



Operational Range Assessment Maxwell Air Force Base

Air Force Operational Range Assessment Program

May 2024

Background

DoD uses and manages operational ranges to support national security objectives and maintain the high state of operational readiness essential to its mission requirements. The Department conducts non-regulatory, proactive, and comprehensive operational range assessments (ORAs) to support the long-term sustainability of these ranges while protecting human health and the environment. The purpose of an ORA is to determine if there is a release or substantial threat of a release of munitions constituents (MC) from an operational range to an off-range area that exceeds an applicable regulatory standard or creates a potential unacceptable risk to human health or the environment.

The DAF Operational Range Assessment Program (ORAP), established to comply with DoD policy, sets forth procedures for consistently conducting ORAs throughout the Air Force. The DAF ORAP assessment methodology uses an installation-wide approach to verify the ORAP inventory and accomplish range-specific assessments. An Air Force ORA is comprised of two primary phases: Qualitative Assessment, Phase 1 and Quantitative Assessment, Phase 2 (if required).

- A Qualitative Assessment, Phase 1, encompasses records review, interviews, and a visual survey.
- A Quantitative Assessment, Phase 2, encompasses records review, interviews, visual survey, and environmental media sampling.

Installation Overview

Maxwell AFB is located in Montgomery, Alabama, in Montgomery County, approximately 1.5 miles west of downtown Montgomery and adjacent to the town of Hunter. Maxwell AFB occupies 2,527 acres and manages 626 acres at four Geographically Separated Units: Vigilant Warrior Training Site, Gunter Annex, Lake Martin Recreational Area, and Next Generation Radar Site (NEXRAD) Site.

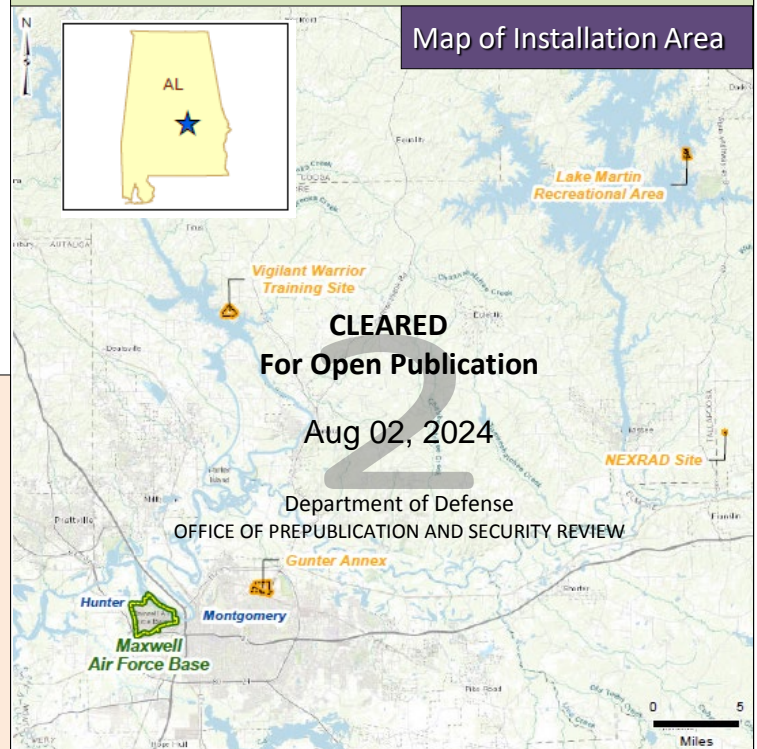
ORAP Findings: March 2023 ORA Report

- MC including copper, iron, lead, zinc, and nitroglycerin (NG), have been transported towards off-range areas via stormwater for one area assessed.
- Substantial threat of release of MC for one area assessed. No threat of release for two areas assessed.
- Potential risks to the environment were identified for one area assessed. No potential risks to receptors for two areas assessed.

Next Steps

Maxwell AFB is scheduled to be assessed in accordance with DAF and DoD specifying periodic assessment or sooner if changes occur that may impact assessment decisions.

- The substantial threat of release via surface water/sediment (via stormwater) shall be addressed under an MC Migration Study.



Installation Overview Continued

During implementation of the ORAP at Maxwell AFB, four operational areas were determined to be eligible for assessment under the ORAP – Combat Arms Training and Maintenance (CATM) Facility; M203 Grenade Range; Canine Training Area; and Vigilant Warrior Training Site. However, the Vigilant Warrior Training Site was not included within the scope of this effort and as such will be evaluated during the next installation-wide implementation of the ORAP.

This is the third assessment for the CATM Facility and M203 Grenade range, and first assessment for the Canine Training Area.

CATM Facility Assessment Overview

The CATM Facility became active in January 2011 and encompasses a total of 7.19 acres. The parcel of land was previously part of an Old Small Arms Range (SAR), which was used as a skeet range from 1937 to 1945 and as a pistol range from 1950 to 1974.

The CATM Facility includes the primary use area (3.06 acres) which contains the active SAR (Building 1325). The remainder of the acreage encompasses classrooms and support facilities (Buildings 1327 and 1330), a parking lot built within the footprint of a former SAR, and the lands between.

The CATM Facility (as noted above) was initially assessed under the ORAP in 2011 and in 2017. This ORA is the initial Phase II for the CATM Facility. The assessment included collection of on-range soil and sediment samples to evaluate transport via stormwater runoff and leaching through the soil column. Samples were taken from the former berm associated with the Old SAR and facility stormwater drainage system. MC of potential concern are metals and nitroglycerin (NG).

The Phase II concluded that MC (copper, lead, zinc, and NG) are migrating towards off-range areas in surface water/sediment via stormwater.

CATM Facility Assessment Overview Continued

Based on available information, there is a substantial threat of release of MC at the CATM Facility. In addition, MC were detected above ecological project action limits and downgradient receptors were identified. As such, there are potential risks to receptors. All other exposure pathways were deemed incomplete to receptors.

An MC Migration/Mitigation Study (ORA Phase 3) is in-progress to further delineate on- and off-range MC impacted areas and evaluate potential actions to address MC transport and reduce risks to receptors.

M203 Grenade Range Assessment Overview

The M203 Grenade Range encompasses approximately 12.95 acres in the western portion of the installation and became active in 2002.

The M203 Grenade Range was assessed under the ORAP in 2011 and in 2017. This effort conducted a periodic ORA Phase I at the M203 Grenade Range. A limited potential MC source was identified at/near the firing points, range floor, and target areas. Given MC unlikely present due to activities and management practices in which all expended munitions are collected following each training exercise, there are no viable transport mechanisms. No potential threat of release was identified and there are no risks to receptors. As such, the range is recommended for a periodic Phase I.

Canine Training Area Assessment Overview

The Canine Training area encompasses approximately 0.90 acres in the southern portion of the installation and is believed to have become operational in 2005.

This is the initial Phase I for the Canine Training Area. A limited source was identified as only small caliber blank munitions are expended and all casings are policed following each training event. Due to limited source, no viable transport mechanisms were identified. There is no potential threat of release and no risks to receptors. The area is recommended for continued evaluation under the ORAP.

For more information on this assessment or the Air Force Operational Range Assessment Program contact the Ranges Subject Matter Expert, Technical Branch, Environmental Quality Directorate, Air Force Civil Engineer Center For more information on the DoD Operational Range Assessment Program visit <https://denix.osd.mil/orap/home/>