



September 17, 2025

Response to FAA request for public comment on U.S. Air Force Proposal to lower floors of Military Operations Areas (MOA) and military support of training that requires supersonic flight at lower altitudes.

Arizona Aviation Safety Advisory Group

The Arizona Aviation Safety Advisory Group is a 501 (c) 3 collaborating with all users of Arizona's airspace. We wish to support the Air Force's mission but feel the lowering of the MOA floors to 500 feet AGL, and in the case of the Tombstone MOA proposing 100' AGL, as is currently allowed in Jackal Low and Fuzzy, and proposing "adjusting the attributes to allow for supersonic speed at lower altitude"¹ are serious impediments to safe use of Arizona's airspace by General Aviation Pilots.

Our concerns are:

1. Current General Aviation flight instruction practice areas extensively use the airspace below the existing MOA floors as shown in Figure 1. The Gladden and Bagdad MOAs overlap the practice areas used by the Prescott area flight schools that include Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University, Leighnor, and Yavapai Community College. The proposed expansion of these MOAs will eliminate approximately 25% of the available airspace currently in use, and force flight activity into already saturated areas. This increases the potential for a mid-air collision which has happened multiple times among training aircraft in our state.² The Prescott area also sits close to noise-sensitive areas and the flight schools must be mindful of noise complaints over many of their eastern practice areas. Moving one quarter of the flight operations to other areas will only exacerbate the noise problem. Prescott Airport ranks fourth in the state behind Mesa, Falcon, and Phoenix Deer Valley, and is 24th in the nation for all airports for total traffic counts. See Table 2. Student and general aviation VFR southwest cross-country flights to locations such as Wickenburg, Parker, Blythe, Yuma, and southern California will not be possible under the proposed MOA expansion.

¹¹ Draft EIS Cover Sheet page 7 of the 212-page document.

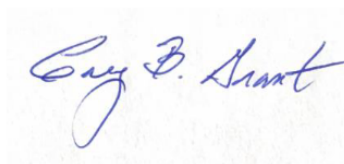
² NTSB Investigation WPR13FA254, WPR13LA004, WPR09FA437, WPR22FA001,

2. The Outlaw MOA expansion will have a similar impact to flight operations using the airspace in the Southeast Practice Area as shown in Figure 1. This area is primarily used by pilots and dozens of flight schools based out of Gateway, Chandler, and Falcon Fields, but also sees use from flight schools and pilots based at any of the seven Phoenix area general aviation airports. These schools include University of North Dakota, Arizona State University, CAE Oxford Academy, ATP Flight Schools, California Aeronautical University, Aeroguard Training Academy, Sierra Charlie Flight Academy, United Aviate Academy, Lufthansa's Flight Training Academy, as well as many smaller training schools. Together, Falcon, Gateway, and Chandler account for 818,732 operations as shown in Table 1. The Phoenix area has four airports in the top 100 busiest in the nation, with Phoenix Sky Harbor 9th, Mesa Falcon 20th, Phoenix Deer Valley 21st, and Scottsdale 72nd. If we include Prescott, as previously mentioned, the state has five of the busiest airports in the top 100. Aviation Performance Systems, based at IWA, provides upset recovery training for various airlines and government operators globally. They operate a fleet of Extra 300s and jet trainers, operating southeast of IWA and are equally concerned with the mid-air collision potential with today's traffic intensity and the MOA expansion will impact them negatively. In addition, there are military contractor training providers using both Falcon and Gateway airports providing high speed flight maneuvering using the airspace around the Outlaw MOA. Also affected will be Superior Airport glider operations, training high school students for Glider ratings which is located inside the western part of the Outlaw MOA. Figure 2 shows the traffic tracks for the Phoenix area during a 24-hour period. Figure 3 depicts the traffic out of IWA for a 24-hour period and as pointed out, over 800 aircraft a day transit below 5000'AGL in or near the western area of the Outlaw MOA. Figure 4 shows the area between Phoenix and Tucson and the gray circles show the Notice to Airmen for active parachute drop operations. Many of these operations are conducted by other government agencies and contractors operating around the clock. ASAG, the jump operators, FAA, and flight training providers are genuinely concerned about the potential for a mid-air collision between aircraft and jumpers and we have an extensive education program in place to try and mitigate the risk. The expansion of the Outlaw MOA will force more aircraft into an already dangerous airspace.
3. ASAG is concerned about access to any airport underlying the MOA. Many of these airports are used for student cross-country training as well as by other general aviation pilots. Under the proposed lowering of the floor to 500 feet AGL, VFR access to these airports is almost impossible and is impossible under IFR if the MOA is active. Numerous backcountry airstrips are used by slow-moving aircraft that generally operate between 1000 to 2000 AGL. Access will be impossible for these pilots. The mountains east of IWA are used annually in the spring for wild-

land fire training with extensive flight training taking place for air-attack lead and bomber pilots.

