

What about See and Avoid?

Chances are you will not be able to see aircraft with their exterior lights off at night. That doesn't mean, however, they can't see you! As a matter of fact, with your normal exterior lights on, you show up remarkably well from miles away when viewed through night vision devices. Air Force aircrew will constantly be scanning the area for other aircraft during the training periods.

In addition to visual scanning dedicated radar will be used to scan the operations area. If at any time aircraft are observed to enter the lights out operations area, Air Force aircraft will turn on their exterior lights and avoid the aircraft.

In short, while it may be nearly impossible to see the military traffic with lights out, they will definitely be looking with their eyes and radar for all traffic. This is why it's vital you know if lights out operations are being conducted in any MOA you transit VFR at night.

Useful Information:

FSS Briefing:	1-800-WX-BRIEF
NOTAMS:	https://www.notams.jcs.mil
Volk Scheduling:	1-800-972-8673
Airborne:	134.35 , recorded information 135.25 Volk Appch(M-F 8am-4pm) Minneapolis / Chicago Center

Military Lights Out Operations



*Volk Field CRTC ANGB
Camp Douglas, Wisconsin*

The Military basic training premise is to train like they fight. Night vision technology has become prevalent in combat situations around the globe. There have been situations where combat pilots had little night vision training before engaging in combat missions.

The Air Force has been training in Restricted Areas, Warning Areas and Air Traffic Control Assigned Airspace (ATCAA) for a few years. These areas were often too small or not located in tactically feasible areas for units in the US to train effectively. Additionally, these areas required high altitude use over land, or over featureless water. One key night vision training element is being able to define terrain and spot targets. This type of training is not practical at high altitudes, or over water. Standard interior and exterior aircraft lighting is incompatible with night vision devices. To be safe and effective, the exterior lights of the aircraft training with night vision devices must be turned off.

The US Air Force petitioned the Federal Aviation Administration for permission to conduct training without exterior aircraft lighting in Military Operations Areas (MOA). The FAA granted an exemption 7960. This exemption permits US Air Force aircraft to operate without exterior illumination in MOAs for night vision training, with several stipulations to inform and protect the flying public.

Lights Out Training: Why?

Lights out operations can take place in several of the published MOAs managed by Volk Field ANGB. Lights out training can be accomplished in the FALLS 1 & 2 and the Volk West, South, East MOAs. The Air Force will always publish their lights out training operations via NOTAM and on several other sources to make informed preflight decisions. VFR pilots planning to transit a MOA should make every effort to determine if lights out operations are scheduled in that MOA. IFR aircraft will be routed to avoid all active MOAs by ATC.

The first source of information is NOTAMS. When obtaining a FSS briefing at 1-800-WX-BRIEF, you **MUST ASK** the briefer if there are lights out operations in each MOA you plan to transit or operate within close proximity. FSS specialists will not check MOAs along your route automatically. Additionally, you can check NOTAMS at <https://www.notams.js.com> from any computer in the US. You will need to check Volk Field ANGB (KVOK), where you will find the planned lights out operations. For current MOA information you can call Volk Field ANGB Scheduling Office at 1-800-972-8673, while on the

ground. Airborne; you can monitor 120.0 for recorded current MOA activity, contact Volk Approach 135.25 (open M-F 0800-1600 and other times by NOTAM), or contact Minneapolis / Chicago center, for "real time" status. If transiting a MOA at ANY time, it is a good idea to get up to date information, which can make your flight safer.

Stay Informed of Lights Out Ops