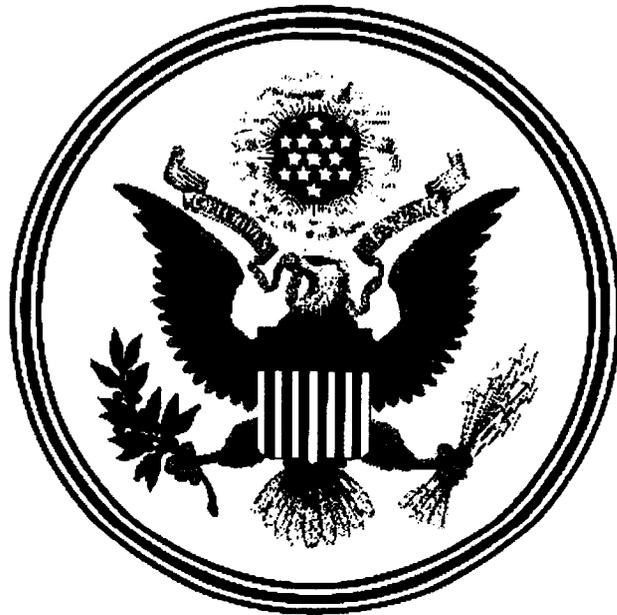


Advance

**DEFENSE BASE CLOSURE AND
REALIGNMENT COMMISSION**



MEDIA BRIEFING BOOK

REGIONAL HEARING
FAIRBANKS, AK



DEFENSE BASE CLOSURE AND REALIGNMENT
COMMISSION

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**2005 Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission
Suggested Talking Points for Visit to Elmendorf AFB**

- 1. Military value is the most important consideration to the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission (BRAC) as the Commission evaluates the suggestion made by the Department of Defense (DoD) to realign Elmendorf Air Force Base.**
 - While the Commission will evaluate the economic, environmental, and other effects that the closure of the installation could have on the surrounding community but the most important consideration in the Commission's evaluation is the military value of the installation.
 - The Commission understands the unique role that Elmendorf AFB serves in Alaska both as a defender and a projector of force. The installation's military value, as such, will be taken into full account by the Commission.

- 2. The Commission is aware of the human impact that the suggestion to realign Elmendorf AFB could have, should the suggestion be enacted.**
 - The Congress established the Commission as an independent entity to ensure that all critical factors have been evaluated, and that the effects on the surrounding community have been taken into account in the decision to recommend a base for closure or realignment.
 - The Commission will evaluate the economic impact that the installation realignment would have on the larger Anchorage community surrounding the base, while basing its decision almost entirely upon military value.
 - Elmendorf AFB has served in a unique role in the defense of the nation. Home to both the United States' missile defense system and the trans-Alaska pipeline, Alaskans and the nation have benefited from the projection of air power resident at Elmendorf. The Commission will analyze Elmendorf AFB's future role in light of the DoD's recommendations.

- 3. The Congress established the Commission as a non-political, transparent, and independent entity to perform a thorough evaluation, through a process set out by law, of the bases suggested for closure or realignment by DoD.**
 - The Commission serves to ensure that all pertinent factors have been evaluated and that the impact that the suggestions to close or realign a base would have on the surrounding community, have been taken into full account.
 - The Commission encourages public input. Community groups wishing to submit information that they feel may have been overlooked by DoD, are encouraged to contact their Congressional representative. Additionally, the public may submit comments directly through the Commission's official website: www.brac.gov.

Facts compiled from included press clippings.



**2005 Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission
Suggested Q's & A's for Visit to Elmendorf AFB**

Q1. The combined proposed cuts for military presence in the State of Alaska are substantial. Estimates suggest that roughly 4,800 jobs will be lost in Alaska. Most of these jobs are located at both Elmendorf AFB and Eielson AFB. Is there a reason that the Air Force installations seem to have been targeted for reduction by the DoD?

A1. The statute establishes the criteria. As outlined by the statute, the Department of Defense placed priority on military value; while also taking into consideration economic, environmental, and other effects that the closure or realignment of a base would have on the community surrounding that base. Information that was gathered in the analysis of a base, with the exception of information that is sensitive to national security, will be made accessible to the public. Part of what constitutes DoD's determination of military value is jointness, ease of mobility, and the base's strategic role in today's changing global threats.

Q2. Strategically, Alaska is an important state. It is home to both the United States' missile defense system and the trans-Alaska pipeline. Traditionally, air power has served in the state as a means of strategic deterrence. Elmendorf AFB is the primary means of defense with Eielson AFB acting as its back-up. Will Elmendorf AFB be able to perform this role independent of Eielson AFB?

A2. The Commission will perform a thorough, accurate, and objective analysis which will take into account, chiefly, the military value of the base, but will also consider other factors. The Department of Defense delineated the strategic/military value of installations in Alaska based upon jointness, ease of mobility, and the base's strategic role in today's changing global threats. Alaska is a unique and valuable state in both location and resources. The Commission will consider all of these factors in its final recommendation to the President.

Q4. Under the proposed realignment, Elmendorf AFB would transfer 24 of its assigned F-15C jets and 21 of its assigned F-15E jets. Does this suggest that Elmendorf will receive any newer-generation aircraft in the future?

A4. The question of what will happen with a base after its realignment is under the purview of DoD rather than the BRAC Commission. DoD will continue to work with communities to ensure the best possible outcome. The Congress established the Commission as an independent entity to evaluate--in a thorough, non-political and accurate way, as prescribed by statute--the suggestions made by DoD to close or realign bases around the county.

Q5. In the coming years, Elmendorf is slated to receive 48 F/A 22 Raptors and the Air Force's new C-17 Globemaster III cargo planes. The decision to merge the resources of Kulis Air National Guard Base into Elmendorf AFB would bring an additional eight C-130 aircraft, three HC-130s, and several HH-60 helicopters. Will

Q5. Continued

Elmendorf be able to accommodate this infusion of equipment in addition to the increased personnel presence on the base?

A5. The Commission will perform a thorough, accurate, and objective analysis which will take into account, chiefly, the military value of the base, but will also consider other factors. In its determination of military value, DoD considered multiple factors, such as jointness, ease of mobility, and others. The Commission will base its recommendations almost entirely upon military value and will take into account these very complex and intertwined elements which make up the military value of a base.

Q6. If the DoD recommendations are approved, Elmendorf AFB and Fort Richardson will both be realigned to become a joint base. This large fusion of resources will be difficult to manage. Will the Commission consider the capability of a base to manage suggested resource changes in making its final recommendation?

A6. The ability of an installation to support the DoD's recommendations will be closely analyzed by the Commission. Currently, Elmendorf AFB and Fort Richardson share a unique relationship fostered by their close proximity to each other. The Commission understands the challenges presented by the creation of a joint base and will consider all factors in arriving at its final decision.

Q7. How can the Community make the Commission aware of information that the Community feels may have been overlooked by DoD?

A7. The BRAC Commission encourages public input into this transparent and objective process. Community groups who wish to submit information for the Atlanta Regional Hearing, scheduled for Thursday, 30 June, are urged to contact their Congressional representative. Additionally, the public may submit comments through the Commission's official website, which is www.brac.gov.

Facts compiled from included press clippings.

ELMENDORF AIR FORCE BASE ALASKA

National Articles

BRAC Members to Visit Alaska Military Installations

More With Less; USAF Reduces Number but Increases Size of Fighter, Transport Squadrons in BRAC

Stevens Will Lay Out Case for Keeping Eielson Fully Staffed

Fairbanks has less than a month to prepare for BRAC hearing

Langley May End Up With 24 More F-15Cs

Alaska Senators Seek Delay in Base Closure Process

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Senators mobilize against closures; Move could stall process until several criteria are met.

Clout matters little in proposed base cuts; Plans to trim military, civilian personnel will be hard to change.

Base shake-up jolts Alaska; If approved, changes would be phased in over 6 years

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Voice of the Times

Voice of the Times

National Articles

BRAC members to visit Alaska military installations

Associated Press

May 29, 2005

Members of the Base **Realignment** and Closure Commission have scheduled June visits to Alaska military bases.

The visits are scheduled for June 14 at **Elmendorf** Air Force Base and Kulis Air National Guard Base in Anchorage.

On June 15 the commission will hold a public hearing in Fairbanks over proposed cuts at Eielson Air Force Base there.

No public hearings will be held in conjunction with the visits to the two Anchorage bases. An analyst will visit each of those installations to collect data before commissioners arrive, BRAC spokeswoman Megan Riffle said.

The commission plans to visit all U.S. military installations that have been recommended by the Department of Defense to lose either 300 civilian jobs or a total of 400 civilian and military jobs.

That includes Kulis and **Elmendorf**. But the most drastic proposed changes in Alaska involve Eielson, which stands to lose all but 130 of nearly 3,000 military personnel.

More With Less; USAF reduces number but increases size of fighter, transport squadrons in BRAC

Aviation Week & Space Technology

Amy Butler

May 23, 2005

The U.S. Air Force is planning to beef up its squadrons and establish new central basing locations for its tactical and transport aircraft fleets.

Many of the changes are geared to realign Reserve component infrastructure and missions in what the service says is the first base closure proposal that includes an objective look at the National Guard and Reserve.

An optimum fighter squadron contains 24 airframes, although some Air Force squadrons had dwindled to as few as eight aircraft, says Maj. Gen. Gary Heckman, the Air Force's top Base **Realignment** and Closure (BRAC) official. Critics of the Pentagon's proposal, sent to the BRAC commission May 13, say shutting down Guard and Reserve bases could produce the unintended consequence of steering citizen airmen away from service by forcing them to travel farther to fulfill their commitments.

Air Guard and Reserve installations in Alaska, Massachusetts, Michigan, New York, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin are on the proposed closure list. Flying missions at others around the country are slated for **realignment**, although in many cases the Air Force plans to leave behind an "enclave" of support capability like civil engineering or security forces at those locations, Heckman says. Those skill sets are some of the most undermanned in the service.

"The ability of a region to be able to recruit and retain folks in the Guard and Reserve was key. Yes, you will find a lot of installations closing, but that is because if we were going to close three squadrons' worth of capability, that could be one active base or it may be three Guard and Reserve bases," Heckman says. Reserve component "demographics was one of the key factors we looked at because we realized we have to maintain that active-[Reserve] mix to maintain our combat capability."

In past BRAC rounds, USAF overlooked some Reserve bases because, in many cases, they are smaller than their active-duty counterparts. This round included 154 installations, including those smaller installations. Heckman acknowledges the Air Force will need to redirect excess pilot capacity, especially as it plans to reduce its force structure. Estimates for tactical aircraft reduction range up to 25% of the fleet.

At the same time, USAF needs more security officials, linguists, medical specialists, engineers and UAV specialists, among others, some of whom could come from the ranks of local police and hospital workers, for example.

A specific transition schedule is not yet final. Officials are awaiting the results of the Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR), a sweeping study of military requirements and capabilities, now underway at the Pentagon, that will report how many tactical and transport assets remain in the fleet as well as outline the numbers of F-35s and F/A-22s to be purchased. However, law requires the recommendations, once approved, to be implemented within six years.

Meanwhile, USAF wants to shift its airframes to maximize their capabilities. For example, nine of the A-10s now at Bradley International Airport Air Guard Station, Conn., would be sent to the Barnes Guard facility 12 mi. away in Massachusetts, minimizing travel for transferred pilots. The remaining six A-10s would be retired, pulling the flying mission from that base.

Left behind at Bradley would be an "enclave" of maintenance capability for the TF-34 engine manned by the remaining A-10 support crews. Additionally, Bradley would pick up the air sovereignty alert mission handled by Otis Air National Guard Base, Mass., which is on the closure list. Likewise, A-10s now at Naval Air Station New Orleans would round out under-resourced units at Barksdale AFB, La., and Whiteman AFB, Mo. A similar center for F100 engine work in the Southeastern U.S. would remain at the New Orleans facility.

CHANGES AHEAD for F-16 basing are similar. The proposed closure of Cannon AFB, N.M., which Heckman describes as a "good base," leaves the active duty centers of gravity for the fleet at Hill AFB, Utah, and Shaw AFB, S.C. Meanwhile, Reserve component units in Wisconsin and South Dakota would be among a group receiving Cannon aircraft.

Realigning the F-15 fleet is "not as clean" as the others, Heckman says, primarily because its future shape depends largely on how many F/A-22s the Air Force will purchase, an issue under intense scrutiny in the QDR. However, USAF's strategy is to homogenize the fleet at Mountain Home AFB, Idaho, by shedding F-16s and receiving F-15Es from **Elmendorf** AFB, Alaska. The shifts leave open the option to base F/A-22s at the Alaska location.

Recent operations around the globe have stressed the C-130 crews, many of which are in the Reserve component. The pace is high because the C-130s provide intratheater support, requiring crews to deploy to a region for a block of time. By contrast, strategic airlifters like the C-5 and C-17 generally demand shorter time commitments for missions and allow crews to turn over more often. To relieve stress and make more predictable the commitments of Guardsmen and Reservists in C-130 units, Heckman says the Air Force plans to transfer some of those aircraft to the active duty and realign some strategic airlift assets into the Reserve component. The service is shifting small numbers of C-130s from various locations--such as a Guard unit in Reno, Nev., and Pope AFB, N.C., which USAF is transferring to the Army--into one single, active duty center at Little Rock AFB, Ark.

Heckman says Cannon and Pope are both solid bases and hard to let go, although their missions can be consolidated at other locations or, in the case of Pope, facilities transferred to the Army for more efficient use.

He adds that the closure of Onizuka Air Force Station, in highly populated Sunnyvale, Calif., allows the Air Force to divest itself of a vulnerable installation and consolidate satellite control operations at Vandenberg AFB, in a much larger and more fortified area down the coast in California. "You don't have to have a very strong arm to throw something at Onizuka and some critical resources there and to do some harm," Heckman says. "It is a small plot of land and it is very tough to protect."

The BRAC commission will turn its recommendations over to the President by Sept. 8. He then has until Sept. 23 to accept or reject the plan in full. Congress must act within 45 legislative days thereafter if it chooses to reject the plan.

GRAPHIC: photograph, Due to encroachment and security challenges at the small facility near San Francisco Bay, the Pentagon is proposing to close Onizuka AFS, Calif. Satellite control operations will be shifted south to Vandenberg AFB.

Stevens will lay out case for keeping Eielson fully staffed

Associated Press State and Local Wire

May 20, 2005

FAIRBANKS

When the panel reviewing recommendations for closing and realigning U.S. military bases meets here next month, U.S. Sen. Ted Stevens will fly in to testify at the hearing.

The Pentagon last week recommended eliminating 2,940 Air Force and civilian positions at Eielson Air Force Base and sending its 36 fighter jets to other states. The base is about 30 miles south of Fairbanks.

The Base **Realignment** and Closure Commission, formed by Congress, to review the recommendations will be in Fairbanks on June 15, one of 16 hearings scheduled across the country.

Stevens, R-Alaska, said he will attend and expects to have about two hours.

He requested a one-day military flight because using commercial aviation to attend the meeting would take too much time midweek when Congress is in session, Stevens said.

Sen. Lisa Murkowski's spokesman, Elliott Bundy, said his boss would "make every effort to be there."

Rep. Don Young's chief of staff, Michael Anderson, said the congressman may have to stay in Washington to guide passage of a national highway bill. Young, chairman of the House Transportation Committee, on Thursday was named chairman of the House-Senate conference committee charged with writing a final bill.

Stevens said his testimony to the commission will focus on Eielson's global strategic location and the need to base jet fighters near the national missile defense site at Fort Greely. Stevens showed reporters a polar projection map illustrating distances to various places around the Northern Hemisphere. The distance from Eielson to Berlin is roughly the same as the distance to the U.S. East Coast, for example. Eielson also is the closest base on the U.S. mainland to east Asia.

"Very clearly, I think, this has been overlooked," Stevens said.

Additionally, he said, the national missile defense interceptor silos lie about 60 miles southeast of Eielson. The military, in justifying the proposed elimination of Eielson's 36 fighter jets, may have

figured new F-22 fighter jets scheduled for deployment at **Elmendorf** Air Force Base near Anchorage could protect the interceptors, Stevens said. But **Elmendorf** is about 200 miles from Fort Greely.

Stevens and Murkowski are sponsoring legislation to halt the entire base **realignment** and closure process. They contend that domestic bases should not be closed or radically changed until overseas bases have been reviewed and a four-year defense strategy has been completed.

Fairbanks has less than a month to prepare for BRAC hearing

Associated Press State and Local Wire

May 20, 2005

FAIRBANKS

Community leaders thought they had 10 weeks to respond to a Pentagon proposal to reduce troop strength at Eielson Air Force Base by nearly 3,000. Instead they have less than a month.

The Base **Realignment** and Closure Commission said Thursday it would hold a hearing June 15 in Fairbanks to take public comment on the Pentagon's recommendation to reduce numbers at Eielson and **Elmendorf** and close Kulis Air National Guard Base in Anchorage. The trip is the only stop scheduled for Alaska.

Fairbanks North Star Borough Mayor Jim Whitaker has said the developments Thursday only added to the sense of urgency at his office.

"We probably have just two weeks to put together our case for the BRAC commission," said Jim Dodson of Dodson Development. The Fairbanks businessman has worked closely with Whitaker since the Pentagon made its **realignment** and closure recommendations last week.

Department of Defense estimates suggest the changes proposed for Eielson could result in a loss of 4,700 jobs in the Fairbanks area.

Dodson, at Whitaker's request, has taken the lead in putting together a team of prominent Alaskans with military experience to advise community leaders.

"The list is pretty short," Dodson said. "There's a lot of people who want to help, but they don't have the military expertise we need."

Three men who have the kind of experience sought by the borough are Ret. Gen. Joe Ralston; Ret. Gen. Pat Gamble, CEO of the Alaska Railroad; and University of Alaska President Mark Hamilton. All three said they were willing to help.

Hamilton and Ralston, former commander of the Alaska Command's joint military forces, said they would meet with Whitaker on Friday.

"If there's something I can do to help, I will be glad to do that," said Gamble, commander of the military's Alaska Command in 1996-1997.

He said he had spoken with a representative from the borough.

Hamilton, who served 31 years in the Army and was chief of staff under Ralston, said their first move would be to look for defects in the recommendation process.

"We need to read the BRAC language thoroughly to find out how they came to their decision," he said.

Gamble said the challenge will be to convince the commission that Eielson is more valuable to the military than the other 16 bases on the Defense Department list. The advisers are likely to focus on Eielson's strategic location and the availability of 60,000 square miles of training air space.

The borough has appropriated \$500,000 to lobby against the Eielson **realignment**. The Legislature is considering spending \$1 million to fight **realignment** at Eielson and other Alaska locations.

The commission must create its own list of recommendations and give them to President Bush by September 8. Bush then has two weeks to accept the list, ask the commission for revisions or reject it. If he accepts the commission recommendations, Congress will have 45 legislative days to accept or reject them, without revision.

Langley May End Up With 24 More F-15Cs

Daily Press
David Lerman
May 20, 2005

WASHINGTON

If the base closure plan is approved, the Hampton installation could get planes from an Alaskan site.

Langley Air Force Base would get 24 additional F-15C fighter jets as part of the Pentagon's base closure and **realignment** plan, newly released documents indicate.

The Hampton base is home to about 60 of the jets now.

It would see a 40 percent increase in coming years as the Air Force attempts to consolidate operations.

A proposed **realignment of Elmendorf** Air Force Base, Alaska, would transfer 24 of its 42 assigned F-15C jets to Langley.

The transfer is just part of several changes proposed for Langley. They would add 749 jobs to the base in coming years.

That growth would partly offset a loss of more than 3,500 Hampton jobs from the proposed closure of the Army's Fort Monroe.

It wasn't clear whether the proposed increase of F-15C fighters was designed to compensate Langley for a potential reduction in the number of new F/A-22 Raptor fighters the base will receive.

Langley is scheduled to house the nation's first operating squadron of Raptors, the Air Force's next-generation fighter that will replace aging F-15s.

Three Raptors are flying at Langley now, and more are expected in coming months.

But the exact number of Raptors that will eventually come to Langley has been in doubt since the Pentagon announced plans to scale back its Raptor program by buying only 179 of the planes, instead of 277.

That move would save \$10.5 billion over six years.

The Air Force report on its base closure recommendations outlines a number of changes at Langley that account for job growth.

In addition to the new jet fighters, Langley would become headquarters for the 914th Airlift Wing, now stationed at Niagara Falls Air Reserve Station, N.Y., the report read.

Langley would also house one of two new centralized Air Force logistics support centers that would replace five regional supply squadrons.

The new logistics center would transfer personnel from Hickam Air Force Base, Hawaii; Luke Air Force Base, Ariz.; and some from Sembach, Germany, the report read.

Langley would gain jobs in general, but a small number of current jobs would be lost to other bases.

A recommendation to consolidate some F-15 avionics maintenance work at Tyndall Air Force Base, Fla., for example, would mean the loss of 19 jobs at Langley.

