

15 August 2005

Inquiry Response

Re: BI-0209-CT-0849, Questions on Little Rock AFB Capacity

Requester: Mr. Ken Small (BRAC Commission Staff)

Question preamble: DOD recommends transferring Dyess' C-130s to Little Rock, Elmendorf and Peterson. The justification for this is outlined in BRAC Recommendations 47 "to create an efficient, single-mission operation at Dyess, the Air Force realigned the tenant C-130s to other Air Force installations." The majority of the C-130s at Dyess go to Little Rock, where the Air Force plans to consolidate all active duty CONUS C-130s (about 118 C-130s). Given this recommendation we request feedback on the following questions:

Question 1: Does the Air Force expect to achieve operational efficiencies (i.e. aircraft availability) by placing all active duty CONUS C-130s at Little Rock? If so, how?

Answer 1: Yes, the Air Force expects to achieve operational efficiencies by placing all active duty C-130s at Little Rock. We expect increased effectiveness through economies of scale, increased flexibility in scheduling aircraft and crews, and decreased loss of aircrew availability during PCS and TDY to the FTU for formal upgrade training.

Question 2: How does the Air Force expect to obtain logistical efficiencies with a C-130 fleet that is not homogenous? As we understand it, the C-130 fleet at Little Rock under this recommendation will be mixed, consisting of C-130Es, C-130Hs, C-130H1, C-130H3, and the new C-130J? If efficiencies are achieved in what areas?

Answer 2: With nine different C-130 variants across three basic models, the aircraft currently assigned to Little Rock AFB already include multiple models and variants. The Air Force recognizes the operational and dollar cost of operating an airlift fleet with such a diverse collection of aircraft. This presents a daily challenge regardless of where the aircraft are based. The Air Force makes every attempt to assign identical series aircraft in reserve component units. However, bases with larger populations of aircraft include a larger collection of variants. The Air Force BRAC report specifically states that the Air Force expects MAJCOMs to manage their fleets appropriately. In the context of the C-130 fleet, this means arranging model variants to the best operational advantage.

In the case of Little Rock, the Air Force does not incur an operational or dollar cost penalty by bringing more model variants onto its largest C-130 base. In fact, by doing so, the Air Force develops a strategic position that allows for improved efficiency and logistical savings in the future, especially when model and variant commonality among the C-130 fleet is improved (See below).

It should be noted there is some logistic support commonality among all of the C-130 aircraft and differences between some of the model variants are relatively small. More importantly, the Air Force has a program in place to improve fleet commonality. The C-130 Avionics Modernization Program (AMP) is the farthest reaching of Air Force efforts to standardize DoD C-130 aircraft. AMP is a cockpit modernization program that replaces aging, unreliable equipment and will result in an identical cockpit configuration across the mobility, SOF-CSAR, and USN C-130 fleets.

Question 3: Does the Air Force have empirical information that shows improvements to key indicators like Mission Capable rates resulting from the consolidation of the C-130 fleet at Little Rock?

Answer 3: No. The Air Force has not accomplished any similar consolidation that could be used to provide empirical data.

Question 4: Given the fact that a certified capacity wasn't completed at Little Rock, it's unclear that Little Rock has sufficient capability to receive such a large fleet of C-130s. Please provide the Commission information that shows that sufficient capacity exists at Little Rock. Of particular note is data:

A. That shows Little Rock has sufficient ramp space, aircraft hangers, maintenance facilities.

B. The number of runways and dimensions, number of drop zones, number of assault strips.

Answer 4a: The capacity data provided by MAJCOMs used parking spaces as the initial, primary indicator for current capacity, then a MILCON cost to build facilities to accept more aircraft in increments of optimum squadron size. Unfortunately, with multiple MAJCOMs involved at Little Rock, a comprehensive capacity view did not occur.

Realizing the deficiency in capacity data for Little Rock, SAF/IEB queried AMC as to the number of C-130s that can be parked on the current ramp at Little Rock. An AMC representative replied on 14 January 2005 that 130 C-130s could be parked at Little Rock using a workable parking plan.

Cost analysis of recommendations that include movements of C-130s to Little Rock included costs required to build hangars, maintenance and support facilities required for gained aircraft. The cost estimates (provided by MAJCOMs in their capacity briefs) to accept additional aircraft were not used in recommendation cost analysis provided to the BRAC Commission.

Answer 4b: Little Rock AFB has a single main runway, 12,000 feet long, 200 feet wide, with 1000 feet long overruns at each end. The airfield also has an assault strip parallel and in close proximity to the main runway. The assault strip is paved and is 3,500 feet long and 60 feet wide with no overruns.

Installations were evaluated based on their proximity to tactical landing zones and drop zones, not only zones that reside on the specific installation. For instance, we know that C-130 units at Little Rock extensively use the drop zones known as "Black Jack" and "All American." These

drop zones are close to Little Rock AFB, but are not part of the Little Rock AFB installation. Therefore, to gain complete awareness of drop zones and landing zones that might be available to aircraft based at Little Rock, please refer to the WIDGET data concerning drop zones and landing zones.

Question 5: Please provide by C-130 model type the breakout of the fleet that will be garrison at Little Rock if this recommendation is approved.

Answer 5: The proposed BRAC end state for Little Rock AFB is the result of seven different Air Force BRAC recommendations. Based on the recommendations submitted to the BRAC Commission and the C-130 fleet breakdown used in development of those recommendations Little Rock AFB would be assigned these aircraft:

C-130E	46
C-130H	66
C-130J	4

Subsequently, the C-130J buy numbers have changed. We estimate this would result in this revised set of aircraft assigned at Little Rock AFB. This will include FTU and operational assigned aircraft:

C-130E	33
C-130H	65
C-130J	18

Question 6: Why not just keep the C-130s at Dyess along with the consolidation of the B-1s? Dyess has sufficient capability to absorb this mission. It would be more cost effective (ref BCEG minutes dates 14 Aug 2004) to do this than transfer the C-130s to other installations.

Answer 6: The BCEG decided it was in the interest of operations efficiency and safety not collocate aircraft with dissimilar operating characteristics and dissimilar missions at the same base (to the extent practical). Contributing to this military judgment decision is the 1994 incident 1994 where 24 U.S. Army soldiers were killed and more than 100 others injured following a mid-air collision of dissimilar aircraft at Pope Air Force Base. The collision occurred between a C-130 and an F-16, both based at Pope.

There are exceptions to this concept and in those cases where the Air Force has dissimilar aircraft based together it is due to operational interdependency between aircraft (Hurlburt) or geographic restrictions (Elmendorf). Adjusting local procedures, generally to the detriment of local operational effectiveness, mitigates risks associated with dissimilar operations.

Attached is a cost analysis of basing the additional B-1s, the existing B-1s and C-130 aircraft Dyess.

Our records show the BCEG did not meet on 14 Aug 2004 and we were unable to identify a BCEG meeting during that month or minutes that were date stamped in that month, that were germane to this question. Please provide more information regarding the response so we may properly respond to your inquiry.

Approved

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

DAVID L. JOHANSEN, Lt Col, USAF
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