

July 26, 2005

## Inquiry Response

**Re:** BI-0156, CT-0646, What Has Changed to Suggest Basing All B-1s at One Base

**Requester:** BRAC Commission (Kenneth Small, AF Team Leader)

**Issue:** During the hearing on August [sic] 18, 2005, the Commission asked General Moseley what had changed to cause the Air Force to propose to base all the B-1s at one location. General Moseley responded that the number of B-1s has been reduced from 100 to 67, and, the Air Force had several examples where all the aircraft of a type were in one location, such as the B-2, F-117, J-Stars and several other aircraft types.

**Question:** Please respond to the following question: What has changed, other than you have fewer aircraft, that leads you to conclude that you can base all the B-1 aircraft at one base with one runway?

**Answer:** On July 18, 2005 Commissioner Skinner raised concerns about the uniqueness of the B-1s operating at a single-runway base, especially in the event of a catastrophe to the runway or facilities at that one base. In his testimony, Gen Moseley replied to Commission Skinner that bedding down an entire weapons system at one installation would not be inconsistent with how the Air Force bases and operates other unique, low-density weapons systems:

“Sir, addressing the single location, we have our Global Hawks and our U-2s now at only one location. We have J-STARS at one location, Rivet Joint at one location, the F-117s at one location, the B-2s at one location. And so, the notion of going to a single location is not inconsistent with some of our other force structure pieces of inventory that we sit with about 60 or 70 airplanes.”

What Commissioner Skinner addressed is not uncommon in today's Air Force given the smaller, diversified force structure; multiple unique, high-value platforms; and the Air Force's historical installation inventory. For example, the B-2 fleet resides at a single-runway base at Whiteman; the U-2/Global Hawk fleet at a single-runway base at Beale; the RC-135/NAOC fleet at a single-runway base at Offutt; and the Joint STARS fleet at a single-runway installation at Robins--all former SAC large aircraft locations. These type of bases had a long, single-runway configuration to disperse, generate and launch a strategic alert force--unlike TAC or ATC bases, which had multiple runways to accommodate concurrent airfield or training events, or whose type of aircraft did not have the range to recover elsewhere. Additionally, all F-117s are located at Holloman and the majority of all special operations aircraft at Hurlburt Field (single runway). All these installations have MDS-unique infrastructure that is difficult to replicate, but this is an operational risk the Air Force has traditionally accepted given the high cost in creating redundant infrastructure elsewhere. This is also a result of the installation inventory today's Air Force has evolved from, to include four previous rounds of base closures. The Air Force uses contingency basing plans in the event of scheduled runway maintenance or natural disaster, such as hurricane evacuation, to ensure portions of its fleet can disperse to, and temporarily operate from, other CONUS locations. The Department's BRAC recommendations can accommodate this type of surge requirement within the remaining Air Force installation inventory.

Bottom Line: The B-1 fleet is now a conventional fleet and force dispersal requirements vis-à-vis its former SIOP mission no longer apply. As Gen Moseley testified, today's B-1 force has 67 aircraft, including combat-coded, training, test, attrition reserve and backup inventory. Having balanced both operational risk and cost, consolidating this conventional fleet of combat-coded and training aircraft at Dyess makes fiscal sense. It will allow the Air Force to maximize effectiveness of its base loading and further leverage common support requirements for its B-1 fleet, not unlike the operational risk it assumes for its other unique weapons systems.

Approved

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. L. JOHANSEN', written over a horizontal line.

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