And a proposal to shift some engine repair work to Seymour Johnson Air Force Base, N.C., would take 32 jobs from Langley.

A spokesman for Langley's 1st Fighter Wing confirmed the plan to bring more F-15C fighters to Langley, but he could offer no details.

Any such move would take two to six years to make under the rules of the base closure process.

That's if the plan wins final approval from the president and Congress. *

Alaska senators seek delay in military base realignment

Associated Press State and Local Wires

May 19, 2005

FAIRBANKS

Alaska's senators want to delay the military base **realignment** and closures in the wake of the Defense Department's recommendation to remove jet fighters and most personnel from Eielson Air Force Base.

Republican Sens. Ted Stevens and Lisa Murkowski on Wednesday co-sponsored legislation introduced by Sen. John Thune, R-S.D., that would delay the base closure process until most troops return from Iraq and a broad military strategy review is complete.

Local officials in Fairbanks are scrambling to prepare a response to the recommendation to gut Eielson of most active military personnel. Members of the Base **Realignment** and Closure Commission will visit Fairbanks and conduct a public hearing June 15. Chairman Anthony Principi and at least two other members will attend.

Murkowski said the base **realignment** and closure recommendations are far-reaching and would have enormous effects on communities such as Fairbanks.

"This legislation appropriately delays implementation of the recommendations until we have a more thorough inventory of our military assets and priorities," she said of Thune's measure.

Similar legislation has failed in the Senate in recent years.

The Defense Department, in recommendations given last week to the Base **Realignment** and Closure Commission, suggested eliminating 2,940 Air Force and civilian positions at Eielson, 30 miles southeast of Fairbanks. The base's 36 jet fighters would be sent to bases Outside.

Another 1,680 positions would be pulled from **Elmendorf** Air Force Base, Fort Richardson and Kulis Air Guard Base near Anchorage.

Stevens predicted last week that most of the Anchorage losses would be made up shortly by other military personnel movement plans unrelated to the base closure and **realignment** process.

Air Force job losses near Fairbanks would be partially offset by Army personnel transferring to Fort Wainwright, also unrelated to the base review, he said.

The Eielson losses, however, would be severe under the military's plan and Stevens promised to protest to the BRAC Commission. He did so Wednesday in a letter to Principi.

The Defense Department on Friday recommended closing 33 major bases and realigning 29 others for a 20-year savings of about \$50 billion. Ellsworth Air Force Base in South Dakota was on the closure list.

"We should not close a single base here in America before the Pentagon decides which overseas bases to close," Sen. Thune said. "It defies common sense to close a base like Ellsworth before its strategic value is addressed in the Pentagon's Quadrennial Defense Review."

Thune's legislation would delay the process until several conditions have been met:

- The return of "substantially all" troops from Iraq.
- The military's completion of two analyses - the Quadrennial Defense Review covering overall U.S. defense needs and a separate ongoing study of overseas base needs.
- The completion of separate maritime and homeland security strategies.
- Delivery of a report to Congress on all those factors, due within a year of meeting the other criteria.

Gen. Richard Myers, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, told the base review commission Monday the broader studies already had helped guide the closure and **realignment** recommendations.

Congress approved the current BRAC process in 2001, the fifth round since 1988. Stevens and then-Sen. Frank Murkowski, now governor, unsuccessfully opposed the continuation of the BRAC process that year.

Stevens, Lisa Murkowski and Rep. Don Young all voted again last year to delay the process.

The House of Representatives passed delaying language in the annual military authorization bill last year. An amendment in the Senate failed, though, and the final legislation, written in a House-Senate conference committee and subsequently passed by both chambers, allowed the process to go forward.

Stevens said consistently during the past five years that his opposition to a new round of base closings was not motivated by parochial interests, but that he did not see any need to close Alaska bases, given their strategic importance.

Senate appropriates funding for base closure task force

Associated Press State and Local Wire

Matt Volz

May 18, 2005

JUNEAU

The Alaska Senate has approved giving \$1 million to a task force that aims to counter the Pentagon's planned cuts of more than 4,800 military and civilian jobs in the state.

Also on Tuesday, the Fairbanks North Star Borough Assembly with an eye on **realignment** at Eielson Air Force Base approved spending \$500,000 to try to change recommended cuts.

The combined \$1.5 million will go to a statewide task force formed by Gov. Frank Murkowski to stem the loss of more than 4,800 military and civilian jobs statewide.

Eielson, about 30 miles south of Fairbanks, would lose its fighter squadrons and about 3,000 jobs under a base **realignment** and closure announcement last week. The Pentagon would close Kulis

Air National Guard Station in Anchorage and shift its personnel to nearby **Elmendorf** Air Force Base.

Senate Finance Co-Chairman Gary Wilken, R-Fairbanks, said the state has to try to keep the Alaska cuts from happening. The 15-member task force created by Murkowski would be charged with coming up with a response to the base **realignment** and closure commission within a couple of months.

The Senate Finance Committee included the appropriation in a supplemental spending bill for this year.

The money would pay for consultants, financial analyses, public campaigning, along with travel to and from Washington, D.C., and towns affected by previous base closures or **realignment**.

Wilken said the argument for keeping the bases open and fully staffed could come in two parts: homeland security and a strategic military presence in the North.

It is necessary to have two bases in Alaska to protect the Arctic region, Wilken said. **Elmendorf** Air Force Base is in Anchorage.

"There has to be a backup for **Elmendorf** in the Arctic, and that has to be Eielson," Wilken said.

Homeland security also is an issue, said Sen. Gene Therriault, R-North Pole. The trans-Alaska oil pipeline and a proposed natural gas pipeline need to be protected, he said. Relocating military assets to Anchorage would leave the pipeline vulnerable, he said.

In 1995, 85 percent of the military's recommendations were accepted and those bases were closed or realigned, Wilken said.

"We need to be part of that 15 percent," he said.

In Fairbanks, North Star Borough Mayor Jim Whitaker said the time to act was short.

"It is imperative to hire the best minds available," Whitaker said. "We're going to fight like hell."

The base closing and **realignment** commission has until Sept. 8 to make its recommendations to President Bush. If Bush approves the recommendations, Congress has 45 legislative days to modify them or they take effect.

Local Articles

Senators mobilize against closures; Move could stall process until several criteria are met.

Anchorage Daily News
Nicole Tsong
May 19, 2005

WASHINGTON

A Pentagon proposal to cut nearly 3,000 jobs from Eielson Air Force Base outside Fairbanks has prompted Alaska's two senators to back new legislation that would delay the base closure process

nationwide.

Republican Sens. Ted Stevens and Lisa Murkowski have joined in co-sponsoring legislation introduced Wednesday that would halt the base **realignment** and closure process until several requirements were met, including the return of most troops from Iraq, the completion of an analysis of overseas facilities, and the release of the Pentagon's comprehensive long-term assessment, the Quadrennial Defense Review. That review is expected out early next year.

The legislation was introduced by Republican Sen. John Thune of South Dakota, which is home to Ellsworth Air Force Base, a facility recommended for closure. Thune, who unseated Democrat Tom Daschle in 2004, claimed during this campaign that he could save Ellsworth through his political connections to the White House, and its listing in the BRAC process has proven politically embarrassing for him.

Other co-sponsors include Sens. Trent Lott, R-Miss.; Susan Collins and Olympia Snowe, R-Maine; Judd Gregg, R-N.H.; Pete Domenici, R-N.M.; and Jeff Bingaman, D-N.M.

The BRAC process was designed to insulate military decisions on U.S. bases from domestic political pressure. The list of cutbacks and closures, released May 13 by Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, is subject to review by a nine-member independent commission. But once the BRAC Commission releases its final report, the president can only accept or reject it in its entirety. Congress will have a similar take-it-or-leave-it decision.

The cutback at Eielson was the most significant on Rumsfeld's list for Alaska. The base would continue to operate air tankers but lose its fighter jets and other operations. Kulis Air National Guard Base in Anchorage was on the closure list.

"I am extremely concerned that the secretary of defense did not take into consideration the significant impact of leaving Alaska and our nation vulnerable to attack by realigning Eielson," Stevens said in a statement. "Having a significant military presence in the Interior is vital to keeping our nation protected from the north. ... I intend to find out why they thought it appropriate to let the refueling tankers have no protection, and why our nation should have inadequate protection in the north."

Stevens, the chairman for the Defense Appropriations subcommittee, also wrote a letter Wednesday to BRAC commission chairman Anthony Principi, asking the commission to hold a hearing in Fairbanks to evaluate the proposed recommendation.

Murkowski added that the recommendations would have an enormous effect on places like Fairbanks.

"This legislation appropriately delays implementation of the recommendations until we have a more thorough inventory of our military assets and priorities," she said in a statement.

The proposed massive reconfiguration of the nation's military bases would result in savings of \$48.8 billion over the next 20 years, the Pentagon said. The proposal recommended closing 33 major bases and realigning 29 others, according to the Defense Department, with most of the changes taking place over the next three to six years.

Under the Pentagon's plan in Alaska, Eielson would lose all but about 130 of its 2,950 military personnel in addition to its 18 F-16 fighter jets and 18 A-10 aircraft, slow-flying jets often

referred to as warthogs. It also would be reduced to "warm base" status, which would keep it open for training exercises but only require a small number of military personnel.

Last week when the list was first released, Stevens said the only real disappointment for him was Eielson, and he vowed to fight its **realignment**. He was particularly concerned about moving the fighter jets out of the area and said it didn't make sense to reduce the number of jets at Eielson especially because forces in Korea are being cut back.

Most of the Air Guard personnel and equipment at Kulis would be transferred to **Elmendorf** Air Force Base in Anchorage. **Elmendorf** is slated to lose 1,499 military and 65 civilian jobs under the **realignment** but would gain 397 military positions and 233 civilian jobs. **Elmendorf** would lose most of its fighter jets, but it also is the future home base for the new F-A 22 Raptor, and two squadrons should arrive by the end of the decade and offset the loss of the F-15s.

Fort Richardson in Anchorage would lose 86 military and 199 civilian jobs.

Sen. Tim Johnson, D-S.D., acknowledged to the Associated Press on Wednesday that it will be difficult to get the legislation passed since the Bush administration was likely to oppose it.

INSIDE

EIELSON: The vast flying space at Eielson Air Force Base is one reason officials have recommended reducing operations there. Maj. Gen. Gary Heckman said that pulling the existing fighter wing would create opportunities to take advantage of the airspace, including expanding the Cope Thunder training exercise to accommodate more people.

Clout matters little in proposed base cuts; Plans to trim military, civilian personnel will be hard to change.

Anchorage Daily News
Nicole Tsong
May 14, 2005

WASHINGTON

While Alaskans may look to Sen. Ted Stevens, the influential Republican chairman of the Defense Appropriations subcommittee, to bail out the state from the Pentagon's proposal Friday to cut 4,818 military and civilian jobs, they may learn that even clout has limits.

People familiar with the base closure process say getting off the Pentagon's proposed base **realignment** and closure plan takes more than political influence and arguments of economic loss.

If you're on the list, "the chances of getting off it are not terribly good," said Christopher Hellman, a military policy analyst for the Washington D.C.-based Center for Arms Control and Non-Proliferation.

The Pentagon released the plan Friday, and it includes major cuts to Eielson Air Force Base outside Fairbanks, which loses almost all of its 3,000 military personnel, the closure of Kulis Air National Guard Base in Anchorage and cuts at **Elmendorf** Air Force Base and Fort Richardson.

Stevens on Friday vowed to fight the removal of 18 A-10 aircraft and 18 F-16 aircraft from Eielson, which would leave the Fairbanks base with just one air refueling wing and tankers.

"These fighters ought to be there to protect that airspace," Stevens said.

The proposal now goes before the nine-member Base **Realignment** and Closure Commission, which is chaired by Anthony Principi. He is the former Veterans Affairs Secretary and once was staff director of the Senate Veterans Affairs Committee when former Sen. Frank Murkowski was chairman.

The commission will have hearings around the nation and consider changes, then issue a report to President Bush in September, according to the Department of Defense. The president must either accept or reject the entire report. If he accepts the report, it then goes to Congress.

In four previous rounds of closures starting in 1988, commissions have accepted 85 percent of bases the Pentagon recommended for closure or consolidation, according to The Associated Press.

Stevens told Alaska reporters Friday that the Defense Department was already reducing forces in South Korea. He said he initially expected the Air Force in Alaska, part of the Pacific Command, to maintain the same number of fighters or even see an increase.

The reduction at **Elmendorf** was not surprising, since two F/A-22 Raptor squadrons are scheduled to go to Alaska in 2007, he said. But there are no new jets expected for Eielson. The duties for the Fairbanks fighter jets include protecting the national missile defense system at Fort Greely and backing up the military in Korea.

"I think it's wrong to leave our area without a fighter protection and it's wrong from a national security point of view," Stevens said. "The access to our nation from that part of the world is across Alaska. It's just not a good decision."

He plans to speak to the commission about the decision to take the jets out of Eielson, he said.

Stevens has fought Pentagon recommendations before. Fort Greely, near Delta Junction, was included on the Pentagon's list in 1995 for **realignment**, and he and U.S. Rep. Don Young testified before the commission and criticized the recommendation. They failed to get it removed. Since then, Fort Greely has become the ground base for the missile defense system.

The commission also briefly considered a recommendation in 1993 to close Fort Richardson but decided not to. Stevens wrote a letter to the commission that year, stressing the strategic importance of Fort Richardson and other military installations in Alaska, according to Daily News reports.

Analyst Hellman says the process is designed to be politically neutral. Alaska is a case in point, he said.

"What party is your senator?" Hellman asked. "He's chairman of what committee?"

But Alaska still was subjected to cuts like the rest of the country, he said.

"It seems to argue against the role politics plays in the process," he said.

Tim Ford, executive director of the Association of Defense Communities, said the commission considers each argument, but communities need to show the base doesn't fit the criteria for **realignment** or closure. The rationale for each closure or change is laid out in the commission's report, issued online Friday.

And the commission is looking at the overall impact of the changes, he said. Ford's group, based in Washington D.C., helps communities affected by the Pentagon's periodic **realignments** and closures.

"You've got to keep fighting, keep working that angle, but you've got to prepare if the **realignment** does move forward," Ford said. "At the end of the day, only a small percentage of bases are removed."

Base shake-up jolts Alaska; If approved, changes would be phased in over 6 years

Anchorage Daily News

Don Hunter

May 14, 2005

Eielson Air Force Base outside Fairbanks would lose all but about 130 of the nearly 3,000 military personnel stationed there under a base **realignment** and closure plan announced Friday by Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld.

The plan includes major shifts and cuts at other Alaska bases as well, including the closing of Kulis Air National Guard Base in Anchorage, the loss of more than 1,500 military and civilian positions at **Elmendorf** Air Force Base, and modest personnel reductions at Fort Richardson.

Altogether, the state would see a loss of more than 4,800 military and civilian jobs.

The Alaska recommendations are part of a sweeping reconfiguring of the nation's military bases that the Department of Defense estimates would save about \$48.8 billion over 20 years.

In all, Rumsfeld has proposed closing 33 major bases and realigning 29 others, according to the Defense Department. Scores of other shifts and cuts are planned for other military installations. Most of the changes, if approved, would phase in over the next three to six years. All must be reviewed by an independent commission and approved by the president this fall. Congress can block the whole list but not individual recommendations.

The closing of Kulis would be tempered by the transfer of most Air Guard personnel and their search-and-rescue responsibilities to **Elmendorf**, where they would set up shop as an independent unit that would work in association with active duty personnel. Kulis' complement of eight C-130 aircraft, three HC-130s, and HH-60 helicopters also would go to **Elmendorf**, along with four C-130s from a Texas base.

Elmendorf would lose 1,499 military and 65 civilian jobs under the **realignment** but would pick up almost 400 military personnel and 233 civilian positions. **Elmendorf** is the state's largest military installation, with 6,775 personnel on base in October, according to the Defense Department. The base would lose 24 of the 42 F-15C and F-15D fighters stationed there, as well

as 18 F-15E jets.

Elmendorf has been chosen as a home base for the new F/A22 Raptor, and two Raptor squadrons, 48 jets, are expected to arrive here by the end of the decade, which would largely offset the loss of F-15s. **Elmendorf** also is slated to receive the Air Force's new C-17 Globemaster III cargo planes.

The effect on Fort Richardson would be comparatively minor. The Army base, next door to **Elmendorf**, would lose 86 military personnel and 199 civilian jobs, according to the list released this morning by the Defense Department. Those modest losses should be overwhelmed by the expected arrival of about 2,500 soldiers being transferred here this year.

The Army's Fort Wainwright in Fairbanks, which has about 4,500 troops, many of them about to head to Iraq, wouldn't be affected by the plan.

Eielson, about 25 miles southeast of Fairbanks, would suffer enormous losses and revert to "warm base" status. That means it would remain open, with a meager Air Force contingent, and be available for training exercises and other purposes.

As of October, Eielson had 2,950 military personnel on base, according to statistics available on an Air Force Web site. Under Rumsfeld's closure recommendations, Eielson would lose 2,821 military personnel and 319 civilian positions.

Rumsfeld's recommendations must be reviewed by the independent Base **Realignment** and Closure Commission. The BRAC commission must complete its work and forward a report to President Bush by Sept. 8, and Bush must accept or reject the recommendations as a whole; if he accepts the list, he must transmit it by Sept. 23 to Congress, which will have 45 days to reject it. If Congress takes no action, the plan becomes binding.

LAWMAKERS REACT

Sens. Ted Stevens and Lisa Murkowski and Gov. Frank Murkowski were particularly critical of the radical downsizing proposed for Eielson and said Friday that they will try to block that plan.

Gov. Murkowski flew to Fairbanks on Friday morning to discuss Eielson's situation with community leaders and formed a task force to respond to it.

"The BRAC process is a difficult one to turn around and so we should be careful not to hold out false hope, but we still should do everything in our power to make our case," the governor said in a statement.

Word of the proposed downsizing moved quickly through the area. Paul Brown, who owns a Fairbanks advertising firm, lives in North Pole and is president of the North Pole Community Chamber of Commerce, said Interior residents feel like they're absorbing the brunt of the BRAC proposals.

"All we're going to have left is a gas-station-slash-air-exercise-base," Brown said.

In Washington, D.C., Stevens said he plans to protest the Eielson reductions to the BRAC commission, which will review Rumsfeld's recommendations and submit a final closure list to the president in September.

"Alaska has half the coastline in the United States and we have the perimeter that faces Asia and there will be fewer aircraft in Korea," Stevens said in a written statement. "It doesn't make sense to me and I intend to go to the Commission and present that case.

"I think it is wrong to leave our area without fighter protection and it is wrong from a national security point of view because the access to our nation from that part of the world is across Alaska, so it is just not a good decision."

CREATING EFFICIENCIES AND SAVINGS

In an afternoon press conference, Lt. Gen. Carrol "Howie" Chandler, who oversees all military activities in Alaska as commander of the Alaskan Command, said the changes, if approved, will take place over the next several years.

If the **realignments** and closures are approved by the president and Congress, actions to implement the recommendations will have to commence within two years and be completed within six years, he said.

"Historically, about 85 percent of what has been recommended to the BRAC commission has been accepted," Chandler said, although the panel also has the power to remove bases or add others.

Chandler said the goal of the **realignment** effort is to create efficiencies and savings while positioning America's military to better respond to 21st Century threats. The proposed closure of Kulis, he said, makes sense because "there are some very good efficiencies to be gained by moving the Guard unit onto **Elmendorf**."

Reservists and active duty Air Force personnel already cooperate and work in tandem on long-range aircraft and in other missions as well, he said.

Similar efficiencies may be gained by consolidating installation management and support functions -- snowplowing, street maintenance, troop support -- between **Elmendorf** and Fort Richardson, he said.

Chandler said he was not part of the decision-making process that led to Rumsfeld's list and would not speculate on why Eielson fared worse than **Elmendorf** in the **realignment** recommendations or why Fort Wainwright and Fort Richardson are affected more modestly than the Air Force bases.

He also said he thinks it's a mistake to look at the proposed deep downsizing of Eielson in isolation, although he said he's also sensitive to the concerns of Fairbanks and North Pole residents.

"When you see 3,000 members potentially leaving a community, that's a very emotional issue," Chandler said, adding that the Defense Department will help communities adapt to changes brought on by military base changes.

"We intend to work with the community any way we can to minimize the impacts," he said.

SILVER LINING

Both Chandler and Maj. Gen. Craig Campbell, adjutant general of the state Department of Military and Veterans Affairs, said the closure of Kulis, on the south end of Ted Stevens Anchorage International Airport, is offset by the movement of its air rescue squadrons and aircraft to **Elmendorf**, where those important functions will continue.

Campbell also noted that four additional C-130s, from a guard base in the Lower 48, will be joining the Kulis aircraft moving to **Elmendorf**.

"We're concerned about the move, because Kulis is a very good location and has served us well for 50 years," he said. "But moving to **Elmendorf** and getting additional aircraft is also good."

The Kulis move will have a silver lining, as well, Campbell and Chandler said, freeing up land at the Anchorage's international airport for expansion of the airport's cargo hub.

