

BASE VISIT REPORT

**MCCHORD AIR FORCE BASE, WA
25 MAY 2005**

LEAD COMMISSIONER:

The Honorable Philip Coyle

ACCOMPANYING COMMISSIONER:

The Honorable James H. Bilbray

COMMISSION STAFF:

Ms. Carol Schmidt

Mr. Ken Small (24 May only)

LIST OF ATTENDEES:

COL Rowayne A. Schatz, Jr., Commander, 62nd Airlift Wing
 COL Frederick H. Martin, Vice Commander, 62nd Airlift Wing
 COL Steven J. Arquette, Director of Staff, 62nd Airlift Wing
 COL JC Crownover, Mission Support Group Commander, 62nd Airlift Wing
 COL Rebecca J. Garcia, Maintenance Group Commander, 62nd Airlift Wing
 COL Thomas G. McCauley, Commander 62nd Medical Group
 COL Eric W. Crabtree, Commander, 446th Airlift Wing
 COL Murry Peterman, Vice Commander, 446th Airlift Wing
 COL Louis G. Bochain, Commander, 1st Air Support Operations Group, Ft Lewis
 COL Joseph Bradbury, Western Area Defense Sector
 LT COL John Schmedake, Deputy Director, Plans and Programs, 62nd AW
 LT COL Jon T. Thomas, Deputy Commander, Operations Group, 62nd AW
 Chief Master Sergeant Ronald J. Hernandez, Command Chief Master Sergeant,
 62nd Airlift Wing
 LT COL Van Fuller, Commander, Civil Engineer Squadron, 62nd Airlift Wing

BASE'S PRESENT MISSION:

Provide safe and effective airlift and airlift support worldwide; ensure combat readiness of those assigned; acquire and maintain equipment necessary for rapid, global force projection and combat support; and provide facilities, support and service.

McChord AFB is primarily an airlift base, flying large transport aircraft that are involved in international U.S. military operations; combat airlift; special tactics; Homeland Defense; and Humanitarian Relief operations. The 62nd Airlift Wing supports worldwide combat and humanitarian airlift contingencies in addition to providing installation support to tenants, who include 446 Airlift Wing (Reserve Wing whose mission includes Aeromedical Evacuation) and Western Area Defense (Air National Guard).

Library Reading Slip 2005 BRAC Commission Materials
 Title of Item: BASE VISIT REPORT
 Installation of Community: MCCHORD AFB
 Source: BRAC COMMISSION
 Certified Material? yes no
 Analyst / Provider: CAROL SCHMIDT Date Received: 6/27/05

SECRETARY OF DEFENSE RECOMMENDATION 1:

Realign McChord Air Force base by relocating the installation management functions to Fort Lewis, WA, establishing Joint Base Lewis-McChord.

SECRETARY OF DEFENSE JUSTIFICATION 1:

All installations employ military, civilian, and contractor personnel to perform common functions in support of installation facilities and personnel. All installations execute these functions using similar or near similar processes. Because these installations share a common boundary with minimal distance between the major facilities or are in near proximity, there is significant opportunity to reduce duplication of efforts with resulting reduction of overall manpower and facilities requirements capable of generating savings, which will be realized by paring unnecessary management personnel and achieving greater efficiencies through economies of scale. Intangible savings are expected to result from opportunities to consolidate and optimize existing and future service contract requirements. Additional opportunities for savings are also expected to result from establishment of a single space management authority capable of generating greater overall utilization of facilities and infrastructure. Further savings are expected to result from opportunities to reduce and correctly size both owned and contracted commercial fleets of base support vehicles and equipment consistent with the size of the combined facilities and supported populations.

SECRETARY OF DEFENSE RECOMMENDATION 2:

Realign McChord Air Force Base, WA, by relocating all medical functions to Fort Lewis, WA.

SECRETARY OF DEFENSE JUSTIFICATION 2:

The primary rationale for this recommendation is to promote jointness and reduce excess capacity. This recommendation supports strategies of reducing excess capacity and locating military medical personnel in areas with enhanced opportunities for medical practice. McChord AFB's medical facility produced 44,283 Relative Value Units (RVU) in FY02, which is well below the Military Health System average of 166,692 RVUs. Its Healthcare Services Functional Military Value of 51.45 is much lower than that of Ft Lewis (73.30). Military personnel stationed at McChord AFB's Medical Facility can be placed in activities of higher military value with a more diverse workload, providing them with enhanced opportunities to maintain their medical currency and making them better able to support Army medical readiness requirements. Approximately 169 military and civilian authorizations will be realigned to Fort Lewis in order to maintain the current level of effort in providing care to the McChord AFB beneficiary population. The remaining civilian authorizations and contractors at McChord AFB that represent unnecessary overhead will be eliminated. Military personnel that are filling similar "overhead positions" will be redistributed by the Service to replace civilian and contract medical personnel elsewhere in the Military Health System activities of higher military value. The large savings along with the reduction of inefficiencies and workload available supports this action. While the jobs are lost in the military system, the same type of job is available in the community.

MAIN FACILITIES REVIEWED:

McChord AFB Main Clinic
Air National Guard Alert Facility
Flight line

KEY ISSUES IDENTIFIED:

- Because of the timing of the visit and lack of available data, very little analysis could be conducted prior to the visit.
- McChord representatives commented that DOD-projected cost savings appeared unrealistic for both the joint basing and medical relocation recommendations pertaining to McChord AFB. McChord personnel stated they were neither advised of the functions, personnel, and/or positions targeted for realignment/abolishment nor were they consulted on the potential impact of joint basing/medical realignment on combat capability and mission readiness.
- Commissioners requested a copy of the McChord-Ft Lewis Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that outlines common support services Ft Lewis will deliver to McChord. If MOU is not available before September, then the commissioners request a copy of all meetings notes that will lead to the development of the MOU.

INSTALLATION CONCERNS RAISED:

- Representatives of 62nd Air Wing were concerned that OSD did not validate the joint basing recommendation in the field and that unique Airlift Wing mission requirements were not considered during the manpower authorization review (i.e., nuclear airlift force). They questioned whether the joint basing recommendation will improve mission readiness or performance.
 - Most, if not all, personnel in 62nd Airlift Wing are deployable; cutting 422 positions will negatively impact combat capability. The installation management functions are integral to the mission support functions. For example,
 - Base Fuels Branch refuels aircraft but personnel are expeditionary.
 - Civil engineer mechanics perform fuels systems maintenance and are expeditionary.
 - Civil engineers are responsible for airfield lighting, barrier maintenance, etc. and are deployable.
- The Medical Group Commander stated:
 - Without McChord's main medical building, it is unclear that Madigan has the required capacity to accommodate McChord's patient population and the population that is expected to arrive with the Stryker Brigade(s) from Europe.
 - It is not clear that the Tacoma community can/will provide the requisite health care services to absorb the patient load of family members and retirees. This will mean greater out of pocket medical costs active duty/reserve families and retirees as well as to the Defense Healthcare System.
 - It is not clear if Dental manpower authorizations are included in the DOD medical realignment recommendation.
 - If the Aerospace Medicine and Occupational Health functions do not transfer to Madigan, the number of manpower authorizations lost from McChord

appears to include authorizations that will be required to perform the functions.

- Medical Group Commander provided more recent Relative Value Units for McChord medical clinic:

October 2004	4554	January 2005	5439
November 2004	4411	February 2005	4818
December 2004	4672	March 2005	5593

COMMUNITY CONCERNS RAISED:

None. Community will have opportunity to express concerns during the Regional Hearing in Portland on 17 June.

REQUESTS FOR STAFF AS A RESULT OF VISIT:

None.