



SeaRay Target Range Range Condition Assessment (RCA)

September 2013

Background

The U.S. Navy's **Range Sustainment Program** is designed to ensure that test and training ranges remain operational while protecting human health and the environment for nearby communities. The **Range Sustainability Environmental Program Assessment (RSEPA)** process is a Navy initiative designed to assess potential environmental impacts of testing and training operations and to implement measures to protect the environment when needed.

The first step of the RSEPA process is the **Range Condition Assessment**, or RCA, an information gathering process that fundamentally answers two questions:

- 1) Is the range in full compliance with environmental laws and policies?
- 2) Is there a threat of an off-range release of **munitions constituents (MCs)**?

MCs are defined as materials originating from munitions, including explosive, non-explosive, emissions, degradation or breakdown elements.

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SeaRay Target Range RCA Findings

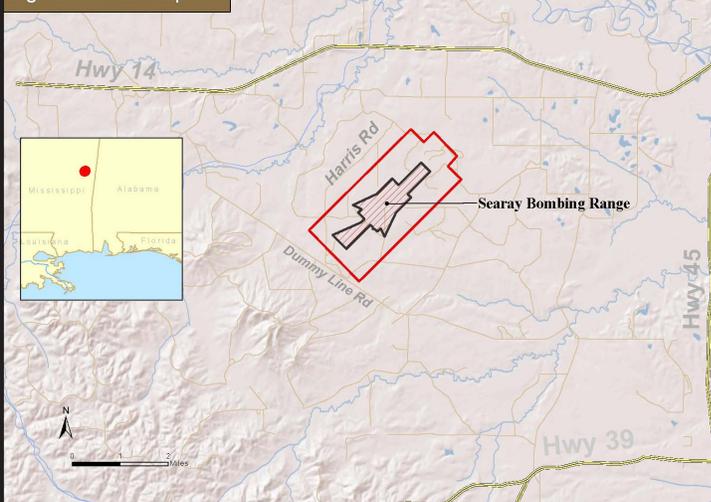
- ✓ **SeaRay Target Range meets environmental compliance requirements.**
- ✓ **Munitions constituents have not migrated off-range.**
- ✓ **No human health or environmental concerns off-range from operations at SeaRay Target.**

SeaRay Target Range

The SeaRay Target Range is located in Noxubee County, Mississippi, north of Meridian. It is used for military aviation training, specifically air-to-ground (ATG) delivery of practice (non-high-explosive) munitions. The range's namesake sea-ray-shaped impact area is depicted in Figure 1 in red hash marks.

The Navy owns the 654-acre impact area. The range target is located within the impact area and consists of a single bull's-eye target with spotting towers and a helicopter pad. The remaining 2,235 acres of the range are private land, which is used as the buffer zone. The Navy has a perpetual and assignable easement on this land, restricting public access.

Figure 1: Area Map



RCA Information

To develop the SeaRay Target Range RCA, a team of environmental and range operational experts evaluated the history of range use, including the types and quantities of munitions used and their chemical constituents; available environmental sampling data; and environmental regulatory requirements and current compliance efforts. The information summarized below came from site visits, personnel interviews, archive search reports, and

Training and Munitions Use

The U.S. Navy and guest military aircraft have used the SeaRay Target Range to train student pilots in the delivery of air-to-ground practice munitions since 1974. Training has included dropping MK-76 practice bombs, firing 2.75-inch practice rockets, and gunnery strafing with 20-millimeter (mm) practice rounds. Training with practice rockets was discontinued in 1987, and strafing practice was discontinued in 1999. The Air Force discontinued all training at SeaRay Target Range in 2000. In 2007, the Air Force resumed training at SeaRay Target Range utilizing electronic scoring instead of practice bombs. The Navy currently uses the range for MK-76 training.

High explosives have not been used on the range. The use of practice munitions typically leaves little to no MCs behind after testing and training because they contain either no explosives or very small amounts, which are consumed upon firing.

Based on the historical and current use of practice munitions, the RCA determined that

Environmental Sampling Data

Environmental sampling has not been required or conducted at the SeaRay Target range.

Environmental Compliance Review

Interviews with SeaRay Target Range Environmental Program Managers and a review of environmental program records and regulatory inspection results confirmed that SeaRay Target Range meets environmental compliance requirements.

MK-76 Practice Bomb



The Practice Bomb MK 76 has a tear shaped; cast metal body that is centrally bored. The tail assembly fits into the end of the bore. The conical after-body covers the tail-tube assembly and is threaded to the body. The fin assembly is welded to the tail tube.

Figure 2: Aerial View



What's Next?

Under the Navy's RSEPA program, RCAs are repeated every five years to ensure continued protection of public health and the environment. The SeaRay Target Range RCA will be repeated, and the findings will again be made available to the public.

For more information

Contact: United States Fleet Forces (USFF), Public Affairs Office at (757) 836-3600
More information online at www.denix.osd.mil/sustainable_ranges — click on "Reports"