

**BASE VISIT REPORT  
GREAT FALLS ANGB, MT  
June 10, 2005**

**COMMISSION STAFF:** Dr. Kathleen Robertson, Brad McRee

**LIST OF ATTENDEES:** (see attached)

**BASE'S PRESENT MISSION:** To support flying associated with the F-16 performing an air defense and general purpose fighter mission.

**SECRETARY OF DEFENSE RECOMMENDATION:**

Realign Great Falls International Airport Air Guard Station, Montana. Distribute the 120th Fighter Wing's F-16s to the 187th Fighter Wing Dannelly Field Air Guard Station, Alabama (three aircraft); the 132d Fighter Wing, Des Moines International Airport Air Guard Station, Iowa (three aircraft); and retire (nine aircraft). The wing's expeditionary combat support (ECS) elements remain in place.

**SECRETARY OF DEFENSE JUSTIFICATION:**

Great Falls (117) ranked low in military value. The reduction in F-16 force structure and the need to align common versions of the F-16 at the same bases argued for realigning F-16s out of Great Falls. The F-16s realign to Dannelly (60) and Des Moines (137). Although Des Moines was somewhat lower in military value ranking than Great Falls, the realignment to Des Moines creates a more effective unit of 18 aircraft. The wing's ECS will remain in place to support the Air Expeditionary Force and to retain trained, experienced Air National Guard personnel.

**MAIN FACILITIES REVIEWED:** (Entire base – windshield tour)

**KEY ISSUES IDENTIFIED:**

- \* See separate report received from base officials detailing their analysis of fighter base MCI rankings
- \* Credit for ranges? Yet are ranges even needed so much anymore with the technology available? The ranges we currently have.... Designed for legacy system weapon systems. No one drops a GPS bomb on a small range. Not so much low-level anymore. High altitude drops. Training requirements have decreased through the years.
- \* 3 other units got lower rankings on mil value – but not affected by BRAC
- \* Plan called Falcon Star to SLEP to 8,000 hrs (currently avg 4,500 hrs)

Library Routing Slip 2005 BRAC Commission Materials  
Title of Item: Great Falls ANGB Base Visit Report  
Installation or Community: Great Falls ANGB, MT  
Source: Commission Generated  
Certified Material? yes  no  
Analyst / Provider: Brad McRee Date Received: \_\_\_\_\_

- \* High OPS tempo
- \* Was NORTHCOM fully involved in the BRAC process?
- \* What will the future be for emerging missions when many of the people (highly skilled) are gone?
- \* Sort scores for bases... AD on top. There were no Guard bases in the top 23, and only two (former DoD bases) in the top 47) Rankings should not be performed solely on an objective basis. How were data call questions worded? Concern that the questions were too simplistic in nature and failed to fully address the concerns that should be evaluated.

### **INSTALLATION CONCERNS RAISED**

- \* Credit for ramp space: NGB took away – penalized
- \* Can shelter 22 F-16s on base.
- \* Departures delayed by ATC not realistic. Source of this data questioned also... CAMS (Consolidated Aircraft Maintenance System)!? Proposed that what should be evaluated includes: 1) Noise mitigation procedures, 2) Hazardous Air Traffic Reports (HATRs), 3) Agreements between military and civilian control agencies to mitigate conflicts. (Sightseeing planes going to the Grand Canyon fly right over Nellis AFB)
- \* Alternate airport requirements... Why set standard at 50 miles? Theirs is at 58 miles.
- \* For VFR weather... they did well here... Did the criteria adequately address the Southeast with months of summer thunderstorm activity?

**COMMUNITY CONCERNS RAISED:** (Did not meet with community)

### **REQUESTS FOR STAFF AS A RESULT OF VISIT:**

- \* Follow-on: 1<sup>st</sup> AF Brief?
- \* New proposal: Do city basing at Great Falls – use runway and huge ramp closed by earlier BRAC. Malmstrom already has all of the other base infrastructure and even base housing.