



# Flight Test Program for Gravity Weapons

## What is the Department of Defense (DoD)/NNSA Joint Flight Testing Program (JFTP)?

Flight tests for gravity weapons are conducted with one or more denuclearized weapons called joint test assemblies (JTAs) that are dropped off DoD aircraft. In some cases, JTAs are not dropped, but simply flown. These JTAs are used to test the compatibility between NNSA weapons and DOD carriers.

## Why is DOD/NNSA JFTP for gravity weapons needed?

Joint (NNSA/DoD) flight tests are necessary to evaluate a weapon's flight characteristics and the operation of the nonnuclear components in operational flight environments throughout stockpile life. The primary purpose of evaluation activities is the timely detection and correction of problems in the hardware interfaces for gravity weapons. The evaluation program is designed to ensure that material conforms to design and reliability requirements throughout its life and that NNSA maintains compatibility with DoD hardware and software components.



## Where does NNSA currently conduct DOD/NNSA JFTP?

The JFTP is currently being conducted with different Air Force Test Squadrons with the aircraft taking off from various locations with specified JTAs loaded on board. The JTAs are drop-tested at the Tonopah Test Range (TTR) in Nevada. Different parts of the range are used to conduct different types of tests. Fly-around JTAs are also tested at TTR.

## What are the alternatives NNSA is evaluating for conducting the DOE/NNSA JFTP?

Five alternatives are evaluated in the Complex Transformation Supplemental PEIS: continue operations at the TTR, upgrade capabilities at the TTR, reduced operations at the TTR under the Campaign Mode Operations Alternative, or move NNSA flight testing from the TTR to either the White Sands Missile Range (WSMR) in New Mexico or to the Nevada Test Site (NTS). NNSA's preferred alternative is to cease NNSA operation of TTR in approximately 2009 and conduct flight testing at a DoD facility. No Category I/II special nuclear material will be used in future flight tests.

### For further information contact:

Mr. Theodore Wyka  
Complex Transformation SPEIS Document Manager  
Office of Transformation, NA-10.1  
U.S. Department of Energy/NNSA  
1000 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, DC 20585

Phone: (800) 832-0885 (ext. 63519)  
E-mail: [complextransformation@nnsa.doe.gov](mailto:complextransformation@nnsa.doe.gov)  
Website: <http://www.ComplexTransformationSPEIS.com>