

DCN 6519

**DEFENSE BASE CLOSURE AND REALIGNMENT COMMISSION
2521 CLARK STREET, SUITE 600
ARLINGTON, VIRGINIA 22202
(703) 699-2950**

MEMORANDUM OF MEETING

DATE: 29 Jul 05

TIME: 1430

MEETING WITH: Delegation representing North Dakota

LOCATION: United States Capitol Building

SUBJECT: Recommendations impacting Grand Forks AFB, North Dakota

PARTICIPANTS:

Name/Title/Phone Number:

Senator Kent Conrad, North Dakota, (202) 224-2043

Senator Byron Dorgan, North Dakota, (202) 224-2551

Jamie Morin, PSM, Sr. Defense Analyst, Senate Budget Committee, (202) 224-0642

Brian Moran, Sr. Legislative Asst, Senator Dorgan, (202) 224-2551

Aleta Botts, Legislative Director (Congressman Earl Pomeroy, ND), (202) 225-2611

Commission Staff:

Frank Cirillo, Director of Review and Analysis, (703) 699-2950

*Tim MacGregor, Senior Air Force Analyst, (703) 699-2950

Jennifer Meyer, Senate Liaison, (703) 699-2950

MEETING SUMMARY:

BRAC Commission Review and Analysis staff members met with North Dakota's United States Senators and staffers in the United States Capitol Building regarding OSD BRAC recommendations for Grand Forks AFB, ND.

During the meeting, Senators Conrad and Dorgan presented and discussed items from several papers (attached). The papers included: "Talking Points on Tanker Mission Analysis," "Current Air Force Tanker MCI," and "North Dakota Proposed Alternative Tanker MCI."

The primary purpose of the meeting was for the North Dakota delegation to present the aforementioned papers, and to discuss them with the BRAC staff. Senators Conrad and Dorgan's remarks closely mirrored the attached papers.

The four primary points made by the Senators, and in the papers, were:

1. The BRAC analysis underestimated the advantages of Grand Forks AFB as a tanker base because of a poor measure of the value of location.
2. The results of the Tanker MCI analysis contradict actual operational efficiency outcomes.
3. The Air Force BRAC analysis completely ignores the need for tankers to support nuclear missions.
4. The Air Force BRAC analysis overvalues concrete and undervalues expansion space.

Noting the large deployment commitments that Grand Forks is filling, Senator Conrad questioned why Grand Forks is, "carrying a disproportionate share of the load?"

The Senators noted that the delegation wished to propose an Alternative Tanker Mission Compatibility Index (MCI), asked that we consider the proposal, and that the Air Force run an alternative analysis on their proposed MCI. The proposed alternative MCI scores are attached.

* Denotes individual responsible for completing the memorandum

**THE FOLLOWING MATERIAL WAS PRESENTED TO
THE BRAC STAFF BY
THE NORTH DAKOTA DELEGATION**

Talking Points on Tanker Mission Analysis

The BRAC analysis underestimated the advantages of Grand Forks AFB as a tanker base because of a poor measure of the value of location.

- As we have discussed in the past, DOD used an inadequate metric to assess the operational value of bases' proximity to airspace supporting the tanker mission.
- The distance of a base to domestic tanker refueling tracks listed on the FLIP AP1B and similar charts is simply not a major component of that base's military value. These tracks are used primarily for peacetime training, and do not even make up a large share of total peacetime training requirements.
- Measuring military value through distance to domestic refueling tracks does not reflect the value of a base for deployments, by far the largest part of current tanker operations. This absurd formula comprised over 39 percent of a tanker base's total military value score, by far the largest component of the MCI ratings.
- The commander of GFAFB told commissioners during their site visit on June 22, 2005 that this approach does not reflect the way the tanker fleet trains and operates. About 80 percent of Air Mobility Command's effort is now being expended overseas in support of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. The Air Force reports that over 66 percent of AMC tanker missions in FY 2004 were in support of those overseas combat operations, a total that does not include the significant number of missions performed by AMC assets temporarily "chopped" to CENTCOM. Training is being done "on the job."
- We recommend modifying the MCI tanker operations analysis to supplement distance to associated training airspace with distance to mobility bases. Since about 80 percent of AMC operations are overseas, distance to major overseas deployment locations should be 80 percent of the score.
- When the Formula 1245 "Proximity to Airspace Supporting Mission" component of the MCI is replaced with an alternative formula based 80 percent on distance to five key deployment destinations and 20 percent on Formula 1245, Grand Forks AFB moves from 40th of 174 bases in the Tanker Mission Compatibility Index to 19th. Furthermore, Grand Forks AFB moves from 6th to 3rd of the seven active duty tanker bases (Fairchild, Grand Forks, MacDill, McConnell, McGuire, Robins, and Travis). This revised MCI clearly justifies retaining a core group of tankers at Grand Forks, and would also argue for a post-BRAC decision in favor of designating Grand Forks as a KC-X base.