Mayor Mark Begich and George Vakalis, a retired top Army officer in Alaska who participated in earlier BRAC rounds and currently chairs the Anchorage Chamber's military committee, agreed that airport managers will be able to make use of land vacated by Kulis.

Begich said that the loss of more than 1,000 personnel from **Elmendorf** is "a serious concern" but that the local Air Force base and Fort Richardson likely are to see net gains in personnel over the next few years.

"It's not great to have news like this, and it's not over yet," Begich said. "We hope (the BRAC commission) will come up here, and we'll continue to make our pitch as to why these bases are important."

Vakalis, who as garrison commander supervised all three Alaska Army posts, said earlier **realignment** and closure rounds largely targeted personnel reductions but not installations. Many of the recommendations -- the consolidation of support services for Fort Richardson and **Elmendorf**, for example -- are sensible and should create significant savings, he said.

"As far as the Eilson picture, I'm not sure how that's all going to shake out," Vakalis said. "That's a lot of positions they're going to be losing. That will certainly have an impact on those communities economically."

Editorial Articles

Voice of the Times
Anchorage Daily News
ELISE PATKOTAK
May 18, 2005

Asleep at the switch? Eielson in peril

ALL ALONG, as the days passed toward the time when Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld was to announce his recommendations for military base closures and **realignments**, we had an uneasy feeling that the state government and the cities of Anchorage and Fairbanks were taking things all

too casually. No need to worry, seemed to be the feeling.

The ax fell last Thursday. Kulis Air Station is to be closed. Fort Richardson is to be "consolidated" with **Elmendorf** Air Force Base. And, basically, the plug was pulled on Eielson Air Force Base near Fairbanks.

Thousands of jobs headed south. Devastating news for the economy of Fairbanks and suburban North Pole.

In contrast, the state of Washington made out very well, indeed. Naval Station Bremerton will pick up 1,400 personnel under the Rumsfeld plan. Fort Lewis would gain 230. Whidbey Island Naval Air Station and Naval Station Everett escaped significant cuts. Fairchild Air Force Base near Spokane -- which some thought faced possible elimination -- took a small hit, the loss of 198 people. McChord Air Force Base, which adjoins Fort Lewis south of Tacoma, was targeted for a 576-personnel cut, but Fort Lewis will pick up 230.

Despite those cuts, Washington state will see a net gain of 800 military personnel.

"Overall, I'm very pleased," said Rep. Norm Dick, D-Wash., the state's senior congressional member. "These are **realignments**," he told the Seattle Times, "and nothing major was closed. I'm thrilled we don't have any real problems."

One reason, we suspect, is that the local communities involved had conducted a full-court press for months on end, meeting regularly with Pentagon officials to extol the military importance of the Washington state facilities.

The same sort of ongoing effort, we understand, was made by other communities that managed to escape significant cuts -- with regular and continuing meetings to point out the ways their local bases fit the guidelines set out in advance by the Pentagon.

In our view, the proposed shuttering of Eielson makes absolutely no sense. Eielson is critically important to the defense of the Alaska mainland and to the Air Force because it offers by far the most expansive air space for training available anywhere in the United States.

But for some reason that message didn't penetrate the Pentagon echelons responsible for drafting the Rumsfeld edict.

Alaska fell asleep. Overconfidence, perhaps, killed us.

The announced cuts are not final. But the prospects of overturning Rumsfeld's recommendations are slim. It will take a vote by at least seven of the nine members of the Base Relocation and Closure Commission to add to or subtract from the Rumsfeld list. That's a super majority that will be tough to achieve.

Voice of the Times
Anchorage Daily News
May 14, 2005

Pentagon's base closure proposals leave ... Alaska hard-hit
WE NEVER EXPECTED THE severity of the recommendations made yesterday by Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld.

We had looked for little or no reductions in military forces here or in the mission of the Army and Air Force units on duty in the 49th State. What happened was just the opposite. Alaska took it in the chops.

Worst hit was Eielson Air Force Base at Fairbanks. If the Rumsfeld plan holds through the entire process and is incorporated in the final report by the Base **Realignment** and Closure Commission, Eielson basically will be history -- at the cost of almost 4,700 jobs.

The Rumsfeld recommendations would move Eielson's complement of A-10 and F-16 fighter aircraft to bases in Georgia, Louisiana and Idaho.

The effect could be devastating on the Fairbanks economy. Anchorage didn't escape unscathed, either. Not by a long shot, unfortunately.

FORT RICHARDSON, the large Army post that has been a big factor in Anchorage's life since the days of World War II, will be "consolidated" with **Elmendorf** Air Force Base for installation management purposes, and its civilian personnel operations will be shipped to Arizona. Net loss: 286 jobs.

Elmendorf -- to use the Defense Department's nomenclature -- will be "realigned," becoming a joint base with Fort Rich. The exact meaning of that is not immediately clear. What is clear, according the Alaska Sen. Ted Stevens, is that **Elmendorf** could lose 24 of its F-15 and 21 of its F-15E aircraft, which would be a huge blow.

Meanwhile, Kulis National Guard Station at Ted Stevens Anchorage International Airport will be closed. Its airplanes and personnel will be moved to **Elmendorf**.

Fort Wainwright, at Fairbanks, also will be "realigned" -- which in its case apparently means moving its Cold Region Test Center down the highway to Fort Greely. Again, the impact of that on jobs in the Fairbanks area is not immediately known.

Alaska Sen. Lisa Murkowski says the loss of direct and indirect employment "in the Fairbanks area alone would be a huge blow to that community's economic and social well being -- not just from tax revenue or a local business standpoint, but also the number of families that would be leaving, impacting schools, churches, and community services."

Stevens, it's safe to say, was shocked by the Rumsfeld plan. He said he would protest to the full BRAC panel, especially with respect to Eielson. "I think it is wrong to leave our area without

fighter protection and it is wrong from a national security point of view. . . ."

Both senators said there are still months to go before the cuts are finalized. But the shadows have now been cast, and the outlook is not good.



**2005 Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission
Suggested Talking Points Regarding Kulis Air National Guard Base, Alaska**

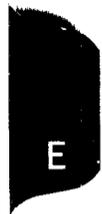
- 1. The most important consideration by the 2005 Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission (BRAC) in its evaluation of the suggestions put forth by the Department of Defense (DoD) to close Kulis ANG Base, is military value.**
 - The process of evaluation and analysis, followed by the Commission, has been specifically set forth by law.
 - Although the Commission understands the human impact these suggestions would have if they are enacted, and will take into account the economic, environmental, and other effects that the closure of Kulis would have on its surrounding community, the Commission holds military value as its foremost important consideration.
 - While many see the prospect of economic growth for Anchorage, should Kulis actually be closed, the Commission will perform a careful and independent evaluation of the military value of the base, as well as its important contributions in areas such as search and rescue and support, before reaching its final conclusion.

- 2. The Congress established the Commission to perform an open, fair, thorough, and objective evaluation of the suggestions made by DoD to close or realign a military installation, and as part of this evaluation, the Commission will take into careful account the economic effects that the closure of Kulis would have on the surrounding community.**
 - While military value is extremely important to the Commission, the Commission understands the human impact that the suggestions by DoD would have, should those suggestions be enacted, and will consider the effects that the loss of jobs would have on the surrounding community.
 - While some initial economic effects of the closure may be negative, there could be redeeming value in the closure should it allow for expansion of the international airport in Anchorage and continued economic development. DoD will work with communities to help them continue to thrive economically, but the Commission only takes into account in its evaluation the effect that DoD's suggestions would have, should they be enacted. Some see the opportunity in the possible closure of Kulis, but the Commission will ensure that a full evaluation has been performed, holding military value as its most important consideration.
 - Anchorage is within a 9-hour flight of 95% of the industrialized world and the Commission will consider this as it analyzes the economic effects that the closure of the base would have on Anchorage as the city seeks to expand its own international airport.

3. The Commission understands the historic ties that the region has to Kulis ANG Base as well as the importance of the missions carried out by the base in years past.

- The Commission is aware of the important search and rescue missions that the installation has executed as well as its valuable support role.
- Every community has historic ties to its base, such as this one named after 1st Lt. Albert Kulis, but the most important consideration of the Commission is the current military value of the installation in this time of changing global threats.
- The Commission welcomes public input in this process. Public comments may be submitted to the Commission directly, through the Commission's official website, which is: www.brac.gov.

Information compiled from included press clippings.



**2005 Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission
Suggested Qs & As Regarding Kulis Air National Guard Base, Alaska**

Q1. Although reactions to the Department of Defense's (DoD) suggestion to close Kulis have been relatively pacific compared to those regarding the recommendations for other Alaskan military installations, around 2000 people serving in the Air National Guard in Alaska have Kulis as their home base. Will the Commission consider the effects the DoD recommendations could have on that community?

A1. The Congress established the 2005 Defense Base Realignment and Closure Commission (BRAC) as an independent entity to ensure that all pertinent factors have been taken into account, through a process specifically prescribed by law, in the recommendation to close or realign a military installation. The Commission serves to evaluate the suggestions made by DoD to close or realign bases across the country but also to provide accountability to the public for those suggestions. The Commissioners are keenly aware of the human impact that these suggestions could have and will take into careful consideration the possible economic, environmental, and other effects, of the closure or realignment of a base could have on a community. While keeping these other considerations in mind, the Commission will base its final decision almost entirely on the military value of the installation.

Q2. Kulis Air National Guard Base was named after 1st Lt. Albert Kulis, who was killed in an F-80 in 1954. The base has had an active and valuable role in search and rescue efforts and has been home to one of two major Alaskan Air National Guard Units: the 176th Wing. Will the Commission take the historic and, what has been, very valuable role of the base into consideration as it evaluates DoD's suggestions to close the base?

A2. The Commission understands historic ties that Kulis ANG Base has to the surrounding community, as well as the importance of missions performed by the base through the years. The most important consideration to the Commission, is current military value, and the Commission will perform a thorough and accurate evaluation and analysis of the installation, as prescribed by law, before making its suggestion regarding Kulis.

Q3. Anchorage is a 9 hour flight from 95% of the industrialized world. Companies such as FedEx, UPS, NW Airlines, and others have taken advantage of this and established themselves here. Will the Commission take this into its consideration of the economic effects that the DoDs suggestion to close Kulis ANG Base would have?

A3. While military value is the most important consideration, the Commission also evaluates the effects that the closure of the installation would have on the surrounding community and is fully aware of the human impact of its suggestions. It will perform a complete analysis before offering its own suggestions regarding whether or not to close Kulis ANG Base.

Q4. Some have pointed out that Ted Stevens Anchorage International Airport is a large source of income for the region and that with surrounding housing

developments, parks, and protected wetlands, has little room to grow. **Will the Commission consider the effect that making the land, previously used by Kulis if DoD's suggestion to close the base is enacted, available for private use would have on the economic development of the region?**

A4. The plan for continued economic development of a community after the closure or realignment of an installation is under the purview of DoD rather than the Commission, but the Commission will take the economic effects that the closure of an installation could have on a community into full account. The Commission maintains military value as its most heavily weighted consideration, while also considering the economic, environmental, and other effects that the closure of the base could have on the local community.

Q5. If DoD's recommendations for Kulis ANG Base are enacted, the installation's C-130 aircraft and helicopters will be relocated to Elmendorf Air Force Base. Will the Commission consider whether the community surrounding Elmendorf has the necessary infrastructure to support this influx?

A5. The Commission will carefully evaluate, as prescribed by statute, all key factors regarding the suggestion to close or realign an installation, including the supporting infrastructure of a community, the economic effect that the suggestion would have on the community, and most importantly the military value of that installation. The Commission will perform an extremely detailed and methodical analysis before reaching its own conclusions as to what should be done regarding Kulis.

Q6. In the face of this closure, some have reminded themselves of what Alaska has recently gained, or will be gaining, in regards to the military. 48 F-22s are expected to begin arriving in 2007, additional Cope Thunder exercises are planned for Eielson AFB, the Airborne Battalion at Ft. Richardson is expected to be transitioned to an Airborne Brigade, and finally, additional aviation units from Korea are expected to begin being moved to Ft. Wainwright. Because of all of this, as well as the chance for continued economic growth through the possible expansion of the international airport in Anchorage, many have been consoled. Will the Commission still take into account the valuable role played by the Air National Guard, specifically, as well as its key previous search and rescue and support missions?

A6. While the Commission is specifically concerned with the impact, had by the suggestions to close or realign an installation, on the surrounding community, it will in no way lose sight of its most important consideration, as set forth by law: that of determining the military value of the base. In these times of changing global threats, there is no consideration more important than keeping our military ready and able to meet these threats and ensure national security. While DoD has formed the strategy, the Commission's purpose is to evaluate the suggestions by DoD to close or realign military installations across the country in an effort to streamline and make our military more effective, and ensure that those suggestions have been made according to law and after all important factors have been considered.

Facts compiled from included press clippings.



KULIS AIR GUARD STATION ALASKA

National News Articles

Sen. Stevens Reacts to BRAC Announcement for Alaska
Kulis ANG Serves Alaska

Local News Articles

Airport could spread wings without Kulis; CARGO: Development ready for takeoff if Air Guard moves to Elmendorf.
Fairbanks mobilizes to keep Eielson a fully active base
Senate funds base-closure panel
Senators back legislation to delay closures

Opinion/Editorial Articles

National News Articles

SEN. STEVENS REACTS TO BRAC ANNOUNCEMENT FOR ALASKA

US States News
May 13, 2005

WASHINGTON

The office of Sen. Ted Stevens, R-Alaska, issued the following press release:

Today, Sen. Ted Stevens (R-Alaska), reacted to the announcement by the Base Realignment and Closure Commission (BRAC) that Alaska's Air Force bases would be realigned, that **Kulis Air Guard Station** will be closed and the Fort Richardson Army Post in Anchorage will be realigned.

"The Secretary of Defense has made his recommendations to the BRAC on how to have a total realignment of our military installations. These recommendations are that only and have yet to be finalized," said Stevens. "We have never faced a base closure at the same time as we have tried to have a global realignment of forces. We have to look at where troops are going and where they are coming from when we approach this process. This is a long process which will take place over a number of years. These changes will not take effect immediately"

Senator Stevens expressed his serious concern that the Secretary's recommendations included moving Eielson Air Force Base to a "warm base" status in which the A-10's and F-16's would be moved to bases in Georgia, Louisiana and Idaho. He also expressed concern that Elmendorf Air Force Base would lose 24 of the assigned F-15 C/D aircraft and 21 of the assigned F-15E aircraft.

"In the long run the only real disappointment is Eielson. I intend to protest to the Base Closure and Realignment Commission. Alaska has half the coastline in the United States and we have the perimeter that faces Asia and there will be fewer aircraft in Korea. The units in Eielson's first line of duty was to reinforce our units in Korea, and now that we have reduced forces in Korea. It doesn't make sense to me and I intend to go to the Commission and present that case. I think it is wrong to leave our area without fighter protection and it is wrong from a national security point

of view because the access to our nation from that part of the world is across Alaska, so it is just not a good decision," said Stevens.

Senator Stevens reminds Alaskans that the BRAC list announced today does not reflect on-going force realignments that will positively effect Alaska. These include:

- * Eight C-17's beginning to arrive in Alaska in 2008
- * 48 F-22's expected to begin arriving in Alaska in 2007
- * Additional Cope Thunder exercises planned for Eielson Air Force Base
- * The transition of the Airborne Battalion at Fort Richardson to an Airborne Brigade
- * Additional aviation units from Korea being moved to Fort Wainwright

The following military installations in Alaska will be effected:

Kulis Air Guard Station (Anchorage, Alaska) - **Kulis** will be closed as part of the BRAC process and the mission, aircraft and personnel will transfer to Elmendorf Air Force Base. It is anticipated that the **Air Guard Station** will gain aircraft through a **Guard/Active Associate Unit** in this move and that the Anchorage Airport will gain much needed land.

Eielson Air Force Base (Fairbanks North Star Borough) - Eielson will remain open but will be realigned to a "warm base" position in which personnel and infrastructure, specifically aircraft, will be removed from the base and moved to other sites across the country. The refueling tankers associated with the 168th Air Refueling Wing of the Alaska Air National Guard will remain at the base. This realignment will mean a loss of 2,940 personnel from the base.

Eielson is currently home to the 354th Fighter Wing, and hosts units from the 168th Air Refueling Wing of the Alaska Air National Guard, a detachment of the 460th Air Force Technical Applications Center, the Arctic Survival School, the 353rd Combat Training Squadron and a detachment of the 632nd Air Force Office Special Investigations.

Elmendorf Air Force Base (Anchorage, Alaska) - Elmendorf will be realigned to become a joint base with Fort Richardson and, will have aircraft and personnel from **Kulis Air Guard Station**, also in Anchorage.

Elmendorf is currently home to the 3rd Fighter Wing, the 517th Airlift Squadron and the 962nd Airborne Air Control Squadron.

Fort Richardson Army Post (Anchorage, Alaska) will be consolidated with Elmendorf Air Force Base and will have consolidated installation management functions. Additionally, civilian personnel operations will be consolidated within the Army to Arizona. These two consolidations will result in a total loss of 286 positions.

Fort Wainwright Army Post (Fairbanks, Alaska) will be realigned by moving the Cold Region Test Center to Fort Greely that was realigned in BRAC 1995.

The timeline for the 2005 BRAC round is as follows:

May 16, 2005: Not later than this date, the Secretary of Defense must publish in the Federal Register and transmit to the Congressional Defense Committees and the Commission, a list of the military installations that the Secretary of Defense recommends for closure or realignment.

July 1, 2005: Not later than this date, the Comptroller General shall transmit to the Congressional Defense Committees, a report containing a detailed analysis of the Secretary of Defense's recommendations and selection process.

September 8, 2005: Not later than this date, the Commission must transmit to the President a report containing its findings and conclusions based on a review and analysis of the Secretary of Defense's recommendations.

September 23, 2005: Not later than this date, the President shall transmit to the Commission and to the Congress, a report containing the President's approval or disapproval of the Commission's recommendations. If the President approves the recommendations, the recommendations are binding 45 legislative days after Presidential transmission or adjournment, unless Congress enacts joint resolution of disapproval.

October 20, 2005: If the President disapproves the Commission's initial recommendations, the Commission must submit revised recommendations to the President not later than this date.

Nov 7, 2005: President's Approval or Disapproval of Revised Recommendations. The President must approve the revised recommendations and transmit approval to Congress by this date or the process ends. The recommendations become binding 45 legislative days after Presidential transmission or adjournment, unless Congress enacts a joint resolution of disapproval.

KULIS ANG SERVES ALASKA

US Fed News

April 4, 2005

JUNEAU, Alaska

Lt. Gov. Loren Leman of Alaska issued the following column:

When I first ran for the State House in 1988, my district included the Turnagain and Sand Lake areas of Anchorage. I was invited by then Col. Ken Taylor, the commander of the 176th Wing at **Kulis Air National Guard** Base, to visit the facility located on the south side of Anchorage International Airport.

I commented, "**Kulis** is Anchorage's best kept secret." Before my visit, I was unaware of its entire mission in Alaska. I suspect quite a number of Alaskans are, like I was then, unaware of its role in search and rescue and support to our active military.

Kulis ANG Base is home to the 176th Wing, one of two major units in the Alaska **Air National Guard**. The other is the 168th **Air Refueling Wing** at Eielson AFB, adjacent to North Pole. The Alaska ANG has units at Elmendorf AFB, Clear AFS and Camp Denali as well. Many Alaskans know about the daring record-setting rescues that the Alaska **Air Guard** does. Many of the major television networks, the Discovery Channel, the History Channel, NFL Films and the National

Geographic have heralded these rescue exploits.

The 176th Wing at **Kulis** has been led for the past 2 1/2 years by Brigadier General Gene Ramsay, a veteran of 33 years in the military. In February, General Ramsay retired from the **Guard**. He and his wife Kathy will continue to make Anchorage their home. I wish them well and thank them for their dedicated service. It was obvious from General Ramsay's retirement ceremony on February 12 that the men and women of the 176th Wing have deep respect for his leadership.

General Ramsay was succeeded by Colonel Tony Hart who recently served as the **Air National Guard** Advisor to the Commander of the **Air Mobility Command** at Scott **Air Force Base** in Illinois. Colonel Hart is already making his mark on leadership and is a welcome addition to the Alaska ANG team. Commander of the Alaska **Air National Guard**, Brigadier General Tim Scott says, "Colonel Hart possesses a wide breadth of leadership experiences and has significant expertise in the airlift field."

During the past two years Alaska's National **Guard** has been called to serve in Iraq, Afghanistan and other hotspots in the world. They have responded to the tragedy of the December 26 tsunami in the Indian Ocean. The ANG was also the first to bring help to Kaktovik in January during a severe winter storm that cut off power to the remote village in sub-zero temperatures. They continue to assist with search and rescue.

I salute the more than 2,000 men and women of the **Air National Guard** who call **Kulis** home. Thank you for your service.