4. Due to the floor of the MOAs being lowered to 500 AGL and lower, ASAG is concerned about the extent of supersonic flight within the MOAs. With the large amount of training activity by both military and civilian pilots in and around the MOAs, the task saturation, and demands of maneuvering flight, will leave truly little time for pilots to devote to traffic awareness or avoidance. Will pilots be counting on Air Traffic Control to separate VFR traffic in the MOA? This will not be possible when aircraft are maneuvering below ATC's RADAR coverage at 500 feet AGL. Using Luke AFB's own Mid-Air Collision Avoidance charts, see Figures 5,6, and 7, and speeds for the F-16, the time to see and react to a target is 12.5 seconds. This presumes clear conditions and clearing for traffic. These numbers cannot be counted on while maneuvering, at higher speeds, at lower altitudes, with terrain and ground clutter obscuring the view of other airplanes. How do supersonic speeds affect the times shown in Figure 7? Will a civilian or military pilot have any hope of picking up a converging aircraft? Very unlikely.
5. According to the FAA's FY2024, see Table 5, Albuquerque Center has experienced a 40% increase in Loss of Standard Separation counts ranking among the highest centers in the country along with Salt Lake City, Chicago, and Boston.³ The majority of the MOA expansion is within Albuquerque Center's area of responsibility and there has been little increase in manning levels as shown in Table 6.⁴

ASAG wishes to support the U.S. Air Force's mission; however, the proposed expansion of the floors to 500 AGL, and in the case of Tombstone to 100 AGL, and aircraft maneuvering at supersonic speeds, creates hazards for which we do not see a safe way of mitigating the risks and we cannot endorse this plan as it is currently proposed.



Cary B. Grant

President, Arizona Aviation Safety Advisory Group

³ Federal Aviation Administration, Air Traffic By The Numbers, June 2025, page 33

⁴ Federal Aviation Administration, Air Traffic By The Numbers, June 2025, page 4

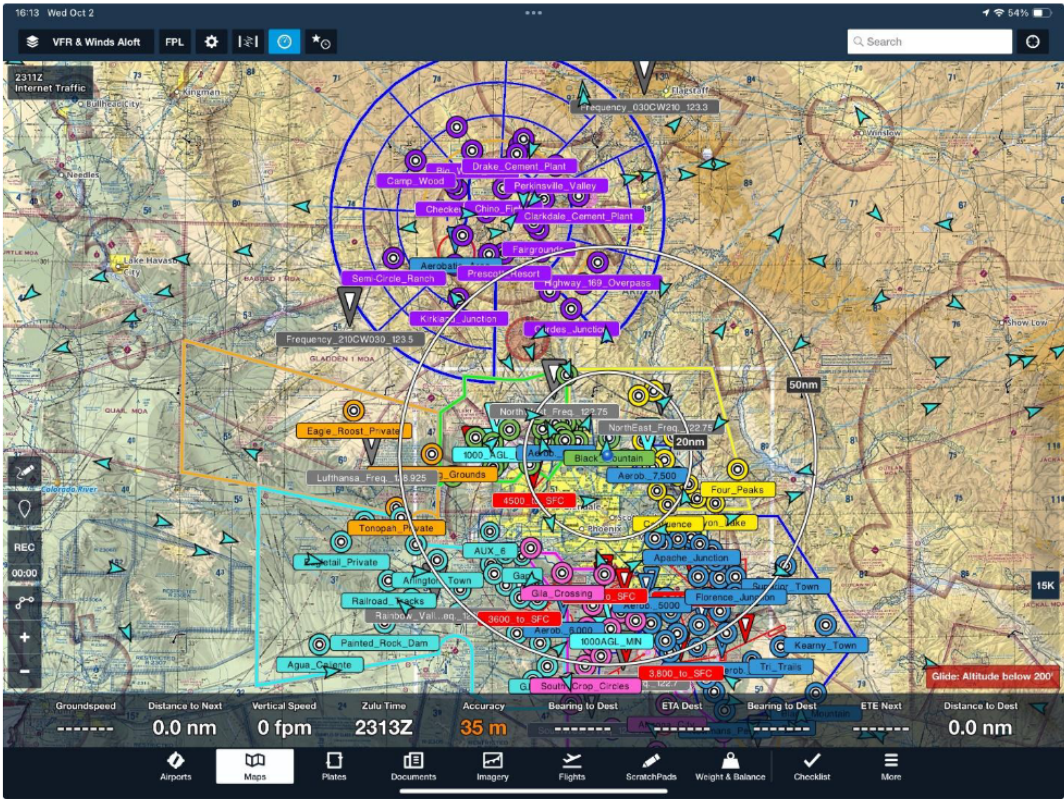


Figure 1.

