

158th Fighter Wing Current Operations **Thursday, 4.9.20**

Winooski City Council held their regular meeting on [Monday, April 6, 2020](#). A representative from the 158th Fighter Wing was scheduled to attend the meeting to discuss the current F-35 operations but was unable due to a scheduling conflict. Mayor Kristine Lott has worked directly with Fighter Wing Commander, Colonel David W. Shevchik Jr., to provide guidance in the form of the FAQ's provided below:

What is the schedule of arrival of additional F-35's for the rest of the year?

We have currently received 15 aircraft that are assigned to the 158th Fighter Wing. A total of 20 aircraft will be assigned to the 158th Fighter Wing with the remaining aircraft arriving this summer. We anticipate all aircraft to arrive before September 2020.

What flying schedule should residents anticipate?

Residents should anticipate the flying schedule to mirror the flying schedule of the F-16s. Standard flying operations take place Tuesday- Friday. We take-off in the morning and again in the afternoon. We also fly on drill weekends, which typically takes place during the first weekend of each month. We primarily fly on Saturday morning and afternoon take-offs. We are also required to fly once a quarter on Sundays and will not fly before noon. We will notify the community through a press release for anything outside of the above schedule (i.e. Night Operations). A takeoff will typically consist of 4-8 aircraft.

What is the expectation for use of afterburners?

We are maintaining the 5% or less afterburner take-off, as stated in the final EIS. To date, we have only conducted a single afterburner take off (less than 1%) from Burlington.

What efforts is the Guard taking to mitigate noise and impact on our community?

We have two main noise abatement procedures in place for local flying. During the takeoff phase, we use reduced power settings on the climb out over the local area. This procedure is both safe and effective in mitigating our noise footprint during the initial phase of flight. On arriving back into the local area for landing, we have done two things: we have raised our pattern altitude by 500' over previous F-16 procedures, and we fly an extended pattern that avoids direct overflight of Winooski High School for landings on runway 15. In addition, we attempt to complete traffic pattern practice work at other airports, primarily Wheeler-Sack Army Airfield at Ft Drum near Watertown, NY.



Why is the 158th Fighter Wing flying during the COVID-19 pandemic?

The 158th Fighter Wing is in a unique position as the first F-35 Wing in the Air National Guard. Our dedicated women and men, those who live, work and have families in our communities are finding the balance right now to meet both State and Federal mission demands. We play a pivotal role in our Nation's national security and must continue flying operations as scheduled in order to maintain our federal mission readiness requirements. Many aspects of our State and Federal mission cannot be worked from home. Currently, we are focused on maintaining a safe work environment so we can protect our team and families. While our maintenance and operations teams launch, fly, maintain and recover aircraft, our medical and mission support teams are building alternate healthcare facilities, maintain ongoing medical operations and manage medical supplies. Your 158th Fighter Wing Airmen face the same challenges our communities face. Our dedicated members are always available to respond, if called upon, to provide additional assets should the State of Vermont or nation request them!

Again, once we get through the immediacy of this health crisis as a community, state and nation, I look forward to the opportunity to connect with you all in person. Thank you for what you do as community leaders, especially during these challenging times that we are all navigating together. We will get through this together, as neighbors, community members & citizens!

- David W. Shevchik, Jr., Colonel, VTANG Commander, 158th Fighter Wing

Questions regarding this update can be sent to USAF VT Public Affairs:

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