

BASE VISIT REPORT
DYESS AIR FORCE BASE, TX

27 JUNE 2005

LEAD COMMISSIONER:

Not applicable. Staff Visit Only.

ACCOMPANYING COMMISSIONER:

Not applicable.

COMMISSION STAFF:

Art Beauchamp (Senior Analyst, Air Force Team)

LIST OF ATTENDEES:

<u>Attendees</u>	<u>Position</u>
Col Harencak	7 BW/CC
Lt Col Fenton	7 BW/XPD
Lt Col Eichhorn	7 MSG/CD
Lt Col Ricky Lee	7 OG/OGX
Art Beauchamp	BRAC Analyst
Major Keith Compton	7 EMS/CC
Mr. Mike Brown	7 LRS/LGR
Mr. John Schults	7 MSS/MOF

BASE'S PRESENT MISSION: Dyess Air Force Base is home to the 7th Bomber Wing, one of only two Air Force B1 bomber wings. It is also home to a major C-130 airlift tenant, the 317th Airlift Group. Dyess' mission is delivering bombing and airlift capability to Combatant Commanders. In addition, Dyess is home to the B1 Weapons School, B1 Test Unit, and B1 Initial Pilot Training. It is also home to a number of training support squadrons and a U.S. Marine Corps, Motor Transportation Maintenance Company.

SECRETARY OF DEFENSE RECOMMENDATION:

DOD's recommendation consolidates the B1 Bomber fleet at Dyess by closing Ellsworth AFB, SD and transferring the B-1s assigned at Ellsworth to Dyess. In addition, DOD recommends realigning Dyess by transferring the C-130 aircraft assigned at Dyess to the active duty, 317th Airlift Group at Little Rock, AK and to other Air Force installations.

Most of the C-130s (22 aircraft) will go to the 317th Airlift Wing. The rest will be transferred to the following units and installations: the Air National Guard (ANG) 189th Airlift Wing (two aircraft), Little Rock AFB, AK; the 176th Wing (ANG), Elmendorf AFB, AK (four aircraft); and the 302d Airlift Wing, AFR, Peterson AFB, CO (four aircraft). Note Peterson AFB will have an active duty/Air Force Reserve association

SECRETARY OF DEFENSE JUSTIFICATION: According to DOD, this recommendation consolidates the B-1 fleet at one installation in order to achieve operational and economic efficiencies. The Air Force desires that to create an efficient, single-mission operation at Dyess that focuses only on the B1 mission, the C-130s assigned to Dyess have to be transferred to other Air Force installations (i.e. Little Rock AFB, AK).

MAIN FACILITIES REVIEWED:

A detailed installation and facility tour (about five hours) was conducted at Dyess. Overall, the infrastructure and facilities at Dyess are in good condition. *With a few notable exceptions (see below) Dyess has the infrastructure and facilities to support the beddown of the Ellsworth B1s. Overall, Dyess can support the beddown of 68 B1 Bombers.*

Helping the consolidation is the fact that the C-130s and maintenance personnel will move from Dyess to Little Rock. Facilities once occupied by C-130 aircraft and personnel will be made available for B1 aircraft and maintenance personnel.

The Air Force has made significant investment into Dyess' infrastructure and facilities. Since 1996, Dyess added \$180M in new infrastructure. Projects include a new B-1 test cell, base housing, fitness center, a state-of-the-art C-130 Squadron Operations and Maintenance Building and the Realistic Bomber Training Initiative. Base personnel stated Dyess currently has a number of funded military construction projects that will be completed over the next two years, to include a Base Exchange, Consolidated Support Facility, and a Consolidated Fabrication Facility.

Dyess has 3 runways (2 active; one inactive), two C-130 assault strips (on base) and a C-130 drop zone. The main runway is 300 feet wide by 13,500 feet long (minimum required for a B1); the C-130 assault strips are 60 feet by 3,500 feet. The inactive runway is a parallel taxiway capable of serving as an emergency departure runway for both B1s and C-130s.

The review identified a few significant requirements that should be in-place prior to the B1 consolidation. *Important note: at the time of the writing of this report Air Combat Command (ACC) completed a site survey. A request was made for the details of the survey, but it was refused by Dyess. ACC directed Dyess not to release the site survey report.*

Infrastructure and facilities requirements for B1 consolidation identified during base visit:

- ***One additional B1 Maintenance hanger (minimum capability: 3 parking spaces).***
- ***Two additional B1 Training Simulators.***
- ***Modification to the B1 School House for expanded classrooms.***
- ***Modification of the new C-130 Squadron Operations Bldg for B1 Classified Mission Brief requirements***
- ***A minimum of twelve munitions storage sites for the additional B1 munitions***

OTHER REVIEWS:

Airspace Training Ranges

A detail presentation on the airspace training ranges and Military Operating Areas (MOA) at Dyess was provided during the visit. The focus of the review centered on the capability of Dyess' airspaces currently and the future requirement to support additional B1s. Prior to requesting the review we asked the FAA to complete an independent analysis. The FAA found that Dyess' has significant range availability. They also reported no significant impacts on the domestic Air Traffic System.

At the presentation, Dyess personnel stated that the number of airspace ranges and the quality of them is more than sufficient to support current and future levels of additional B1s. Prior to the installation visit the BRAC commission R&A staff asked Dyess for a detail analysis on their airspace training ranges.

The analysis provided by Dyess detailed the number of ranges and the quality of those ranges. It focused on range distance, airspace volume, operation hours, scoreable range, and air to ground weapons delivery, live ordinance, IMC weapons release, electronic combat, laser use, lights out capable, flare and chaff. These are the same factors used by the Air Force military value range scoring.