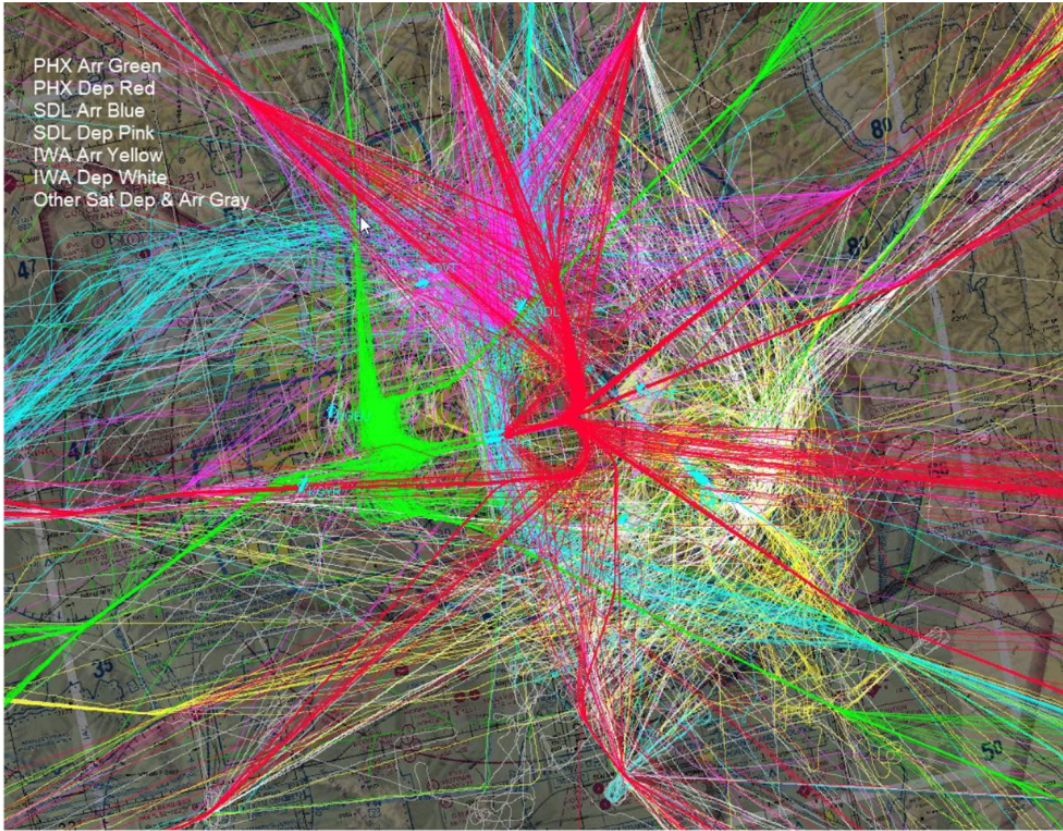


Figure 2

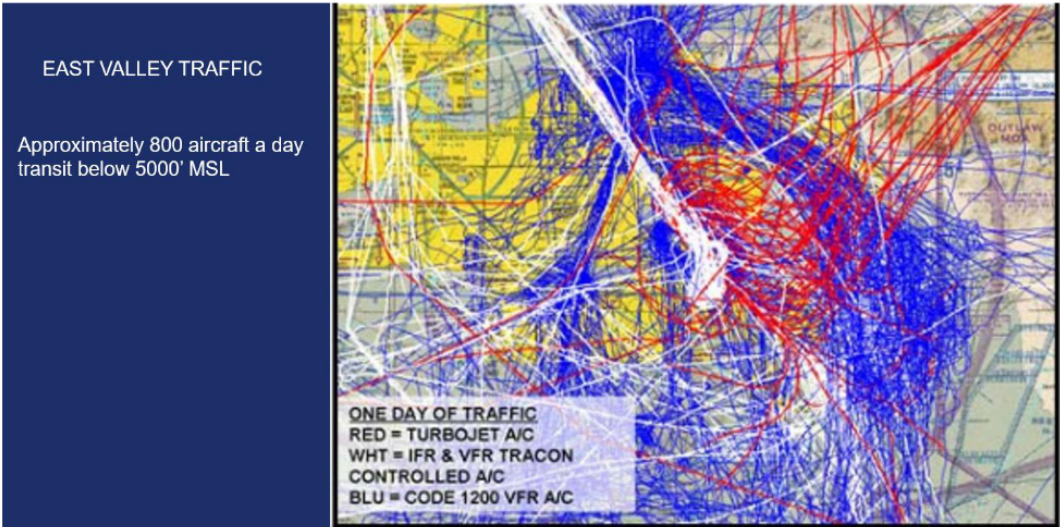


Figure 3.