Talking Points on Tanker Mission Analysis

The results of the Tanker MCI analysis contradict actual operational efficiency outcomes.

- The shortcomings in the Air Force's current MCI analysis are demonstrated by the proven operational efficiency of Grand Forks for the tanker mission. Grand Forks AFB has consistently maintained the highest levels of operational efficiency of any tanker base. In fiscal year 2004 it conducted more missions and flew more hours in support of Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom than any tanker base – more than twice as many as Fairchild.
- On a per assigned aircraft basis, Grand Forks produced nearly 50 percent more flying hours in support of those operations than the average AMC tanker base. This high operational efficiency has been sustained over many years, suggesting that it reflects real military value factors that are not included in the Air Force MCI analysis. This argues for revising the MCI to better reflect the operational realities faced by our expeditionary Air Force.
- In FY 2004, the average active duty KC-135 flew 664 hours (including both overseas and domestic operations), while the Guard and Reserve tankers only flew 321 hours. Unless the transferred aircraft are able to achieve significantly higher utilization rates than the units to which they are transferred have historically attained, transferring Grand Forks-based tanker aircraft runs the risk of diminishing the total amount of tanker sorties that the Air Force can generate.
- On average, Grand Forks' tankers flew 675 hours in FY 2004, while tankers at the bases receiving Grand Forks' aircraft flew only 377 hours (this average includes Forbes, which receives fallout aircraft resulting from the move from Grand Forks to McConnell).
- Transferring 36 Grand Forks aircraft could actually reduce the total ability of the Air Force to generate tanker missions. This is precisely the wrong outcome at a time when the tanker fleet is already heavily strained. Augmenting the tanker crew ratios at Grand Forks with Guard airmen might be a better option.

Talking Points on Tanker Mission Analysis

The Air Force BRAC analysis completely ignores the need for tankers to support nuclear missions.

- Neither the Air Force MCI scoring nor any language about application of military judgment to the BRAC recommendations suggests that the role of tankers in nuclear missions was considered in this BRAC process.
- Grand Forks is the base best positioned to support B-52s from Minot AFB flying on Unified Command Plan (UCP) missions, and it is also well positioned to support B-2s from Whiteman AFB.
- Sound strategic judgment dictates retaining at least a core group of tankers at Grand Forks sufficient to support UCP missions.

Talking Points on Tanker Mission Analysis

The Air Force BRAC analysis overvalues concrete and undervalues expansion space.

- The analysis heavily penalizes bases with moderate amounts of current ramp space, while giving very little credit to bases with a great deal of unconstrained buildable acreage for new ramps.
- This error runs directly counter to the basic principle that BRAC ought to preserve that which cannot be easily duplicated.
- The current Air Force MCI analysis is improperly balanced because, instead of reflecting enduring and immutable characteristics of bases, it overweights factors that can be fairly readily changed or bought, like total ramp space, while underweighting potential “showstopper” issues like air quality and available acreage for expansion.
- Three different MCI factors which together total 24 percent of the tanker mission MCI all depend largely on counting the size of the same ramp area (Formula 8, ramp area and serviceability; Formula 1235, pavements quality; and Formula 1241, mobility space). As a result, GFAFB lost more than 10 points in the MCI score because it has 334,000 square yards of ramps, instead of the 851,000 needed for a perfect score.
- For example, it would cost about \$25 million to add 120,000 square yards of ramps at Grand Forks, enough to accommodate 16 KC-135s. It is not overly expensive to pour concrete, so long as you have the space to build on. That investment would increase GFAFB’s rating significantly. That a fairly small investment can make such a big difference suggests the MCI weightings are wrong.
- Grand Forks has the second most total available buildable acreage for airfield operations and maintenance of all the flying bases in the Air Force, behind only Eglin AFB. Grand Forks AFB has over 2,000 acres available, almost 10 million square yards of available land.
- Grand Forks also ranks near the top of all Air Force bases (8th) for *unconstrained* buildable acreage for airfield operations with more than 400 acres – ten times more than Ellsworth AFB.
- Ramp space is also improperly assessed using a “step” metric that does not accurately reflect operational needs for ramp space. There is simply no good reason that going from 503,000 to 504,000 square yards of ramp space should triple a base’s score on the “Ramp Area” metric.