Local News Articles

Airport could spread wings without Kulis; CARGO: Development ready for takeoff if Air Guard moves to Elmendorf.

Anchorage Daily News
Richard Richtmyer

The proposed shutdown of **Kulis Air Guard Station** could help boost Anchorage's economy by giving its international airport, which has been increasingly hemmed in by development, more room to grow.

The airport was far from town and surrounded by open spaces 50 years ago when the Alaska Air National **Guard** moved there from Elmendorf Air Force Base.

On Friday, the Defense Department said it wants to shut down **Kulis** and move the **Air Guard** back to Elmendorf. That, officials say, could benefit Ted Stevens Anchorage International Airport, which has transformed itself in the last 15 years into an important global air-cargo hub.

Closing **Kulis** would open the airport to further commercial development and might offset some of the jobs that would be lost by moving the base's aircraft and mission to Elmendorf, said Maj. Gen. Craig Campbell, adjutant general of the state Department of Military and Veterans Affairs.

"It might provide more job opportunities than (we're losing)," Campbell said.

Anchorage's central location -- it's a nine-hour flight from 95 percent of the industrialized world - has helped the airport grow to become one of the world's busiest cargo airports. Large international carriers including FedEx, UPS, Northwest Airlines and many smaller outfits have set up shops there.

Officials expect that growth to continue, but there's little room left to expand the airport, which covers some 4,800 acres and is boxed in by housing developments, parks and protected wetlands.

Opening up the 130-acre **Kulis** site would help alleviate that crunch and make room for new businesses, said Mort Plumb, the state-owned airport's director.

The airport owns the land, and leases it to the Air **Guard** for \$1 a year. The **Guard** also pays an annual "impact fee" for using the airport's taxiways and runways, which is much lower than the landing fees commercial planes pay to use the airport, Plumb said.

"If we were to lease out that land, it could generate a little over \$500,000 a year at today's rates," Plumb said. "And that's not counting what it could generate in landing fees."

Potential uses for the **Kulis** site, which is accessible from Raspberry Road, could include air-cargo operations or maintenance, Plumb said.

Kulis -- named for 1st Lt. Albert **Kulis**, a pilot killed in his F-80 in 1954 -- is one of four Alaska military installations that could be affected by the Defense Department's base realignment and closure plan. All 459 of its military and civilian jobs would be lost.

In all, Alaska would lose more than 4,600 military jobs under the plan announced Friday by Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld.

Before any of the closings or realignments take effect, a federal commission and the president must approve the plan in the coming months. Congress has the option to block it in its entirety.

The changes would be phased in over six years, starting next year.

Fairbanks mobilizes to keep Eielson a fully active base

Alaska Journal of Commerce

By Tim Bradner

05/29/05

Additionally, he said the national missile defense interceptor silos lie about 60 miles southeast of Eielson. The military, in justifying the proposed elimination of Eielson's 36 fighter jets, may have figured new F-22 fighter jets scheduled for deployment at Elmendorf Air Force Base near Anchorage could protect the interceptors, Stevens said. But Elmendorf is 200 miles from Fort Greely. Eielson is about 40 miles.

Stevens and Murkowski also are sponsoring legislation to halt the entire base realignment and closure process. They contend that domestic bases should not be closed or radically changed until overseas bases have been reviewed and a four-year defense strategy has been completed.

The Pentagon recommendations are that Eielson remain as a base for Air National Guard tankers used in aerial refueling, which will keep 600 to 700 military positions at the base. Whitaker said Eielson can be more effective in supporting training if it is a fully active air base with the fighter squadrons that are now based there.

Norm Phillips, Doyon Ltd. resources vice president and board chairman of the Fairbanks Chamber of Commerce, said, "we're still struggling to understand the military justification for this. We're still working our way through the shock.

"We had looked at the military's criteria for the base realignment process but we never expected one of our bases might be vulnerable," given the Pentagon's recent efforts to build up forces in Alaska, he said.

Phillips said the chamber is pleased that members of the BRAC will visit Fairbanks before final recommendations are made to Congress. The normal procedure is that two members of the commission visit communities that are affected, but it's not a requirement, Phillips said.

Whitaker said he was disappointed that the recommendation to reduce Eielson's status but retain the aerial training did not recognize the partnership with the state and local communities that is implicit in the agreement to periodically close large areas of airspace in Interior Alaska for aircraft training and maneuvers.

The airspace closures are an inconvenience for civilian air operators in the region, "but we have cooperated with the military partly because of the importance of Eielson to our local economy," Whitaker said.

"The Air Force and the Department of Defense have been very sensitive to community and state concerns on the airspace issue, and we have been very accommodating," the mayor said.

If the reductions take place it could have the effect of reducing state and local support for the airspace closures, he said.

The Pentagon report recommended to distribute the 354th Fighter Wing's A-10 attack aircraft with 12 planes going to a new fighter group at Moody Air Force Base in Georgia, three planes going to the 917th Fighter Wing at Barksdale Air Force Base in Louisiana, and three aircraft going to backup aircraft inventory.

The 18 F-16s in the 354th would go to the 57th Fighter Wing at Nellis Air Force Base in Nevada, while the Air National Guard's tanker unit at rescue alert detachment would remain at Eielson.

In its recommendation to the BRAC, the Pentagon also recommended closure of Kulis Air National Guard Base in Anchorage as well as personnel reductions and relocations at Fort Richardson and Elmendorf Air Force Base.

If the Pentagon's recommendations are accepted, Kulis Air National Guard Base at Ted Stevens Anchorage International Airport would close, with its C-130 aircraft and helicopters moved to Elmendorf.

Elmendorf itself would lose 1,103 military personnel but gain 169 civilian jobs, for a net loss of 934 positions. The 3rd Fighter Wing at the base would lose 24 of its 42 F-15Cs and F-15Ds to the 1st Fighter Wing at Langley Air Force Base in Virginia.

Fort Richardson would lose 286 jobs - 87 military and 199 civilian positions.

Reactions to the changes at Kulis, Elmendorf and Richardson are muted, in comparison to Fairbanks.

"Early indications are that Kulis personnel may move to Elmendorf," said Rep. Don Young, R-Alaska. "As far as Kulis is concerned, the state has been pushing for the close of the base for a long time. The property can become an excellent expansion capability for the airport."

Anchorage Mayor Mark Begich agreed with Young. "New personnel being transferred to Elmendorf and Richardson will make up for any losses, he said. "If Kulis is eventually closed, that base is certainly prime property for expansion of Anchorage's air cargo operations, which are already among the world's busiest."

The BRAC must submit its final recommendations to President Bush by Sept. 18. The president and Congress must then accept or reject the commission's recommendations by Nov. 7.

Pentagon analysts spent two years developing the recommendations. The recommendation would close, consolidate or reorganize more than 800 military facilities in all 50 states. The plan would save \$48.8 billion over 20 years, the Pentagon said.

Some critics argue the Pentagon's recommendations are premature because they do not account for the bulk of 70,000 troops that would be relocated from Europe to the United States. The Pentagon may not need to close as many bases as are recommended because of the returning troops.

Eielson has a long history in Alaska. The base was built to provide additional air defense coverage against an "over the top" attack on North America by Soviet bombers.

During the tense decades of the Cold War, Eielson played a key role in refueling Strategic Air Command, nuclear-armed B-52 bombers, which at the time were kept constantly airborne and ready to respond if the U.S.S.R. attacked. Eielson was also a base for secret U-2 reconnaissance flights into Soviet airspace.

Today tanker aircraft from Eielson refuel military aircraft flying polar routes.

Senate funds base-closure panel

The Juneau Empire

Matt Volz

May 18, 2005

\$1 million appropriated for task force

The Alaska Senate on Tuesday approved giving \$1 million to a task force that aims to counter the Pentagon's planned cuts of more than 4,800 military and civilian jobs in the state.

Eielson Air Force Base outside Fairbanks would lose its fighter squadrons and about 3,000 jobs under last week's base realignment and closure announcement. Kulis Air National Guard Station in Anchorage would close completely.

Senate Finance Co-Chairman Gary Wilken, R-Fairbanks, said the state has to try to keep those cuts from happening. The 15-member task force created by Gov. Frank Murkowski would be charged with coming up with a response to the BRAC commission within a couple of months. The Senate Finance Committee included the appropriation in a supplemental spending bill for this year. The money would be combined with a \$500,000 grant the Fairbanks North Star Borough assembly was to consider Tuesday night.

The money would pay for consultants, financial analyses, public campaigning, along with travel to and from Washington, D.C., and towns affected by previous base closures or realignment.

Wilken said the argument for keeping the bases open and fully staffed could come in two parts: homeland security and keeping a strategic military presence in the North.

It is necessary to have two bases in Alaska to protect the Arctic region, Wilken said. Elmendorf Air Force Base is located near Anchorage.

"There has to be a backup for Elmendorf in the Arctic, and that has to be Eielson," Wilken said.

Homeland security also is an issue, said Sen. Gene Therriault, R-North Pole. The trans-Alaska oil pipeline and a proposed natural gas pipeline need to be protected, he said. Relocating military assets to Anchorage would contribute to leaving the pipeline vulnerable, he said.

In 1995, 85 percent of the BRAC recommendations were accepted, and those bases were closed or realigned, Wilken said.

"We need to be part of that 15 percent," he said.

The Senate passed the supplemental spending bill and a capital budget bill on Tuesday.

Senators back legislation to delay closures

Fairbanks Daily News-Miner

Sam Bishop

May 19, 2005

WASHINGTON--Alaska's senators want to delay the military base realignment and closure process in the wake of the Defense Department's recommendation last week to remove fighters and most personnel from Eielson Air Force Base.

Republican Sens. Ted Stevens and Lisa Murkowski on Wednesday co-sponsored legislation introduced by Sen. John Thune, R-S.D., that would delay the base closure process until most troops return from Iraq and a broad military strategy review is complete.

"The recent BRAC recommendations are far-reaching nationally and would have enormous effects on communities like Fairbanks," Murkowski said in a news release. "This legislation appropriately delays implementation of the recommendations until we have a more thorough inventory of our military assets and priorities."

Similar legislation has failed in the Senate in recent years.

The Defense Department, in recommendations given last week to the Base Realignment and Closure Commission, suggested eliminating a net total of 2,940 Air Force and civilian positions at Eielson, 30 miles southeast of Fairbanks. The base's 36 jet fighters would be sent to bases Outside.

Another 1,680 positions would be pulled from Elmendorf Air Force Base, Fort Richardson and Kulis Air Guard Station near Anchorage.

Stevens predicted last week that most of the Anchorage losses would be made up shortly by other military personnel movement plans unrelated to the base closure and realignment process. The Air Force job losses in the Fairbanks area would be partially offset by Army personnel transferring to Fort Wainwright, also unrelated to the base review, he noted.

Still, he said, the Eielson losses would be severe under the military's plan and he promised to protest to the BRAC Commission. He did so Wednesday in a letter to the commission chairman, Anthony Principi. He also asked the commission to hold a hearing in Fairbanks as soon as possible.

The Defense Department on May 13 recommended closing 33 major bases and realigning 29 others for a 20-year savings of about \$50 billion.

Ellsworth Air Force Base in South Dakota was on the closure list.

"We should not close a single base here in America before the Pentagon decides which overseas bases to close," Thune said in a news release. "It defies common sense to close a base like Ellsworth before its strategic value is addressed in the Pentagon's Quadrennial Defense Review." Thune's legislation would delay the process until several conditions have been met:

- * The return of "substantially all" troops from Iraq.
- * The military's completion of two analyses--the Quadrennial Defense Review covering overall U.S. defense needs and a separate ongoing study of overseas base needs.
- * The completion of separate maritime and homeland security strategies.
- * Delivery of a report to Congress on all these factors, due within a year of meeting the other criteria.

Gen. Richard Myers, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, told the base review commission Monday the broader studies already had helped guide the closure and realignment recommendations. The domestic base review was not a "stand-alone" event.

Congress approved the current BRAC process in 2001, the fifth round since 1988. Stevens and then-Sen. Frank Murkowski, now governor, unsuccessfully opposed the continuation of the BRAC process that year.

Stevens, Lisa Murkowski and Rep. Don Young all voted again in 2004 to delay the process. The House of Representatives actually passed delaying language in the annual military authorization bill last year. An amendment in the Senate failed, though, and the final legislation, written in a House-Senate conference committee and subsequently passed by both chambers, allowed the process to go forward.

Stevens said consistently during the past five years that his opposition to a new round of base closings wasn't motivated by parochial interests.

"We have four major bases left and they're not subject, really, in my opinion, to closure because they're too needed to maintain our presence in the North Pacific," Stevens said in September 2001.

"I don't see any danger of Alaska bases being closed," Stevens told reporters again in May 2004. Still, he said, the domestic base closings should be delayed.

"There's an enormous number of bases overseas that should be reviewed, and the determination should be made on which of those are going to be closed before we close our bases at home," he said in May last year.

Also, he said, he thought it was poor timing to talk about closing home bases when close to half of the military's personnel were overseas.

"To start talking about base closures and not be specific," he said, "is going to send a shock wave to people overseas who say, 'They're not going to close my base where my family are while I'm over here are they?' That's just a wrong thing to do."

Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld defended the adjustments before the BRAC Commission with Myers on Monday.

"The changes are essential in helping us win in this conflict," he said.

Opinion/Editorial Articles





2005 BRAC Commission Schedule

Base Realignment and Closure Commission

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Contact: Robert McCreary
Deputy Director of Communications
703 – 699 – 2964
Robert.mccreary@wso.whs.mil

9 June, 2005

Media Advisory for 2005 BRAC Regional Hearing in Fairbanks, Alaska

The Base Realignment and Closure Commission (BRAC) will hold its first regional hearing in Fairbanks, Alaska on Wednesday, June 15. BRAC Chairman Anthony Principi, Commissioners James Bilbray, Philip Coyle, and James Hansen will be attending.

Participating States: Alaska

Date:

Wednesday, June 15

Location:

Carlson Center
2010 2nd Avenue
Fairbanks, AK 99701
www.carlson-center.com

Times:

Doors Open to Public at 12:00PM

Hearing Coverage- Main Arena

1:00PM – 3:30PM Arrive no later than 12:00PM

Media Availability – Media Briefing Room

We will begin promptly 15 minutes after the end of the hearing.

Logistical information for media

- Satellite truck parking available
- 110 Watt power available for trucks w/ 220 ft power cord
- 400 ft. Cable run to press risers
- 65 ft. Max camera throw
- Analog internet connection available \$150
- TV quality sound and lighting

Credentialing:

Please contact Robert.mccreary@wso.whs.mil.

Please visit our website, www.brac.gov, for future updates.

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**2005 Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission
Suggested Talking Points for Visit to Eielson AFB**

1. Military value is the most important consideration to the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission (BRAC) as the Commission evaluates the suggestion made by the Department of Defense (DoD) to realign Eielson Air Force Base.

- The Commission will evaluate the economic, environmental, and other effects that the closure of the installation could have on the surrounding community but the key factor in the Commission's conclusion as to whether or not to suggest Eielson AFB for realignment is military value.
- The Commission understands the unique role that Eielson AFB has played in Alaska. The base was built to provide additional air defense coverage against an "over the top" attack on North America by Soviet bombers. In addition, Eielson AFB was critical in refueling our nuclear armed B-52 bombers and keeping them constantly airborne and ready to attack.
- The Commission understands the continued role that Eielson has played in the defense of Alaska and the nation. The Commission will evaluate the current military value of the base as the DoD seeks to streamline and transform our military to meet changing global threats.

2. The Commission is aware of the human impact that the suggestion to realign Eielson AFB could have, should the suggestion be enacted.

- The Congress established the Commission as an independent entity to ensure that all critical factors have been evaluated, and that the effects on the surrounding community have been taken into account in the decision to recommend a base for closure or realignment.
- The Commission will evaluate the economic impact that the installation realignment would have on the larger Fairbanks community surrounding the base, while basing its decision almost entirely upon military value.
- Eielson AFB has served in a unique role in the defense of the nation. Home to both the United States' missile defense system and the trans-Alaska pipeline, Alaskans and the nation have benefited from the projection of air power resident at Eielson. The Commission will analyze Eielson AFB's future role in light of the DoD's recommendations.
- The Commission understands that the current recommendations will have a strong economic impact on the Fairbanks community. Estimates have placed the impact as high as an 8% reduction in employment. The Commission will take into full consideration the economic ramifications of the DoD's recommendations.

3. The Congress established the Commission as a non-political, transparent, and independent entity to perform a thorough evaluation, through a process set forth by law, of the bases suggested for closure or realignment by DoD.

- The Commission serves to ensure that all pertinent factors have been included in the analysis and that the impact that the suggestions to close or realign a base would have on the surrounding community, have been fully evaluated.
- The Commission encourages public input. Community groups wishing to submit information that they feel may have been overlooked by DoD, are encouraged to contact their Congressional representative. Additionally, the public may submit comments directly through the Commission's official website: www.brac.gov.

Facts compiled from included press clippings.



**2005 Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission
Suggested Q's & A's for Visit to Eielson AFB**

Q1. The combined proposed cuts for military presence in the State of Alaska are substantial. Estimates suggest that roughly 4,800 jobs will be lost in Alaska. Most of these jobs are located at both Elmendorf Air Force Base and Eielson Air Force Base. Is there a reason that the Air Force installations seem to have been targeted for reduction by the DoD?

A1. The statute establishes the criteria. As outlined by the statute, the Department of Defense (DoD) placed priority on military value; while also taking into consideration economic, environmental, and other effects that the closure or realignment of a base would have on the community surrounding that base. Part of what constitutes DoD's determination of military value is jointness, ease of mobility, and the base's strategic role in today's changing global threats. The Commission is completely open and transparent, and with exception of material sensitive to national security, all information received or used by the Commission will be made publicly accessible. The purpose of the Commission is to ensure that all the pertinent factors have been evaluated as prescribed by law.

Q2. Estimates predict that the proposed realignment of Eielson AFB will cause roughly an 8% reduction in the greater Fairbanks population base. Economically, this will not only impact state revenue and small business, but it will have significant effects on schools, churches, and community services. Will the Commission take this into account?

A2. The Commission understands the role that Eielson AFB plays in Fairbank's economic vitality. The Commission understands the significance of this particular recommendation and will perform a full evaluation

Q2. Strategically, Alaska is an important state. It is home to both the United States' missile defense system and the trans-Alaska pipeline. In addition, Alaska has half the coastline of the United States and the perimeter that faces Asia. Eielson AFB's primary duty was to reinforce the troops stationed in Korea. The Pentagon has reduced the number of troops in Korea. Does it make strategic sense to downsize the base?

A2. The most critical consideration in the Commission's evaluation is military of the installation. The Commission will take into account, chiefly, the military value of the base, but will also consider other factors. The Department of Defense delineated the strategic/military value of installations in Alaska based upon jointness, ease of mobility, and the base's strategic role in today's changing global threats. Alaska is a unique and valuable state in both location and resources. The Commission will consider all of these factors in its final recommendation to the President.

Q3. Under the proposed realignment, Eielson AFB would lose all fighter airframes but retain an Air National Guard tanker unit. The base would revert to "warm status" and would be used primarily for training exercises. Eielson is an expensive

base to maintain given the climate of the interior of Alaska. Is it economically viable to maintain Eielson with such reductions in manpower?

A3. The Commission will perform a thorough, accurate, and objective analysis which will take into account, chiefly, the military value of the base, but will also consider other factors. Please be assured that the Commission will make a full evaluation, as prescribed by law, before coming to its conclusions and formulating its suggestions.

Q5. In the coming years, Elmendorf is slated to receive 48 F/A 22 Raptors and the Air Force's new C-17 Globemaster III cargo planes. The recommendations suggest that the air defense of Alaska can be achieved solely through Elmendorf AFB. However, Eielson AFB lies approximately 150 miles closer to the national missile defense silos at Fort Greely than does Elmendorf AFB. Will the Commission consider this in its recommendation?

A5. The Commission will take into account, chiefly, the military value of the base, but will also consider other factors. The Department of Defense delineated the strategic/military value of installations in Alaska based upon jointness, ease of mobility, and the base's strategic role in today's changing global threats. Alaska is a unique and valuable state in both location and resources. The presence of the national missile defense infrastructure in the State is a factor that the Commission will strongly consider.

Q6. Under the current BRAC recommendations, the Fairbanks community feels as though they have received an unnecessary blow. The recommendation to reduce Eielson AFB's status but retain its aerial training component does not recognize the partnership with state and local communities that is implicit in the agreement to periodically close large areas of airspace in Interior Alaska. These closures are a large inconvenience for civilian air operators in the region. If the proposed realignment is to occur, the community may be less amenable to these closures. How will the Commission consider this?

A6. The Commission respects the relationship that forms between military installations and the neighboring communities. However, this is outside of the purview of the Commission in reviewing the DoD's recommendations. Primarily the Commission will consider the military value of the base. The Commission will also take into consideration economic, environmental, and other effects that the closure or realignment of a base would have on the community surrounding that base.

Q7. How can the Community make the Commission aware of information that the Community feels may have been overlooked by DoD?