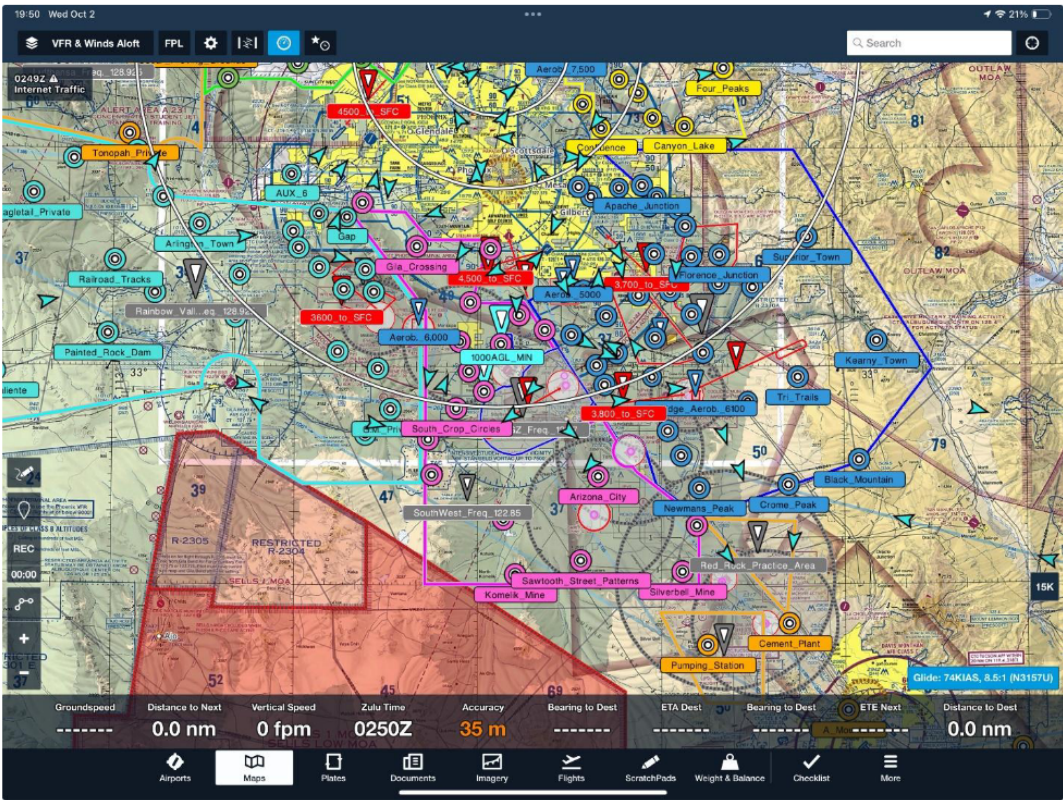


Figure 4.

Reaction Chart

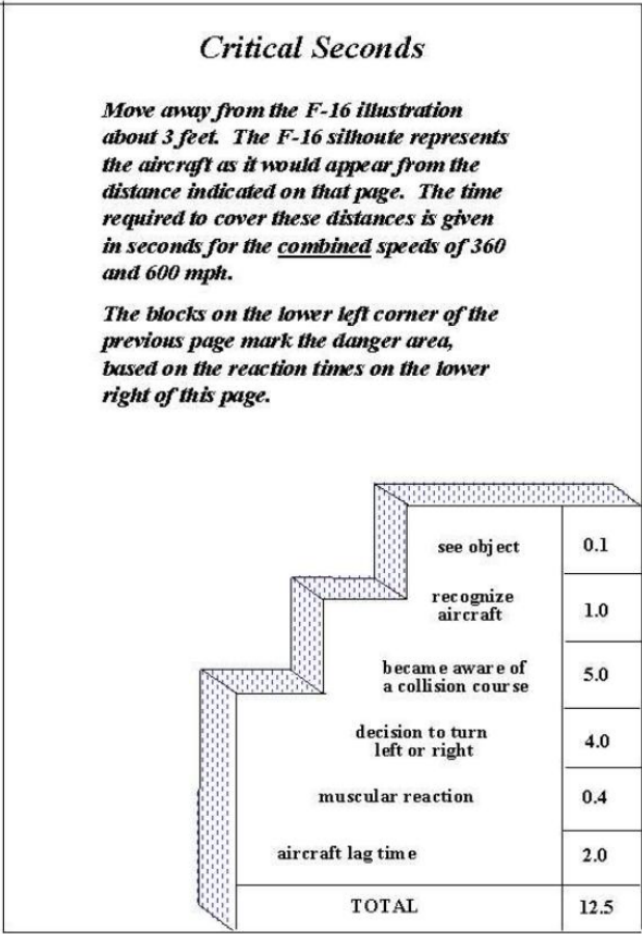


Figure 5.

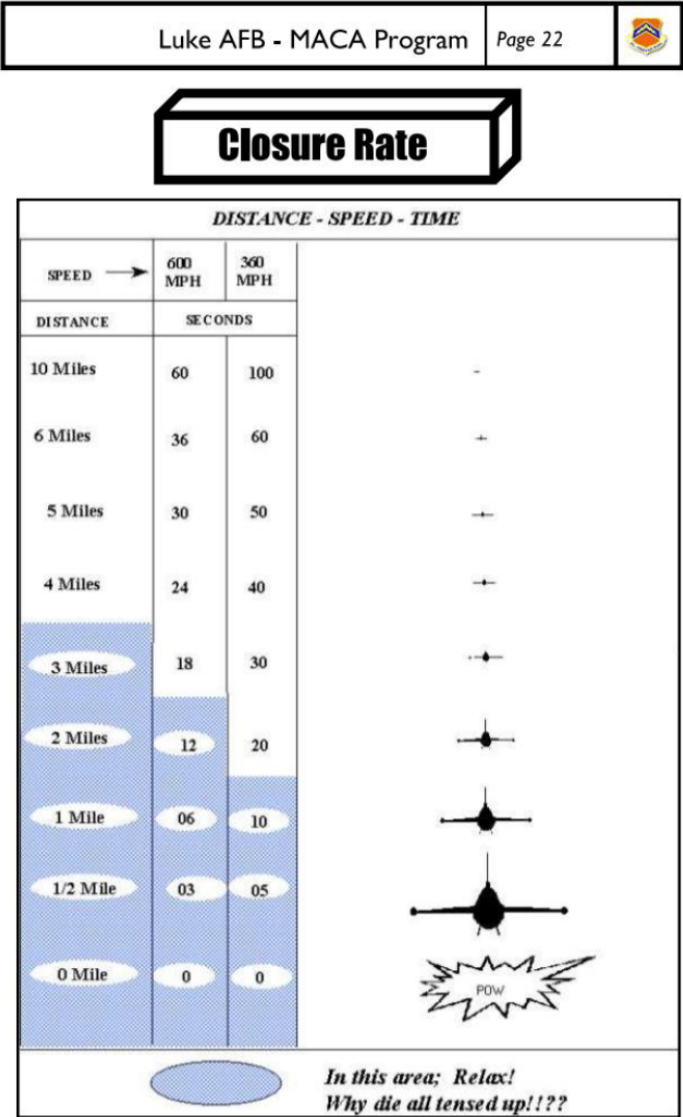


Figure 6.

