BRAC 2005 - Query Response Manager

Response to E0457

Question:
We understand that the Army plans to field a Stryker Brigade Combat Team and Airborne Brigade Combat Team at Ft. Wainright, AK and Ft Richardson, AK, respectively. With the OSD proposed realignment of Eielson AFB, AK, close air support (CAS) aircraft will be relocated from Alaska to Moody Air Force Base, GA.

1. Overall, how does the Army view the Close Air Support (CAS) requirement for joint training opportunities with the Air Force?
   a. What type of training is most valauable?
   b. Where are the opportunities most valuable, i.e. in terms of locations of units and ranges?
   c. What are the Army's priorities?
      1. Training with AF ground controllers?
      2. Live munition delivery?
      3. Variations in terrain?
      4. Conventional v. smart munitions (e.g., gun strafe, GPS guided munitions, direct fire Laser or TV/IR guided munitions)
      5. Types of targets (structures, vehicles, armor)?
      6. Exercise or deployment planning, small unit and large formations?

2. How will the proposed relignment of Eielson impact joint training opportunities in Alaska?

3. Will any lost opportunities in Alaska be more than offset by increased opportunities in the Southeast U.S. with increased CAS aircraft at Moody AFB, GA?

4. Will the OSD recommendation to remove the A-10s from Pope AFB impact on training at Ft Bragg?

5. How does the Air Force schedule training sorties for joint/combined arms training at any or all locations?

Answer:
Please note that the Army has already fielded the Stryker Brigade Combat Team (SBCT) at Fort Wainwright, AK and will complete the activation of the airborne brigade at Fort Richardson, AK in FY05.

1. All joint training in support of Army and Combatant Commander requirements is important. However, the importance of specific joint training activities varies by unit and their mission. Even specific unit priorities will vary over time. Therefore, it would not be appropriate to provide an over aching Army priority list. Clearly, the Army's most valuable opportunities occur at those installations with large operational unit concentrations, such as Fort Hood, TX and Fort Bragg,NC at our Centers and Schools, such as Fort Benning, GA and Fort Sill, OK and at our major training centers, Fort Irwin, CA and Fort Polk, LA.

2. It is not clear that the proposed realignment of Eielson Air Force Base (AFB) will have a significant positive or negative impact on joint training opportunities in Alaska. The training areas and ranges associated with Fort Wainwright and Eielson AFB still represent excellent training venues for both the Army and the Air Force to conduct integrated, joint and coalition exercises. These exercises provide a valuable spin-up tool for units slated for deployments. The COPE THUNDER exercise conducted at Eielson AFB also supports the United States' growing engagement strategy in the Pacific Rim. With the proposed recommendation to station additional Air Force units at Elmendorf AFB and the Army's activation of an airborne brigade combat team (BCT) at Fort Richardson, joint training opportunities are just as likely to increase in Alaska. Additionally, operational requirements could likely cause the SBCT at Fort Wainwright to be deployed up to one out of every three years. Therefore, maintaining the capability to conduct strategic airlift out of Eielson AFB is very important. Conversely, when the SBCT is deployed, the opportunity for the Air Force to conduct joint training would be reduced.

3. Again, it is not clear that there will be any lost joint training opportunities in Alaska. In fact, the consolidation of Air Force units could increase the availability of aircraft for joint training opportunities. Given the proximity of Moody AFB, GA to all the major Army installations in the southeastern United States, joint training opportunities involving close air support could increase at Fort Benning, GA and Fort Stewart, GA, and Fort Bragg, NC, along with special operations forces at Eglin AFB and Hurlburt Field in Florida. If the proposed recommendations are approved, there will be eight Army BCTs, two Special Force Groups, and a Ranger Battalion in the southeastern United States.

4. The Air Force's proposed recommendation to realign the A-10s from Pope AFB does not necessarily mean that joint training opportunities will be reduced at Fort Bragg, NC. Through the consolidation of A-10s at Moody AFB, the Air Force may actually be able to more effectively and efficiently support close air support training objectives across the entire southeastern United States. However, the interaction between the Air Force and the Army at Pope AFB and Fort Bragg is very important. The units at Fort Bragg have airborne proficiency and deployment requirements that are unique. The Air Force does not exclusively rely on the aircraft stationed at Pope AFB to meet these and other joint training requirements. Therefore, the relationships that exist between the Army units at Fort Bragg and the Air Force at Pope AFB to plan and schedule joint training using the Joint Airborne/Air Transportability Training

(JA/ATT) Process, for example, may be more important than aircraft stationed at Pope Air Force Base.

5. The Army and the Air Force employ the JA/ATT Process, a Department of Defense (DOD) regulated, Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) directed program, for airborne and proficiency/continuation training in joint environments. Additionally, Air Force Major Commands use Consolidated Planning Orders (CPO) to task Air Force assets into Chairman Joint Chief of Staff (CJCS) exercises, major Army and Air Force exercises, to include the Army's Battle Command Training Program (BCTP) exercises.

References:

Approved By: Kurt D. Weaver **Date:** 20-Jul-05