

**Cannon AFB Issues Paper**

**Background:** Cannon AFB, NM, is recommended for closure on the DoD BRAC list. It appears Cannon AFB received a misleading low score on Military Value. We request the BRAC Air Force R&A Team analyze the following preliminary issues:

1. Our initial review indicates several installations with significantly less favorable weather, range availability, and air traffic control conditions received a higher military value.
2. Cannon AFB received an incorrect evaluation of air space: The New Mexico Training Range Initiative was never considered, a critical component to Cannon's military value and viability. The Initiative has had no show-stoppers, and, in fact, the Air Force and the FAA are in process of completing a Letter of Agreement.
3. Encroachment was considered a critical component to the DoD's analysis. Yet, unlike numerous peer fighter bases, the air space used by Cannon AFB, including that proposed for inclusion in the New Mexico Training Range Initiative, has no encroachment, now or in the future.
  - For example, at Hill AFB, there are a number of ongoing environmental issues that could constrain the use of the air space and flexibility of the forces. A number of exemptions to federal environmental laws are now being sought for Hill AFB. However, these federal exemptions have failed to pass the Congress thus far.
  - Luke AFB has considerable encroachment issues that appear to have been ignored; New Mexico is concerned that the Air Force is continuing to support tactical fighter operations in areas that are congested due to commercial air traffic.
4. Looking to the future, and given the requirements of new technology, there is no excess of air space. In fact, the air space and range space in New Mexico allows integration of both air-to-air and air-to-ground combat training.
5. Cannon AFB has outstanding infrastructure—runways, hangars (the 27th FW can hangar all their aircraft), and ramp space, all of which can easily support increased force structure.
6. Economic Impact: The Clovis/Portales negative economic impact from a Cannon AFB closure would be more than 200% greater than the next impacted community according to our analysis—we will provide more information in the near future. Our initial analysis shows that the community is unlikely to recover.
7. Force Structure: the DOD recommended action of inactivating three active fighter squadrons would have a detrimental impact on the retention, rotation base and total quality of life of the F-16 fighter force; we will provide additional information as we have time for analysis.

DCN: 2074  
**Issues / Questions for BRAC R&A Team**  
**Cannon AFB**

1. *The New Mexico Training Range Initiative would allow supersonic/ supercruise operations at Cannon AFB and dramatically increase the military value and viability for future F-22 and JSF mission requirements, including the use of future stand-off munitions. This initiative was strongly supported by the Air Force.*

**Why was the New Mexico Training Range Initiative not included in the Air Force's military value analysis of Cannon AFB?**

2. *Encroachment was considered a primary liability during the Pentagon's 2005 BRAC analysis. Luke AFB is severely encroached, being one of the greatest centers of population growth in the country. Nellis AFB has previously been cited by the GAO for serious encroachment issues due to population growth. Utah (Hill AFB) is battling a controversial plan by the Goshute Indian Tribe to place a nuclear waste site on the Skull Valley Reservation that could impact 1/3 of F-16 operations at the Utah Test and Training Range (UTTR).*

**Did the Air Force adequately take into consideration real constraints, present and future, of Cannon AFB's potential peer facilities, including Hill AFB, Luke AFB, and Nellis AFB?**

3. *The Chief of Staff, Air Force, testified to the Congress as late as April 2005 to the absolute necessity of retaining all available range space. This includes the need for supercruise range space to accommodate 1.5 mach speed aircraft and for the use of next generation standoff munitions. The Education and Training Joint Cross Service Group took no significant actions regarding ranges because they realized their value.*

**Did the Air Force take into consideration the Force Structure implications of integrating future supercruise aircraft and air munitions and the requirements to operate these weapons platforms, given potential future restrictions at a number of ranges?**

4. *Cannon AFB has outstanding hangars, runways, and base infrastructure. There exists potential alternative missions that could be accomplished at Cannon AFB that are consistent with our Force Structure.*

**Did the Air Force or Joint Cross Service Group consider Cannon AFB as a potential fighter training site, an interceptor air warfare center, or as a receiving site for retrograding overseas fighters?**

5. *Our analysis shows the Cannon community will not recover from a closure. Some cities, including Lubbock TX, were inappropriately included in the analysis and appear to serve to decrease the impact of a closure.*

**Why was Lubbock, TX included in the economic analysis to a Cannon closure? How significant will the BRAC Commission consider serious economic devastation to a community?**