Geometry of a Collision

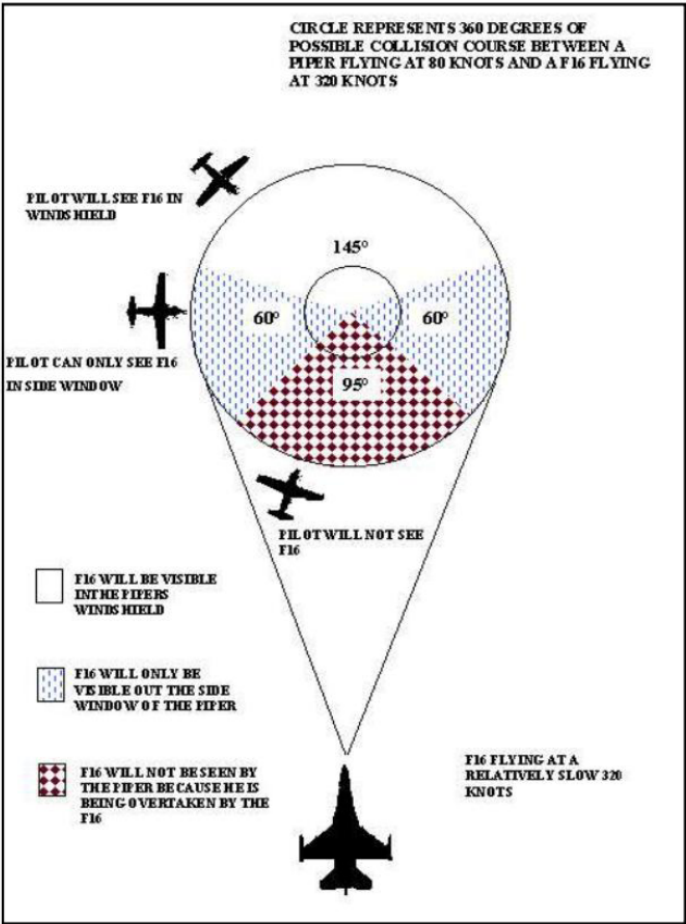


Figure 7

ID	YEAR	IFR Itinerants	IFR Overflights	VFR Itinerants	VFR Overflights	Local VFR	Total Tower Ops
DVT	2023	13241	1387	101402	6027	229743	351800
FFZ	2023	6600	542	134926	5050	207341	354459
PHX	2023	443440	5954	11225	29447	0	490066
PRC	2023	18174	37	82542	1149	234864	336766
SDL	2023	61469	132	69137	4672	45212	180622
TUS	2023	69880	125	48718	4057	27535	150315
CHD	2023	4,211	47	70,636	2,792	140,874	218,560
FLG	2023	6,972	4	18,087	1,694	5,701	32,458
GEU	2023	2,420	669	33,565	2,289	72,115	111,058
GYR	2023	5,650	374	75,218	3,034	119,641	203,917
IFP	2023	1,398	12	7,000	1,197	2,378	11,985
IWA	2023	23,976	252	68,855	4,153	148,477	245,713
RYN	2023	2,409	10	31,999	325	66,206	100,949

Table 1.