Current Air Force Tanker MCI

Name	Effective Percentage
1 - Current / Future Mission	46.00
1 - Operating Environment	6.90
1242 - ATC Restrictions to Operations	6.90
2 - Geo-locational Factors	39.10
1245 - Proximity to Airspace Supporting Mission (ASM)	39.10
2 - Condition of Infrastructure	41.50
3 - Key Mission Infrastructure	41.50
1 - Fuel Hydrant Systems Support Mission Growth	4.15
8 - Ramp Area and Serviceability	7.89
9 - Runway Dimension and Serviceability	9.55
19 - Hangar Capability - Large Aircraft	3.32
1207 - Level of Mission Encroachment	2.08
1235 - Installation Pavements Quality	14.53
3 - Contingency, Mobilization, Future Forces	10.00
5 - Mobility/Surge	5.50
1214 - Fuel Dispensing Rate to Support Mobility and Surge	3.85
1241 - Ability to Support Large-Scale Mobility Deployment	1.65
6 - Growth Potential	4.50
213 - Attainment / Emission Budget Growth Allowance	1.35
1205.1 - Buildable Acres for Industrial Operations Growth	1.58
1205.2 - Buildable Acres for Air Operations Growth	1.58
4 - Cost of Ops / Manpower	2.50
7 - Cost Factors	2.50
1250 - Area Cost Factor	1.25
1269 - Utilities cost rating (U3C)	0.13
1402 - BAH Rate	0.88
1403 - GS Locality Pay Rate	0.25

North Dakota Proposed Alternative Tanker MCI
Changed items are italicized

Name	Effective Percentage
1 - Current / Future Mission	46.00
1 - Operating Environment	6.90
1242 - ATC Restrictions to Operations	6.90
* <i>Recommend supplementing with 1622 - Flight operating hours restricted by local regulations, with weighting TBD.</i>	
2 - Geo-locational Factors	39.10
1245 - <i>Proximity to Airspace Supporting Mission (ASM)</i>	7.82
1273 - <i>Aerial Port Proximity</i>	31.28
* <i>See "Military Judgment Justifies Retaining Grand Forks AFB" for calculation details.</i>	
2 - Condition of Infrastructure	41.50
3 - Key Mission Infrastructure	41.50
1 - Fuel Hydrant Systems Support Mission Growth	4.15
8 - Ramp Area and Serviceability	7.89
* <i>Recommend replacing "step" measure with a linear measure.</i>	
9 - Runway Dimension and Serviceability	9.55
19 - Hangar Capability - Large Aircraft	3.32
1207 - <i>Level of Mission Encroachment</i>	12.08
* <i>Recommend establishing a more stringent standard for receiving full points.</i>	
1235 - <i>Installation Pavements Quality</i>	4.53
* <i>Recommend replacing "step" measure with a linear measure.</i>	
3 - Contingency, Mobilization, Future Forces	10.00
5 - <i>Mobility/Surge</i>	3.50
1214 - Fuel Dispensing Rate to Support Mobility and Surge	2.45
1241 - Ability to Support Large-Scale Mobility Deployment	1.05
6 - <i>Growth Potential</i>	6.50
213 - Attainment / Emission Budget Growth Allowance	1.95
1205.1 - Buildable Acres for Industrial Operations Growth	2.275
1205.2 - Buildable Acres for Air Operations Growth	2.275
* <i>Recommend establishing a more stringent standard for receiving full points.</i>	
4 - Cost of Ops / Manpower	2.50
7 - Cost Factors	2.50
1250 - Area Cost Factor	1.25
1269 - Utilities cost rating (U3C)	0.13
1402 - BAH Rate	0.88

1403 - GS Locality Pay Rate

0.25