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The Way Ahead

As DoD's SRI has continued to mature over the last 10 years, DoD and the Military Services have made significant progress in being able to identify and act upon the external pressures that constrain the use of training and testing range resources. Critical factors in managing those pressures have been:

- ▶ Effective use of Section 2864a authorities
- ▶ Engagement activities for compatible land, sea, airspace, and frequency use
- ▶ Both local and regional encroachment partnering activities
- ▶ Further refining the comprehensive DoD-wide range inventory
- ▶ Development of clear criteria and standard methods for assessing the adequacy of range resources against current and anticipated training requirements

Looking to the future, DoD must build upon the early successes of the SRI, while continually evaluating needs and requirements associated with a constantly changing environment and using innovations to ensure the long-term sustainability of military range resources.

5.1 The Sustainable Ranges Initiative

The SRI is an ongoing process, with its greatest benefits coming from influencing and changing approaches to mission management and resource use decision making. Though encroachment is an issue for ranges in general, the situation at each range is unique and requires a specific approach in order to achieve mission success. The SRI is designed to help range staffs address encroachment concerns by providing training and education to staffs both inside and outside the fence line, fostering long-term partnerships to reduce the likelihood of

future conflict, and attracting outside investment in mission protection. The SRI helps provide tools to improve asset management on the ranges, and encourage compatible activities off the ranges.

5.2 Compatible Land, Airspace, and Sea Space Use and Engagement and Partnering Activities

Competition for land, airspace, and sea space for siting of renewable energy infrastructure to meet national energy objectives is a growing concern in relation to DoD's capability and capacity to train and maintain readiness. As a result, DoD has been working on developing compatible energy siting considerations and sharing information with interested stakeholders to include NGOs, other government agencies, and the renewable energy industry. These considerations will protect military training, testing, and operational considerations while promoting sound environmental stewardship. DoD is also working with BOEM and the coastal states through a task force process to ensure that renewable energy infrastructure siting on the outer continental shelf is compatible with DoD's offshore activities. Additionally, DoD is seeking to proactively engage with stakeholders to develop compatible siting solutions through the establishment of a DoD Siting Clearinghouse. The purpose of this organization is to facilitate fully coordinated Department positions on the mission compatibility of proposed projects for energy developers, government agencies, and other concerned parties.

DoD will continue to work with Congress, other federal agencies, Native American tribes, states, local governments, NGOs, and other stakeholders to take full advantage of legislative and regulatory initiatives that support compatible land use and encroachment prevention around Military installations. While the REPI program had conserved over

215,000 acres of land near and around DoD installations by the close of FY2011, demand from the Military Services for funding of projects in FY2010 was 1.5 times greater than those funds appropriated for the program. Regional partnering efforts are bearing fruit, with state partners in SERPPAS and WRP investing in compatible land use, conservation, habitat restoration and management, and renewable energy.

Academia is contributing to that success in a variety of studies and pilot projects directly impacting DoD efforts, while NGOs are working collaboratively to develop and implement range-wide planning efforts. DoD and the Military Services have found outreach and partnering on such issues to be the most effective way to address today's encroachment concerns while minimizing future problems and ensuring the long-term sustainability of DoD's range resources.

Through the Regional Partnerships established in the Southeast and the Southwest, GIS mapping is being used to clearly articulate DoD current and future mission requirements across these regions, particularly in areas where outlying landing fields, low-level flight routes, and helicopter training areas are located. This effort could expand to all regions of the country, if states are interested, or if there is desire among a particular set of States to coordinate efforts towards multiple and mutual benefits across a region.

It is important to note that SRI outreach, education, engagement, and partnering is a long-term part of the solution to develop true sustainability across all DoD ranges. DoD is committed to continued investment in current efforts, and to developing new tools to protect and enhance readiness. Conservation banking, as authorized in the FY2009 NDAA, holds particular promise for tapping new sources of private industry funding to leverage DoD, other federal agency funding, and State and local government contributions. It took several decades for the challenges of encroachment to manifest themselves around ranges opened during World War II, and it will take a consistent and sustained effort to address and mitigate those challenges.

5.3 Use of Range Inventory and Encroachment and Capability Tools

DoD will make greater use of its comprehensive range inventory and standardized assessment methodology to evaluate encroachment impacts and range capabilities in a manner that is consistent across the Military Services. The tools developed to date will assist DoD and Military Service leadership with identifying at-risk ranges, recognizing emerging issues, and making informed decisions about how to focus new or additional range sustainment efforts. These actions will enhance the abilities of DoD and the Military Services to meet training requirements, and will allow for accurate and expedited responses to internal and Congressional requests for related information.

The ultimate success of the SRI will be realized when DoD can prevent encroachment and avoid mission degradation before it occurs.