

DEFENSE BASE REALIGNMENT AND CLOSURE COMMISSION
2521 S. CLARK STREET, SUITE 600
ARLINGTON, VIRGINIA 22202
(703) 699-2950

MEMORANDUM OF MEETING

DATE: July 28, 2005

TIME: 3:00 PM

MEETING WITH: Community representatives representing AFRL-Mesa

OBJECTIVE:

To receive community presentation asking the Commission to reject the recommendation to relocate the AFRL-Mesa facility to Wright-Patterson or approve an alternative proposal to allow privatization-in-place

JCSG STAFF: N/A

OTHER COMMISSION PARTICIPANTS:

Les Farrington, Senior Analyst, Joint Issues team
Glenn Knoepfle, Senior Analyst, Joint Issues Team

NON-COMMISSION PARTICIPANT(S):

LTG (retired) John B. Hall (the Spectrum Group), 703-683-4222
Mr. Stuart Hadley, Executive Director for Federal Affairs, Arizona State University,
480-727-7912

MEETING RESULTS/FOLLOW-UP ACTION:

Background:

The AFRL-Mesa was initially scheduled to move to Orlando, upon closure of the Williams AFB as directed by the 1991 BRAC Commission. The 1995 BRAC Commission redirected the original recommendation due the non-availability of facilities in Orlando and directed that the lab should stay in-place. Following closure of the William AFB, Arizona Sate University established and developed a 600 acre campus on the former military base and the AFRL-Mesa Warfighter lab remained in-place. The

2005 BRAC recommendation is for the closure of the AFRL-Mesa and transferring all its functions, personnel and equipment to the Wright-Patterson AFB in Dayton, Ohio. This would involve the relocation of 57 personnel to Dayton and elimination of 21 positions.

Discussion:

The community representatives presented the Commission staff with a briefing (charts to be entered into the E-library). Pertinent comments provided by the community representatives are highlighted below.

- The state of Arizona and Arizona State University support keeping the Mesa lab at its current location. They believe the TJCSG did not place sufficient emphasis on one of its guiding principles – maintain “competition of ideas” by retaining at least two geographically separated sites. They also believe that the TJCSG decision to recommend relocation of the Mesa lab was not entirely driven by military value considerations, but stated that that sufficient data was not made available to the general public to make fully support their position because answers to some questions remain classified.
- The community representatives offered an alternative suggestion. Rather than relocating the lab facilities, equipment and personnel to Wright-Paterson, they asked the Commission to consider a recommendation to allow a privatization-in-place alternative. To make this option more attractive, Arizona State University has pledged \$2 million in annual financial support. Their briefing cited three previous success stories where prior BRAC Commissions suggested privatization-in-place alternatives and which the military departments subsequently implemented. The cited privation-in-place examples are located on former military installations located at Newark, Ohio; Indianapolis, Indiana; and Lexington, Kentucky.
- Community representatives provided estimates of the Mesa share of DOD’s combined BRAC 2005 recommendation (TECH-22) to relocate portions of various service led laboratories to provide greater synergy across similar technical disciplines and functions. The community believes its portion of the combined recommendation would require one-time costs of \$2.8 million (from a total of \$164.6 million) and produce annual recurring savings of \$3.9 million (from a total of \$41.1 million). If the privatization-in-place option would be allowed, the community estimates that one-time costs would be zero, and that annual recurring savings would be \$3.15 million. The lower annual recurring savings backs out \$750,000 in savings from the elimination 6 military positions which DOD’s claimed as savings, but for GAO’s recent report suggested were inappropriate unless overall force is also reduced.
- In summary the community officials believe that the privatization-in-place option would save money, preserve a valuable and skilled workforce, ensure continuity of research, and address the “competition of ideas” principle which they believe the TJCSG overlooked in its analyses and deliberations.