OPSNET : Tower Operations : Ranking Report

From 05/01/2023 To 05/31/2024 | FAA Only
Ranked by : Tower Operations

# Facility	IFR Rnwrnt					IFR Overflight					VFR Rnwrnt					VFR Overflight					Local		Total	Airport Operations	Tower Operations
	Air Carrier	Air General Aviation	Military	Total	Carrier	Air Carrier	Air General Aviation	Military	Total	Carrier	Air Carrier	Air General Aviation	Military	Total	Carrier	Air Carrier	Air General Aviation	Military	Total	Civil	Military				
1 ATL	837,597	9,374	5,544	237	852,752	721	153	707	8	1,589	4	56	1,599	31	1,690	0	2,392	2,126	238	4,756	0	0	854,442	860,787	
2 ORD	654,664	134,965	3,650	110	793,409	175	174	71	3	423	3	64	824	17	908	0	300	335	19	654	0	0	794,317	795,394	
3 DFW	747,561	16,637	4,993	87	769,276	2,664	1,236	810	25	4,635	23	207	927	77	1,234	0	1,031	2,265	34	3,330	0	0	770,512	778,477	
4 DEN	648,948	83,915	3,190	163	736,216	1,254	391	117	10	1,762	21	116	366	16	519	0	257	546	136	939	0	0	736,735	739,436	
5 LAS	448,679	56,659	38,617	9,896	553,851	394	1,414	2,003	52	3,863	3	108,875	2,552	697	112,127	0	10,903	6,677	207	17,787	0	0	665,978	667,628	
6 LAX	693,499	21,751	13,115	355	828,720	436	71	59	3	569	18	21	690	141	860	0	169	15,552	1,248	16,968	0	0	726,755	734,258	
7 CLT	483,143	93,227	21,836	813	598,019	468	161	201	4	834	1	595	4,839	65	5,500	0	1,808	5,190	170	7,268	0	0	604,519	612,821	
8 EWR	438,104	10,022	4,784	43	452,953	275	307	407	24	1,013	29	988	10,848	111	11,950	1	12,248	56,086	6,496	114,871	0	0	464,908	580,792	
9 PHX	440,351	32,746	16,781	2,255	492,033	399	1,343	1,423	1,693	8,708	35	4,434	7,690	297	13,466	0	25,059	5,839	3,987	34,896	0	0	504,489	546,082	
10 JFK	493,438	6,537	3,358	244	502,677	427	61	77	4	569	5	1,297	12,497	169	13,968	0	767	19,515	543	20,825	0	0	516,645	538,039	
11 MIA	475,283	26,521	12,461	431	514,696	364	15	9	12	400	1,193	620	2,093	67	3,973	3	53	7,432	220	7,708	0	0	518,669	526,777	
12 IAH	402,036	55,957	7,874	54	465,561	592	164	82	4	842	2	335	638	76	1,051	0	798	3,959	626	5,581	0	0	466,612	473,035	
13 LGA	376,742	5,282	2,559	119	384,702	1,029	28	106	18	1,181	2	391	1,793	77	2,263	0	11,748	59,263	5,982	76,993	0	0	386,965	465,139	
14 SEA	455,491	4,190	1,014	39	460,733	418	622	369	21	1,430	9	22	353	12	396	0	64	595	14	673	0	0	461,129	463,232	
15 MCO	428,760	16,555	12,769	196	458,310	194	8	2	2	206	21	971	1,988	65	2,545	0	286	366	9	661	0	0	461,255	462,122	
16 BOS	362,013	51,100	8,428	163	421,704	251	1,322	1,268	26	2,867	39	9,977	2,251	159	12,426	0	7,357	5,730	276	13,363	0	0	434,130	450,360	
17 LGB	38,387	8,752	24,820	420	72,379	30	76	280	17	403	1	6,043	94,826	297	101,167	0	203	14,013	473	14,689	241,626	13	241,639	415,185	430,277
18 VNY	63	36,841	41,131	106	78,171	31,380	10,925	5,945	108	48,364	0	745	95,972	391	97,108	0	312	19,640	298	20,250	180,596	7	180,603	355,882	424,496
19 SFO	390,364	25,929	6,841	400	413,534	318	75	608	21	1,022	1	972	672	2,527	4,172	0	487	4,326	115	4,926	0	0	417,706	423,656	
20 FTF	5	2,748	3,839	125	6,725	338	85	93	19	532	0	78,108	70,846	1,371	151,325	0	1,207	3,796	79	5,142	254,939	8	254,947	412,997	418,671
21 DVT	11	6,651	8,495	16	15,212	794	78	88	4	1,575	2	86,254	85,299	80	121,585	0	1,733	4,362	276	6,371	272,118	274	272,392	459,710	416,488
22 APA	34	32,888	38,908	2,278	74,108	4	43	97	34	178	56	24,527	85,116	1,447	111,146	2	422	999	90	1,513	205,428	332	205,760	395,014	396,705
23 MYF	0	3,066	27,619	529	31,234	11	89	259	99	458	1	4,218	89,604	1,014	94,837	6	352	6,631	2,724	9,713	259,885	232	260,117	386,168	396,359
24 PNC	325,997	21,600	8,508	1,928	358,033	112	148	3,960	133	5,594	2	87	562	121	772	0	3,939	3,729	298	7,966	0	0	358,805	372,365	
26 DCA	315,629	3,136	2,225	387	321,377	350	21	553	44	968	7	64	48	2,084	2,203	24	12,532	17,533	16,179	46,208	0	0	323,580	370,816	
27 SLC	297,493	38,210	24,647	1,685	322,035	9	26	131	8	174	9	3,598	18,630	3,244	26,469	1	4,673	10,595	601	16,870	0	0	348,488	364,532	
28 HNL	182,700	44,125	7,477	13,917	248,219	0	11	4	19	34	1	59,695	52,009	2,020	113,725	0	17	4	6	27	44	5	49	361,993	362,054
29 DAB	6,485	44,872	14,897	539	68,572	1	46	52	1	100	0	137,186	28,408	229	165,923	0	634	685	60	1,379	124,449	9	124,458	356,853	358,332
30 FLL	264,659	30,903	27,714	581	323,857	794	62	98	29	871	791	4,048	9,098	1,236	14,531	7	3,447	16,368	759	17,611	0	0	338,368	396,970	
31 SNA	104,851	29,666	40,257	80	174,854	877	262	300	59	1,558	3	224	65,949	148	66,324	1	82	5,185	153	5,421	94,015	62	94,077	335,255	342,264
32 PHX	244,558	67,591	10,785	226	323,060	300	234	148	8	690	0	250	1,734	274	2,258	0	5,544	3,388	347	9,279	0	0	325,318	335,267	
33 TMB	9	5,403	26,977	123	32,512	17	11	63	2	83	0	797	122,889	207	123,863	0	292	4,562	43	5,055	172,263	203	172,233	328,609	331,736
34 TEB	69	10,689	12,040	149	17,947	123,691	2,454	1,304	49	9,127,458	2	4,537	12,353	295	17,187	18	2,377	3,481	393	6,269	0	0	182,134	322,861	
35 GFK	2,370	35,109	4,738	88	42,305	0	44	3	1	48	24	90,938	8,676	45	99,683	0	92	342	14	448	180,203	0	180,203	322,191	322,687
36 DTW	305,371	6,748	4,491	81	316,691	802	62	93	8	214	5	15	658	13	638	0	62	851	23	936	0	0	317,339	320,440	
37 IAD	212,845	26,098	30,473	527	312,101	294	384	348	55	1,081	12	330	840	83	1,265	0	1,751	2,507	959	5,217	0	0	313,366	319,644	
38 ANC	144,335	50,725	14,214	3,880	213,154	443	437	543	4,155	5,578	45	28,710	54,903	3,296	86,954	0	801	2,734	420	4,005	9,725	0	9,725	309,633	319,416
39 BNA	222,511	32,711	26,819	1,084	283,164	420	622	1,629	58	2,129	3	413	10,318	1,961	13,316	0	3,568	10,318	1,229	22,604	0	0	296,488	319,644	
40 BJC	13	13,590	16,514	343	30,460	8	139	293	9	449	35	9,417	95,324	1,093	105,869	0	501	2,388	58	2,947	171,846	1,441	173,287	308,616	313,012
41 SFB	198,966	26,151	11,848	564	237,429	4	56	57	0	117	3	50,626	24,432	160	75,221	2	146	489	7	644	175,621	158	175,779	309,547	310,308
42 AUS	213,517	26,261	37,044	2,663	278,485	990	415	602	67	1,964	7	1,057	10,046	3,158	14,864	1	2,813	5,094	3,332	11,240	366	226	592	294,417	307,811
43 DAL	163,713	56,064	46,285	616	266,678	176	738	5,682	26	7,620	1	1,622	5,088	95	6,806	0	10,308	11,685	432	22,426	0	0	273,484	303,530	
44 FRG	103	11,285	12,639	74	24,301	11,749	110	191	9	12,059	35	16,990	81,367	899	99,321	17	1,029	2,739	669	4,354	135,585	78	135,663	259,285	275,698
45 BHH	234,871	15,559	9,647	711	260,787	426	73	335	7	841	9	578	14,064	487	15,136	0	3,040	6,712	644	10,496	0	0	262,944	274,381	
46 SAN	213,981	16,037	8,668	317	239,035	116	47	22	94	279	13	413	1,112	744	2,012	1	1,234	17,253	13,448	31,636	1	0	214,016	272,931	
47 CNO	46	732	12,046	606	13,430	29	657	1,128	60	1,874	0	602	56,432	1,154	58,188	0	220	11,089	439	11,748	182,063	849	182,912	254,530	268,152
48 TPA	197,603	34,419	40,471	142	204,856	253	356	467	63	1,179	9	578	14,064	487	15,136	0	11,640	6,185	1,603	19,428	0	0	219,994	240,601	
49 VRB	1,409	16,399	16,274	155	34,177	0	106	199	0	305	2														

