

March 3, 2022

Arizona Regional Airspace EIS  
c/o Cardno, 501 Butler Farm Rd.  
Suite H, Hampton, VA 23666

I am writing a second letter to express a specific concern if the U.S. Air Force expands the Tombstone MOA. Among other important issues, expansion would negatively affect both human residents and native wildlife due to loud noise exposure impact.

I worked as a Nurse Practitioner for 8 years conducting Department of Defense Post Deployment Health Reassessments. The PDHRA is a “health screen designed to protect and evaluate the health of those returning from combat & provides education, screening, assessment, and access to care for a wide variety of questions and concerns that Service members may have about their health” ([www.health.mil](http://www.health.mil))

Service members from every active duty branch as well as National Guard & Reserves are required to have the PDHRA screen with a Nurse Practitioner (NP) or Physician Assistant (PA) 3-6 months after every deployment (the frequency of the PDHRA requirement for each deployment increased during the duration of my time with the project). The Service Member (SM) completes his/her portion of an extensive questionnaire which is reviewed with a NP/PA who then refers the SM for treatment or further evaluation if necessary. I performed thousands of these interviews & recall many of the issues that impacted military members who served our country but note the most common:

Tinnitus (ringing of the ears) and Hearing Loss are the #1 and #2 service related disabilities. These injuries are usually a result of loud noise exposures

“Excessive exposure to noises that are too loud, too close, or experienced for too long can cause irreversible & permanent damage to hearing” ([www.hearing.health.mil](http://www.hearing.health.mil)) Exposure to sounds 85 dB and above damages hearing, noise above 120dB (like a commercial jet taking off) can cause immediate pain and ear injury ([www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)) Fighter jets have been measured at 140dB ([www.scienceabc.com](http://www.scienceabc.com))

The Department of Defense has been so concerned about Noise Induced Hearing Loss (NIHL) that some years back the Hearing Center of Excellence was established & legislated by Congress (National Defense Authorization Act) to focus on prevention, diagnosis, treatment & rehabilitation <https://hearing.health.mil> (Hearing Center of Excellence, 2200 Bergquist Dr., Suite 1, Lackland AFB, Texas 78236)

Service members are instructed to wear ear protection at all times when warned that they might be subjected to loud noise exposures (predictable or not), yet a very large number continue to suffer injury & permanent disability. Rehabilitation services and expenses for what seem like “minor” health issues are astronomical. Many of those injured suffer greatly as they

have no choice but to endure life-long communication struggles because normal hearing cannot ever be restored.

It seems impossible for Arizona & New Mexico residents to be protected from Tombstone MOA expansion involving higher impact loud noise exposure when protecting Military Service members remains a tragically complex & unresolved challenge.

While residents support the military role in protecting our country, in view of the dangers referenced here and in a variety of comments submitted by many others, it seems logical to adopt Alternative 1, No action for the Tombstone MOA proposal.

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