Overall, Dyess has access to 42 ranges which various levels of capability. The closest range to Dyess is 27 NW. A detailed analysis of the information provided is underway.

Force Protection

An interview with the Dyess Office of Special Investigation (OSI) was also completed. The intent of the interview was to obtain the **local** OSI's perspective on force protection/mitigation plan for protecting B1s, particularly if the entire fleet is stationed there.

The local OSI perspective is that sufficient counter measure are in place to counter most threats. Dyess recently funded about \$9M in physical barriers, cameras and other force protection equipment. A request will be made to DTRA for any assessment reports on Dyess and Ellsworth.

Sortie Generation

Also reviewed was the sortie generation requirement of each bomber unit. The review consisted of measuring the capability of Dyess to generate B1 missions both now and under the consolidation of B1s. Lastly, a review of the Dyess' net explosive weight capability for B1s on the parking ramp was reviewed as well as the munitions storage area and condition of the runway pavement. Clarification is still required on the maximum capability to load B1s simultaneously is required.

KEY ISSUES IDENTIFIED

- Dyess appears to be receiving 179 more personnel than required for the B1 consolidation. This was discovered during discussions with Dyess manpower personnel. If true, the BRAC recommendation will have to be modified to correct this discrepancy. This equates to an \$8M manpower savings.
- Dyess needs one new B1 maintenance hanger to support the beddown of the Ellsworth B1s.
- A minimum of two additional B1 cockpit simulators will be needed at Dyess to accommodate the jump in B1 pilot training requirements due to the consolidation.
- Currently, only 22 security force personnel are being added to Dyess manpower. Is this sufficient to protect an additional 24 B1 bombers?
- Need to determine the cost to expand the munitions storage capability. About 12 new facilities will be needed to accommodate the additional munitions from Ellsworth.
- **Overall: Dyess has the capability to accommodate up to 68 B1s Bombers. Dyess personnel also noted that it can house 35 C-130s, in addition to the B1 fleet. If true, this begs the following questions:**
 - *Why move the C-130H models to Little Rock that ranks lower than Dyess as an airlift base (11th vs. 17th)? This isn't consistent with the Air Force's plan of military value.*
 - *Why incur the MILCON cost and cost to transfer 1,185 personnel from Dyess to Little Rock for a lesser military value base?*
 - *The recommendation for Dyess isn't consistent with its plan to consolidate aircraft of the same type. At Little Rock, where after the consolidation, they will be a mixed fleet of 116 C-130H and C-130J models. Even accounting for the fact that Little Rock will be the Air Force's School House for C-130 training, do they need such a large mixed fleet?*
 - *Why not just keep the 29 C-130H currently at Dyess and add 3 more C-130H models to achieve an optimal sized C-130 squadron of 16 aircraft each?*
- Other concerns/questions with the transfer of C-130s at Dyess to Little Rock:
 - Can Little Rock's facilities/airspace/training ranges absorb the density of 116 aircraft?
 - Dyess has assault strips and a drop zone on base. This is an excellent capability. We need to determine the number of assault stripes and drop zones at Little Rock. Feedback from Dyess personnel was Little Rock doesn't have any on the base.
- **Big Issue – assess the risk of consolidating the entire B1 fleet at one location – the “all the eggs in one basket argument”.**

INSTALLATION CONCERNS RAISED

Very few concerns were raised by Dyess personnel. The most significant was the need for additional B1 simulators to support the growth pilot training and need for additional B1 maintenance hanger. Concern was also expressed about officer development of placing all B1 pilots at a single location. Lastly, base personnel wanted to know how the Air Force defined maximum number of aircraft on the ground or MOG during the BRAC process. Their view is that the working MOG for Dyess might be underestimated.

COMMUNITY CONCERNS RAISED:

This analysis met with the community advocacy group the day after the visit to Dyess (29 June 05). The group's central theme was that Dyess has the capability to absorb the additional B1s and to house up to 35 C-130 aircraft.

In keeping with this theme, the group stated that "DOD's recommendation for Dyess deviates substantially from military criteria #5. Their view is that it will cost more in MILCON to beddown the C-130s at Little Rock than to keep the C-130s at Dyess and also beddown the addition B1s." They stated that according to Air Force BCEG minutes (dated 14 Aug 2004) the cost of C-130s remaining at Dyess and consolidating B1s at Dyess is \$167M", while ... "the costs to transfer the C-130s to Little Rock and to consolidate the B1s at Dyess is \$185M."

The community also voiced its concern that "despite the fact that Dyess has one 13,500 foot runway that is used every day, and had perfect scores for installation pavement quality, DOD gave Dyess 0 points out of 4:49."

Lastly, the group stated that DOD substantially deviated from selection criteria 1, 4, and 5 in transferring C-130s from Dyess to a lessor military value base (Little Rock).

REQUESTS FOR STAFF AS A RESULT OF VISIT:

- Need to validate the 179 person overage identified by Dyess personnel.
- Request a COBRA run where the B1 are consolidated at Dyess and the C-130s stay.
- Request clarification from DOD on the logic of sending C-130s to a lessor military value base, as well as the reason for a large C-130 mixed fleet at Little Rock.
- Request a copy of the recently completed Dyess site survey.
- Determine if the cost of the additional B1 simulators, B1 hanger, and other facilities requirements are included in the COBRA model.
- Need to address the issues raised by the community (see above)
- Request a threat assessment of Dyess from DTRA.
- Determine risk of placing all B1s at one location.
- Determine maximum capability to load B1s simultaneously on runway.
- Determine costs for additional munitions storage facilities.