

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

MEMORANDUM OF MEETING

DATE: June 28th, 2005

TIME: 3:00 – 3:30 pm

MEETING WITH: Great Falls Air National Guard representatives

SUBJECT: Great Falls ANG Realignment

PARTICIPANTS:

Name/Title/Phone Number:

Col Michael J. McDonald, Vice Commander, 120th Fighter Wing (406) 791-0280
Lisa A. Whisler, Legislative Assistant for Senator Baucus - MT (202) 224-2651

Commission Staff:

*Colleen Turner, Senior Analyst, Joint Cross-Service Team
Craig Hall, Senior Analyst, Air Force Team
Tyler Oborn, Associate Analyst, COBRA Team
Ryan Dean, Associate Analyst, Joint Cross-Service Team

MEETING SUMMARY:

- Purpose of the visit was to address Commissioner Coyle's question at the Portland regional hearing on whether the Great Falls International Airport Air Guard Station could move to Malmstrom AFB
- Community felt move to Malmstrom was viable option because it offers great airspace and training areas and a chance to expand the mission of the Guard unit.
- Malmstrom could accommodate other ANG F-16s (to increase squadron size) and also accommodate F-15s
- Realignment to Malmstrom seen as means of opening a major expansion for a variety of missions

- Col McDonald agreed to submit a paper to the Commission outlining the relocation of the Guard unit to Malmstrom as an option to the DOD realignment recommendation

* Denotes individual responsible for completing the memorandum

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June 1, 2005

Anthony J. Principi
Chairman, Base Realignment and Closure Commission
2521 South Clark Street, Suite 600
Arlington, VA 22202

Dear Chairman Principi:

The Air National Guard in Great Falls, Montana was on the Department of Defense's BRAC list and has been slated for realignment. This recommendation greatly concerns me since it will remove the F-16 flying mission out of Montana and leave the entire state without a single flying mission to protect it.

The national security implications of DoD's decision are vast. As you know, Montana is a northern border state, and as security is tightened on the southern border, the northern border has become more vulnerable. I believe that the military should be looking to expand in our state, not make cuts. I am also baffled by the process that led to the decision to put the Great Falls Air Guard Base on the BRAC list, particularly since our F-16s are to be realigned to a base with lower military value.

In my years of working to protect the military in Montana through many BRAC processes, I have never seen the state more united and unanimous in their concern than this year. That is why I would like to invite you to come to my Washington, D.C. office on June 9, 2005 to meet with me. I have invited the entire Congressional delegation of Montana, the Governor, and the Mayor of Great Falls to be present as well. We would appreciate any amount of time that you or other available members of your commission could give us that day. We are particularly interested in meeting with General Lloyd Newton.

Please contact me at 202 224-2651 if you will be able to join me. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,



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**Plan to Realign the Great Falls 120th Fighter Wing to Malmstrom Air Force Base,
Great Falls, Montana and Analysis of Potential Missions**

**Office of Senator Max Baucus, Montana
Office of Senator Conrad Burns**

Point of Contact: Lisa Whisler, MLA Senator Baucus 202.224.0617

PURPOSE

Present information and reasoning explaining why permanent relocation of the 120 Fighter Wing (FW) to Malmstrom AFB provides the nation, and the Total Force, the best strategic capability.

DISCUSSION

- Standup an active associate fighter wing at Malmstrom AFB
 - Available ramp space exceeds 353,000 square yards and would easily accommodate a 3 to 4 squadron fighter wing
 - Retain 120 FW's 15 F16s and robust with an additional 9 aircraft (24 PAA) to "right size" the squadron **OR** convert the 120 FW to F-15's to minimize logistical and support issues
 - Move 24 F15C from Elmendorf AFB, AK to Malmstrom AFB, MT
 - Solves NW US air sovereignty issues
 - Support an alert detachment at McChord AFB, WA to protect Seattle
 - Provide critical infrastructure air cover in the NW region (nuclear plants, chemical depots, etc)
 - Training airspace in Montana is better suited to an air superiority mission
 - 280 x 90 nm overland dimensions
 - Lack of encroachment
 - Less than 7 people/square mile under airspace boundaries
 - Projected population change indicates a decline in growth for the next 10 years
 - Future fighter needs will only exacerbate encroachment issues
 - Any future war will be fought overland and that's where national defense assets must train
- Highly experienced work force integrating with active-duty base support and services
 - Already integrated to a large extent
 - MPA tours this FY include 29 personnel and 4,324 man-days; 95% of them within the Mission Support Group
 - Existing Red Horse associate unit (219 RHF)
 - Utilize highly experienced and stabilized workforce
 - Integrate with support areas such as personnel or security forces
 - Provide continuity by not transferring every 3 years
 - Remain available to support AEF ECS requirements
 - A76 contracts coming due
 - AF disappointed with contractor performance
 - 120 FW to pick up those services

