



JOINT PACIFIC ALASKA RANGE COMPLEX

Frequently Asked Questions

1) Q. What is the Joint Pacific Alaska Range Complex (JPARC)?

A. The JPARC consists of all the land, air, sea, space and cyberspace used for military training in Alaska, providing unmatched opportunities for present and future Service, joint, interagency and multinational training. Today, the JPARC is comprised of approximately:

- 65,000 square miles of available airspace
- 2,490 square miles of land space with 1.5 million acres of maneuver land
- 42,000 square nautical miles of sea and airspace in the Gulf of Alaska

The JPARC provides a realistic training environment and allows commanders to train for full spectrum engagements, ranging from individual skills to complex, large-scale joint engagements. Each year, thousands from the U.S. military Services, federal, state and local agencies, allied nations and nongovernmental organizations receive training in the JPARC. In addition to home-station training for Alaskan-based units and smaller unit training events, the JPARC hosts three to four large-scale exercises annually.

Exercise NORTHERN EDGE is Alaska's largest joint training exercise and a prime example of the training available in the JPARC. In 2011, more than 6,000 service members from across all Services participated in NORTHERN EDGE, receiving realistic joint training for crises response throughout the Asia-Pacific region.



A team of Navy SEALs conduct a river crossing exercise during NORTHERN EDGE 2009 June 17 at Fort Wainwright, Alaska. NORTHERN EDGE is a large-scale exercise hosted in Alaska to improve command, control and communications between the armed services. The West Coast-based SEALs are training for overseas operations. (U.S. Air Force photo/Staff Sgt. Christopher Boltz)

Since 2009, the JPARC has been an accredited and certified Joint National Training Capability, ensuring that the range space and infrastructure are interoperable, supportable and meet standards to provide a realistic joint training environment.

2) Q. Who owns the JPARC? How is it funded?

A. The Services have the responsibility, authority and funding to develop the ranges. In 2008, the JPARC was "chartered" with a governing body to synchronize these existing investments and resources to increase efficiencies and joint training opportunities. This joint collaboration is crucial in today's economic environment, leading to the most effective use of our country's resources.

3) Q. What is Alaskan Command's relationship to the JPARC?

A. Alaskan Command (ALCOM) is the Department of Defense's regional joint headquarters in Alaska. In this role, ALCOM coordinates with the Services to develop a joint strategy to identify joint training opportunities in Alaska, maximize the utilization of training resources and improve interoperability. As a steward for the JPARC, ALCOM facilitates the JPARC's progression as a joint endeavor and integrate the separate Service investments.

4) Q. How does the JPARC benefit the people of Alaska?

A. The JPARC has real benefits for the people of Alaska, providing critical training for the men and women serving in Alaska's armed services as well as bolstering the state's economy and infrastructure.



A 210th Rescue Squadron Pave Hawk helicopter from the Alaska Air National Guard is seen flying on a training mission over Alaska in July 2011. Alaska National Guardsmen were credited with saving 104 people here in Alaska or in combat zones in Afghanistan during 2011. (Photo by Master Sgt. Sean Mitchell, 210th Rescue Squadron, Alaska Air National Guard.)

Members of the Alaska Army and Air National Guard units train daily on the same ranges as the active duty, better preparing them to protect the citizens of their state. Training in the JPARC also prepares members of the National Guard to provide real-time support to civilians—including pilots, hunters and hikers—through search and rescue missions. From 2000-2010, the National Guard's Rescue Coordination Center made 1,099 saves in terms of life and limb.

Alaskans also benefit from economic support and improved infrastructure. Investments in the JPARC grow a stronger Alaskan economy, including modernized and enhanced infrastructure that makes the state more attractive for businesses and economic growth. In fiscal year 2012, Alaska's military construction work will receive nearly \$400 million, including \$15 million in funding for Joint Training Ranges like the JPARC.¹ Military payroll feeds into the state's economy, as do the tourism dollars spent each year by the thousands of exercise participants who come to the state, eager to take advantage of all that Alaska has to offer.

The support the military receives from the citizens of Alaska ensures the continued viability of training in the state and a long and mutually-beneficial relationship.