A7. The BRAC Commission encourages public input into this transparent and objective process. Community groups who wish to submit information for the Atlanta Regional Hearing, scheduled for Thursday, 30 June, are urged to contact their Congressional representative. Additionally, the public may submit comments through the Commission's official website, which is www.brac.gov.

Facts compiled from included press clippings.



EIELSON AIR FORCE BASE ALASKA

National News Articles

Sen. Stevens Supports Postponement of BRAC, Asks for BRAC Hearing In Fairbanks
Gov. Murkowski Acts to Respond to BRAC Recommendations

Local News Articles

Fairbanks Mobilizes to Keep Eielson a Fully Active Base
Base shake-up jolts Alaska; If approved, changes would be phased in over 6 years
Stevens: Eielson's Importance Ignored
Senators mobilize against closures; LEGISLATION: Move could stall process until several criteria are met.
Young Explains BRAC Vote
Congressmen Say They Lack Data to Decide on Base Closures
Reaction to Pentagon Base Closing Recommendations
Fairbanks Has Less Than a Month to Prepare for BRAC Hearing
Economist: Eielson Reduction Will Affect Fairbanks Economy
University President Chosen to Articulate Eielson Cause

Opinion/Editorial Articles

Voice of the Times

National News Articles

SEN. STEVENS SUPPORTS POSTPONEMENT OF BRAC, ASKS FOR BRAC HEARING IN FAIRBANKS

US States News
May 18, 2005

WASHINGTON

The office of Sen. Ted Stevens, R-Alaska, issued the following press release:

Today, Sen. Ted Stevens (R-Alaska) joined Sen. John Thune (R-S.D.) and co-sponsored legislation to postpone the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Act, the **BRAC**, out of serious concern over the Secretary of Defense's recommendation to make **Eielson Air Force Base** a "warm base."

The postponement of the **BRAC** would require certain actions take place prior to the **BRAC** process restarting. The actions include a complete analysis, consideration and implementation of the Commission on Review of Overseas Military Facility Structure, the return from deployment in the Iraq theater of operations of substantially all (as determined by the Secretary of Defense) major combat units and assets of the Armed Forces; the receipt by the House and Senate Armed Services Committees of the quadrennial defense review that is to be submitted in 2006; the complete development and implementation of the National Maritime Security Strategy; and, the complete development and implementation of the Homeland Defense and Civil Support directive. Until these directives are met the **BRAC** will have no further force or effect.

"I am extremely concerned that the Secretary of Defense did not take into consideration the significant impact of leaving Alaska and our nation vulnerable to attack by realigning **Eielson**," stated Stevens. "Having a significant military presence in the Interior is vital to keeping our nation protected from the north. Without **Eielson** we are not able to do that properly. I intend to find out why they thought it appropriate to let the refueling tankers have no protection, and why our nation should have inadequate protection in the north."

In addition to his support of this measure, Senator Stevens today wrote to **BRAC** Commission Chairman Anthony Principi regarding the "warm base" status of **Eielson**. Stevens expressed his concern about Alaska's security and the nation's defense by downgrading **Eielson's** status.

"**Eielson's** close proximity to vast airspaces and ranges provides an extremely valuable military asset to the Defense Department. Strategically, the location of the installations allows units based there to respond to contingencies in Europe faster than units at bases on the East Coast. The same is true for the Pacific Theater. **Eielson** units can deploy to Korea more expeditiously than many of the units based in California," stated Stevens in his letter to Principi.

Stevens also requested that the Commission hold hearings in Fairbanks in order to evaluate the proposed recommendation, "due to the high military value of **Eielson Air Force Base**...it is imperative for the commission to demonstrate the recommendation was based on the criteria set out in law and the force structure plan." The **BRAC** Commission has stated that they will hold a hearing in Fairbanks on June 15, 2005.

GOV. MURKOWSKI ACTS TO RESPOND TO BRAC RECOMMENDATIONS

US States News

FAIRBANKS, Alaska

Gov. Frank Murkowski, R-Alaska, issued the following news release:

Gov. Frank H. Murkowski will create a 15-member task force to respond to the Department of Defense's Base Realignment and Closure recommendation to realign **Eielson Air Force Base**.

Governor Murkowski flew to Fairbanks today when the **BRAC** recommendations were made public to convene a meeting with local leaders. Under the recommendations, Fairbanks is the community that would feel the greatest economic impact in Alaska.

The 15-member task force will work with the Congressional Delegation to offer Alaska's perspective to the **BRAC** recommendation. It will also determine what community, job, family and retraining assistance can be made available.

"I don't agree that **Eielson** should be included in the **BRAC** recommendations because of its strategic location, but my administration will do what it can to mitigate the negative impact this decision could have on Alaskans," Murkowski said. "This decision will affect families and whole communities, and so I hope that all Alaskans will make their voices heard."

Members of the **BRAC** Commission or staff will visit all 62 military installations effected and the commission will hold regional hearings at sites that will be determined later. The entire process is expected to be complete by the end of 2005.

"The **BRAC** process is a difficult one to turn around and so we should be careful not to hold out false hope, but we still should do everything in our power to make our case," Murkowski said.

The Department of Defense estimates that between 2006-2011 there will be 2,940 direct jobs lost and 1,770 indirect jobs lost as a result of the **Eielson** realignment. This represents 8.7 percent of the Fairbanks area employment.

The department is recommending that the A-10 and F-16 aircraft at **Eielson** be relocated to bases in Louisiana, Georgia and Nevada and that the Air National Guard Tanker unit and rescue alert detachment remain behind. The base would be reduced to "warm" status and be retained by the Air Force for training exercises.

Governor Murkowski said the DoD decision makes more important the administration's work toward construction of a natural gas pipeline and a proposal to extend the Alaska Railroad through Canada. The administration is currently pursuing three Stranded Gas applications.

The railroad project would represent a multi-million dollar project that links Fairbanks with the Lower 48.

The 15-member task force will be co-chaired by Adjutant General Craig Campbell and North Pole Mayor Jeff Jacobsen. Also invited to participate are mayors Jim Whitaker and Steve Thompson, state Sens. Gene Therriault, Gary Wilken and state Reps. John Coghill, Jay Ramras, John Harris, school superintendent Ann Shortt, Billie Blanchard and Commissioners Greg O'Claray and Edgar Blatchford.

"Beyond the economic impact to Alaska by this decision, I have concerns that removing fighter strength from this state will result in a weakened Pacific Region force strength. It is not in the best interest of the Department of Defense or the Air Force to step away from the important missions that are assigned to **Eielson Air Force Base**," Murkowski said.

The DoD is also recommending the Cold Regions Test Center headquarters at Fort Wainwright be moved to Fort Greely. The department does not anticipate any job losses as a result of this move.

It also recommends **Kulis Air National Guard Base** in Anchorage be closed and its operations be moved to nearby **Elmendorf Air Force Base**, at a net gain of one C-130 aircraft. The 3rd Wing at **Elmendorf Air Force Base** would be reduced to 18 fighter aircraft. The department estimates this will cost 848 direct jobs and 622 indirect jobs between 2006-2011, but it does not take into consideration pending force upgrades.

"While there will be some realignment affecting Anchorage, overall the final outcome would result in more personnel in the Elmendorf and Richardson installations than previous," Murkwoski said.

Local News Articles

Fairbanks mobilizes to keep Eielson a fully active base

Alaska Journal of Commerce

Tim Bradner

05/29/05

Additionally, he said the national missile defense interceptor silos lie about 60 miles southeast of Eielson. The military, in justifying the proposed elimination of Eielson's 36 fighter jets, may have figured new F-22 fighter jets scheduled for deployment at Elmendorf Air Force Base near Anchorage could protect the interceptors, Stevens said. But Elmendorf is 200 miles from Fort Greely. Eielson is about 40 miles.

Stevens and Murkowski also are sponsoring legislation to halt the entire base realignment and closure process. They contend that domestic bases should not be closed or radically changed until overseas bases have been reviewed and a four-year defense strategy has been completed.

The Pentagon recommendations are that Eielson remain as a base for Air National Guard tankers used in aerial refueling, which will keep 600 to 700 military positions at the base. Whitaker said Eielson can be more effective in supporting training if it is a fully active air base with the fighter squadrons that are now based there.

Norm Phillips, Doyon Ltd. resources vice president and board chairman of the Fairbanks Chamber of Commerce, said, "we're still struggling to understand the military justification for this. We're still working our way through the shock.

"We had looked at the military's criteria for the base realignment process but we never expected one of our bases might be vulnerable," given the Pentagon's recent efforts to build up forces in Alaska, he said.

Phillips said the chamber is pleased that members of the BRAC will visit Fairbanks before final recommendations are made to Congress. The normal procedure is that two members of the commission visit communities that are affected, but it's not a requirement, Phillips said.

Whitaker said he was disappointed that the recommendation to reduce Eielson's status but retain the aerial training did not recognize the partnership with the state and local communities that is implicit in the agreement to periodically close large areas of airspace in Interior Alaska for aircraft training and maneuvers.

The airspace closures are an inconvenience for civilian air operators in the region, "but we have cooperated with the military partly because of the importance of Eielson to our local economy," Whitaker said.

"The Air Force and the Department of Defense have been very sensitive to community and state concerns on the airspace issue, and we have been very accommodating," the mayor said.

If the reductions take place it could have the effect of reducing state and local support for the airspace closures, he said.

The Pentagon report recommended to distribute the 354th Fighter Wing's A-10 attack aircraft with 12 planes going to a new fighter group at Moody Air Force Base in Georgia, three planes going to the 917th Fighter Wing at Barksdale Air Force Base in Louisiana, and three aircraft going to backup aircraft inventory.

The 18 F-16s in the 354th would go to the 57th Fighter Wing at Nellis Air Force Base in Nevada, while the Air National Guard's tanker unit at rescue alert detachment would remain at Eielson.

In its recommendation to the BRAC, the Pentagon also recommended closure of Kulis Air National Guard Base in Anchorage as well as personnel reductions and relocations at Fort Richardson and Elmendorf Air Force Base.

If the Pentagon's recommendations are accepted, Kulis Air National Guard Base at Ted Stevens Anchorage International Airport would close, with its C-130 aircraft and helicopters moved to Elmendorf.

Elmendorf itself would lose 1,103 military personnel but gain 169 civilian jobs, for a net loss of 934 positions. The 3rd Fighter Wing at the base would lose 24 of its 42 F-15Cs and F-15Ds to the 1st Fighter Wing at Langley Air Force Base in Virginia.

Fort Richardson would lose 286 jobs - 87 military and 199 civilian positions.

Reactions to the changes at Kulis, Elmendorf and Richardson are muted, in comparison to Fairbanks.

"Early indications are that Kulis personnel may move to Elmendorf," said Rep. Don Young, R-Alaska. "As far as Kulis is concerned, the state has been pushing for the close of the base for a long time. The property can become an excellent expansion capability for the airport."

Anchorage Mayor Mark Begich agreed with Young. "New personnel being transferred to Elmendorf and Richardson will make up for any losses, he said. "If Kulis is eventually closed, that base is certainly prime property for expansion of Anchorage's air cargo operations, which are already among the world's busiest."

The BRAC must submit its final recommendations to President Bush by Sept. 18. The president and Congress must then accept or reject the commission's recommendations by Nov. 7.

Pentagon analysts spent two years developing the recommendations. The recommendation would close, consolidate or reorganize more than 800 military facilities in all 50 states. The plan would save \$48.8 billion over 20 years, the Pentagon said.

Some critics argue the Pentagon's recommendations are premature because they do not account for the bulk of 70,000 troops that would be relocated from Europe to the United States. The Pentagon may not need to close as many bases as are recommended because of the returning troops.

Eielson has a long history in Alaska. The base was built to provide additional air defense coverage against an "over the top" attack on North America by Soviet bombers.

During the tense decades of the Cold War, Eielson played a key role in refueling Strategic Air Command, nuclear-armed B-52 bombers, which at the time were kept constantly airborne and ready to respond if the U.S.S.R. attacked. Eielson was also a base for secret U-2 reconnaissance flights into Soviet airspace.

Today tanker aircraft from Eielson refuel military aircraft flying polar routes.

Base shake-up jolts Alaska; If approved, changes would be phased in over 6 years

Anchorage Daily News

DON HUNTER

May 14, 2005

Eielson Air Force Base outside Fairbanks would lose all but about 130 of the nearly 3,000 military personnel stationed there under a base realignment and closure plan announced Friday by Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld.

The plan includes major shifts and cuts at other Alaska bases as well, including the closing of Kulis Air National Guard Base in Anchorage, the loss of more than 1,500 military and civilian positions at Elmendorf Air Force Base, and modest personnel reductions at Fort Richardson.

Altogether, the state would see a loss of more than 4,800 military and civilian jobs.

The Alaska recommendations are part of a sweeping reconfiguring of the nation's military bases

that the Department of Defense estimates would save about \$48.8 billion over 20 years.

In all, Rumsfeld has proposed closing 33 major bases and realigning 29 others, according to the Defense Department. Scores of other shifts and cuts are planned for other military installations. Most of the changes, if approved, would phase in over the next three to six years. All must be reviewed by an independent commission and approved by the president this fall. Congress can block the whole list but not individual recommendations.

The closing of Kulis would be tempered by the transfer of most Air Guard personnel and their search-and-rescue responsibilities to Elmendorf, where they would set up shop as an independent unit that would work in association with active duty personnel. Kulis' complement of eight C-130 aircraft, three HC-130s, and HH-60 helicopters also would go to Elmendorf, along with four C-130s from a Texas base.

Elmendorf would lose 1,499 military and 65 civilian jobs under the realignment but would pick up almost 400 military personnel and 233 civilian positions. Elmendorf is the state's largest military installation, with 6,775 personnel on base in October, according to the Defense Department. The base would lose 24 of the 42 F-15C and F-15D fighters stationed there, as well as 18 F-15E jets.

Elmendorf has been chosen as a home base for the new F/A22 Raptor, and two Raptor squadrons, 48 jets, are expected to arrive here by the end of the decade, which would largely offset the loss of F-15s. Elmendorf also is slated to receive the Air Force's new C-17 Globemaster III cargo planes.

The effect on Fort Richardson would be comparatively minor. The Army base, next door to Elmendorf, would lose 86 military personnel and 199 civilian jobs, according to the list released this morning by the Defense Department. Those modest losses should be overwhelmed by the expected arrival of about 2,500 soldiers being transferred here this year.

The Army's Fort Wainwright in Fairbanks, which has about 4,500 troops, many of them about to head to Iraq, wouldn't be affected by the plan.

Eielson, about 25 miles southeast of Fairbanks, would suffer enormous losses and revert to "warm base" status. That means it would remain open, with a meager Air Force contingent, and be available for training exercises and other purposes.

As of October, Eielson had 2,950 military personnel on base, according to statistics available on an Air Force Web site. Under Rumsfeld's closure recommendations, Eielson would lose 2,821 military personnel and 319 civilian positions.

Rumsfeld's recommendations must be reviewed by the independent Base Realignment and Closure Commission. The **BRAC** commission must complete its work and forward a report to President Bush by Sept. 8, and Bush must accept or reject the recommendations as a whole; if he accepts the list, he must transmit it by Sept. 23 to Congress, which will have 45 days to reject it. If Congress takes no action, the plan becomes binding.

LAWMAKERS REACT

Sens. Ted Stevens and Lisa Murkowski and Gov. Frank Murkowski were particularly critical of the radical downsizing proposed for Eielson and said Friday that they will try to block that plan.

Gov. Murkowski flew to Fairbanks on Friday morning to discuss Eielson's situation with community leaders and formed a task force to respond to it.

"The **BRAC** process is a difficult one to turn around and so we should be careful not to hold out false hope, but we still should do everything in our power to make our case," the governor said in a statement.

Word of the proposed downsizing moved quickly through the area. Paul Brown, who owns a Fairbanks advertising firm, lives in North Pole and is president of the North Pole Community Chamber of Commerce, said Interior residents feel like they're absorbing the brunt of the **BRAC** proposals.

"All we're going to have left is a gas-station-slash-air-exercise-base," Brown said.

In Washington, D.C., Stevens said he plans to protest the Eielson reductions to the **BRAC** commission, which will review Rumsfeld's recommendations and submit a final closure list to the president in September.

"Alaska has half the coastline in the United States and we have the perimeter that faces Asia and there will be fewer aircraft in Korea," Stevens said in a written statement. "It doesn't make sense to me and I intend to go to the Commission and present that case.

"I think it is wrong to leave our area without fighter protection and it is wrong from a national security point of view because the access to our nation from that part of the world is across Alaska, so it is just not a good decision."

CREATING EFFICIENCIES AND SAVINGS

In an afternoon press conference, Lt. Gen. Carrol "Howie" Chandler, who oversees all military activities in Alaska as commander of the Alaskan Command, said the changes, if approved, will take place over the next several years.

If the realignments and closures are approved by the president and Congress, actions to implement the recommendations will have to commence within two years and be completed within six years, he said.

"Historically, about 85 percent of what has been recommended to the **BRAC** commission has been accepted," Chandler said, although the panel also has the power to remove bases or add others.

Chandler said the goal of the realignment effort is to create efficiencies and savings while positioning America's military to better respond to 21st Century threats. The proposed closure of Kulis, he said, makes sense because "there are some very good efficiencies to be gained by moving the Guard unit onto Elmendorf."

Reservists and active duty Air Force personnel already cooperate and work in tandem on long-range aircraft and in other missions as well, he said.

Similar efficiencies may be gained by consolidating installation management and support functions -- snowplowing, street maintenance, troop support -- between Elmendorf and Fort

Richardson, he said.

Chandler said he was not part of the decision-making process that led to Rumsfeld's list and would not speculate on why Eielson fared worse than Elmendorf in the realignment recommendations or why Fort Wainwright and Fort Richardson are affected more modestly than the Air Force bases.

He also said he thinks it's a mistake to look at the proposed deep downsizing of Eielson in isolation, although he said he's also sensitive to the concerns of Fairbanks and North Pole residents.

"When you see 3,000 members potentially leaving a community, that's a very emotional issue," Chandler said, adding that the Defense Department will help communities adapt to changes brought on by military base changes.

"We intend to work with the community any way we can to minimize the impacts," he said.

SILVER LINING

Both Chandler and Maj. Gen. Craig Campbell, adjutant general of the state Department of Military and Veterans Affairs, said the closure of Kulis, on the south end of Ted Stevens Anchorage International Airport, is offset by the movement of its air rescue squadrons and aircraft to Elmendorf, where those important functions will continue.

Campbell also noted that four additional C-130s, from a guard base in the Lower 48, will be joining the Kulis aircraft moving to Elmendorf.

"We're concerned about the move, because Kulis is a very good location and has served us well for 50 years," he said. "But moving to Elmendorf and getting additional aircraft is also good."

The Kulis move will have a silver lining, as well, Campbell and Chandler said, freeing up land at the Anchorage's international airport for expansion of the airport's cargo hub.

Mayor Mark Begich and George Vakalis, a retired top Army officer in Alaska who participated in earlier **BRAC** rounds and currently chairs the Anchorage Chamber's military committee, agreed that airport managers will be able to make use of land vacated by Kulis.

Begich said that the loss of more than 1,000 personnel from Elmendorf is "a serious concern" but that the local Air Force base and Fort Richardson likely are to see net gains in personnel over the next few years.

"It's not great to have news like this, and it's not over yet," Begich said. "We hope (the **BRAC** commission) will come up here, and we'll continue to make our pitch as to why these bases are important."

Vakalis, who as garrison commander supervised all three Alaska Army posts, said earlier realignment and closure rounds largely targeted personnel reductions but not installations. Many of the recommendations -- the consolidation of support services for Fort Richardson and Elmendorf, for example -- are sensible and should create significant savings, he said.

"As far as the **Eielson** picture, I'm not sure how that's all going to shake out," Vakalis said. "That's

a lot of positions they're going to be losing. That will certainly have an impact on those communities economically."

Stevens: Eielson's importance ignored

Juneau Empire

June 1, 2005

ANCHORAGE - The Pentagon seems to have concluded Eielson Air Force Base has no strategic importance, and "that is an absolute error in judgment," U.S. Sen. Ted Stevens said Tuesday. Stevens, R-Alaska, spoke as he prepared to travel to Fairbanks to meet with state and community leaders who will try to persuade the Base Realignment and Closure Commission that Eielson should remain at current staffing levels. A hearing in Fairbanks is scheduled for June 15.

As part of the base closure and realignment process, the Defense Department on May 13 recommended that Eielson's active airmen be reduced by 2,800 and that its fighter aircraft be moved to other bases. The Pentagon contends realigning most of Eielson's personnel would save nearly \$230 million annually.

Borough and state officials fear that more than 1,700 additional jobs would be lost because of the reductions. The base is about 30 miles south of Fairbanks.

For Eielson to be removed from the realignment list, five of the nine BRAC commission members must disagree with the Defense Department recommendation. Commissioners would have to be persuaded that the Defense Department strayed from its realignment and closure criteria by putting Eielson on the list.

