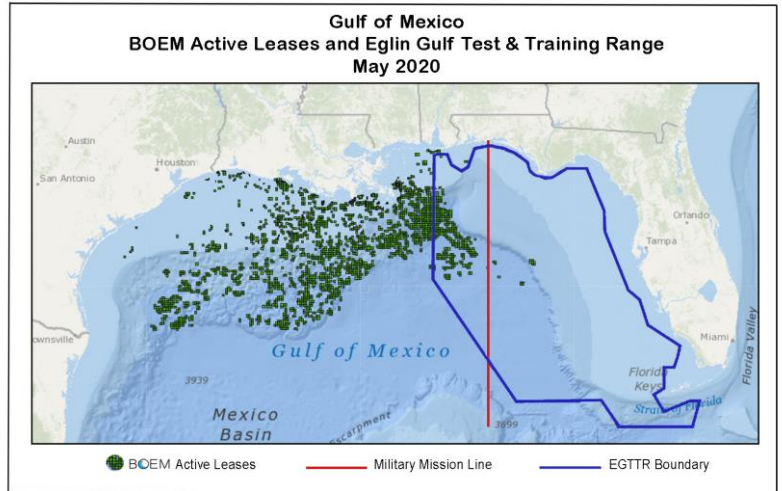
The entire EGTTR must be configured to provide a fully instrumented test capability with an operationally representative combat battlespace environment to meet advanced weapons and T&E requirements. Formalizing the EGTTR-MAX concept through the I&M process with prioritized capability inserts will provide the best opportunity to acquire additional modernization funding.

## EGTTR-MAX Components

Maximizing the utilization of the EGTTR for testing next-generation munitions will require a system-of-systems.

### Military Mission Line

Federal policies have protected the EGTTR since 1983 providing a buffer zone, now defined by Public Law 109-432 as the Military Mission Line (MML) established in 2006, restricting oil and natural gas drilling and exploration. This mandated north-south Military Mission Line moratorium protects the EGTTR from encroachment. DoD has documented that the presence of oil and gas infrastructure in the eastern Gulf of Mexico is incompatible with safe conduct of defense industry test and training mission activity, and the safety of O&G personnel and infrastructure.



The EGTTR must be maintained, adequately funded, and immediately available for present and emerging needs. Compromise on the size, capability, or utilization of the EGTTR could directly result in mission failure. Oil drilling structures and associated exploratory activities east of the MML are incompatible with military activities, would negatively impact our military's readiness and compromise our nation's military superiority.

The Congressional moratorium was set to expire June 2022 and oil interests are aggressively pursuing lease opportunities and marketing to advance commercial interests. A September 2020 Presidential Executive Order extended moratorium protection to 2032. U.S. Senator Marco Rubio and Senator Rick Scott re-introduced the *Florida Shores Protection and Fairness Act*, legislation that would extend the moratorium on oil and gas drilling in the Eastern Gulf of Mexico from 2022 to 2032. Failure to codify the moratorium extension would be catastrophic for national defense interests and Florida's defense infrastructure. The EGTTR and our national military capabilities would be in jeopardy. The Gulf of Mexico Energy Security Act of 2006 or other legal instrument must endure beyond 30 June 2022 to sustain the national defense needs of Test and Training capabilities within the EGTTR/Eastern Gulf of Mexico.

### Congressional Ask

- Support sustainment of the Military Mission Line to prevent encroachment
- Provide Congressional Bills to enact Federal Law extending protection of the EGTTR via the Military Mission Line by amending or replacing the current Public Law 109-432, entitled the Gulf of Mexico Energy Security Act of 2006, to *permanently* ratify the moratorium protection.

## **Gulf Range Enhancement Plan**

The Gulf Range Enhancement (GRE) is a modernization program to expand critical instrumentation coverage deeper into the Gulf of Mexico. The GRE plan is an approved United States Air Force program [Program Element (PE) 0604759F, Major T&E Investment] with phased increments to improve infrastructure capabilities of the Major Range and Test Facilities Base in Florida; i.e. EGTR. The GRE project grew out of a 2012 Air Force Long Range Stand-Off Weapons study on where future large footprint weapons could be tested. While the study found that no existing US range had all the capabilities needed, the EGTR was the most cost-effective range for modernization. The GRE enhances instrumentation and test capability and capacity of the EGTR, to include replacing aging Range Support Aircraft and providing advanced threat emitters, making the range capable of supporting the full spectrum of armament/munitions developmental and operational testing required today and in the future; e.g. 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> Gen capabilities, hypersonics, and advanced kill-chain dominance. The EGTR upgrade plans include improving secure and encrypted data relay/transmission capabilities and capacities.

The project was approved in 2014 with a need date of 2019. Funding profiles were originally proposed using FY12 cost data. However, this antiquated funding baseline will not provide adequate funding in today's market. Constrained budgets and high operational ops tempo of recent years has resulted in delays in funding GRE implementation. Significant mission growth is planned for the U.S. Navy and Air Force test programs. DoD must preserve national capability and capacity for growing RDT&E in support of new & competitive technologies; include hypersonics.