5) Q. What are the plans for JPARC's future?

A. The JPARC can fill a unique niche for our nation and support the evolution of joint training in the 21st century. In its current configuration, however, the JPARC cannot fully meet the training requirements for forces and training exercises located in Alaska. The JPARC was originally developed to support older and in some cases now obsolete weapons and tactics. The JPARC requires a more contemporary and versatile design and improved infrastructure to meet the present and future needs of the military.

Similarly, new fifth generation weapons systems and emerging technology—such as the F-22 fighter jet, Stryker combat vehicle, and unmanned aerial systems (UAS)—have increased mobility, expanded weapons and sensor capabilities and improved communications. These advancements in technology require more space to be trained and tested safely and effectively. With encroachment challenging other ranges, the JPARC, through modernization and enhancement, will become one of the few places in the world with adequate space available to provide safe and realistic training.

Ultimately, the vision for the JPARC is to build on these strengths and ensure it remains the DoD's **“premier, multi-domain, live-virtual-constructive joint integration range enabling full spectrum twenty-first century joint and multinational training.”**

6) Q. Are the JPARC roads, lands, etc., open for public use?

A. The military only uses the air and land space absolutely needed to conduct safe and mission-critical training and testing. Naturally, military maneuvers and both simulated and real weapons employment don't mix safely with public use and must be separated. However, when not in use, and when safe, the military makes every effort to open up restricted air and land to the public. For example, in September 2011, the Army made 1.2 out of 1.5 million acres of land available at Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson (JBER) and the Tanana Flats, Yukon and Donnelly Training Areas for various hunting seasons.



Caribou can be hunted on Army lands – if hunters are there at the right time. The military opened record amounts of land to hunting for 2011.

7) Q. How often does training take place? How often does training impact residents, including fishing and hunting activities?

A. Home-station training occurs daily. The JPARC provides home-station training for thousands of military members stationed in Alaska and without the ability to train here, Alaskan-based units would be required to shift training and resources outside of the state. In addition to home-station training for Alaskan-based units, the JPARC hosts three to four large-scale exercises, such as RED FLAG, annually.

8) Q. What is a MOA and how does it impact my airspace mobility?

A. Military Operating Areas (MOA) are airspace designated to separate or segregate certain non-hazardous military activities from non-military aircraft. MOAs are not always in use. They are activated for flying exercises and returned to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) immediately upon completion of military use. Emergency aircraft, air evacuation, Life Flight and firefighting aircraft always have priority over military training. Civilian pilots who plan to fly near or through an established MOA in central Alaska should use the Special Use Airspace Information Service (see question 9 for more details). Pilots are also urged to obtain the most current status of the MOAs from any FAA Automated Flight Service Station, Anchorage Center or Eielson Range Control and to always file a flight plan. Additional resources are available on the JBER Web site: www.jber.af.mil/11af/alaskaairspaceinfo.

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9) Q. How can I find out about proposed training routes and times?

A. The Special Use Airspace Information Service (SUAIS) is a 24-hour service providing civilian pilots with near real time information on military airspace use, Army artillery firing and known helicopter operations. MOA activation times are published 30 days in advance and can be found on the JBER Web site (www.jber.af.mil/11af/alaskaairspaceinfo). For current information on MOA activity and range status, contact:

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¹ Office of Senator Lisa Murkowski. (2011). Alaska's "Arctic Tough" Military Receiving 2012 Support [Press release]. Retrieved from http://murkowski.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?p=PressReleases&ContentRecord_id=74c1517b-c344-4990-9099-9136cd26ecfd&ContentType_id=b94acc28-404a-4fc6-b143-a9e15bf92da4&Group_id=c01df158-d935-4d7a-895d-f694ddf41624

10) Q. What steps are taken to ensure my safety as a private pilot?

A. Pilots should familiarize themselves with the SUAIS (see question 9) and initiate and maintain contact with Eielson Range Control in flight to find out the MOAs scheduled to be active and during what time. Conveying your intended flight route to Range Control is also critical to helping the system enhance flight safety in areas that lack low altitude radio coverage. To promote safety and improve everyone's situational awareness, pilots are encouraged to provide routing and destination updates, particularly if their flight route changes.

