

BASE VISIT REPORT

DCN: 3704

**New Castle County Air Guard Station, DE
June 13, 2005**

COMMISSION STAFF:

Jim Hanna
Ashley Buzzell

LIST OF ATTENDEES:

Gov. Ruth Minner	Governor
Sen. Joseph Biden	Senator
Sen. Thomas Carper	Senator
Rep. Michael Castle	Representative
Mr. Christopher Coons	Country Executive
Major General Francis Vavala	Adjutants General (DE)
Brigadier General Hugh Broomall	Assistant Adjutant General DE ANG
Colonel Tom Thomas	IO unit Commander, Detachment 1
Lt Col Mike Castaldi	OP Officer 142 nd Airlift Squadron
Colonel Bruce Thompson	166 th Airlift
Ms. Kate Finnerty	Director, D.C. Office of the Governor
Ms. Erin Logan	Staff, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations
Dr. Mischa Thompson	Staff, Sen. Carper
Mr. Jim Catella	Staff, Rep. Castle
Mr. Glenn Shipley	Staff, Mr. Coons

Library Routing Slip 2005 BRAC Commission Materials

Title of Item: Base Visit Report

Installation or Community: New Castle County Air Guard Station, DE

Source: Commission Generated

Certified Material? yes no

Analyst / Provider: Ashley Buzzell Date Received: 6/30/05

BASE'S PRESENT MISSION: Mid-Atlantic Intra-Theater Airlift and FEMA Support

SECRETARY OF DEFENSE RECOMMENDATION:

Realign New Castle County Airport Air Guard Station, Delaware. Distribute the wing's eight C-130H2 aircraft to the 145th Airlift Wing (ANG), Charlotte/Douglas International Airport Air Guard Station, North Carolina (four aircraft) and 165th Airlift Wing (ANG), Savannah Airport Air Guard Station, Georgia (four aircraft). Move flying related Expeditionary Combat Support (ECS) to McGuire Air Force Base, New Jersey (Aeromedical Squadron) and Dover Air Force Base, Delaware (aerial port and fire fighters). Other ECS remains in place at New Castle.

SECRETARY OF DEFENSE JUSTIFICATION:

This recommendation makes experienced Airmen from New Castle (120) available for employment at these nearby installations. Military value was the predominant consideration; New Castle had a low military value ranking and was near other bases keeping or gaining aircraft. Charlotte (33) and Savannah (77) were selected to receive aircraft because of higher military value rankings and avoiding conversion training costs. The Air Force also considered active / Air National Guard / Air Force Reserve manning mix; recruiting, cost factors (to include cost avoidance), environmental factors, and base capacity in its analysis of this recommendation.

MAIN FACILITIES REVIEWED: Headquarters, flight ramps and hangers.

KEY ISSUES IDENTIFIED:

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Lack of state involvement in AF recommendations to DoD

Future mission uncertainty

- Considered only Air Force Mission
- “Guard enclave” vague and unclear for missions retained at DE ANG

Recruiting and retention rate

- Demographic for recruiting
- Only 7 of 31 C-130 pilots are commercial airline pilots
- “No airplanes no Air National Guard”

McGuire’s Aeromedical Evacuation Squadrons (AES) train at New Castle as no lift assets available there

- Why move Delaware’s AES to McGuire when ability to train is not there?

2004 MILCON provided landing zone (LZ) on New Castle ANG premises

Fire Station

- Only station supporting dual use Air Field
- Only station in Delaware having CHEMBIO firefighting capabilities

No C-130 squadrons from Rhode Island to North Carolina (800 mile stretch)

- 20% of the American population,
- Two of the nation’s largest cities (New York and Philadelphia),
- National Capital Region.

INSTALLATION CONCERNS RAISED:

Current and Future Mission

- BRAC analysis incorrect due to data and assumption errors
- Force assumptions related to PCS incorrect
- Base can support 12 PAA vice 8 stated in AF justification data

Land, facilities and airspace

- BRAC analysis incorrect due to data and assumption errors
- NCCA has access to uniquely open area of airspace in the region
- Failure to recognize key community relationships

Accommodations of Operations

- BRAC analysis incorrect due to data and assumption errors
- Proven ability to accommodate future force operations

Manpower & Operations Costs

- Cost assumptions based on faulty model
- Training costs not captured
- True manpower costs of realignment is inaccurate. Doesn’t count drilling Guardsmen

Cost Savings

- Cost assumptions based on faulty model
- Equates Guard with Active force personnel

COMMUNITY CONCERNS RAISED:

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Community Economic Impact

- Economic impact understated in New Castle County
- Failures to account for traditional guardsman economic impact
- Regional vitality impacted by airport's future
- Cost of replacing Guard services (firehouses, etc.)

Infrastructure Capability

- BRAC analysis incorrect due to data and assumption errors
- Homeland defense mission not accounted for
- Enclave requirements not validated

REQUESTS FOR STAFF AS A RESULT OF VISIT:

- Keep the staff informed