- Relocation costs
 - Estimated at \$80-100 million
 - Non-aviation related entities relocate from aviation related infrastructure
 - Runway and associated facility regeneration and construction such as a control tower and approach systems is required
 - Relocation of non-aviation related entities would require new facilities
 - Gains
 - Fully operational runway capable of bedding down a 3 to 4 squadron wing and be able to host C4ISR assets to exercise "Find, Fix, Track, Target, Engage, and Assess" loop against a robust mobile electronic attack array in a large airspace
 - Ability to train for FUTURE fights without competing with civilian aviation interests

SUMMARY

Stand-up an active associate wing with F15C, and 120th FW F16C aircraft at Malmstrom AFB. For roughly 1/3 the cost of one F/A-22, the Air Force gains an operable runway with associated infrastructure to train in the largest, least encumbered overland airspace in the Continental United States. Mission Suitability Comparison for the Montana ANG
F-15A versus C-130J

F-15A

- + Maximizes the utility of our unique overland airspace and training opportunities for the AF
 - + Stays consistent with the objective analysis presented in testimony
 - + Supports the Malmstrom initiative presented 28 June to BRAC Analysis Staff (atch'ed)
 - ++ Opening of Malmstrom runway with a bed down of Active AF fighter squadron(s) in an Active Associate role
 - ++ Utilization of the Malmstrom ramp to host large scale C4ISR exercises
 - + Retains the experience of the on-board aircrew and maintenance personnel
- + Increase in Fulltime (25-50) and Military (0-50) Manpower Authorizations
- + No Change, or Decrease, in PERSTEMPO/OPSTEMPO
 - + F-15 AEF rotations are similar to F-16
 - + Would allow a CC coded unit to sit alert at Portland vice the TF coded Kingsley
- + Likely increase in DLR funding
- + Facilities (Hangars and Shelters) are compatible with F-15 – minimal construction costs, minimizing the overall conversion costs
- + Airframe delivery will be immediate, actual utilization will follow conversion training
 - + Projected retirement date is 2022 of the F-15 Fleet, reflecting the need for air superiority assets combined with reduced buy of the F/A-22 Fleet
- + Ideal mission and aircraft to transition to future AF missions and remain relevant

C-130J

- + A manned flying mission
- +/-Actual State and Northwest Region Firefighting Support would be problematic
 - NORTHCOM Regional Plan already in process of development
 - State Mission will likely be secondary to the Federal/Contingency obligations (similar to the situation already occurring with the Army National Guard)
 - Firefighting takes special training and only very few units are so equipped and trained
- Geographic location is not central to projected CONUS customer users, causing a significant "dead-head" waste of aircrew and airframe time to pickup deliveries and then return to home station
- Current airspace (BearPaw/Hays MOA/ATCAA) does not have a drop zone and is largely incompatible with C-130 training
 - 120th would face a similar issue that currently exists with the F-16 BDU requirement of having to fly significant distances to practice live drops
 - Montana airspace would likely be lost to the Air Force since without daily use the FAA would request a return of the airspace (similar to the loss of the Loring MOA)
- Decrease in Fulltime (50) and Military (125) Manpower Authorizations
 - AFSC differences could make recruiting and retention problematic
- Decrease in DLR funding
- Increase in PERSTEMPO/OPSTEMPO due to AEF rotations and out-of-cycle support (ANG average is currently over 200 days per year deployed)
 - Firefighting mission would add to the OPSTEMPO and decrease at-home downtime
- Current infrastructure not sized for C-130 airframe or engine maintenance requirements
 - No protection from winter conditions without significant construction costs
- Delivery of airframes goes to 2012 with a sporadic historical funding record in Congress
 - Production line reopening is currently in conference between the House and Senate
 - Other BRAC C-130 recommendations "right size" C-130 units to a minimum of 12 PAA, while this option would leave Montana, Channel Island, CA, and Quonset State, RI with only 8 PAA and the only 3 units with J models

Recommendation: To maximize the trained personnel and unique ability of the Montana Air National Guard to support future training opportunities for the USAF, accept the F-15 mission.