

Taylor, Bob (Thune)

From: Taylor, Bob (Thune)
Sent: Tuesday, July 19, 2005 12:48 PM
To: 'kenneth.small@wso.whs.mil'; 'Arthur.Beauchamp@wso.whs.mil'
Subject: Air Force ROD
Follow Up Flag: Follow up
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Attachments: ROD.pdf

Ken/Art;

When we visited you last Tuesday and dropped off the packet pertaining to the RBTI litigation, I failed to include a copy of the Air Force Record of Decision, prepared with their initial EIS. It is an important document because it goes to the issue of what the AF envisioned as the RBTI's ideal range capability and clearly states their concept and intended use of the Lancer MOA and IR-178, once the RBTI and EIS were approved;

- On page 1, it states without equivocation that the MTR (IR-178) would permit flights "down to 300 feet above ground level in some segments.."
- It also states that the MOA (Lancer) would have a floor of 3,000 feet AGL.

Of course, the federal court now imposes a 500 feet AGL floor in the MTR and a 12,000 feet MSL floor in the Lancer MOA. Also of interest, on page 7, note that in response to community concerns raised in the administrative approval process, the Air Force placed self-imposed limitations on the number of sortie-operations – thus, reducing the number from 2,600 per year down to 1,560 per year. (The sortie issue will obviously be a fertile ground for additional litigation if the Dyess B-1 inventory and training requirements should double.) On the same page, the Air Force seems to indicate that 200 feet AGL was the proposed minimum altitude in the MTR IR-178, but they raised it to 300 in response to concerns raised by the public.

Art, I saw your questions submitted to the Air Force posted on the BRAC website. I immediately thought of several related issues not asked you may want to ask as a follow-up:

What number of training sorties does the AF estimate as a requirement for RBTI if the entire B-1 fleet is consolidated at Dyess?

Assuming the consolidation of all 67 B-1s at Dyess, and if the court should limit the number of sorties flown per year into the RBTI, e.g. even at its present level, where will the other Dyess B-1s go for alternative training? What additional costs will result from flying to these alternative training sites, per year?

If the AF is permanently restricted to flying at 12,000 feet MSL in the Lancer MOA, how will this impact B-1 training?

In light of both MG DeCuir's sworn affidavit (limitations do not "fully meet realistic training requirements") and LTC Garrett's sworn affidavit (no substitute ranges "within a reasonable flying distance of our bases in Texas") that were submitted to the court in January 2005 and given under penalty of perjury (and no doubt fully staffed within ACC before being submitted), I look forward with great interest as to how the AF will answer your questions on the impact of the court's restrictions.

Bob

7/20/2006