



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE
Silver Spring, MD 20910

AUG 13 2013

Mr. Thomas L. Chavers
Acting Chief, Natural Resources Branch
AAC/EMSN
501 DeLeon Street, Suite 101
Eglin Air Force Base, Florida 32542-5133

Dear Mr. Chavers:

Enclosed is an Incidental Harassment Authorization (IHA) issued to Eglin Air Force Base (Eglin AFB), pursuant to Section 101(a)(5)(D) of the Marine Mammal Protection Act (16 U.S.C. 1361 *et seq.*), to take marine mammals by Level A and Level B harassment incidental to conducting Maritime Strike Operations in Eglin AFB's Gulf Test and Training Range. Eglin AFB is required to comply with the conditions contained in the IHA. In addition, Eglin AFB must submit a draft report to the National Marine Fisheries Service's (NMFS) Office of Protected Resources, within 90 days after completion of the work authorized herein. Along with other mitigation measures to be incorporated, the IHA requires monitoring for the presence and behavior of marine mammals and an analysis of the effectiveness of the sensor-based monitoring for detecting marine mammals in the area of Eglin AFB's maritime strike operations.

If you have any questions concerning the IHA or its requirements, please contact Brian Hopper, NMFS, Office of Protected Resources, at (301) 427-8401.

Sincerely,

Donna S. Wieting
Director
Office of Protected Resources

Enclosure





Incidental Harassment Authorization

The Commanding Officer, Eglin Air Force Base, Florida 32542-5133 is hereby authorized under section 101(a)(5)(D) of the Marine Mammal Protection Act (16 U.S.C. 1371(a)(5)(D)) and 50 CFR 216.107 to take marine mammals by Level A and Level B harassment incidental to conducting maritime strike operations within the Eglin Gulf Test and Training Range (EGTTR), contingent upon the following conditions:

1. This Authorization is valid from August 19, 2013 through August 18, 2014.
2. This Authorization is valid only for activities associated with maritime strike operations utilizing munitions identified in the Attachment.
- 3(a). The incidental taking, by Level A and Level B harassment, is limited to: Atlantic bottlenose dolphin (*Tursiops truncatus*); and Atlantic spotted dolphin (*Stenella frontalis*) as specified in the following table:

Species	Level A Harassment	Level B Harassment (TTS)	Level B Harassment (Behavioral)
Bottlenose dolphin	2	30	61
Atlantic spotted dolphin	1	16	32
Unidentified bottlenose dolphin/Atlantic spotted dolphin	0	1	1
TOTAL	3	47	94

(b) The taking by serious injury or death of these species, the taking of these species in violation of the conditions of this Incidental Harassment Authorization, or the taking by harassment, serious injury or death of any other species of marine mammal is prohibited and may result in the modification, suspension or revocation of this Authorization.



4. Mitigation.

When conducting this activity, the following mitigation measures must be undertaken:

(a) If daytime weather and/or sea conditions preclude adequate monitoring for detecting marine mammals and other marine life, maritime strike operations must be delayed until adequate sea conditions exist for monitoring to be undertaken. Daytime maritime strike exercises will be conducted only when sea surface conditions do not exceed Beaufort sea state 4 (i.e., wind speed 13-18 mph (11-16 knots); wave height 1 m (3.3 ft)), the visibility is 5.6 km (3 nm) or greater, and the ceiling is 305 m (1,000 ft) or greater.

(b) On the morning of the maritime strike mission, the test director and safety officer will confirm that there are no issues that would preclude mission execution and that the weather is adequate to support monitoring and mitigation measures.

(c) Two Hours Prior to Mission

(i) Mission-related surface vessels will be stationed on site.

(ii) Vessel-based observers on board at least one vessel will assess the overall suitability of the test site based on environmental conditions (e.g., sea state) and presence/absence of marine mammal or marine mammal indicators (e.g., large schools of fish, jellyfish, *Sargassum* rafts, and large flocks of birds feeding at the surface). Observers will relay this information to the safety officer.

(d) One and One-half Hours Prior to Mission

(i) Vessel-based surveys and video camera surveillance will commence.

Vessel-based observers will survey the applicable Zone of Impact (ZOI) and relay all marine mammal and indicator sightings, including the time of sighting and direction of travel (if known) to the safety officer. Surveys will continue for approximately one hour.

(ii) If marine mammals or marine mammal indicators are observed within the applicable ZOI, the test range will be declared “fouled,” which will signify to mission personnel that conditions are such that a live ordnance drop cannot occur.

