

TACTICAL AIR OPERATIONS/SKYDIVE SAN DIEGO LEASE WITH THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

POSITION: The Defense, Veterans & Military Affairs Committee voted to SUPPORT Tactical Air Operation's request for a long-term lease with the City of San Diego on June 7, 2017. The Public Policy Committee voted to SUPPORT this item on June 13, 2017.

STATUS: Tactical Air Operations/Skydive San Diego is in discussions with Mayor Faulconer's office.

AT-A-GLANCE

Tactical Air Operations (TAO) operates an outdoor sky-diving facility in the Otay Mesa area that contracts with the U.S. Navy to train and prepare troops for parachute and parachute-related responsibilities. The operation is on City-owned land where TAO is seeking a long-term lease extension to allow for continued use.

SUMMARY

Tactical Air Operations (TAO) has provided air readiness training for U.S. Naval Special Warfare personnel for the past 13 years. This San Diego site is currently the only viable facility in the U.S. TAO's lease agreement with the City of San Diego is set to expire in 2020. Thus, TAO is looking to secure a long-term lease extension to continue and expand its operations in the San Diego area.

ANALYSIS

According to TAO, "loss of the San Diego site would eliminate 75 jobs and \$8 million in gross annual revenue from the region, and potentially the state." The U.S. Navy asserts that TAO's local facility is critical to the U.S. Navy's operations and overall mission readiness. Furthermore, the U.S. Navy believes that the TAO facility in Otay has been vital to managing sailors' time away from home.

The loss of the current TAO site would force U.S. Naval Special Warfare to obtain an alternative location for air readiness training. The nearest viable alternative is around 80 miles from Naval Base Coronado, which creates additional burdensome program costs and increases the amount of time servicemembers spend away from home.

The Chamber has long supported our military and veteran communities in the San Diego region, and continues to do so today. Denying this long-term lease extension to TAO, who has been training servicemembers for over 13 years, would be a hit to not only Naval operations but to a vital business in the community. A long-term lease extension should be granted to TAO so that they can continue to train our servicemembers, expand operations, and contribute to the regional economy.