"They overlooked one substantial portion of that, which is that the current deployment here is one of dual mission," Stevens said. "One, to reinforce the North Pacific, particularly in to South Korea. The other is to reinforce northern Europe."

Senators mobilize against closures; LEGISLATION: Move could stall process until several criteria are met.

Anchorage Daily News

NICOLE TSONG

May 19, 2005

WASHINGTON -

A Pentagon proposal to cut nearly 3,000 jobs from **Eielson Air Force Base** outside Fairbanks has prompted Alaska's two senators to back new legislation that would delay the base closure process nationwide.

Republican Sens. Ted Stevens and Lisa Murkowski have joined in co-sponsoring legislation introduced Wednesday that would halt the base realignment and closure process until several requirements were met, including the return of most troops from Iraq, the completion of an analysis of overseas facilities, and the release of the Pentagon's comprehensive long-term assessment, the Quadrennial Defense Review. That review is expected out early next year.

The legislation was introduced by Republican Sen. John Thune of South Dakota, which is home

to Ellsworth **Air Force Base**, a facility recommended for closure. Thune, who unseated Democrat Tom Daschle in 2004, claimed during this campaign that he could save Ellsworth through his political connections to the White House, and its listing in the **BRAC** process has proven politically embarrassing for him.

Other co-sponsors include Sens. Trent Lott, R-Miss.; Susan Collins and Olympia Snowe, R-Maine; Judd Gregg, R-N.H.; Pete Domenici, R-N.M.; and Jeff Bingaman, D-N.M.

The **BRAC** process was designed to insulate military decisions on U.S. bases from domestic political pressure. The list of cutbacks and closures, released May 13 by Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, is subject to review by a nine-member independent commission. But once the **BRAC** Commission releases its final report, the president can only accept or reject it in its entirety. Congress will have a similar take-it-or-leave-it decision.

The cutback at **Eielson** was the most significant on Rumsfeld's list for Alaska. The base would continue to operate air tankers but lose its fighter jets and other operations. Kulis Air National Guard Base in Anchorage was on the closure list.

"I am extremely concerned that the secretary of defense did not take into consideration the significant impact of leaving Alaska and our nation vulnerable to attack by realigning **Eielson**," Stevens said in a statement. "Having a significant military presence in the Interior is vital to keeping our nation protected from the north. ... I intend to find out why they thought it appropriate to let the refueling tankers have no protection, and why our nation should have inadequate protection in the north."

Stevens, the chairman for the Defense Appropriations subcommittee, also wrote a letter Wednesday to **BRAC** commission chairman Anthony Principi, asking the commission to hold a hearing in Fairbanks to evaluate the proposed recommendation.

Murkowski added that the recommendations would have an enormous effect on places like Fairbanks.

"This legislation appropriately delays implementation of the recommendations until we have a more thorough inventory of our military assets and priorities," she said in a statement.

The proposed massive reconfiguration of the nation's military bases would result in savings of \$48.8 billion over the next 20 years, the Pentagon said. The proposal recommended closing 33 major bases and realigning 29 others, according to the Defense Department, with most of the changes taking place over the next three to six years.

Under the Pentagon's plan in Alaska, **Eielson** would lose all but about 130 of its 2,950 military personnel in addition to its 18 F-16 fighter jets and 18 A-10 aircraft, slow-flying jets often referred to as warthogs. It also would be reduced to "warm base" status, which would keep it open for training exercises but only require a small number of military personnel.

Last week when the list was first released, Stevens said the only real disappointment for him was **Eielson**, and he vowed to fight its realignment. He was particularly concerned about moving the fighter jets out of the area and said it didn't make sense to reduce the number of jets at **Eielson** especially because forces in Korea are being cut back.

Most of the Air Guard personnel and equipment at Kulis would be transferred to Elmendorf **Air**

Force Base in Anchorage. Elmendorf is slated to lose 1,499 military and 65 civilian jobs under the realignment but would gain 397 military positions and 233 civilian jobs. Elmendorf would lose most of its fighter jets, but it also is the future home base for the new F-A 22 Raptor, and two squadrons should arrive by the end of the decade and offset the loss of the F-15s.

Fort Richardson in Anchorage would lose 86 military and 199 civilian jobs.

Sen. Tim Johnson, D-S.D., acknowledged to the Associated Press on Wednesday that it will be difficult to get the legislation passed since the Bush administration was likely to oppose it.

Young explains BRAC vote

Associated Press State and Local Wire

May 27, 2005

FAIRBANKS

Rep. Don Young voted against an amendment to slow down a military base review because it's the wrong way to defend **Eielson Air Force Base** near Fairbanks from proposed cuts, the Alaska Republican said Thursday.

Trying to stop the process is not realistic, Young told the Fairbanks Daily News-Miner on Thursday after a House of Representatives floor session.

Instead, efforts should be directed at modifying the Pentagon's recommendations.

"We have to express the need to keep that base there," Young said.

His comments came the same day members of the U.S. Senate and 14 governors sent separate letters of protest about the Base Realignment and Closure plan. Senators scrambling to head off proposed military base closings in their states are pressing Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld to release all data used to decide which facilities to shut down.

Nearly two dozen senators signed the letter, saying they need to know how the Pentagon ranked the bases and determined their military value.

Governors from 14 states, including Alaska Gov. Frank Murkowski, sent a similar letter to President Bush asking him to direct Rumsfeld to release all the information and request a delay in the base closing process until the data is made available and there has been time for review.

Federal statute, said the governors, requires the information be delivered no more than seven days after the list of proposed closings is released. The list was made public May 13.

The Pentagon proposed moving **Eielson's** fighter aircraft and most of its approximately 3,000 Air Force personnel.

Alaska Sens. Ted Stevens and Lisa Murkowski have signed onto a bill in the Senate that would delay the **BRAC** process until most troops have returned from Iraq, overseas bases have been reworked and an overall military strategy has been finished.

Young voted Wednesday night against an identical amendment to the House's annual authorization bill for defense spending.

"I think it's the wrong way to go," Young said. Most members of the House agreed with him. The amendment failed 316-112.

Stevens and Murkowski have both said that getting Senate approval of the **BRAC**-delaying bill will be difficult. They said, however, it was important to send a message of disapproval to the Pentagon.

That sentiment did not prevail in the House. Young noted that many House members whose bases face possible closures and reductions voted for the process to continue.

"I wasn't the only one," he said.

Young said the **BRAC** commission can be persuaded to modify the Pentagon proposal.

"The commission has said there is going to be changes," he said.

Stevens has suggested the economic damage from the removal of **Eielson's** Air Force personnel might be overstated by the Pentagon report. If, as Air Force officials have suggested, the base becomes a major training site for crews from around the country, it will continue to make a significant economic contribution.

Young also saw hope in the situation.

"It could have been closed," he said. "This is a realignment."

Congressmen say they lack data to decide on base closures

Associated Press State and Local Wire
May 26, 2005

FAIRBANKS

Alaska's congressional delegation and other members of Congress say they have not received detailed information necessary to analyze Pentagon proposals to close some of the nation's military bases.

That frustration in the House of Representatives, however, did not lead to a postponement of the process Wednesday.

Two-thirds of the House, including Rep. Don Young, R-Alaska, voted against an amendment that would have slowed the process.

The Pentagon provided Sen. Lisa Murkowski, R-Alaska, with about 50 pages of information concerning **Eielson Air Force Base**, which the Pentagon two weeks ago suggested should be stripped of its jet fighters and most permanent Air Force personnel. The base would lose nearly

3,000 jobs under the plan.

Murkowski spokeswoman Kristin Pugh said the 50 pages were mostly conclusions rather than detailed data. The conclusions arrived a week and a half after Murkowski's staff requested the data, Pugh said.

"What we were told was that the Office of the Secretary of Defense was conducting a security review of the specific recommendations and was unable to release the detailed analysis," Pugh said.

That delay contradicts the military's promise that the Base Realignment and Closure process would be fair and open, she said.

"How transparent is it if supposedly there is a security issue with releasing the information that the community of Fairbanks and the delegation need to defend **Eielson**?" Pugh asked.

U.S. Sen. Ted Stevens, R-Alaska, chairman of the Senate Appropriations Committee's subcommittee on defense spending, also has not received detailed information, according to spokeswoman Courtney Schikora Boone.

"We've heard from a number of senators that the Pentagon is not providing the information in a timely manner," Boone said. "We are having the same frustration."

An independent commission reviewing the Pentagon's recommendations will hold a hearing June 15 in Fairbanks. The lack of information has been a complaint of Fairbanks officials.

"We're at an extreme disadvantage because we don't know what that information is," said Jim Dodson, chairman of the statewide task force to protect **Eielson**. "The **BRAC** process was set up by Congress so communities would have an equal shot at providing input and this doesn't allow us to get our opinion out there."

The House voted 316-112 Wednesday evening to kill an amendment that would have postponed the **BRAC** process. Frustration with the lack of information appeared on the House floor during debate on the amendment.

Rep. Rob Simmons, R-Conn., said the **BRAC** Commission would visit the submarine base in Groton on June 1.

"We still don't have the information," he said.

Rep. Tom Allen, D-Maine, asked why the United States is closing military installations at home while fighting a war and building bases in Iraq.

"These are questions my constituents are asking. I don't have good answers but neither does the Pentagon," Allen said.

Other House members said the process should go forward.

The House Armed Services Committee voted last week 50-8 not to stop the **BRAC** process. It also voted 47-10 against delaying it.

Rep. Vic Snyder, D-Ark., said there will always be calls for more information from people who perceive harm from the process.

"There will never be a good time to do something like this," Snyder said.

Others are hoping to delay the **BRAC** process if more information is not forthcoming.

Sens. John Thune, R-S.D., and Olympia Snowe, R-Maine, introduced a bill Wednesday that would delay the **BRAC** Commission's deadlines by the same amount of time it takes the Pentagon to release the detailed data.

The senators asked for information produced by the "data calls" sent to every military base by the Pentagon before making its **BRAC** recommendations. They also want all documents describing how the Pentagon applied its "military value" criteria to each base.

Stevens has said the Pentagon did not weigh **Eielson's** strategic location enough when considering its military value.

Acting Secretary of Air Force Michael Dominguez told the **BRAC** Commission last week that the Pentagon's recommendations were based on a "reasoned, thoughtful, quantifiable approach to military value."

Reaction to Pentagon base closing recommendations

The Associated Press

May 13, 2005

Reaction to the Pentagon's proposal for closing and consolidating military facilities in Alaska:
"In the long run the only real disappointment is **Eielson (Air Force Base)**. I intend to protest to the Base Closure and Realignment Commission. Alaska has half the coastline in the United States and we have the perimeter that faces Asia and there will be fewer aircraft in Korea. The units in **Eielson's** first line of duty was to reinforce our units in Korea, and now that we have reduced forces in Korea it doesn't make sense to me and I intend to go to the commission and present that case. I think it is wrong to leave our area without fighter protection and it is wrong from a national security point of view because the access to our nation from that part of the world is across Alaska, so it is just not a good decision." - U.S. Sen. Ted Stevens, R-Alaska.

"I am disappointed in the Department of Defense's proposed reduction of over 4,600 positions, military and civilian, in Alaska over the 2006-2011 time period.

"The estimated loss of approximately 4,700 jobs, direct and indirect, in the Fairbanks area alone would be a huge blow to that community's economic and social well-being not just from tax revenue or a local business standpoint, but also the number of families that would be leaving, impacting schools, churches, and community services." - U.S. Sen. Lisa Murkowski, R-Alaska.

"Fortunately, because of Alaska's strategic position in the world, new soldiers and airmen and women are expected to be transferred to Elmendorf and Richardson soon, helping to make up for today's potential losses. If Kulis is eventually closed, that base is certainly prime property for

expansion of Anchorage's international cargo operations, which already are among the world's busiest" - Anchorage Mayor Mark Begich.

"We'll deal with this." - Fairbanks North Star Borough Mayor Jim Whitaker.

"It could have been worse," said Rep. Nancy Dahlstrom, R-Eagle, chairwoman of the Legislature's joint Armed Forces Committee. "Definitely, it will have an impact on the economy of Fairbanks."

"The news is not good at first blush." - Rep. Bob Lynn, chairman of the House Military and Veterans' Affairs Special Committee.

"The **BRAC** process is a difficult one to turn around and so we should be careful not to hold out false hope, but we still should do everything in our power to make our case." - Gov. Frank Murkowski.

"We are trying to shape ourselves right now for as far out into the future as we can see. - Lt. Gen. Carrol Chandler, head of the Alaskan Command.

"I am very disappointed by the decision of the Pentagon to realign **Eielson**. There will be a considerable loss of jobs in the Fairbanks region. The Alaska delegation is going to request a hearing on before the **BRAC** Commission in hopes to change their minds about the loss of mission capabilities of **Eielson**. Overall in this process Alaska comes out ahead because of the added battalions, paratroopers, Stryker brigades and military and civilian personnel in Fort Richardson." - U.S. Rep. Don Young, R-Alaska.

Fairbanks has less than a month to prepare for BRAC hearing

Associated Press State and Local Wire

May 20, 2005

FAIRBANKS

Community leaders thought they had 10 weeks to respond to a Pentagon proposal to reduce troop strength at Eielson Air Force Base by nearly 3,000. Instead they have less than a month.

The Base Realignment and Closure Commission said Thursday it would hold a hearing June 15 in Fairbanks to take public comment on the Pentagon's recommendation to reduce numbers at Eielson and Elmendorf and close Kulis Air National Guard Base in Anchorage. The trip is the only stop scheduled for Alaska.

Fairbanks North Star Borough Mayor Jim Whitaker has said the developments Thursday only added to the sense of urgency at his office.

"We probably have just two weeks to put together our case for the BRAC commission," said Jim Dodson of Dodson Development. The Fairbanks businessman has worked closely with Whitaker since the Pentagon made its realignment and closure recommendations last week.

Department of Defense estimates suggest the changes proposed for Eielson could result in a loss of 4,700 jobs in the Fairbanks area.

Dodson, at Whitaker's request, has taken the lead in putting together a team of prominent Alaskans with military experience to advise community leaders.

"The list is pretty short," Dodson said. "There's a lot of people who want to help, but they don't have the military expertise we need."

Three men who have the kind of experience sought by the borough are Ret. Gen. Joe Ralston; Ret. Gen. Pat Gamble, CEO of the Alaska Railroad; and University of Alaska President Mark Hamilton. All three said they were willing to help.

Hamilton and Ralston, former commander of the Alaska Command's joint military forces, said they would meet with Whitaker on Friday.

"If there's something I can do to help, I will be glad to do that," said Gamble, commander of the military's Alaska Command in 1996-1997.

He said he had spoken with a representative from the borough.

Hamilton, who served 31 years in the Army and was chief of staff under Ralston, said their first move would be to look for defects in the recommendation process.

"We need to read the BRAC language thoroughly to find out how they came to their decision," he said.

Gamble said the challenge will be to convince the commission that Eielson is more valuable to the military than the other 16 bases on the Defense Department list. The advisers are likely to focus on Eielson's strategic location and the availability of 60,000 square miles of training air space.

The borough has appropriated \$500,000 to lobby against the Eielson realignment. The Legislature is considering spending \$1 million to fight realignment at Eielson and other Alaska locations.

The commission must create its own list of recommendations and give them to President Bush by September 8. Bush then has two weeks to accept the list, ask the commission for revisions or reject it. If he accepts the commission recommendations, Congress will have 45 legislative days to accept or reject them, without revision.

Economist: Eielson reduction will affect Fairbanks economy

Associated Press Writer
DAN JOLING

ANCHORAGE, Alaska

A loss of most personnel at **Eielson Air Force Base** would have a major effect on the economy of the Fairbanks North Star Borough, an economist for the state Department of Labor said.

A Pentagon closure and realignment list released Friday indicated that **Eielson** would lose its

fighter squadrons, including airmen who fly F-16s Fighting Falcons and A/OA-10 Thunderbolt II aircraft.

The loss of the fighter squadrons would leave **Eielson** with just one flying wing, the 168th air refueling wing, a National Guard unit. The Air National Guard flies KC-135s.

Downsizings must be approved or modified by a federal base closing commission by Sept. 8, and then agreed to by Congress and President Bush, a process that could take six months.

Lt. Gen. Carrol Chandler, head of the Alaskan Command, emphasized at a news conference at Elmendorf **Air Force Base** that the base closure and realignment list is not the final word.

"It is important to remember this is an ongoing process," said Chandler, who is the senior military officer in Alaska.

However, he said, historically 85 percent of commission recommendations have been accepted and finalized.

Now that the military has made its recommendations, Chandler said he expects affected communities, as well as Alaska's state and congressional delegations, to get involved.

"We intend to work with communities any way we can to minimize the impacts," he said.

Republican Gov. Frank Murkowski said he will create a 15-member task force to respond to the **Eielson** recommendation.

"This decision will affect families and whole communities, and so I hope that all Alaskans will make their voices heard," Murkowski said.

The Pentagon lists **Eielson's** loss under the realignment plan at 2,821 military and 319 civilian jobs. The realignment would cost \$141 million and save \$229 million a year, according to the military.

A Fairbanks Community Research publication listed **Eielson's** military work force at 2,890 for the fourth quarter of 2004, said Brigitta Windisch-Cole, a state Department of Labor economist.

The loss of all jobs listed in the realignment would not leave the base with much, she said.

"That's almost a near-closure of that base," Windisch-Cole said. "That would have a significant impact."

The report listed an **Eielson** Air Force population, with dependents, of 6,484. That's about 7.6 percent of the borough population.

"That would definitely have an impact on the Fairbanks economy," Windisch-Cole said.

What might soften the impact is the Army's plan to locate a Stryker brigade at nearby Fort Wainwright, she said. Some of the Stryker brigade has been located temporarily at Fort Richardson in Anchorage.

Once deployments are completed next year, the Army population at Fort Wainwright is expected

to increase by about 1,500 soldiers.

Those soldiers, however, tend to be younger than the Air Force population, with fewer dependents, Windisch-Cole said.

U.S. Sen. Lisa Murkowski, R-Alaska, said the **Eielson** changes would effect more than the economy.

"The estimated loss of approximately 4,700 jobs, direct and indirect, in the Fairbanks area alone would be a huge blow to that community's economic and social well-being not just from tax revenue or a local business standpoint, but also the number of families that would be leaving, impacting schools, churches, and community services," she said.

She said she was confident that the Base Realignment and Closure Commission will recognize the strategic importance of Alaska's bases to national security.

U.S. Sen. Ted Stevens, R-Alaska, said he would protest the **Eielson** changes, given that the military has reduced forces in Korea and **Eielson's** first line of duty was to reinforce those units.

Fairbanks North Star Borough Mayor Jim Whitaker said the borough will deal with the potential loss of jobs in a methodical manner.

"It's clear that it's the first step in a process and it's a multiyear process," said Whitaker. "There is probably some room for alteration. That alteration will be in the hands of a very powerful congressional delegation."

He said attempts will be made to mitigate the effects at the local, state and national levels. The potential economic damage puts emphasis on the need to push for a natural gas line from the North Slope of Alaska and other local development efforts.

"We'll deal with this," he said.

Stevens said the closure and realignment list did not reflect ongoing force realignments that will positively effect Alaska.

Among them: eight C-17s beginning to arrive in Alaska in 2008; 48 F-22s expected to begin arriving in Alaska in 2007; additional Cope Thunder exercises planned for **Eielson Air Force Base**; the transition of the Airborne Battalion at Fort Richardson to an Airborne Brigade; and additional aviation units from Korea being moved to Fort Wainwright.

Reality of Eielson cutbacks hits hard; North Pole: Some see economic crisis with loss of 3,000 jobs.

Anchorage Daily News

KYLE HOPKINS

May 15, 2005

NORTH POLE

Norbert "Red" Strandberg is living in the partially completed home he works on diligently just outside town. The North Slope Teamster plans to sell the single-family house for a handsome profit when he's finished.

It seemed like a good way to make big money two days ago, but now Strandberg is thinking he may want to hold off on buying any more property. Friday morning, the Department of Defense, as part of a massive, nationwide reorganization of the military, recommended nearby **Eielson Air Force Base** lose all but a sliver of the men and women stationed there.

A sampling of local opinion Saturday shows Strandberg is not alone in possibly rearranging some of his plans. Locals warn that if what former North Pole lawmaker Mike Miller calls an effective closure of the base materializes, the region's housing boom may grind to a halt.

Excavator Chris Farmier has lived in North Pole his entire life and says local builders are planning large single-family and multi-unit projects throughout the small military town.

"If the base shuts down, I guarantee the housing here is not going to thrive like it has been," the 23-year-old said. "It's going to take a steep dive."

In addition to property values, other concerns that have arisen include school budgets, which depend on enrollment, the loss of service jobs and less sales tax revenue.

Saturday afternoon, **Eielson** airman Patrick McCabe and his wife, Jennifer, ate lunch at the North Pole Taco Bell and headed to the nearby Safeway to pick up milk. By the time they left the store, the young couple had spent roughly \$100 on groceries, which they loaded into a 2000 Chevy Blazer they bought in Fairbanks.