In summary, the floor of several MOAs would be lowered to provide additional airspace for low-altitude training for the current missions of the primary aircraft using each MOA. The proposed floor compared to the existing floor of the MOAs is presented in **Table 2.1-2**. In addition, required training terrain variety in the region would be improved by establishing new low-altitude training airspace that covers a variety of vertical terrain features. The only vertical change to the ATCAAs would be the default scheduling for Outlaw and Jackal ATCAAs to FL510.

Table 2.1-2 Summary of Proposed Altitude Changes

MOA	Existing Floor (No Action)	Proposed Floor
Tombstone	500 feet AGL	100 feet AGL
Outlaw	8,000 feet MSL or 3,000 feet AGL, whichever is higher	500 feet AGL
Jackal	11,000 feet MSL or 3,000 feet AGL, whichever is higher	500 feet AGL
Jackal Low	100 feet AGL	No change
Morenci	1,500 feet AGL	No change
Reserve	5,000 feet AGL	No change
Bagdad	7,000 feet MSL or 5,000 feet AGL, whichever is higher	500 feet AGL
Gladden	7,000 feet MSL or 5,000 feet AGL, whichever is higher	500 feet AGL
Sells	10,000 feet MSL	No change
Sells Low	3,000 feet AGL	No change
Ruby	10,000 feet MSL	No change
Fuzzy	100 feet AGL	No change

Legend: AGL = above ground level; ATCAA = Air Traffic Control Assigned Airspace; FL = Flight Level; MOA = Military Operations Area; MSL = mean sea level.

2-4 Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)

Table 3.

Supersonic flight is currently authorized in Gladden, Bagdad, and Sells MOAs at 10,000 feet MSL and above and would remain unchanged with the Proposed Action. The Proposed Action includes authorizing supersonic flight down to 5,000 feet AGL in Tombstone, Outlaw, Jackal, Morenci, and Reserve MOAs. The existing and proposed supersonic flight authorizations are provided in **Table 2.1-3**. These changes would increase the capacity of the regional airspace to support non-hazardous training that requires supersonic flight at lower altitudes.

