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Tankers fly Walla Walla's airspace
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If you haven't seen the KC-135 refueling tankers flying above Walla Walla in recent months, chances are you've certainly heard them.

The planes have been using Walla Walla air space since about November, said Walla Walla Regional Airport Manager Jennifer Skoglund.

The pilots have been making their way into the community from Fairchild Air Force Base to practice their runway approaches. Their presence has a benefit for Walla Walla: The control tower is able to roll the practice approaches into the local statistics to the Federal Aviation Administration, which calculates the local community's cost-share for the tower. The higher the numbers, the smaller the amount from the local community, Skoglund said.

Airport officials have been encouraging military aircraft to use the space for several months, she said. Fairchild started in November. December's tally of operations reached 35. The pilots usually practice three or four approaches while in the community. They do not land, Skoglund said.