

(2) Proposed substantive changes to the mitigation and monitoring requirements contained in these regulations or in the current Letter of Authorization.

(c) A notice of issuance or denial of a renewal of a Letter of Authorization shall be published in the FEDERAL REGISTER.

(d) Adaptive Management—NMFS may modify or augment the existing mitigation or monitoring measures (after consulting with the U.S. Air Force regarding the practicability of the modifications) if doing so creates a reasonable likelihood of more effectively accomplishing the goals of mitigation and monitoring set forth in the preamble of these regulations. Below are some of the possible sources of new data that could contribute to the decision to modify the mitigation or monitoring measures:

(1) Results from the U.S. Air Force's monitoring from the previous year;

(2) Results from marine mammal and sound research; or

(3) Any information which reveals that marine mammals may have been taken in a manner, extent or number not authorized by these regulations or subsequent Letters of Authorization.

**§217.89 Modifications of Letters of Authorization.**

(a) Except as provided in paragraph (b) of this section, no substantive modification (including withdrawal or suspension) to the Letter of Authorization by NMFS issued pursuant to §216.106 of this chapter and §217.87 of this chapter and subject to the provisions of this subpart shall be made until after notification and an opportunity for public comment has been provided. For purposes of this paragraph, a renewal of a Letter of Authorization under §217.88, without modification (except for the period of validity), is not considered a substantive modification.

(b) If the Assistant Administrator determines that an emergency exists that poses a significant risk to the well-being of the species or stocks of marine mammals specified in §217.80(b), a Letter of Authorization issued pursuant to §216.106 of this chapter and §217.87 of this chapter may be substantively

modified without prior notification and an opportunity for public comment. Notification shall be published in the FEDERAL REGISTER within 30 days subsequent to the action.

**Subparts J–K [Reserved]**

**Subpart L—Taking Marine Mammals Incidental to Conducting Precision Strike Weapon and Air-to-Surface Gunnery Missions at Eglin Gulf Test and Training Range (EGTTR) in the Gulf of Mexico**

SOURCE: 79 FR 13588, Mar. 11, 2014, unless otherwise noted.

**§217.110 Specified activity and specified geographical region.**

(a) Regulations in this subpart apply only to the U.S. Air Force for the incidental taking of marine mammals that occurs in the area outlined in paragraph (b) of this section and that occur incidental to the activities described in paragraph (c) of this section.

(b) The taking of marine mammals by the Air Force is only authorized if it occurs within the Eglin Air Force Base Gulf Test and Training Range (as depicted in Figure 1–9 of the Air Force's Request for a Letter of Authorization). The EGTTR is the airspace over the Gulf of Mexico beyond 3 nm from shore that is controlled by Eglin Air Force Base. The specified activities will take place within the boundaries of Warning Area W–151. The inshore and offshore boundaries of W–151 are roughly parallel to the shoreline contour. The shoreward boundary is 3 nm from shore, while the seaward boundary extends approximately 85 to 100 nm offshore, depending on the specific location. W–151 has a surface area of approximately 10,247 nm<sup>2</sup> (35,145 km<sup>2</sup>), and includes water depths ranging from approximately 20 to 700 m.

(c) The taking of marine mammals by the Air Force is only authorized of it occurs incidental to the following activities within the designated amounts of use:

## §217.111

(1) The use of the following Precision Strike Weapons (PSWs) for PSW training activities, in the amounts indicated below:

(i) Joint Air-to-Surface Stand-Off Missile (JASSM) AGM-158 A and B—two live shots (single) and 4 inert shots (single) per year;

(ii) Small-diameter bomb (SDB) GBU-39/B—six live shots per year, with two of the shots occurring simultaneously, and 12 inert shots per year, with up to two occurring simultaneously.

(2) The use of the following ordnance for daytime Air-to-Surface (AS) Gun-nery training activities, in the amounts indicated below:

(i) 105 mm HE Full Up (FU)—25 missions per year with 30 rounds per mission;

(ii) 40 mm HE—25 missions per year with 64 rounds per mission;

(iii) 25 mm HE—25 mission per year with 560 rounds per mission.

(3) The use of the following ordnance for nighttime Air-to-Surface (AS) Gun-nery training activities, in the amounts indicated below:

(i) 105 mm HE Training Round (TR)—45 missions per year with 30 rounds per mission;

(ii) 40 mm HE—45 missions per year with 64 rounds per mission;

(iii) 25 mm HE—45 mission per year with 560 rounds per mission.

### §217.111 Effective dates.

Regulations in this subpart are effective March 11, 2014 and applicable to Eglin AFB March 5, 2014, through March 4, 2019.

### §217.112 Permissible methods of taking.

(a) Under a Letter of Authorization issued pursuant to §§216.106 and 217.117 of this chapter, the Holder of the Letter of Authorization may incidentally, but not intentionally, take marine mammals by Level A and Level B harassment within the area described in §217.110(b) of this chapter, provided the activity is in compliance with all terms, conditions, and requirements of this subpart and the appropriate Letter of Authorization.

(b) The activities identified in §217.110(c) of this chapter must be con-

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ducted in a manner that minimizes, to the greatest extent practicable, any adverse impact on marine mammals and their habitat.

(c) The incidental take of marine mammals under the activities identified in §217.110(c) is limited to the following species, by the indicated method of take and the indicated number:

(1) Level B Harassment:

(i) Atlantic bottlenose dolphin (*Tursiops truncatus*)—2,200 (an average of 444 annually);

(ii) Atlantic spotted dolphin (*Stenella frontalis*)—1,765 (an average of 353 annually);

(iii) Pantropical spotted dolphin (*S. attenuate*)—15 (an average of 3 annually);

(iv) Spinner dolphin (*S. longirostris*)—15 (an average of 3 annually);

(v) Dwarf or pygmy sperm whale (*Kogia simus* or *Kogia breviceps*)—10 (an average of 2 annually).

(2) Level A Harassment:

(i) Atlantic bottlenose dolphin (*Tursiops truncatus*)—25 (an average of 5 annually);

(ii) Atlantic spotted dolphin (*Stenella frontalis*)—20 (an average of 4 annually).

### §217.113 Prohibitions.

No person in connection with the activities described in §217.110 shall:

(a) Take any marine mammal not specified in §217.112(c);

(b) Take any marine mammal specified in §217.112(c) other than by incidental take as specified in §217.112(c)(1) and (c)(2);

(c) Take a marine mammal specified in §217.112(c) if such taking results in more than a negligible impact on the species or stocks of such marine mammal; or

(d) Violate, or fail to comply with, the terms, conditions, and requirements of this subpart or a Letter of Authorization issued under §§216.106 and 217.117 of this chapter.

### §217.114 Mitigation.

(a) The activities identified in §217.110(c) must be conducted in a manner that minimizes, to the greatest extent practicable, adverse impacts on marine mammals and their habitats. When conducting operations identified in §217.110(c), the mitigation measures