At the Santa Claus House -- a popular stop for people passing through North Pole, and hard to miss with its massive Saint Nick smiling at the highway -- anywhere from 25 percent to 40 percent of its summer employees are airmen's spouses, owner Mike Miller said.

Unlike other towns in the cross hairs, North Pole residents may not be as worried about **Eielson's** name on the Department of Defense blacklist because they saw Fort Richardson escape cuts in the last round of belt tightening, he said.

This time, Alaska could be in for a tougher battle despite its heavyweight congressional delegation.

"They've changed the rules, and it's a whole lot harder to get something off the list," Miller said.

Miller stood among the postcards and Santa memorabilia in his store, looking, without his trademark beard, 10 years younger than he did in his unsuccessful bid to unseat Sen. Lisa Murkowski last year.

Known as a staunch conservative, the lifelong North Pole resident served North Pole and **Eielson** for 18 years in the state House and Senate. **Eielson Air Force Base** predates the city of North Pole by a few years, Miller said, and over the past several decades the town evolved from a place where military personnel rented homes and apartments to one where they buy houses and come back to retire.

The Christmas-flavored town, where every streetlight looks like a candy cane and even the Laundromat's pale sign features a dazed-looking Santa, scrubbing a shirt, is home to 1,500 people according to 2004 state estimates.

Lawmakers say closer to 15,000-20,000 people actually live in the area. The military is blended throughout town, Miller said, and military spending helps sustain the local economy.

A day after the Department of Defense's base closure and realignment list became public, many North Pole residents still had trouble taking the possible loss of more than 2,800 active duty personnel and more than 300 civilian jobs at **Eielson** seriously.

At Santa's Pull Tabs and Gifts, sisters Chris Denton and Jamie Foltz talked about the prospect of **Eielson** becoming a ghost town.

"I hope not, because North Pole would go phttttt," Foltz said.

"Nah, there's enough of us out here," Denton replied.

The pair sat at a long wooden counter, lined with jars of pull-tabs. Later in the year, volunteers will create a makeshift assembly line here, addressing, stuffing and stamping letters to kids around the world.

The letters are replies to thousands of wish lists mailed simply to "Santa Claus," and which end up in North Pole. The walls of the pull-tab parlor are covered with Christmas decorations and notes from kids.

On one wall, a small library of donated paperbacks lined rows of shelves. Money from the sale of the books helps pay for things like stamps and envelopes. Denton and Foltz say North Pole volunteers spend countless hours on the Santa letters.

The sisters moved to the Interior roughly 30 years ago, they said, when their father came up looking for work on the pipeline. He was too late, but the family stayed, and now the sisters walk together on sunny days and Denton works in the strip mall pull-tab shop, which is book-ended by an auto parts store and a diner.

Few airmen or their spouses come into the pull-tab parlor, the women said.

Besides the military, one of the few industries in North Pole is the local refinery, and near that is the Refinery Lounge, a mint and forest-green bar with its name spelled out in dusty black pipes.

The bar prides itself on taking care of **Eielson** airmen and business would plunge without them, bartender Erika Olson said. On weekends, 70 percent to 80 percent of the people dancing or playing pool at the lounge are from the base, she said.

Almost a third of the **Eielson** population lives off base, and many of airmen raise families and

buy homes in North Pole.

Strandberg, the Teamster investing in local land, said the anticipation of more troops at Fort Wainwright also might be behind some of the busy housing construction.

Nicknamed for his tangerine freckles and hair, Strandberg worked at home in a "Volleyball is Everything" T-shirt Saturday afternoon as an aging, shirtless man ran a power trowel over the foundation of a new garage across the street.

Strandberg worked in Alaska for decades before moving here for good four years ago, after his union told him a gas pipeline was on the way. He works three-month stints building ice roads on the North Slope, then invests the money he's made into homes like the one he's building now.

His neighborhood is a collection of new homes and freshly cleared sites. Strandberg said new houses are cropping up all around North Pole, though he can't explain exactly why. Maybe others are banking on the gas pipeline, or the land's simply cheaper than in Fairbanks.

The place he's building now might have fetched \$145,000 three years ago but could have sold for closer to \$200,000 on the recent market, Strandberg said.

What could happen to that price tag now, and to the economy and culture of North Pole, is anybody's guess. Strandberg says he can't imagine **Eielson** will actually go dormant. But, then again, he couldn't imagine it would ever be on the realignment list in the first place.

University president chosen to articulate Eielson cause

Associated Press State and Local Wire

May 21, 2005

FAIRBANKS

University of Alaska President Mark Hamilton has been chosen as the local voice to champion the cause of **Eielson Air Force Base**.

Hamilton will make the state's case next month before an independent commission in charge of reviewing the Department of Defense's list of recommended reductions and realignments.

Hamilton will share the spotlight with Sen. Ted Stevens, who plans to make a special trip to Fairbanks on June 15 to testify before the commission.

The Base Realignment and Closure Commission Chairman Anthony Principi and two other commissioners are expected to attend the June 15 meeting. Congress appointed the commission to review Pentagon recommendations.

BRAC representatives will visit a total of 16 cities. In addition, an analyst will visit each city ahead of the commission to gather information. A date for that visit has not been scheduled.

In addition to Hamilton and Stevens, Gov. Frank Murkowski and his daughter, U.S. Sen. Lisa Murkowski, are expected to attend.

Hamilton was chosen at a meeting called Friday by Fairbanks North Star Borough Mayor Jim Whitaker. Also Friday, the borough hired The Lundquist Group to lobby on behalf of the Fairbanks area.

Whitaker has been spearheading the response in Fairbanks to the Defense Department's plan to reduce **Eielson** to "warm status," along with Fairbanks businessman Jim Dodson. Gov. Frank Murkowski recently named Dodson chairman of the statewide task force he created to help with Alaska's proposed losses. The local and state groups are coordinating their efforts, Dodson said.

The mayor has called on a number of Alaska's prominent retired military personnel to advise the borough. Retired Gens. Joe Ralston and Pat Gamble have volunteered their time, as has Joe Beedle, UA vice president of finance.

The Pentagon proposal would reduce troop strength at **Eielson** by nearly 3,000 airmen. The Pentagon contends realigning most of **Eielson's** personnel would save nearly \$230 million a year. More than 1,700 additional jobs would be lost in the community because of the reductions, estimates show.

Five of the nine **BRAC** commission members would have to approve any effort to remove **Eielson** from the list. The challenge will be to convince commissioners the Pentagon made a mistake in its assessment of **Eielson's** strategic importance to defense.

"I don't think they have a full appreciation for the importance of Alaska," Ralston said

Ralston called Hamilton the right choice to address the commission.

"He's the most articulate spokesman that I have known in uniform," Ralston said.

Hamilton completed two tours of duty with the Army in Alaska and served as chief of staff under Ralston on the joint Army and Air Force Alaska Command in 1992-93. Hamilton retired from the military in 1998, the same year he became president of the statewide university system.

The Borough Assembly has approved spending \$500,000 to lobby the **BRAC** commission. The state Legislature has proposed contributing an additional \$1 million to a statewide effort.

Opinion/Editorial Articles

Voice of the Times

Anchorage Daily News

May 14, 2005

Pentagon's base closure proposals leave ... Alaska hard-hit
WE NEVER EXPECTED THE severity of the recommendations made yesterday by Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld.

We had looked for little or no reductions in military forces here or in the mission of the Army and Air Force units on duty in the 49th State. What happened was just the opposite. Alaska took it in the chops.

Worst hit was **Eielson Air Force Base** at Fairbanks. If the Rumsfeld plan holds through the entire process and is incorporated in the final report by the Base Realignment and Closure Commission, **Eielson** basically will be history -- at the cost of almost 4,700 jobs.

The Rumsfeld recommendations would move **Eielson's** complement of A-10 and F-16 fighter aircraft to bases in Georgia, Louisiana and Idaho.

The effect could be devastating on the Fairbanks economy. Anchorage didn't escape unscathed, either. Not by a long shot, unfortunately.

FORT RICHARDSON, the large Army post that has been a big factor in Anchorage's life since the days of World War II, will be "consolidated" with Elmendorf **Air Force Base** for installation management purposes, and its civilian personnel operations will be shipped to Arizona. Net loss: 286 jobs.

Elmendorf -- to use the Defense Department's nomenclature -- will be "realigned," becoming a joint base with Fort Rich. The exact meaning of that is not immediately clear. What is clear, according to the Alaska Sen. Ted Stevens, is that Elmendorf could lose 24 of its F-15 and 21 of its F-15E aircraft, which would be a huge blow.

Meanwhile, Kulis National Guard Station at Ted Stevens Anchorage International Airport will be closed. Its airplanes and personnel will be moved to Elmendorf.

Fort Wainwright, at Fairbanks, also will be "realigned" -- which in its case apparently means moving its Cold Region Test Center down the highway to Fort Greely. Again, the impact of that on jobs in the Fairbanks area is not immediately known.

Alaska Sen. Lisa Murkowski says the loss of direct and indirect employment "in the Fairbanks area alone would be a huge blow to that community's economic and social well being -- not just from tax revenue or a local business standpoint, but also the number of families that would be leaving, impacting schools, churches, and community services."

Stevens, it's safe to say, was shocked by the Rumsfeld plan. He said he would protest to the full **BRAC** panel, especially with respect to **Eielson**. "I think it is wrong to leave our area without fighter protection and it is wrong from a national security point of view. . . ."

Both senators said there are still months to go before the cuts are finalized. But the shadows have now been cast, and the outlook is not good.



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Base Realignment and Closure Commission Hearing
Media List
Fairbanks, Alaska
15 June, 2005

Radio

Clear Channel -

David Castor
Peter Van Nort
Kathryn Harris
Tim Palmer
Charlie O'Toole
Hank Kildrow

New Northwest Broadcasters:

Glenn Anderson
Michael Dukes
Steve Floyd
Terry Walley

KJNP- FM

Dick Olson
Julie Beaver

KUAC-FM (NPR)

Libby Casey

Television

KTVA – CBS – Anchorage, Katie Groller, Assignment Editor

Ben Deci, Reporter
Brian Hild, Camera

KTVF – NBC - Fairbanks

Darryl Lewis(Camera)
Mike Shultz (Reporter)
Chelsey Schell (Reporter)
Mike Beck (Repoter)

KTUU – NBC – Anchorage

Sean Doogan (Reporter)
Rich Jordan (Camera)
Dave Roberts (Technical Assistant)

Channel 2/13/8 – ABC Alaska

Janecz Wright (reporter) plus 2



KXD/KFXF – CBS/Fox – Fairbanks

Sharice Walker (Reporter)
Sam Oxman (Photographer)
Thomas Bonet (Reporter)
Kelsa Shilanski (Photographer)
Mike Martinez (Photographer)

Print

Anchorage Daily News

Tataboline (Ta) Brant
Photographer – Possible

Associated Press

Dan Joling

Fairbanks Daily News-Miner



Kelly Bostian, Reporter/Editor
Rod Boyce, Reporter/Editor
Chris Talbott Reporter/Editor
R.A. (Robert) Dillon, Reporter
Diana Campbell, Reporter
Mary Beth Smetzer, Reporter
Margaret Friedman, Reporter
Sam Harrel, Photographer
Nora Gruner, Photographer
John Wagner, Photographer







FAIRBANKS HEARING QUESTIONS

- ① We understand that "warm basing" approaches have been used in the past at Alaska military installations, including Ft Greely, King Salmon & Galena. What is your view of the success of these "warm basing" instances?
- ② We understand that the Air Force plans to expand Cope Thunder exercises at Eielson over the coming years. To what degree will this offset the economic impact of the DOD's realignment of Eielson?
- ③ The State delegation has raised the issue of Alaska's strategic location in terms of proximity to future threats and defense of the homeland.
 - a. Given how quickly aircraft can "project power" or respond to a crisis emerging overseas, and given lead times ~~the~~ or warning that a crisis is emerging, doesn't basing fighter aircraft at Eielson make only a marginal difference?
 - b. Aren't F-15s & eventually F/A-22s at Elmendorf sufficient for the homeland defense or air sovereignty mission?
- ④ The State delegation has raised the issue the importance of basing A-10s & F16s at Eielson for the purpose of training with the Army's Striker Brigade to be based at Ft. Wainwright. -
Would the Striker Brigade have opportunities to train with other A-10 & F16 units who are based elsewhere?

5. With the loss of aircraft at Elmendorf + Eielson, AK ranges are at risk to be underutilized. How can DOD ensure that this valuable air + range space is not lost due to commercial / civil aviation demands? (e.g. "Delta" corridor.)

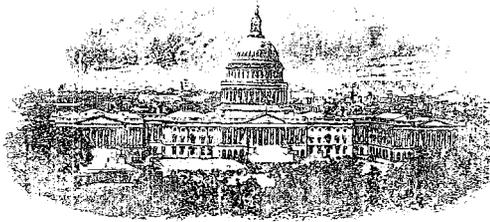
DON YOUNG
CONGRESSMAN FOR ALL ALASKA

WASHINGTON OFFICE
2111 RAYBURN BUILDING
TELEPHONE 202/225-5765
WWW.HOUSE.GOV/DONYOUNG/

COMMITTEES:

CHAIRMAN
COMMITTEE ON
TRANSPORTATION

COMMITTEE ON
RESOURCES



Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

DISTRICT OFFICES:
222 WEST 7TH AVENUE, #3
ANCHORAGE, ALASKA 99513-7595
TELEPHONE 907/271-5978
BOX 10, 101 12TH AVENUE
FAIRBANKS, ALASKA 99701-0273
TELEPHONE 907/456 0210
S71 FEDERAL BUILDING
P.O. BOX 21247
JUNEAU, ALASKA 99802-1647
TELEPHONE 907/586-7400
CURALL OFFICE BUILDING, SUITE 101
540 WATER STREET
KETCHIKAN, ALASKA 99901-6489
TELEPHONE 907/225-6880
130 TRADING BAY ROAD
SUITE 350
KENAI, ALASKA 99611-7716
907/283-5808
MAT-SU
851 EAST WESTPOINT DRIVE
#307, WASILLA, ALASKA 99654
TELEPHONE 907/376-7665

The Base Realignment and Closure Commission, Alaska Regional Hearing
Fairbanks, Alaska

Statement of The Honorable Donald Young
June 15, 2005

Commissioners: If there is one message I want to get across today, it is that the Department of Defense has a history of doing what is proposed in this current BRAC process - undervaluing Alaska - and a history of seeing the error of its ways.

From Alaska's first discovery, through WWII, the Cold War, and now today, U.S. armed forces have come in waves to Alaska. And after each wave, the military has tried to save money by leaving, but has always had to return. Alaska is too vital, too centrally located, too significant to be anything but fully garrisoned and utilized. This tendency to arrive and then withdraw was perhaps just tolerable in the past, but in the future we will not have the luxury of leisurely response times to fix mistakes.

With the purchase of Alaska in 1867, the War Department dispatched ships and men to the new territory, mostly to Southeast. The expense of maintaining these posts quickly became too much for the government, and they soon closed. The Army had to return, however, with the Gold Rush, but again withdrew, this time until WWII. The Japanese attack on the Aleutians surprised all but the most foresightful strategic thinkers. There was a massive, hurried - and therefore overly expensive - build up.

After the war, the military scaled back its presence in Alaska, only to be forced to recommit when the realities of the Cold War became clear. Today's Eielson AFB started as 26 Mile Field (because it was 26 miles south of Fairbanks), a bad weather alternate base for Russian lend-lease flights. In 1945, 26 Mile Field was placed into caretaker status, similar to what is proposed today. But the Soviet threat necessitated well-placed bomber bases, and Alaska was chosen. This led to the re-activation of 26 Mile field, an expansion of its runway (to 14,000 feet) and a renaming as Eielson Air Base.

Again, during the earlier BRAC rounds, the Pentagon misjudged the value of Alaska bases. Ft. Greely was closed in the 1995 round. But its superior global position meant it was reactivated and now houses interceptors as the core of a national ballistic missile defense system. The central location of Alaska, at the top of the world, means the geometry of interception is best here. But the geography of Alaska is supportive for more than just missiles.

The future holds a shift in the world's strategic map. The Fulda Gap and NATO/Warsaw Pact fault line was dethroned 15 years ago. Since then, the Middle East and the Pacific Rim have competed for prominence. Although we are now involved in the Middle East, and will remain so for awhile, the Pacific Rim is where the future lies. The world's six largest militaries are in it, as well as half the world's surface and more than half the world's economy. Most everyone agrees that the premier rival to American military dominance will come, very soon, from China. North Korea remains a desperate, heavily armed, power. Focusing our military assets in this area is the wisest choice. And Alaska is the best place to do that.

Alaska's strategic importance was first recognized by Secretary Seward in the purchase of Alaska from Russia, and was underscored by Medal of Honor winner and father of the US Air Force, Gen. Billy Mitchell. He has a famous quote, that I am sure you'll hear many times today, but it bears repeating, so I'll use it again now: "I believe that, in the future, whoever holds Alaska will hold the world... I think it is the most important strategic place in the world."

Fairbanks is 700 miles closer to Seoul than Honolulu. It is a thousand miles closer to Beijing. Eielson's massive runway can support up to 20 loaded C-17s and C-5s. Deploying from Eielson, these aircraft would be offloading their troops and cargo in Korea in less than 8 hours, and in Southwest Asia in under 11 ½ hours. Fighter aircraft from here can deploy to the battle in even less time. Moreover, perhaps the biggest constraint today is the availability of air refueling assets, and planes at Eielson can deploy using fewer air refuelings than Lower 48 fighters. The access to training areas, and the Stryker Brigade based just up the road at Ft. Wainwright, are also tremendous assets that would not be best utilized on a temporary, short term, "summer only" basis.

In the future, the U.S. will not have time to leisurely build up forces, or construct new bases like in the past. The speed of modern war means we will not have the time to fix old mistakes. We need to act now to keep Eielson open, equipped, and active.

I thank you for time and consideration of this matter, and I hope your time here has increased your knowledge of the importance of Eielson Air Base.

2005 Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission
Suggested Talking Points Regarding Kulis Air National Guard Base, Alaska

- 1. The most important consideration by the 2005 Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission (BRAC) in its evaluation of the suggestions put forth by the Department of Defense (DoD) to close Kulis ANG Base, is military value.**
 - The process of evaluation and analysis, followed by the Commission, has been specifically set forth by law.
 - Although the Commission understands the human impact these suggestions would have if they are enacted, and will take into account the economic, environmental, and other effects that the closure of Kulis would have on its surrounding community, the Commission holds military value as its foremost important consideration.
 - While many see the prospect of economic growth for Anchorage, should Kulis actually be closed, the Commission will perform a careful and independent evaluation of the military value of the base, as well as its important contributions in areas such as search and rescue and support, before reaching its final conclusion.

- 2. The Congress established the Commission to perform an open, fair, thorough, and objective evaluation of the suggestions made by DoD to close or realign a military installation, and as part of this evaluation, the Commission will take into careful account the economic effects that the closure of Kulis would have on the surrounding community.**
 - While military value is extremely important to the Commission, the Commission understands the human impact that the suggestions by DoD would have, should those suggestions be enacted, and will consider the effects that the loss of jobs would have on the surrounding community.
 - While some initial economic effects of the closure may be negative, there could be redeeming value in the closure should it allow for expansion of the international airport in Anchorage and continued economic development. DoD will work with communities to help them continue to thrive economically, but the Commission only takes into account in its evaluation the effect that DoD's suggestions would have, should they be enacted. Some see the opportunity in the possible closure of Kulis, but the Commission will ensure that a full evaluation has been performed, holding military value as its most important consideration.
 - Anchorage is within a 9-hour flight of 95% of the industrialized world and the Commission will consider this as it analyzes the economic effects that the closure of the base would have on Anchorage as the city seeks to expand its own international airport.

3. The Commission understands the historic ties that the region has to Kulis ANG Base as well as the importance of the missions carried out by the base in years past.

- The Commission is aware of the important search and rescue missions that the installation has executed as well as its valuable support role.
- Every community has historic ties to its base, such as this one named after 1st Lt. Albert Kullis, but the most important consideration of the Commission is the current military value of the installation in this time of changing global threats.
- The Commission welcomes public input in this process. Public comments may be submitted to the Commission directly, through the Commission's official website, which is: www.brac.gov.

Information compiled from included press clippings.

**2005 Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission
Suggested Qs & As Regarding Kulis Air National Guard Base, Alaska**

Q1. Although reactions to the Department of Defense's (DoD) suggestion to close Kulis have been relatively pacific compared to those regarding the recommendations for other Alaskan military installations, around 2000 people serving in the Air National Guard in Alaska have Kulis as their home base. Will the Commission consider the effects the DoD recommendations could have on that community?

