

**Response to Inquiry  
From  
Sen Leahy (D-VT)  
F-35 Environmental Impact Statement Afterburner Analysis  
10 September 2019**

**Question 1: Is the AF directing additional afterburner take-off noise impact analysis above 5%? If so, what levels and will this impact Burlington, VT F-35s? There are indications that the AF is pursuing additional analysis of 10%, 25%, and 50% afterburner take-offs at future F-35 operational locations, can you confirm what level of afterburner use will be analyzed?**

**Answer 1:** The F-35A Operational Basing Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) of September 2013 and the Record of Decision signed on December 2, 2013 are accurate with respect to anticipated afterburner use by the Burlington ANG. The Burlington ANG does not intend to fly more than 5% of their take-offs with afterburner. The Air National Guard Mitigation and Management Plan includes detailed actions and responsible parties, documented in the Fighter Wing Instructions and the local In-Flight Guide, to assure compliance with all existing Federal Aviation Administration and local avoidance procedures designed to reduce aircraft noise and overflights. The 158 Fighter Wing will continue to participate in the Burlington airport's noise mapping, Noise Compatibility Program updates, and the 14 CFR Part 150 compliance process. We will comply with all public involvement requirements during the development and implementation of the Noise Compatibility Program, and the 158 FW will participate in the public processes to the extent requested by the Burlington IAP Manager. The Air National Guard will monitor potential impacts as the F-35A basing at the 158th Fighter Wing in Burlington continues. The Air Force has an on-going duty to follow-up on our predicted impacts identified in Environmental Impact Statements by tracking to ensure that mitigations required in the Record of Decision achieve their intended goals. We will track afterburner use as part of the ongoing mitigation monitoring program. The Air Force considers intended use and

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impacts for each F-35 basing action. Internal Air Force discussions on additional use and analysis relate to other F-35A locations and beddowns.

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**Question 2: If the additional analysis is pursued, how much of a delay will this cause to the completion of Ops 5-6 EIS? Ops 7 EIS?**

**Answer 2:** The Draft EIS for Ops 5-6 assessed potential noise impacts based upon 5% afterburner use. The Air National Guard has indicated its intent to operate within the limits assessed at each of the alternative location under consideration. Therefore, we do not anticipate delays in completion of the Ops 5&6 EIS. Regarding Ops 7, the Air Force Reserve Command has opted to assess potential noise impacts at various different levels of afterburner use (5%, 50% and 95%). The Ops 7 Draft EIS release for public comment is anticipated in January of 2020.