

**PERIMETER SECURITY PARTNERSHIPS:
TECHNICAL MEMO**

JOINING FORCES

NORTH TEXAS

PERIMETER SECURITY PARTNERSHIPS

APRIL 2024

INTRODUCTION

During the Joint Land Use Study that concluded in 2018, project staff heard from all of the military installations in the study area that trespassing was a concern. Specifically related to Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base Fort Worth, the 2018 JLUS recommended coordination with Regional Coordination Committee members to reduce the risk of trespass onto NAS JRB Fort Worth from Lake Worth or other areas around the installation's perimeter.

INITIAL EFFORTS

During the 2019 session of the Texas Legislature, Senate Bill 2299 was passed, which added military installations to the list of critical infrastructure facilities over which Unmanned Aircraft Systems could not operate. This had been a long-standing issue facing NAS JRB Fort Worth, which was seeing an increasing number of UAS incursions into the base's fence line or airspace. During the COVID-19 pandemic, working with local law enforcement on a plan to implement this new state law near the base was put on hold. At the time when project staff was preparing to engage with local law enforcement, the entire critical infrastructure statute was declared unconstitutional. A new effort during the 2023 Texas Legislature resulted in a much more targeted bill, SB 1308, being passed that addressed UAS flights near military installations or airports if the UAS was flying in a way that interfered with airport operations. The implementation of SB 1308 was a key component of a plan to reach out to local first responders to address partnerships with a goal of positively improving perimeter security of the base.

In September 2022, a training aircraft was struck by a bird on final approach to NAS JRB Fort Worth, leading the two pilots to eject and the plane to crash in the back yards of three homes in Lake Worth. Lake Worth Fire and Police Departments were the initial responders to this incident, but multiple surrounding emergency responders assisted, including from the base. This incident highlighted the importance of coordinated communication and highlighted that not all local agencies were able to easily communicate. Following the incident, first responders were invited to a tour and meeting at the base for all entities to get more familiar with each other.

The NCTCOG Emergency Preparedness Department administers Urban Area Security Initiative funding for the Dallas-Fort Worth region. There is a possibility that some of this funding could be allocated in the future to local governments near NAS JRB Fort Worth to assist with homeland security initiatives.

The convergence of these initiatives led project staff to restart efforts to bring the local communities and the base together to look specifically at coordinating response to events, preparedness, and perimeter security in general. Initial efforts have been led by White Settlement Police Chief Christopher Cook.

JOINING FORCES

NORTH TEXAS

Gradually, more and more entities and individuals have been brought into the process.

FORMATION OF DEFENSE COMMUNITY SAFETY & SECURITY COUNCIL

The initial meeting of the Defense Community Safety & Security Committee was held on May 19, 2023. This served as an excellent opportunity for all members of the committee to meet each other and hear more about needs from surrounding communities. The UASI grant and potential funding needs were covered. Updates were provided about upcoming transportation projects. An update was provided on the UAS bill that was moving through the legislature at the time. The base indicated that UAS was the top security concern. Discussions got started about an Air Show the base would be hosting in April 2024, including support from the community law enforcement for the event. It was determined that the committee would meet quarterly moving forward.

A second meeting was held on August 31, 2023. The primary topic for this meeting was the upcoming Air Show. NAS JRB Fort Worth personnel provided a brief on preliminary plans and local law enforcement needs. An update was also provided on the UAS bill and UAS operations more generally.

NEXT STEPS

In the fall of 2023 and into the spring of 2024, the DCSSC did not formally meet, but separate efforts involving many of the committee members to plan and carry out an air show at the base in April 2024 were conducted. The event was successful and many lessons were learned. This experience should jump start a reengagement of the committee. A meeting will be planned for May or June 2024 and at that time a set meeting date and time will be set for quarterly meetings moving forward. Approximately 60 individuals make up the committee currently and that size is expected to grow in the future.