### **Congressional Ask**

- Fund the Gulf Range Enhancement program to enable modernization and full spectrum test and training capabilities of next generation armament, platform, and advanced systems
  - Replace aging RSA E-9A Widgets with Gulfstream 550s configured for current range support activities
- Fund the preparation of required facilities for testing new munitions on the AF's designated threshold platform (the F-35A)
  - F-35A Developmental Test 2-Bay Test Hanger, \$39M MILCON
  - F-35A Developmental Test 2-Bay Maintenance Hangar, \$35M MILCON

## **Electronic Warfare Assets**

The DoD requires a comprehensive set of test capabilities to fully assess the entire target identification and destruction in contested environments. A broad multi-spectrum integrated set of T&E capabilities is required including advanced electronic warfare (EW) assets to emulate a relevant contested environment. The Advanced Program directorate at Eglin has proposed a plan which includes acquiring new electronic warfare assets for supporting the EGTR and has developed plans for a new facility called the Advanced Weapons Kill Chain-Dominance Test Complex (AWKC-D). The AWKC-D Test Complex will provide secure state-of-the-art flight test and laboratory facilities, foundational for emerging advanced weapon technology development testing and complete kill-chain assessment in a relevant environment to include the complex interactions with combat representative battle management architecture and target destruction elements.

The EGTTR-MAX ECR component proposes upgrades to 96TW EW capabilities and aligns range EW capabilities with DoD's September 2020 Electromagnetic Spectrum Superiority Strategy [Goal 2: Evolve to an Agile, Fully Integrated Electromagnetic Spectrum Infrastructure, Objective 2.4: Modernize EMS Live, Virtual, Constructive, Infrastructure for Testing, Training, and Analysis]. To meet increasing EW needs, and to decrease Nevada Test and Training Range (NTTR) schedule pressure, a Pre-NTTR test capability is proposed. Eglin's three phase plan (FY20-28) adds 6 advanced threat systems within a new Distributed Integrated Air Defense System to the existing Multi Spectral Test & Training Environment capability at a total estimated integration/acquisition cost of \$76.2M. When all assets are in place funding for an additional estimated \$1.1M/yr in operations/maintenance cost will be required. The funding for the 6 modern EW threat systems is included in PE 0604256F, Threat Simulator Development and the associated 663321 Project: EW Ground test Resources.

### **Congressional Ask**

- Support requests for Program Element 0604256F, project: 0663321 EW Ground test Resources in the FY22 Authorization Bill to provide ability to align Eglin range mission capabilities with DoD's September 2020 Electromagnetic Spectrum Superiority Strategy and to relieve flight test scheduling pressure with NTTR.
- Fund EW assets and threat simulator development and acquisition for comprehensive test and realistic operational training capabilities in an Electronic Combat Range

### **Weapons Technology Integration Center**

The rise of near-peer adversaries and the rapid proliferation of technological advancements have challenged the US military advantage. This rapid advancement in technology is also changing the character of war, increasing the speed and complexity with multi-domain warfare and the effects of contested actions in the air, land, sea, space, cyberspace, etc. The complexity of future warfare drives the need for more advanced weapon systems that can operate at the speed necessary; adapt to situations in a complex, multi-domain environment; and perform multiple roles while executing its primary mission. The Weapons Technology Integration Center (WTIC) is a federal research laboratory providing modern, secure space that makes the transition to digital weapons research, development, test/evaluation and life cycle management a reality.

The Air Force Research Laboratory and its partners have identified the WTIC to be a weapons enterprise focused on state of the art collaborative labs and secure space for next-gen weapons development and testing. As directed by the National Security Strategy and National Defense Strategy, modernization of U.S. weapon systems is required and at the speed of relevance. The WTIC would enable achieving these needs with the required technologically advanced laboratory space to enhance research and development capabilities, and a collaborative, multi-disciplinary workforce that enables rapid transition of technologies to the warfighter. By supporting the WTIC MILCON, the Lab and other Air Armament Enterprise partners will continue to address the needs of newer weapons such as Long-Range Stand-off Weapons, Directed Energy Weapons, Hypersonic Weapons, and Swarming/Artificial Intelligence Weapons.

### **Congressional Ask**

- Approve \$40 Million to complete the Planning and Design (P&D) phase of the WTIC MILCON Expansion. Approximately 10% of the total \$403 Million requirement.

