



## ***What is the Air Force Special Operations Command (AFSOC)?***



AFSOC, headquartered at Hurlburt Field, Florida, was established in 1990 to provide Air Force Special Operations Forces (SOF) for worldwide deployment and assignment to regional unified commands. AFSOC is composed of highly trained, rapidly deployable airmen who are equipped with highly specialized aircraft. These forces provide global ability to conduct special operations missions ranging from precision application of firepower, to infiltration, exfiltration, resupply, and refueling of SOF operational elements.

AFSOC is a Major Command (MAJCOM) and the Air Force component of U.S. Special Operations Command (USSOCOM), a unified command located at MacDill AFB, Florida. AFSOC is responsible to USSOCOM for the readiness of Air Force SOF for worldwide deployment. On August 20, 2007 a Record of Decision (ROD) approved the beddown of AFSOC personnel and equipment at Cannon AFB, New Mexico and created a new AFSOC Wing, the 27th Special Operations Wing (27 SOW). AFSOC's core tasks and the 27 SOW training requirements are grouped into four mission areas:

- Forward presence and engagement;
- Information operations;
- Precision employment and strike; and
- SOF mobility.

## ***Why is AFSOC looking to terrain in New Mexico and Colorado to meet Training Requirements?***

To meet SOF mobility training requirements, the Air Force is proposing that various types of C-130 and CV-22 Osprey aircrews, flying as low as 200 feet above-ground-level (AGL) with speeds below 250 knots indicated airspeed, train in the proposed LATN area. The proposed LATN area is necessary because the existing Military Training Routes (MTRs) controlled by 27 SOW at Cannon AFB are generally narrow corridors over flat terrain designed for use by F-16 aircraft previously flown from Cannon AFB. These MTRs do not provide the access to aircrew training opportunities over high mountainous terrain need to represent current real world taskings. No air drops are proposed in the LATN area and aircraft lights and communications systems will be used in the LATN area. These aircrews would hone unique skills by flying:

- At night
- In high altitude mountains
- With vertical terrain separated from large human populations.



This SOF mobility capability is a unique, national asset and proficiency at these skills are required for successful operations in ongoing global conflicts.

The northern New Mexico and southern Colorado area proposed for the SOF training meets these terrain requirements. This environment is very challenging for crews to keep the aircraft on the proper time schedule and course while avoiding simulated threats.