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Finally, safe flying is a personal and professional interest of military pilots. In fact, new aircraft, such as the F-22, record all actions while in flight. If pilots ignore safety regulations, we take action to ensure future compliance. To report unexpected encounters with military aircraft or other safety concerns, call:

General Safety Reporting Contacts
JBER - (907) 552-4128/4798
Eielson - (907) 377-1155/1025



U.S. Air Force Tech. Sgt. Lemario McPhaul records the progress of an F-16 sortie Nov. 29, 2011, Eielson Air Force Base, Alaska. McPhaul is an air traffic controller assigned to the 354th Operations Support Squadron. (U.S. Air Force photo by Staff Sgt. Christopher Boitz/Released)

11) Q. Why can't you clean up the areas that you have previously made unsafe to enter?

A. The military is actively working to clean up the impacts of the past, as we are all more informed about the impact of our human footprint on the environment. Under the Installation Restoration Program, the 611th Air Support Group is working to clean-up 424 sites across 37 installations in Alaska to current, more stringent environmental standards.

12) Q. Why doesn't the military operate in less populated areas?

A. The potential to train in more remote locations can be inefficient and cost prohibitive due to the additional fuel required to reach the training destinations from our military bases. The fuel used in transit directly reduces the amount of training that can be conducted once arriving in the training areas. Additionally, encroachment is dramatically impacting training areas across the country. The JPARC is one of the only ranges with space available to train realistically for large-scale full spectrum operations while leveraging the Services' most advanced capabilities.

13) Q. Why do pilots need to fly supersonic? What is a sonic boom and how is it caused? What does a sonic boom sound like?

A. Supersonic employment of existing air-to-air and air-to-ground ordnance makes the pilot more survivable in combat. To most effectively train for and master the evolving tactics for today's air-to-air and air-to-ground weapons, pilots must train in the same manner as combat situations.

A sonic boom is a shock wave pattern that is generated by an aircraft flying faster than sound. As the aircraft moves, it pushes the air out of its path. Because the aircraft is moving faster than the speed of sound, the disturbance remains concentrated as shock waves. A sonic boom is generated continuously as the aircraft flies at supersonic speed, but is only heard once as the shock wave passes over a given spot on the ground. The sound of a sonic boom depends on how high and how fast the aircraft is flying, and where the receiver is relative to the flight path. Sonic booms under the flight path usually sound like two sharp claps a fraction of a second apart. Off to the side, they may sound less distinct, like distant thunder.



An F-22 Raptor executes a supersonic flyby over the flight deck of the aircraft carrier USS John C. Stennis June 22, 2009, during NORTHERN EDGE 2009, a joint exercise in Alaska focusing on detecting and tracking units at sea, in the air and on land. (U.S. Navy photo/Petty Officer 1st Class Ronald Dejarnett)

14) Q. How do I report noise complaints?

A. Noise concerns are taken seriously and all complaints are investigated. To file a noise complaint, call the 24-hour feedback line: 1-800-Jet-Noise (1-800-538-6647).

15) Q. When conducting training in the JPARC, how close do the military aircraft fly to one another?

A. Military pilots are trained to routinely fly in close formations, separated by as little as three feet. They perform aerial refueling, where aircraft are directly linked to each other. Tactical training, however, generally can start with distances of well over 100 miles separation and end with close-quarter aerial maneuvering.

16) Q. What impact does the JPARC have on wildlife?

A. The JPARC restricts military operations to ensure wildlife is not adversely affected. There is no documentation that current training in the JPARC has a negative impact on wildlife; however, the military is sensitive to this concern and works closely with organizations and state agencies to support monitoring and tracking of wildlife. The effects of training and testing on wildlife well-being are something we monitor and will adjust if needed.