(iii) If no marine mammals or marine mammal indicators are observed, the range will be declared “green,” which will signify to mission personnel that conditions are such that a live ordnance drop may occur.

(e) One-half Hour Prior to Mission

(i) Approximately 30 minutes prior to live weapon deployment, vessel-based observers will be instructed to leave the test site and remain outside the safety zone, which will be

9.5 miles from the detonation point (actual size will be determined by weapon net explosive weight (NEW) and method of delivery) during the conduct of the mission.

(ii) Monitoring for marine mammals will continue from the periphery of the safety zone while the mission is in progress. Other safety boat crews will be instructed to observe for marine mammals during this time.

(iii) After survey vessels have left the test site, marine species monitoring will continue for the Eglin control tower through the video feed received from the high definition cameras on the instrument barge.

(f) Execution of Mission

(i) Immediately prior to live weapons drop, the test director and safety officer will communicate to confirm the results of the marine mammal survey and the appropriateness of proceeding with the mission. The safety officer will have final authority to proceed with, postpone, move, or cancel the mission.

(ii) The mission will be postponed or moved if:

(A) Any marine mammal is visually detected within the applicable ZOI. Postponement will continue until the animal(s) that caused the postponement is confirmed to be outside of the applicable ZOI due to swimming out of the range; or

(B) Large schools of fish, jellyfish, *Sargassum* rafts, or large flocks of birds feeding at the surface are observed within the applicable ZOI. Postponement will continue until these potential indicators are confirmed to be outside the applicable ZOI.

(iii) In the event of a postponement, pre-mission monitoring will continue as long as weather and daylight hours allow.

(g) Post Mission

(i) Post-mission surveys will commence as soon as Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) personnel declare the test area safe. These surveys will be conducted by the same vessel-based observers that conducted the pre-mission surveys.

(ii) Survey vessels will move into the applicable ZOI from outside the safety zone and monitor for at least 30 minutes, concentrating on the area down-current of the test site. Any marine mammals killed or injured as a result of the test will be documented and immediately reported to the NMFS Southeast Region Marine Mammal Stranding Network at 877-433-8299 (Blair.Mase@noaa.gov and Erin.Fougeres@noaa.gov) and the Florida Marine Mammal Stranding Hotline at 888-404-3922. The species, number, location, and behavior of any animals observed will be documented and reported.

(iii) If post-mission surveys determine that an injury or lethal take of a marine mammal has occurred, the next maritime strike mission will be suspended until the test procedure and the monitoring methods have been reviewed with NMFS and appropriate changes made.

5. Monitoring.

(a) The holder of this Authorization is required to cooperate with the National Marine Fisheries Service and any other Federal, state or local agency monitoring the impacts of the activity on marine mammals.

(b) The holder of this Authorization will track their use of the EGTTR for maritime strike missions and marine mammal observations, through the use of mission reporting forms.

(c) Maritime strike missions will coordinate with other activities conducted in the EGTTR (e.g., Precision Strike Weapon and Air-to-Surface Gunnery missions) to provide supplemental post-mission observations of marine mammals in the operations area of the exercise.

(d) Any dead or injured marine mammals observed or detected prior to testing or injured or killed during live drops, must be immediately reported to the NMFS Southeast Region Marine Mammal Stranding Network at 877-433-8299 (Blair.Mase@noaa.gov and Erin.Fougeres@noaa.gov) and the Florida Marine Mammal Stranding Hotline at 888-404-3922.

(e) Any unauthorized impacts on marine mammals must be immediately reported to Dr. Roy E. Crabtree, the National Marine Fisheries Service's Southeast Regional Administrator, at 727-842-5312 or Roy.Crabtree@noaa.gov, and Jolie Harrison, Incidental Take Team Supervisor, Office of Protected Resources at 301-427-8401 or Jolie.Harrison@noaa.gov.

(f) The monitoring team will document any marine mammals that were killed or injured as a result of the test and, if practicable, coordinate with the local stranding network and NMFS to assist with recovery and examination of any dead animals, as needed.

(g) Activities related to the monitoring described in this Authorization, including the retention of marine mammals, do not require a separate scientific research permit issued under section 104 of the Marine Mammal Protection Act.

