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BASE VISIT REPORT

MAXWELL AIR FORCE BASE

May 26, 2005

LEAD COMMISSIONER:

Admiral Harold W. Gehman, Jr., USN (Ret.)

ACCOMPANYING COMMISSIONER:

None.

COMMISSION STAFF:

Lester C. Farrington, Senior Analyst

LIST OF ATTENDEES:

- Lt Gen John Regni-Commanding Officer, Air University
- Col John Neubauer-Commander, 42nd Air Base Wing
- Frank P. Weber-Director- Operations Support Systems Wing,
Electronics Systems Center, Hanscom
Air Force Base
- Greg Garcia-Incoming Director- Operations & Sustainment Systems
Group-Maxwell AFB
- Howard Stubblefield, Acting Director- OSSG-Maxwell
- Col James Brewster- Deputy Dir., OSSG-Maxwell
- John Macker-Dir. Plans & Programs, OSSG-Maxwell
- Robert Littlejohn-Facilities Engineer-Maxwell
- Toy Robinson-Engineering Squadron/Chief Architect
- Tommy Pope-Financial Management
- MAJ Susan Turley-Judge Advocate
- Chief Master Sgt. Andrea Reese-Superintendent
- Phil Berube-Public Affairs
- Col Howard Stendahl-Head of Chaplains School

BASE'S PRESENT MISSION:

As part of Air Education Training Command, Air University conducts military, graduate and continuing education for precommissioned and commissioned officers, enlisted personnel and civilians. One of the tenants is the 908th Airlift Wing (C-130). A much more significant is the Operations and Sustainment Systems Group (OSSG). The mission

of OSSG is to provide and support combat support information systems and networks (that is, non-Tactical Data networks) for Air Force and DOD components using innovative information and technology contracts to acquire and manage Enterprise services and commodities.

SECRETARY OF DEFENSE RECOMMENDATION:

- Close Mansfield-Lahm Municipal Airport Air Guard Station, OH and move 4 C-130 aircraft to Maxwell AFB and 4 to Little Rock AFB, AR.
- Realign Maxwell, NAS-Meridian and Naval Station, Newport by relocating religious training and education to Ft. Jackson, SC.
- Realign WPAFB, Maxwell AFB and Lackland AFB by relocating air and space information systems research and development and acquisition to Hanscom.

SECRETARY OF DEFENSE JUSTIFICATION:

This recommendation is intended to reduce the number of technical facilities engaged in Air & Space Sensors, Electronic Warfare, and Information Systems RDAT&E from 6 to 2. Through this consolidation, the Department will increase efficiency of RDAT&E operations resulting in a multi-functional center of excellence in the rapidly changing area of C4ISR.

MAIN FACILITIES REVIEWED:

1. Operations & Sustainment Systems Group-Gunter Annex, Maxwell AFB
2. Engineering & Integration Systems Squadron- Gunter Annex, Maxwell AFB

KEY ISSUES IDENTIFIED

- The move of OSSG from Maxwell to Hanscom would have an impact on Montgomery's economy. The impact would equate to a loss of \$750M in total revenue to the Montgomery area. A total of 711 contractors are involved, "inside the gate." According to officials, this loss was not quantified nor considered in BRAC data.
- Maxwell is to lose 1251 people (740 military, 511 civilian) to Hanscom. (Certified data provided by Maxwell on 12/06/04 showed 669 mil and 528 civ). The OSSG area at Maxwell consists of 7 buildings and 2 warehouses to be completely vacated by the move. The current vs. authorized occupancy as of 5/24/05 is as follows:
 - 1845 actual
 - 1937 authorized (670 mil, 554 civ, 713 contractors)
- Regeneration of the workforce at Hanscom is a concern. Moving from a low to high cost area in MA makes the move for many questionable. A transition plan has not been prepared and affected workers have not been polled. The belief is that few people will move out of Montgomery.

--OSSG essentially operates and maintains scores and scores of non-tactical, administrative data networks. OSSG's operational boss is the CG, 8th Air Force at Barksdale AFB in LA. What OSSG does could be done anywhere. OSSG does little or no R&D, T&E or acquisition, so the benefit of co-locating OSSG with the R&D and acquisition community at Hanscom AFB will have to be demonstrated.

--While some savings would be realized through consolidation, specific savings will have to be examined and verified at OSD. MILCON requirements at Hanscom and moving costs are documented in COBRA runs. None of this information was available at the time of the visit.

-- Receipt of the C-130's and required infrastructure present no problem. Relocation of religious training to Ft. Jackson to establish a joint center of excellence may not be the best move for the Air Force because the curriculum offered at the joint center may not adequately emphasize religious training from an individual service perspective and in the case of Air Force, how religious training will relate to Air Force policies and procedures. Commissioner Gehman questions the rationale for combining chaplain training.

INSTALLATION CONCERNS RAISED

--loss of people to Hanscom and the likelihood that many of the personnel affected by the move will not relocate to the higher cost of living area of New England.

--loss of the business base in the Montgomery area where over \$750M in contracts will be lost.

COMMUNITY CONCERNS RAISED:

One point paper provided to Commission staff after the Base Visit identified the following expected community and congressional concerns:

1. Allegation was made that pertinent data was excluded and are puzzled by certain logic in the proposal. BRAC data may have omitted all contractors, whether on or off base.
2. Question was raised whether BRAC data considered "sustainment and operations" missions in the recommendation to consolidate. Question raised whether it is appropriate to relocate proven, existing operations and sustainment missions into the consolidated RDT&E C4ISR centers.
3. Point was made that OSSG's ties with the Defense Information Systems Agency may not have been properly factored before the OSSG realignment was reached. A DISA site is co-located at Gunter next to OSSG and DISA relies on OSSG for its USAF Network Operations Center, operating platforms in the DISA facility, and shares and leverages infrastructure for long-haul communication with big pipes and trunks.
4. Given the high cost of living in the Boston area, issue raised whether there are tangible economic advantages of consolidating at Hanscom. Prospects of filling additional information technology civilian positions were claimed to be suspect.

Another paper provided to Commission staff enumerated the above but focused on military value. Paper addressed the significant amount of IT intellectual capital accumulated in Montgomery over the last 34 years. The wealth of knowledge primarily centers around legacy systems the AF depends upon to accomplish its mission, and it primarily resides in a contractor base made up of retired military and civilian employees who will probably not be willing to move to another location. The paper also addressed the critical AF Network Operations Center that allows OSSG to provide end-to-end resolution, tracking, and status monitoring of all AF networks and applications.

The overall conclusion drawn by the community in this point paper was that the BRAC recommendation concerning consolidation of RDAT&E for IT systems is something that will pay dividends over time in efficiency, synergy, and innovation. However, the operations and sustainment missions performed by OSSG are totally separate from that vision. These missions could and should remain at Gunter without impacting the mission at Hanscom. Significant savings and efficiencies could be realized through the cost avoidance of not moving and rebuilding the extensive infrastructure associated with the 24-hour operations center, the contractor supported sustainment missions, and the total loss of joint connectivity with the DISA control center.

The issues raised by the community need to be researched by Commission staff.

REQUESTS OF STAFF AS A RESULT OF VISIT:

- All "claims" as to what was and what was not considered must be researched.
- The BRAC report lists one rolled-up number for all consolidations at Hanscom; the report we had at the time of the visit did not break out OSSG from Maxwell.
- Need better understanding of the chaplain training.