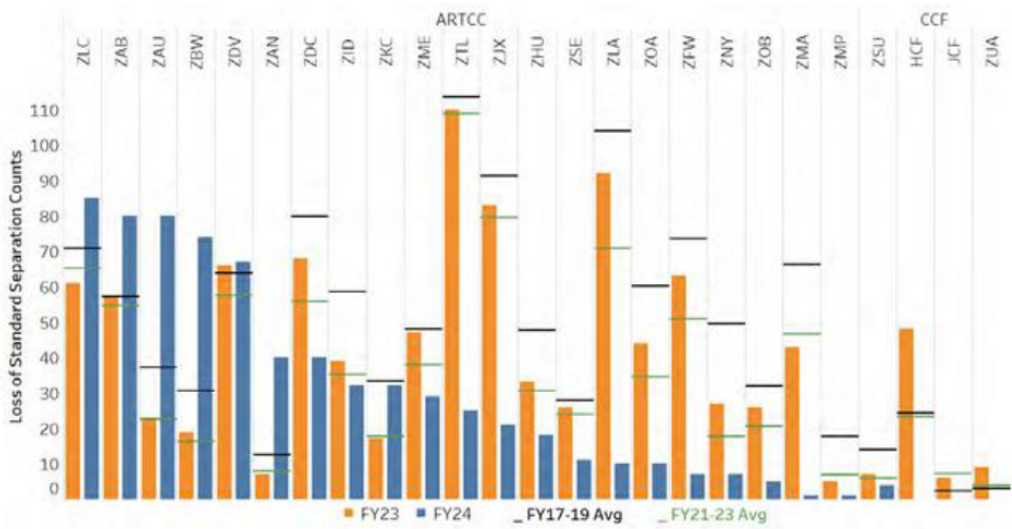
Table 2.1-3 Existing and Proposed Supersonic Flight Authorization

MOA/ATCAA	Existing Minimum Altitude (No Action)	Proposed Minimum Altitude
Tombstone	FL300	5,000 feet AGL
Outlaw	FL300	5,000 feet AGL
Jackal	FL300	5,000 feet AGL
Morenci	FL300	5,000 feet AGL
Reserve	FL300	5,000 feet AGL
Bagdad	10,000 feet MSL	No change
Gladden	10,000 feet MSL	No change
Sells	10,000 feet MSL	No change
Ruby	Not authorized	No change
Fuzzy	Not authorized	No change

Legend: AGL = above ground level; ATCAA = Air Traffic Control Assigned Airspace; FL = Flight Level; MOA = Military Operations Area; MSL = mean sea level.

2-7 Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)

Table 4.



Total Losses of Standard Separation									
FY17-19 Avg		FY21-23 Avg		FY23		FY24		% Change	
1,221		904		1,026		679		-33.8%	
Center	FY17-19 Avg	FY21-23 Avg	FY23	FY24	Center	FY17-19 Avg	FY21-23 Avg	FY23	FY24
HCF	24	23	48	0	ZLA	104	71	92	10
JCF	2	7	6	0	ZLC	71	65	61	85
ZAB	57	55	57	80	ZMA	66	47	43	1
ZAN	13	8	7	40	ZME	48	38	47	29
ZAU	37	23	23	80	ZMP	18	7	5	1
ZBW	31	16	19	74	ZNY	50	18	27	7
ZDC	80	56	68	40	ZOA	60	35	44	10
ZDV	64	58	66	67	ZOB	32	21	26	5
ZFW	74	51	63	7	ZSE	28	24	26	11
ZHU	48	31	33	18	ZSU	14	6	7	4
ZID	59	35	39	32	ZTL	114	109	110	25
ZJX	91	80	83	21	ZUA	3	4	9	0
ZKC	33	18	17	32					

Source: Federal Aviation Administration, Air Traffic Organization, Safety and Technical Training, Office of Policy and Performance (AJI-3), unpublished Airborne Loss Event data, April 30, 2025.

Table 5

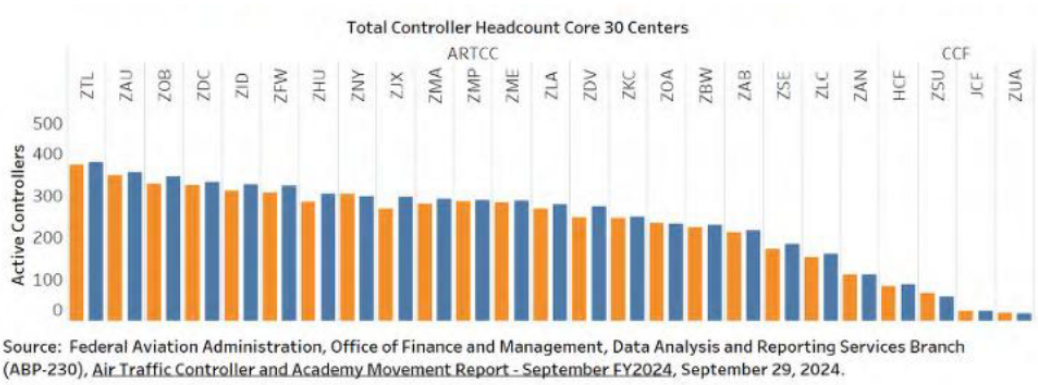


Table 6.