



# News Release

## WISCONSIN ARMY AND AIR NATIONAL GUARD

Joint Force Headquarters ▪ 2400 Wright Street ▪ Madison WI ▪ 53704

January 15, 2016

Contact: [Wisconsin National Guard Public Affairs Office](#)

Office: 608-242-3050 or Cell: 608-516-1777

### **NEWS: Draft environmental assessment of Volk Field airspace proposal available for public review**

Wisconsin National Guard

MADISON, Wis. – A draft environmental assessment for a proposed modification to the Volk Field Special Activity Airspace (VFSAA) near the Volk Field Combat Readiness Training Center in Camp Douglas, Wisconsin, will be available for public review Jan. 15.

The environmental assessment of the proposed airspace expansion evaluated the potential environmental impacts associated with the proposed action.

The attached map shows the current VFSAA military operations area outlined in a solid block line. The proposed changes are outlined in a dashed line that extends the VFSAA further north in Portage, Wood, Clark and Eau Claire counties. The proposal also pushes the military operations area north and east in Waupaca County and east across the Waushara and Green Lake County lines into Winnebago, Fond du Lac and Dodge counties. A small portion of the military operations area will extend into the southwest corner of Marathon County. In the southern portion of the military operations area, the VFSAA will extend further south in Juneau and Monroe counties.

Volk Field CRTC has worked closely with other local and federal aviation entities to develop a redesign of the airspace that serves the needs of military, commercial, and civilian aviation.

The military has used the Volk airspace for 60 years, and over that span, military aircraft have changed and advanced technologically. As a result, so too has the military's need for airspace where pilots can conduct realistic mission-oriented training. This training prepares them to counter the 21st century threats our nation faces.

The proposed modification and expansion of the airspace would better accommodate today's more technologically advanced aircraft and allow fighters, bombers, and tactical airlift aircrews and aircraft to realistically train against emerging threats.

Volk Field CRTC hosts multiple air-to-air and air-to-ground large force exercises each year, with aircraft and ground support elements from across the nation and multiple military services participating. These exercises have required the annual establishment of temporary military operations areas and air traffic control assigned airspaces to ensure a safe and effective training

environment for participants. Without the temporary additions to the airspace, safety has become a concern. As a result, the FAA requested that the temporary additions and modifications to the airspace granted during large-scale exercises be made permanent.

The current airspace is inadequate for current generation aircraft and tactics and would restrict support for future aircraft, tactics and techniques, forcing existing and emerging fighter and bomber units to deploy to more costly, limited access airspace venues elsewhere to fulfill their training requirements. Fighters, bombers, tankers, tactical airlift, cargo, mobility, helicopters, and command and control platforms all use Volk Field CRTC.

F-16s from the Wisconsin Air National Guard's 115th Fighter Wing, based in Madison, Wisconsin, utilize the Volk Field airspace and Hardwood Aerial Gunnery Range (R-6904 A/B on accompanying map) almost exclusively on a daily basis due to its proximity. The 148th Fighter Wing, out of Duluth, Minnesota, uses the airspace to train for its suppression of enemy air defenses mission, and the Volk Field military operations area is the closest airspace with suppression of enemy air defenses training capability. F-16s from the Sioux Falls, South Dakota-based 114th Fighter Wing regularly use the airspace as well.

Generally, the use of the airspace would remain unchanged, and aircraft would use the VFSAA regularly during daytime hours Monday through Friday with periodic night operations throughout the year. The proposed modifications would optimize the airspace boundaries and create less compression of air operations, likely resulting in a decrease in noise experienced on the ground.

To see the complete draft of the environmental assessment, click [here](#). Copies are also available at the following Wisconsin libraries: Madison Public Library (Central Library), Black River Falls Public Library, Neillsville Public Library, Marshfield Public Library, Portage County Public Library, McMillan Memorial Library, New Lisbon Memorial Library, Coloma Public Library, and Oshkosh Public Library.

Comments on the draft environmental assessment should be submitted by mail to: National Guard Bureau, Attn: Kevin Marek, A7AM, Shepperd Hall, 3501 Fetchet Ave., Joint Base Andrews, Maryland 20762, or by e-mail to [usaf.jbanafw.ngb-a7.mbx.a7a-nepa-comments@mail.mil](mailto:usaf.jbanafw.ngb-a7.mbx.a7a-nepa-comments@mail.mil). For more information visit <http://dma.wi.gov/DMA/vfsaa/main>.

*Editor's note: Notice of availability of the Environmental Assessment for this airspace proposal will be open for public comment for a 45-day comment period announced through the Wisconsin National Guard's news and web outlets. The Federal Aviation Administration is the final decision-making authority for airspace usage and modifications in the Continental U.S.*