

**TUCSON FORWARD, INC.** <http://tucsonforward.com/> is a non-partisan, diverse group of over 600 forward-thinking residents of the city of Tucson whose backgrounds include small business owners, real estate developers, doctors, lawyers, educators, community and neighborhood leaders, students, and retirees.

We are very concerned that Air Force plans to bring in much louder, riskier jet fighters, and significantly increase the number and frequency of military flights over Tucson, could seriously damage our revitalization project of downtown, our large tourism/hospitality industry, and the property values, health, and quality of life of residents of the central area of Tucson, and thus decrease city revenue and the economy of the entire valley.

### **BACKGROUND/HISTORY:**

Over the past 35 years, the AF has repeatedly expanded the flight operations over Tucson without complying with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), which requires that before any expansion of operations, an Environmental Assessment (EA) must be conducted to determine if there is a possibility of any negative impact on the environment (including humans and their properties).

If the EA indicates that there may be a negative impact, then a more in-depth Environmental Impact Study (EIS) must be conducted, and all possible impacts must be determined and disclosed to the public, and action must be taken to eliminate (or at a minimum) alleviate those impacts.

Yet the last EA for Operation Snowbird was in 1978, despite the fact that it brings in jet fighters to fly over densely populated central Tucson, and has undergone enormous expansion since then.

### **CURRENT ISSUE:**

After decades of complaints from Tucson residents about the ever-increasing overflights and louder jets, the AF has finally conducted an EA. However, they have used grossly inappropriate tools to measure such things as noise from overflights and the effects of increased noise on: hearing, other aspects of physical and emotional health, property values, and structural integrity of residences and other buildings.

This has led to an inadequate Environmental Assessment, and the surprising claim that increasing the number of flights and flying louder, riskier jets over Tucson will have "No Significant Impact" on the residents

or environment of Tucson.

**NEPA requires that there be a public comment period for the EA to allow the public a chance to voice any concerns about the plans for expansion. The comment period for this EA is set to end Nov. 24th. We are concerned, because our city officials and the media and press have not brought the issue to the public's attention, and instead, have allowed several misconceptions about Davis-Monthan and the Air Force to be viewed as facts, in the minds of the public.**

**Therefore, we are attempting to make sure that the entire Tucson public is made aware of all the facts regarding the expansion plans, so they can make informed comments to the Air Force, and voice their concerns.**

Recently, the Southern Arizona Defense Alliance (SADA) published a document they call the SADA Community Survey, which claims that residents of Tucson (even those living close to Davis-Monthan and the Air National Guard runway out of Tucson International Airport) are so supportive of the bases, that they do not mind louder fighters flying over Tucson.... even the F-35 (which is the loudest fighter ever built, and which will come here under Operation Snowbird if the F-35 replaces all other jet fighters as the Air Force plans).

**Therefore, Tucson Forward, Inc. (TFI) has just completed a survey specifically designed to determine the views of residents in 17 Tucson zip codes containing the 46 neighborhoods most heavily impacted by the military overflights from Davis-Monthan (D-M) and the Air National Guard (which flies out of Tucson International Airport).**

In sharp contrast to the SADA conclusions, the TFI survey has found that a majority of respondents are opposed to both the elevated noise and risk of an increase in overflights by louder and riskier jet fighters.

**Additionally, the TFI survey identifies a solution to the threat of D-M closure, and reveals 63% support of this solution by residents in all areas surveyed.**

**The solution is to convert Davis-Monthan to an urban-friendly base by switching to on-the-ground operations, such as: regional coordination command center, simulator training, remote guidance, and collaborative research with the University, Raytheon and other high tech industries (for example, solar, and other alternative energies), while limiting in-the-air flight operations to current levels.**