ELMENDORF AIR FORCE BASE, Alaska -- Alaska Department of Fish and Game biologists, along with Fort Richardson natural resource specialists and University of Alaska, Fairbanks wildlife biology department personnel, place a GPS tracking collar and run a variety of tests on a moose near base housing areas. The study is joint effort between Alaska and the Department of Defense to study the movement and overall health of moose on base. (U.S. Air Force photo by Master Sgt. Keith Brown)

U.S. Air Force and Army airspace managers work closely, together, and with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game to establish seasonal overflight restrictions of key migratory wildlife resources such as the 40-mile and Nelchina herds. These restrictions are updated frequently to ensure aircrew do not disturb the herds during key biological timeframes, such as mating and calving seasons.

17) Q. With regard to the modernization and improvement of the JPARC, does my opinion matter?

A. Yes, your opinion matters. The public impact of the proposed modernization and improvement of the JPARC ranges is currently being investigated through an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). Additionally, the Draft EIS, anticipated to be available for public review in the early spring of 2012, will disclose potential natural and human environmental impacts related to the proposed modernization and enhancement of the JPARC ranges. This Draft EIS review process provides you—and all members of the public—the opportunity to review the revised proposals and the environmental assessment and further voice your opinions and concerns to help shape the decision-making process. Public involvement is an integral component of the [National Environmental Policy Act \(NEPA\) of 1969](#) and enhances the Government's effectiveness and improves the quality of its decisions. Input from the public, pilots and agencies such as the Alaska Departments of Transportation and Fish and Game have already resulted in significant changes to the proposals. To learn more about the next opportunity for formal public comment, please visit: <http://www.jpargcis.com>.

18) Q. With the opening of the Arctic, what impact does the JPARC have on military strategy?

A. With climate changes reducing ice coverage of the Arctic, the opportunity the United States has in harnessing potential natural resources and being stewards of this environment is vast. The proximity of the JPARC to the Arctic provides the nation with access to develop all Arctic capabilities and is advantageous to the safety and security of our national interests as we look at development in the region. The JPARC is strategically located within the sovereign boundaries of the United States, providing a U.S.-only range to train and test air, land and sea units to execute military operations in the Arctic.

19) Q. Do Russians still fly across the Arctic into Alaska?

A. North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD) carefully monitors all air activities in its assigned area to fulfill the air sovereignty responsibility to Canada and the United States. Aircraft may conduct identification missions should Russian aircraft approach the internationally recognized North American Air Defense Identification Zone (ADIZ). The ADIZ is a zone of internationally recognized airspace surrounding North America that facilitates the identification of aircraft well before they come into contact with U.S. or Canadian airspace.

20) Q. Does the JPARC only offer training opportunities for Alaskan forces? How can my military unit find out more information on training in the JPARC?

A. The JPARC is a premier training venue like few others in the United States or around the globe, making it a critical national asset and prime training location for all U.S. troops, as well as interagency and multinational partners. The JPARC complements other existing ranges and capabilities, such as the Nevada Test and Training Range, by providing additional opportunities for realistic training.

For example, Alaska has the space to train across realistic deployment distances, as well as land and air ranges that are easily integrated with the Gulf of Alaska.

Furthermore, Alaska and the JPARC offer unique opportunities to train for real-world operations. For example, units are able to realistically prepare for operations—such as in Afghanistan—in the JPARC due to mountainous terrain, cold weather and long periods of daylight.

With commercial and residential encroachment negatively impacting training venues in many other regions of the country, the JPARC will become increasingly important. As a certified and accredited Joint National Training Capability, the JPARC site and systems meet standards to provide a joint training environment that benefits all U.S. troops, as well as interagency and multinational partners.

For more information on U.S. military training opportunities in the JPARC, contact:

Alaskan Command Public Affairs
(907) 552-2341
alcom.j08@elmendorf.af.mil



A SEAL scans the terrain during NORTHERN EDGE 2009, Fort Wainwright, Alaska -- Operators from a west-coast based Navy SEAL team participated in infiltration and exfiltration training as part of NORTHERN EDGE 2009, June 15, 2009. Army Task Force 49, 1-52 Aviation Regiment, B company, transported the SEALs in CH-47D "Chinook" helicopters, performing two-wheel landings atop mountainous terrain in the JPARC. Exercise NORTHERN EDGE is a training exercise designed to promote and improve interoperability. (U.S. Marine Corps Photo/Lance Cpl. Ryan Rhoads)