

# What has been done to protect the mission of Luke Air Force Base?



*Luke Air Force Base's 56th Fighter Wing is the largest in the U.S. Air Force with 26 squadrons and more than 190 F-16 aircraft. As part of the Air Education and Training Command, Luke AFB graduates more than 1,000 F-16 pilots and 900 crew chiefs annually.*

*The wing oversees the Gila Bend Air Force Auxiliary Field and is steward of the Barry M. Goldwater Range, a military training area spanning more than 1.5 million acres of Sonoran desert and a national security asset.*

# Legislative Action

*West Valley communities have proactively and successfully worked together to secure statewide legislation that provides statutory guidance to ensure responsible land-use planning around Arizona's military airports.*

**SB 1062 (1995)** established the “territory in the vicinity of Luke AFB” known as “the box” requiring disclosure to property owners. The legislation addressed the concern of residential encroachment around Arizona’s military airports by requiring all political subdivisions in the vicinity of a military airport to adopt land use plans and adopt and enforce zoning regulations that assure development compatible with the high noise and accident potential generated by military airport operations.

**SB 1514 (2000)** provided penalties and places responsibility for enforcement of the 1995 statute with the Attorney General.

**SB 1120 (2001)** ultimately appropriated \$500,000 to develop comprehensive land-use plans in the noise and accident potential zones surrounding Arizona’s active military airports, with Luke AFB being the first priority. This effort also includes identifying acceptable and feasible uses of land, consulting with stakeholders, and developing a strong implementation plan, financing mechanisms, and potential funding sources for landowner compensation.

**SB 1525 (2001)** established enhanced notification of proposed developments to the state’s military airports and provided heightened disclosure requirements on the sale of land within the vicinity of a military airport. These measures provide for open communication between the military base, political subdivisions, developers, and the community so that responsible, safe planning around Arizona’s bases can occur. Key provisions of the bill include enhanced notification and disclosure requirements for rezonings or new development proposals; noise attenuation requirements with noise contours; and definitions of High Noise and Accident Potential Zones.

**SB 1393 (2002)** was a technical correction bill to the provisions of SB 1525 with one of the main points being that school districts are included in the definition of political subdivisions. This addition ensured schools are located in areas consistent with military airport operations for safety purposes. The bill also changed the term “particular” to “individual” in relation to compatible uses within the High Noise and Accident Potential Zones. This change is intended to encourage more communication between political subdivisions and military airports and would allow a military base to comment on all individual uses and not restrict comment to particular uses. It also clarified legislative intent regarding sound attenuation for developments located near a military airport.

**HB 2134 (2004)** prohibited natural gas storage facilities within nine miles of an active duty military air force base whose primary mission is pilot training.

**HB 2141 (2004)** extended protections to Luke’s Auxiliary Airfield-1 (Aux-1) in Surprise where Luke pilots practice instrument approaches and departures. It established high-noise and accident potential zones where development will be limited to compatible uses, and it established a box in the vicinity of Aux-1. Potential homeowners would also be informed that military aircraft fly overhead. It provided essentially the same protection around Aux-1 that Luke has around its main base.

**HB 2140 (2004)** established protection at the base’s Auxiliary Airfield-1 (Aux-1) and the Gila Bend Air Force Auxiliary Field, the hub for pilot training over the Barry M. Goldwater range (BMGR) in southern Arizona. The legislation includes an annual appropriation of \$4.8 million for military installation preservation and enhancement projects, such as buying lands near military bases or financing infrastructure improvements. It also established a military affairs commission for the disbursement of these funds.

HB 2140 required the State Land Department to provide a legal description of the auxiliary fields for the public and to provide a map of the fields, to include descriptions of high noise and accident potential zones, to the Real Estate Commissioner and county government. Such areas are also required on municipal and county general or comprehensive plans.

**HB 2662 (2004)** required notification of potential buyers of real estate underlying military training routes that there is military activity over their land. It defined a military training route as a low-level military route that allows military aircraft to conduct flights that may be as low as 100 feet above the ground at speeds in excess of 250 knots indicated air speed.



# Community Initiatives

Since 1995, Glendale has been at the forefront of efforts to enhance awareness of the critical importance of Luke AFB's mission to our national security and the need to take necessary steps to preserve the ability of Luke AFB to carry out that mission. This has resulted in the Arizona State Legislature passing several state laws to formalize the communication cycle between Luke and municipalities and to establish compatible use definitions and protections in the high-risk areas on both ends of Luke's parallel runways.

Statutes relating to military airports have been expanded and carefully crafted to provide open, effective communication between Luke, developers and communities so that responsible, safe planning around the base can occur.

Glendale -- together with the base, local communities, the State of Arizona and the state's Congressional delegation -- has instituted innovative measures that are conducive to Luke conducting its F-16 training mission.