6. Reporting.

(a) An annual report of marine mammal observations and maritime strike mission activities must be submitted to the National Marine Fisheries Service's Southeast Regional Office, Protected Resources Division, 263 13th Ave. South, St. Petersburg, FL 33701 and NMFS's Office of Protected Resources, 1315 East West Highway, Silver Spring, MD 20910 at the time of a request for renewal of this Authorization or 90 days after expiration of this Authorization if a new authorization will not be requested. This annual report must include the following information:

(i) Date and time of each maritime strike mission;

(ii) A complete description of the pre-exercise and post-exercise activities related to mitigating and monitoring the effects of maritime strike missions on marine mammal populations;

(iii) Results of the monitoring program, including numbers by species/stock of any marine mammals noted injured or killed as a result of the maritime strike mission and number of marine mammals (by species if possible) that may have been harassed due to presence within the applicable ZOI; and

(iv) A detailed assessment of the effectiveness of sensor-based monitoring in detecting marine mammals in the area of maritime strike operations.

(b) The draft report will be subject to review and comment by the National Marine Fisheries Service. Any recommendations made by the National Marine Fisheries Service must be addressed in the final report prior to acceptance by the National Marine Fisheries Service. The draft report will be considered the final report for this activity under this Authorization if the National Marine Fisheries Service has not provided comments and recommendations within 90 days of receipt of the draft report.

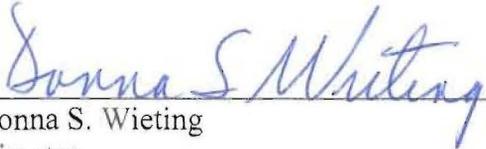
7. Additional Conditions:

(a) The maritime strike mission monitoring team will participate in the marine mammal species observation training. Designated crew members will be selected to receive training as protected species observers. Observers will receive training in protected species survey and identification techniques through a National Marine Fisheries Service-approved training program.

(b) The holder of this Authorization must inform the Director, Office of Protected Resources, National Marine Fisheries Service, (301-427-8400) or designee (301-427-8401) prior to the initiation of any changes to the monitoring plan for a specified mission activity.

(c) A copy of this Authorization must be in the possession of the safety officer on duty each day that maritime strike missions are conducted.

(d) Failure to abide by the Terms and Conditions contained in this Incidental Harassment Authorization may result in a modification, suspension or revocation of the Authorization.



Donna S. Wieting
Director
Office of Protected Resources
National Marine Fisheries Service

AUG 13 2013

Date

Attachment

Type of Munition	Total # of Live Munitions	# of Detonations by Height/Depth	Warhead – explosive material	Net Explosive Weight per Munition
GBU-10	1	Water Surface: all	MK-84 - Tritonal	945 lbs
GBU-24	1	Water Surface: all	MK-84 - Tritonal	945 lbs
GBU-31 (JDAM)	13	Water Surface: 4	MK-84 - Tritonal	945 lbs (MK-84)
		20 feet AGL: 3		
		5 feet underwater: 3		
		10 feet underwater: 3		
GBU-12	1	Water Surface: all	MK-82 - Tritonal	192 lbs
GBU-38 (JDAM)	13	Water Surface: 4	MK-82 – Tritonal	192 lbs (MK-82)
		20 feet AGL: 3		
		5 feet underwater: 3		
		10 feet underwater: 3		
GBU-54 (LJDAM)	1	Water Surface: all	MK-82 – Tritonal	192 lbs (MK-82)
AGM-65E/L/K/G2 (Maverick)	2 each (8 total)	Water Surface: all	WDU-24/B penetrating blast-fragmentation warhead	86 lbs
CBU-103	4	Water Surface: all	202 Blu-97/B Combined Effects Bomblets (0.63 lbs each)	127 lbs
AGM-114 (Hellfire)	4	Water Surface: all	High Explosive Anti-Tank (HEAT) tandem anti-armor metal augmented charge	20 lbs
M-117	6	20 feet AGL: 3	750 lb blast/fragmentation bomb, used the same way as MK-82 - Tritonal	386 lbs (Tritonal)
		Water Surface: 3		
PGU-12 HEI 30 mm	1,000	Water Surface: all	30 x 173 mm caliber with aluminized RDX explosive. Designed for GAU-8/A Gun System	0.1 lbs
M56/PGU-28 HEI 20 mm	1,500	Water Surface: all	20 x 120 mm caliber with aluminized Comp A-4 HEI. Designed for M61 and M197 Gun System	0.02 lbs (Comp A-4 HEI)