**Additional critical programs include:**

- NexGen Repair by Replacement
- Childcare Development Center
- NAS Whiting Field North Field Tower

**NexGen**

The 96<sup>th</sup> Test Wing needs adaptive, resilient, right-sized and fiscally sustainable infrastructure to assure combat readiness, lethality, and Airmen resilience. A majority of Eglin's infrastructure is not suitable for modern mission requirements and is beyond cost-effective life-cycle repair. Combined with existing repair authorities, the updated authority language to completely replace a facility, when more cost effective, will greatly increase opportunities for the consolidation into right-sized facilities and the timely disposal of unneeded facility space—thus avoiding unnecessary sustainment costs, generating realized cost savings and allowing for additional optimization of the Department's physical plant.

The 96<sup>th</sup> TW developed an Infrastructure Investment Strategy to capture requirements necessary for future capabilities; NexGen. The NexGen strategy identifies the Planning & Programming support necessary to realize the largest recapitalization and sustainment effort at Eglin AFB since 1973; providing for required infrastructure in the technologically advancing environment. Recapitalization by replacement will allow aging and inefficient Federal facilities to be replaced with operationally optimal facilities, instead of continually performing workarounds. By allowing Whole Building Repair by Replacement using O&M funds, MILCON funding can remain focused on new mission priorities. Current programming rules limit options for large scale Restoration and Modernization (R&M) construction projects, i.e. an entire facility cannot be replaced as a repair project.

**Congressional Ask**

- Amend 10 U.S.C 2811 Language for Repair by Replacement to allow a more cost-efficient method of recapitalizing aging infrastructure when appropriate

**Childcare Development Center**

Providing affordable quality childcare is a growing conundrum for the military and civilian families alike in the Okaloosa County area. In addition to being a family priority and concern, the inadequate facility challenges also impacts military readiness and retention. There is an identified deficit in both quality and quantity of daycare centers, and the existing deficit was exacerbated by the influx of Tyndall AFB families into Okaloosa and Walton Counties following the devastation to Tyndall AFB during Hurricane Michael in October 2018. The demand is high, with over 600 children on the CDC waiting lists at both EAFB and Hurlburt Field combined; infants being the highest percentage.

Duke Field and the Army's 7th Special Forces Group (Airborne) cantonment site, Camp Simons, on the northern section of the Eglin land range have an additional challenge with the required commute time. As most of the 7th SFG(A)'s Soldiers and Families live in Crestview, or areas to the north of Eglin, they must drive approximately 22 miles one-way to reach the main-base CDC. The 22 mile drive across undevelopable military range land is further aggravated by extreme traffic congestion resulting in a one hour one-way commute time; up to four hours in one day.



Members of the 7th SFG(A) routinely deploy to the USCENTCOM, USSOUTHCOM, and USNORTHCOM Areas of Responsibility in support of combat operations and other security cooperation activities and missions. The lack of adequate childcare has further compounded the already high level of stress and anxiety associated with these deployments. Cumulatively, the situation has resulted in serious impacts to the unit and its families. Collectively, these impacts directly affect the unit's operational readiness.



The crux of the problem is two-fold: 1) lack of suitable space to build a CDC facility; and 2) lack of funding for the construction and maintenance of a CDC facility. The scarcity of land is attributed to the size and the Eglin Test Range purpose and related safety concerns which prohibit the establishment of a CDC facility within the northern range cantonment areas. Eglin AFB receives funding for its installation's CDC based on Service Member demographics which includes the 7th SFG(A). Eglin is willing to accommodate 7th SFG(A) children at its main CDC. However, it will not split its funding to establish a second CDC facility. A proposed WellPlex, a commercial CDC-like facility, is planned for development in the City of Crestview north of the range which could solve the unit's childcare issues. With Service and SOCOM oversight, this concept could be adequately resourced, managed and eventually result in a CDC facility that meets the needs of the Soldiers and their Families.

In 2020, U.S. Senators Marco Rubio and Rick Scott, and U.S. Representative Matt Gaetz, wrote a letter to U.S. Army Secretary Ryan McCarthy urging him to address the lack of childcare facilities for members of the 7SFG. The childcare problems continues, now further exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic.

### **Congressional Ask**

- If the WellPlex does not come to fruition, Congressional advocacy for a required joint Army, Air Force and USSOCOM report to outline the problem and provide a detailed plan of action to address the development of a Childcare Development Center.

### **NAS Whiting Field North Field Tower**

Naval Air Station Whiting Field is located in Santa Rosa County and is one of the Navy's two primary pilot training bases for Navy, Marine Corps, Coast Guard and international student aviators in the primary and intermediate phases of fixed wing aviation, and advanced training for helicopters. NAS Whiting Field is the busiest naval air complex in the world with two airfields sharing a common support installation. The primary flight training students fly the Beechcraft T-6 Texan II from the North airfield and advanced helicopter training takes place at the South airfield. The installation's North Tower is in a disrepair and has been in an aging decline for several decades. This has been Whiting Field's #1 MILCON project since FY06. Most recent NDAA authorized \$10M in MILCON funding to build a new tower; however, this is approximately \$7M short.

### **Congressional Ask**

- Fund the required additional \$7M for construction of a new North Field Tower

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