# Planning and Zoning

*West Valley communities have taken numerous planning and zoning actions to ensure compatible land use around Luke AFB.*

- **Glendale:** Annexed Luke AFB in 1995 to help protect the base from incompatible land-use encroachment and ensure the city had a voice and an active role in Luke's future.
- All seven jurisdictions with land around Luke AFB have adopted the 1988 Westside Joint Land Use Study (WJLUS) noise contours.
- **El Mirage:** Rezoned 1,300 residential acres to commercial/light industrial.
- **Goodyear:** Changed vested residential zoning rights to commercial, thus removing 59 residential lots from the 1988 WJLUS noise contours. In 1994, established a zoning policy that calls for all new residential developments to notify all residential buyers that their property is subject to aircraft overflights.
- **Litchfield Park:** Developed Rancho La Loma in conjunction with Luke AFB to ensure the land use was compatible with the base's mission.
- **Maricopa County:** In 1978, adopted the *Military Airport Zoning Overlay for the Unincorporated Area of Maricopa County* to regulate land use in the airport districts of Luke AFB. In 2000, adopted the White Tank and Grand Avenue Area Plan, incorporating additional acreage into the White Tanks Regional Park, which adds to the preservation of land around Luke. Requires notification on the front door of home sale(s) offices, covenants, conditions and restrictions of new homes within the "territory in the vicinity of a military airport."
- **Peoria:** New General Plan contains goals, objectives and policies in support of Luke's mission.
- **Phoenix:** In 1998, Phoenix traded 640 acres in the City of Surprise for more than 1,000 acres at the end of the Luke AFB runway. This trade was designed to protect the land around Luke from development. The Phoenix City Council also has supported various studies to protect Luke and continues to work with West Valley communities to protect the base.

# Infrastructure

*Communities near Luke AFB continue to provide the base with necessary support and resources.*

- **Glendale:** Spent millions of dollars providing the necessary infrastructure for the base, including the installation of traffic control improvements, signage upgrades and rubberized asphalt. In 1997, Glendale began the "Luke Link" transit service, which carries over 100 riders a day between downtown Glendale and the base commissary and hospital. Glendale Municipal Airport directs all of its flights away from Luke AFB and has a direct phone line to Luke air traffic control.
- **Goodyear:** Hired an architectural firm to draft a site plan to assist in the relocation of public tour facilities of a working farm located within the Accident Potential Zone (APZ).

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## Infrastructure (continued)

- **Maricopa County Flood Control District:** Collaborated with Luke AFB on multiple flood control projects and studies over the course of the last 60 plus years including McMicken Dam, White Tanks Area Drainage Master Plan and Dysart Drainage Project, which created Falcon Dunes Golf Course.
- **Phoenix:** Sky Harbor International Airport officials established open and continuing communication with Luke AFB and Federal Aviation Administration officials to address airspace concerns on an ongoing basis.

## Advocacy Groups

- **Fighter Country Coalition** was created at the request of Senator John McCain to ensure that all possible efforts were being directed toward preserving the mission of Luke AFB. The coalition included city, county and state officials, as well as property owners and representatives from development groups and utility companies.
- **Fighter Country Partnership** is a group with more than 200 active community members. Its purpose is to fundraise, educate and demonstrate widespread support in maintaining Luke's military mission.
- **Luke West Valley Council** was established in the mid '80s and is comprised of Luke AFB officials, elected officials from 12 West Valley cities and the Maricopa County Board of Directors and representatives from the governing bodies of Sun City and Sun City West. Its purpose is to discuss and address community issues, challenges and successes relating to Luke activities.

## Studies / Consultants

- **Glendale participated in the Arizona Military Airports Regional Compatibility Project/Western Maricopa County Luke Air Force Base Project** – This project is the result of SB 1120, passed by the state legislature in 2001, which appropriated funds to develop comprehensive land-use plans in the noise and accident potential zones surrounding active military airports. This project is intended to provide a proactive and permanent resolution of land-use compatibility and encroachment problems through the coordination of planning efforts to ensure a comprehensive land use plan, enforcement of past legislation and establishment of an implementation program. For more information, visit [www.azcommerce.com/communityplanning/compatibility.htm](http://www.azcommerce.com/communityplanning/compatibility.htm).
- **Glendale spearheaded the Economic Impact of Arizona's Principal Military Facilities study** – Ten communities from around the state (Glendale, Tucson, Peoria, Phoenix, Goodyear, Avondale, Surprise, Yuma, Litchfield Park and Wickenburg) collectively funded this first statewide standardized study after recognizing the need to independently document the importance of the military to Arizona's economy. To read the report, visit [www.ci.glendale.az.us/lukeafb/economic-impact-of-az-military.cfm](http://www.ci.glendale.az.us/lukeafb/economic-impact-of-az-military.cfm).
- **Glendale** – From 1994 to 2000, the city retained The Spectrum Group, a Washington, D.C.-based military consulting firm. In 2001, it retained Gene Santarelli, a retired three-star general from the U.S. Air Force, to assist the city in protecting Luke AFB.
- **Glendale and West Valley cities** – From 2003 to present, provided funding to retain the services of O'Brien & Associates in Washington, D.C. to work closely with congressional members and Department of Defense officials to assist in preservation efforts. These efforts have led to securing \$27.3 million for acquiring land in the southern departure corridor that increases the margin of safety for live ordnance flight operations while preserving critical access to the Barry M. Goldwater Range.

