BASE VISIT REPORT

Sheppard Air Force Base, TX

Monday, August 1, 2005

LEAD COMMISSIONER: BG Sue E. Turner (USAF, Ret.)

ACCOMPANYING COMMISSIONER: None

COMMISSION STAFF: Ms. Lesia Mandzia, Senior Analyst

LIST OF ATTENDEES: See attached itinerary.

BASE'S PRESENT MISSION:

- 82TRW Mission Statement – "Global Training to Sustain Warfighter Capability"
- 80FTW Mission Statement – "Provide Combat Airpower by Producing Top Quality Fighter Pilots for the NATO Alliance"

SECRETARY OF DEFENSE RECOMMENDATION:

Three recommendations:

1. Realign Sheppard AFB, TX, by relocating to Eglin AFB, FL, a sufficient number of front-line and instructor-qualified maintenance technicians and logistics support personnel to stand up the Air Force's portion of the JSF Initial Joint Training Site hereby established at Eglin AFB, FL.
2. Realign Moody AFB, GA by relocating: Introduction to Fighter Fundamentals Training for Pilots and Introduction to Fighter Fundamentals Training for Weapons Systems Officers to Sheppard AFB, TX.
3. Realign Sheppard AFB, TX, by relocating basic and specialty enlisted medical training to Fort Sam Houston.

SECRETARY OF DEFENSE JUSTIFICATION:

DOD RECOMMENDATION 1

- Realign Sheppard AFB, TX, by relocating to Eglin AFB, FL, a sufficient number of front-line and instructor-qualified maintenance technicians and logistics support personnel to stand up the Air Force's portion of the JSF Initial Joint Training Site hereby established at Eglin AFB, FL.

DOD JUSTIFICATION

- This recommendation establishes Eglin AFB, FL as an Initial Joint Training Site that teaches entry-level aviators and maintenance technicians how to safely operate and maintain the new Joint Strike Fighter aircraft. The Department is schedules to take delivery of the F-35 beginning in 2008. This joint basing arrangement will allow the Interservice Training Review Organization (ITRO) process to establish a DoD baseline program in a consolidated/joint school with curricula that permits services latitude to preserve service-unique culture and a faculty and staff that brings a "Train as we fight; jointly" national perspective to the learning process.

DOD RECOMMENDATION 2

- Realign Moody AFB, GA by relocating: a) Introduction to Fighter Fundamentals Training for Pilots and b) Introduction to Fighter Fundamentals Training for Weapons Systems Officers to Sheppard AFB, TX.

DOD JUSTIFICATION

- This recommendation will realign and consolidate USAF's primary phase of undergraduate flight training functions to reduce excess/unused basing capacity to eliminate redundancy, enhance jointness for UNT/Naval Flight Officer (NFO) training, reduce excess capacity, and improve military value. The basing arrangement that flows from this recommendation will allow the Inter-service Training Review Organization (ITRO) process to establish a DoD baseline program in UNT/NFO with curricula that permit services latitude to preserve service-unique culture and faculty and staff that brings a "Train as we fight; jointly" national perspective to the learning process.

DOD RECOMMENDATION 3

- Realign Sheppard AFB, TX, by relocating basic and specialty enlisted medical training to Fort Sam Houston. (Note: this recommendation also realigns basic and specialty enlisted medical training at naval Station Great Lakes, IL, Naval Medical Center Portsmouth, VA, and Naval Medical Center San Diego, CA to Fort Sam Houston.)

DOD JUSTIFICATION

- To transform legacy medical infrastructure into a modernized joint operational medicine platform. This recommendation reduces excess capacity within the San Antonio Multi-Service Market (MSM: two or more facilities co-located geographically with "shared" beneficiary population) while maintaining the level of care for the beneficiaries, enhancing opportunities for provider currency, and maintaining surge capacity.
- Co-locating all (except Aerospace Medicine) medical basic and specialty enlisted training at Fort Sam Houston, TX, with the potential of transitioning to a joint training effort, will result

in reduced infrastructure and excess system capacity, while capitalizing on the synergy of the co-location of similar training conducted by each of the three Services.

- The development of a joint training center will result in standardized training for medical enlisted specialties enhancing interoperability and joint deployability.
- Co-location of medical enlisted training with related military clinical activities of the San Antonio Regional Medical Center at Brooke Army Medical Center, Fort Sam Houston, TX, provides synergistic opportunities to bring clinical insight into the training environment, realtime. As a result, both the healthcare delivery and training experiences are exponentially enhanced.

MAIN FACILITIES REVIEWED:

882nd Training Group and 80th Flying Wing facilities

KEY ISSUES IDENTIFIED

[Note: these are issues identified from the June visit.]

- For relocating basic and specialty enlisted medical training to Fort Sam Houston -

1. It is unclear what number of students versus others such as civilian instructors are affected by this recommendation.
2. If the enlisted medical training is moved to Fort Sam Houston, will there be opportunity for clinical training at the new San Antonio Regional Medical Center or will students have to travel to another location to obtain that training?
3. How will the Air Force specific programs be dealt with – will they remain Air Force programs or will they be combined with like programs?

[Note: these are issues identified during the August 1st visit.]

Air Force representatives stated that the officer training programs along with the basic enlisted medical training will be moved to Fort Sam Houston, as will the field training. However, the COBRA costs do not reflect the officer or field training moves.

Due to the recommendation (Med – 12) that converts inpatient medical facilities to outpatient clinics and ambulatory care centers, Phase II training (clinical training) may be affected because 6 of the Air Force's 15 training sites will be affected.

INSTALLATION CONCERNS RAISED

[Note: these are concerns raised during the June visit.]

Relocating basic and specialty enlisted medical training to Fort Sam Houston –

It is unclear what exact courses will be relocated to Fort Sam Houston. Sheppard has some programs that enlisted and officers take. Additionally, the recommendation was silent on officer and readiness courses.

Until Sheppard finds out what exact courses are affected by the recommendation it is hard to predict what number of individuals will be affected by the recommendation.

Air Force staff are also concerned about the different training philosophy's (i.e. Air Force V. Navy v. Army).

-Development of the Joint Strike Fighter Test Site at Eglin AFB – No issues raised by the installation.

-Relocation of pilot Training to Sheppard AFB – No issues raised by the installation.

[Note: these are issues identified during the August 1st visit.]

Costs of moving the officer and filed training are not included in the Cobra run but they believe that all their programs will be moving to Fort Sam Houston.

Phase II training will probably not be affected by the Med-12 recommendation until after FY 2007. However, they will explore alternative training sites—possibly looking for other opportunities like civilian hospitals in the San Antonio area.

COMMUNITY CONCERNS RAISED:

According to testimony given at the San Antonio regional hearing, Sheppard has the largest available classroom capacity of all the bases listed and a one of a kind joint medical readiness center equipped to fully train medics in combat field operations. They stated that Sheppard has greater berthing capacity than was taken into account when DOD ran their scenario. Since the data call was made two new dormitories were opened.

REQUESTS FOR STAFF AS A RESULT OF VISIT:

Determine whether the officer training was part of this recommendation. If yes, was the cost of moving the officer training included in the COBRA run.

Determine if the field training was part of the recommendation. If yes, was the cost of moving it included in the COBRA run.

Determine if the Navy was also moving its officer training that is presently provided at Great lakes, Portsmouth and San Diego, to Fort Sam Houston.