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(S.D.)-Ellsworth Air Force B-1 Bombers Again Taking To The Skies



By: Roxie Graham-Marski Posted at: 07/17/2013 08:06 AM

ELLSWORTH AIR FORCE BASE, S.D. (ASSOCIATED PRESS) - B-1 bombers at Ellsworth Air Force Base are again flying at a combat-mission-ready rate after being mostly grounded in April due to budget cuts.

The grounding affected about one-third of the Air Force's active-duty combat aircraft, including squadrons of fighters bombers, and airborne warning and control craft.

Base officials say that only a small portion of non-deployed aircrews at Ellsworth flew during the limited flying hours period.

The Defense Department received authority from Congress to shift about \$7.5 billion from lower priority accounts to more vital operations. The Air Force says the restored flying hours represent about \$208 million of that allocation authorized by Congress.

The restoration of flying hours will last through Oct. 1.