A1. The Congress established the 2005 Defense Base Realignment and Closure Commission (BRAC) as an independent entity to ensure that all pertinent factors have been taken into account, through a process specifically prescribed by law, in the recommendation to close or realign a military installation. The Commission serves to evaluate the suggestions made by DoD to close or realign bases across the country but also to provide accountability to the public for those suggestions. The Commissioners are keenly aware of the human impact that these suggestions could have and will take into careful consideration the possible economic, environmental, and other effects, of the closure or realignment of a base could have on a community. While keeping these other considerations in mind, the Commission will base its final decision almost entirely on the military value of the installation.

Q2. Kulis Air National Guard Base was named after 1st Lt. Albert Kulis, who was killed in an F-80 in 1954. The base has had an active and valuable role in search and rescue efforts and has been home to one of two major Alaskan Air National Guard Units: the 176th Wing. Will the Commission take the historic and, what has been, very valuable role of the base into consideration as it evaluates DoD's suggestions to close the base?

A2. The Commission understands historic ties that Kulis ANG Base has to the surrounding community, as well as the importance of missions performed by the base through the years. The most important consideration to the Commission, is current military value, and the Commission will perform a thorough and accurate evaluation and analysis of the installation, as prescribed by law, before making its suggestion regarding Kulis.

Q3. Anchorage is a 9 hour flight from 95% of the industrialized world. Companies such as FedEx, UPS, NW Airlines, and others have taken advantage of this and established themselves here. Will the Commission take this into its consideration of the economic effects that the DoD's suggestion to close Kulis ANG Base would have?

A3. While military value is the most important consideration, the Commission also evaluates the effects that the closure of the installation would have on the surrounding community and is fully aware of the human impact of its suggestions. It will perform a complete analysis before offering its own suggestions regarding whether or not to close Kulis ANG Base.

Q4. Some have pointed out that Ted Stevens Anchorage International Airport is a large source of income for the region and that with surrounding housing

developments, parks, and protected wetlands, has little room to grow. Will the Commission consider the effect that making the land, previously used by Kulis if DoD's suggestion to close the base is enacted, available for private use would have on the economic development of the region?

A4. The plan for continued economic development of a community after the closure or realignment of an installation is under the purview of DoD rather than the Commission, but the Commission will take the economic effects that the closure of an installation could have on a community into full account. The Commission maintains military value as its most heavily weighted consideration, while also considering the economic, environmental, and other effects that the closure of the base could have on the local community.

Q5. If DoD's recommendations for Kulis ANG Base are enacted, the installation's C-130 aircraft and helicopters will be relocated to Elmendorf Air Force Base. Will the Commission consider whether the community surrounding Elmendorf has the necessary infrastructure to support this influx?

A5. The Commission will carefully evaluate, as prescribed by statute, all key factors regarding the suggestion to close or realign an installation, including the supporting infrastructure of a community, the economic effect that the suggestion would have on the community, and most importantly the military value of that installation. The Commission will perform an extremely detailed and methodical analysis before reaching its own conclusions as to what should be done regarding Kulis.

Q6. In the face of this closure, some have reminded themselves of what Alaska has recently gained, or will be gaining, in regards to the military. 48 F-22s are expected to begin arriving in 2007, additional Cope Thunder exercises are planned for Eielson AFB, the Airborne Battalion at Ft. Richardson is expected to be transitioned to an Airborne Brigade, and finally, additional aviation units from Korea are expected to begin being moved to Ft. Wainwright. Because of all of this, as well as the chance for continued economic growth through the possible expansion of the international airport in Anchorage, many have been consoled. Will the Commission still take into account the valuable role played by the Air National Guard, specifically, as well as its key previous search and rescue and support missions?

A6. While the Commission is specifically concerned with the impact, had by the suggestions to close or realign an installation, on the surrounding community, it will in no way lose sight of its most important consideration, as set forth by law: that of determining the military value of the base. In these times of changing global threats, there is no consideration more important than keeping our military ready and able to meet these threats and ensure national security. While DoD has formed the strategy, the Commission's purpose is to evaluate the suggestions by DoD to close or realign military installations across the country in an effort to streamline and make our military more effective, and ensure that those suggestions have been made according to law and after all important factors have been considered.

Facts compiled from included press clippings.

**2005 Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission
Suggested Talking Points Regarding Kulis Air National Guard Base, Alaska**

- 1. The most important consideration by the 2005 Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission (BRAC) in its evaluation of the suggestions put forth by the Department of Defense (DoD) to close Kulis ANG Base, is military value.**
 - The process of evaluation and analysis, followed by the Commission, has been specifically set forth by law.
 - Although the Commission understands the human impact these suggestions would have if they are enacted, and will take into account the economic, environmental, and other effects that the closure of Kulis would have on its surrounding community, the Commission holds military value as its foremost important consideration.
 - While many see the prospect of economic growth for Anchorage, should Kulis actually be closed, the Commission will perform a careful and independent evaluation of the military value of the base, as well as its important contributions in areas such as search and rescue and support, before reaching its final conclusion.

- 2. The Congress established the Commission to perform an open, fair, thorough, and objective evaluation of the suggestions made by DoD to close or realign a military installation, and as part of this evaluation, the Commission will take into careful account the economic effects that the closure of Kulis would have on the surrounding community.**
 - While military value is extremely important to the Commission, the Commission understands the human impact that the suggestions by DoD would have, should those suggestions be enacted, and will consider the effects that the loss of jobs would have on the surrounding community.
 - While some initial economic effects of the closure may be negative, there could be redeeming value in the closure should it allow for expansion of the international airport in Anchorage and continued economic development. DoD will work with communities to help them continue to thrive economically, but the Commission only takes into account in its evaluation the effect that DoD's suggestions would have, should they be enacted. Some see the opportunity in the possible closure of Kulis, but the Commission will ensure that a full evaluation has been performed, holding military value as its most important consideration.
 - Anchorage is within a 9-hour flight of 95% of the industrialized world and the Commission will consider this as it analyzes the economic effects that the closure of the base would have on Anchorage as the city seeks to expand its own international airport.

3. The Commission understands the historic ties that the region has to Kulis ANG Base as well as the importance of the missions carried out by the base in years past.

- The Commission is aware of the important search and rescue missions that the installation has executed as well as its valuable support role.
- Every community has historic ties to its base, such as this one named after 1st Lt. Albert Kullis, but the most important consideration of the Commission is the current military value of the installation in this time of changing global threats.
- The Commission welcomes public input in this process. Public comments may be submitted to the Commission directly, through the Commission's official website, which is: www.brac.gov.

Information compiled from included press clippings.

**2005 Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission
Suggested Qs & As Regarding Kulis Air National Guard Base, Alaska**

Q1. Although reactions to the Department of Defense's (DoD) suggestion to close Kulis have been relatively pacific compared to those regarding the recommendations for other Alaskan military installations, around 2000 people serving in the Air National Guard in Alaska have Kulis as their home base. Will the Commission consider the effects the DoD recommendations could have on that community?

A1. The Congress established the 2005 Defense Base Realignment and Closure Commission (BRAC) as an independent entity to ensure that all pertinent factors have been taken into account, through a process specifically prescribed by law, in the recommendation to close or realign a military installation. The Commission serves to evaluate the suggestions made by DoD to close or realign bases across the country but also to provide accountability to the public for those suggestions. The Commissioners are keenly aware of the human impact that these suggestions could have and will take into careful consideration the possible economic, environmental, and other effects, of the closure or realignment of a base could have on a community. While keeping these other considerations in mind, the Commission will base its final decision almost entirely on the military value of the installation.

Q2. Kulis Air National Guard Base was named after 1st Lt. Albert Kulis, who was killed in an F-80 in 1954. The base has had an active and valuable role in search and rescue efforts and has been home to one of two major Alaskan Air National Guard Units: the 176th Wing. Will the Commission take the historic and, what has been, very valuable role of the base into consideration as it evaluates DoD's suggestions to close the base?

A2. The Commission understands historic ties that Kulis ANG Base has to the surrounding community, as well as the importance of missions performed by the base through the years. The most important consideration to the Commission, is current military value, and the Commission will perform a thorough and accurate evaluation and analysis of the installation, as prescribed by law, before making its suggestion regarding Kulis.

Q3. Anchorage is a 9 hour flight from 95% of the industrialized world. Companies such as FedEx, UPS, NW Airlines, and others have taken advantage of this and established themselves here. Will the Commission take this into its consideration of the economic effects that the DoD's suggestion to close Kulis ANG Base would have?

A3. While military value is the most important consideration, the Commission also evaluates the effects that the closure of the installation would have on the surrounding community and is fully aware of the human impact of its suggestions. It will perform a complete analysis before offering its own suggestions regarding whether or not to close Kulis ANG Base.

Q4. Some have pointed out that Ted Stevens Anchorage International Airport is a large source of income for the region and that with surrounding housing

developments, parks, and protected wetlands, has little room to grow. Will the Commission consider the effect that making the land, previously used by Kulis if DoD's suggestion to close the base is enacted, available for private use would have on the economic development of the region?

A4. The plan for continued economic development of a community after the closure or realignment of an installation is under the purview of DoD rather than the Commission, but the Commission will take the economic effects that the closure of an installation could have on a community into full account. The Commission maintains military value as its most heavily weighted consideration, while also considering the economic, environmental, and other effects that the closure of the base could have on the local community.

Q5. If DoD's recommendations for Kulis ANG Base are enacted, the installation's C-130 aircraft and helicopters will be relocated to Elmendorf Air Force Base. Will the Commission consider whether the community surrounding Elmendorf has the necessary infrastructure to support this influx?

A5. The Commission will carefully evaluate, as prescribed by statute, all key factors regarding the suggestion to close or realign an installation, including the supporting infrastructure of a community, the economic effect that the suggestion would have on the community, and most importantly the military value of that installation. The Commission will perform an extremely detailed and methodical analysis before reaching its own conclusions as to what should be done regarding Kulis.

Q6. In the face of this closure, some have reminded themselves of what Alaska has recently gained, or will be gaining, in regards to the military. 48 F-22s are expected to begin arriving in 2007, additional Cope Thunder exercises are planned for Eielson AFB, the Airborne Battalion at Ft. Richardson is expected to be transitioned to an Airborne Brigade, and finally, additional aviation units from Korea are expected to begin being moved to Ft. Wainwright. Because of all of this, as well as the chance for continued economic growth through the possible expansion of the international airport in Anchorage, many have been consoled. Will the Commission still take into account the valuable role played by the Air National Guard, specifically, as well as its key previous search and rescue and support missions?

A6. While the Commission is specifically concerned with the impact, had by the suggestions to close or realign an installation, on the surrounding community, it will in no way lose sight of its most important consideration, as set forth by law: that of determining the military value of the base. In these times of changing global threats, there is no consideration more important than keeping our military ready and able to meet these threats and ensure national security. While DoD has formed the strategy, the Commission's purpose is to evaluate the suggestions by DoD to close or realign military installations across the country in an effort to streamline and make our military more effective, and ensure that those suggestions have been made according to law and after all important factors have been considered.

Facts compiled from included press clippings.

**2005 Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission
Suggested Talking Points for Visit to Eielson AFB**

- 1. Military value is the most important consideration to the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission (BRAC) as the Commission evaluates the suggestion made by the Department of Defense (DoD) to realign Eielson Air Force Base.**
 - The Commission will evaluate the economic, environmental, and other effects that the closure of the installation could have on the surrounding community but the key factor in the Commission's conclusion as to whether or not to suggest Eielson AFB for realignment is military value.
 - The Commission understands the unique role that Eielson AFB has played in Alaska. The base was built to provide additional air defense coverage against an "over the top" attack on North America by Soviet bombers. In addition, Eielson AFB was critical in refueling our nuclear armed B-52 bombers and keeping them constantly airborne and ready to attack.
 - The Commission understands the continued role that Eielson has played in the defense of Alaska and the nation. The Commission will evaluate the current military value of the base as the DoD seeks to streamline and transform our military to meet changing global threats.

- 2. The Commission is aware of the human impact that the suggestion to realign Eielson AFB could have, should the suggestion be enacted.**
 - The Congress established the Commission as an independent entity to ensure that all critical factors have been evaluated, and that the effects on the surrounding community have been taken into account in the decision to recommend a base for closure or realignment.
 - The Commission will evaluate the economic impact that the installation realignment would have on the larger Fairbanks community surrounding the base, while basing its decision almost entirely upon military value.
 - Eielson AFB has served in a unique role in the defense of the nation. Home to both the United States' missile defense system and the trans-Alaska pipeline, Alaskans and the nation have benefited from the projection of air power resident at Eielson. The Commission will analyze Eielson AFB's future role in light of the DoD's recommendations.
 - The Commission understands that the current recommendations will have a strong economic impact on the Fairbanks community. Estimates have placed the impact as high as an 8% reduction in employment. The Commission will take into full consideration the economic ramifications of the DoD's recommendations.

- 3. The Congress established the Commission as a non-political, transparent, and independent entity to perform a thorough evaluation, through a process set forth by law, of the bases suggested for closure or realignment by DoD.**
 - The Commission serves to ensure that all pertinent factors have been included in the analysis and that the impact that the suggestions to close or realign a base would have on the surrounding community, have been fully evaluated.
 - The Commission encourages public input. Community groups wishing to submit information that they feel may have been overlooked by DoD, are encouraged to contact their Congressional representative. Additionally, the public may submit comments directly through the Commission's official website: www.brac.gov.

Facts compiled from included press clippings.

**2005 Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission
Suggested Q's & A's for Visit to Eielson AFB**

Q1. The combined proposed cuts for military presence in the State of Alaska are substantial. Estimates suggest that roughly 4,800 jobs will be lost in Alaska. Most of these jobs are located at both Elmendorf Air Force Base and Eielson Air Force Base. Is there a reason that the Air Force installations seem to have been targeted for reduction by the DoD?

A1. The statute establishes the criteria. As outlined by the statute, the Department of Defense (DoD) placed priority on military value; while also taking into consideration economic, environmental, and other effects that the closure or realignment of a base would have on the community surrounding that base. Part of what constitutes DoD's determination of military value is jointness, ease of mobility, and the base's strategic role in today's changing global threats. The Commission is completely open and transparent, and with exception of material sensitive to national security, all information received or used by the Commission will be made publicly accessible. The purpose of the Commission is to ensure that all the pertinent factors have been evaluated as prescribed by law.

Q2. Estimates predict that the proposed realignment of Eielson AFB will cause roughly an 8% reduction in the greater Fairbanks population base. Economically, this will not only impact state revenue and small business, but it will have significant effects on schools, churches, and community services. Will the Commission take this into account?

A2. The Commission understands the role that Eielson AFB plays in Fairbank's economic vitality. The Commission understands the significance of this particular recommendation and will perform a full evaluation

Q2. Strategically, Alaska is an important state. It is home to both the United States' missile defense system and the trans-Alaska pipeline. In addition, Alaska has half the coastline of the United States and the perimeter that faces Asia. Eielson AFB's primary duty was to reinforce the troops stationed in Korea. The Pentagon has reduced the number of troops in Korea. Does it make strategic sense to downsize the base?

A2. The most critical consideration in the Commission's evaluation is military of the installation. The Commission will take into account, chiefly, the military value of the base, but will also consider other factors. The Department of Defense delineated the strategic/military value of installations in Alaska based upon jointness, ease of mobility, and the base's strategic role in today's changing global threats. Alaska is a unique and valuable state in both location and resources. The Commission will consider all of these factors in its final recommendation to the President.

Q3. Under the proposed realignment, Eielson AFB would lose all fighter airframes but retain an Air National Guard tanker unit. The base would revert to "warm status" and would be used primarily for training exercises. Eielson is an expensive

base to maintain given the climate of the interior of Alaska. Is it economically viable to maintain Eielson with such reductions in manpower?

A3. The Commission will perform a thorough, accurate, and objective analysis which will take into account, chiefly, the military value of the base, but will also consider other factors. Please be assured that the Commission will make a full evaluation, as prescribed by law, before coming to its conclusions and formulating its suggestions.

Q5. In the coming years, Elmendorf is slated to receive 48 F/A 22 Raptors and the Air Force's new C-17 Globemaster III cargo planes. The recommendations suggest that the air defense of Alaska can be achieved solely through Elmendorf AFB. However, Eielson AFB lies approximately 150 miles closer to the national missile defense silos at Fort Greely than does Elmendorf AFB. Will the Commission consider this in its recommendation?

A5. The Commission will take into account, chiefly, the military value of the base, but will also consider other factors. The Department of Defense delineated the strategic/military value of installations in Alaska based upon jointness, ease of mobility, and the base's strategic role in today's changing global threats. Alaska is a unique and valuable state in both location and resources. The presence of the national missile defense infrastructure in the State is a factor that the Commission will strongly consider.

Q6. Under the current BRAC recommendations, the Fairbanks community feels as though they have received an unnecessary blow. The recommendation to reduce Eielson AFB's status but retain its aerial training component does not recognize the partnership with state and local communities that is implicit in the agreement to periodically close large areas of airspace in Interior Alaska. These closures are a large inconvenience for civilian air operators in the region. If the proposed realignment is to occur, the community may be less amenable to these closures. How will the Commission consider this?

A6. The Commission respects the relationship that forms between military installations and the neighboring communities. However, this is outside of the purview of the Commission in reviewing the DoD's recommendations. Primarily the Commission will consider the military value of the base. The Commission will also take into consideration economic, environmental, and other effects that the closure or realignment of a base would have on the community surrounding that base.

Q7. How can the Community make the Commission aware of information that the Community feels may have been overlooked by DoD?

A7. The BRAC Commission encourages public input into this transparent and objective process. Community groups who wish to submit information for the Atlanta Regional Hearing, scheduled for Thursday, 30 June, are urged to contact their Congressional representative. Additionally, the public may submit comments through the Commission's official website, which is www.brac.gov.

Facts compiled from included press clippings.

**2005 Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission
Suggested Talking Points for Visit to Eielson AFB**

1. Military value is the most important consideration to the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission (BRAC) as the Commission evaluates the suggestion made by the Department of Defense (DoD) to realign Eielson Air Force Base.

- The Commission will evaluate the economic, environmental, and other effects that the closure of the installation could have on the surrounding community but the key factor in the Commission's conclusion as to whether or not to suggest Eielson AFB for realignment is military value.
- The Commission understands the unique role that Eielson AFB has played in Alaska. The base was built to provide additional air defense coverage against an "over the top" attack on North America by Soviet bombers. In addition, Eielson AFB was critical in refueling our nuclear armed B-52 bombers and keeping them constantly airborne and ready to attack.
- The Commission understands the continued role that Eielson has played in the defense of Alaska and the nation. The Commission will evaluate the current military value of the base as the DoD seeks to streamline and transform our military to meet changing global threats.

2. The Commission is aware of the human impact that the suggestion to realign Eielson AFB could have, should the suggestion be enacted.

- The Congress established the Commission as an independent entity to ensure that all critical factors have been evaluated, and that the effects on the surrounding community have been taken into account in the decision to recommend a base for closure or realignment.
- The Commission will evaluate the economic impact that the installation realignment would have on the larger Fairbanks community surrounding the base, while basing its decision almost entirely upon military value.
- Eielson AFB has served in a unique role in the defense of the nation. Home to both the United States' missile defense system and the trans-Alaska pipeline, Alaskans and the nation have benefited from the projection of air power resident at Eielson. The Commission will analyze Eielson AFB's future role in light of the DoD's recommendations.
- The Commission understands that the current recommendations will have a strong economic impact on the Fairbanks community. Estimates have placed the impact as high as an 8% reduction in employment. The Commission will take into full consideration the economic ramifications of the DoD's recommendations.

3. The Congress established the Commission as a non-political, transparent, and independent entity to perform a thorough evaluation, through a process set forth by law, of the bases suggested for closure or realignment by DoD.

- The Commission serves to ensure that all pertinent factors have been included in the analysis and that the impact that the suggestions to close or realign a base would have on the surrounding community, have been fully evaluated.
- The Commission encourages public input. Community groups wishing to submit information that they feel may have been overlooked by DoD, are encouraged to contact their Congressional representative. Additionally, the public may submit comments directly through the Commission's official website: www.brac.gov.

Facts compiled from included press clippings.

**2005 Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission
Suggested Q's & A's for Visit to Eielson AFB**

Q1. The combined proposed cuts for military presence in the State of Alaska are substantial. Estimates suggest that roughly 4,800 jobs will be lost in Alaska. Most of these jobs are located at both Elmendorf Air Force Base and Eielson Air Force Base. Is there a reason that the Air Force installations seem to have been targeted for reduction by the DoD?

A1. The statute establishes the criteria. As outlined by the statute, the Department of Defense (DoD) placed priority on military value; while also taking into consideration economic, environmental, and other effects that the closure or realignment of a base would have on the community surrounding that base. Part of what constitutes DoD's determination of military value is jointness, ease of mobility, and the base's strategic role in today's changing global threats. The Commission is completely open and transparent, and with exception of material sensitive to national security, all information received or used by the Commission will be made publicly accessible. The purpose of the Commission is to ensure that all the pertinent factors have been evaluated as prescribed by law.

Q2. Estimates predict that the proposed realignment of Eielson AFB will cause roughly an 8% reduction in the greater Fairbanks population base. Economically, this will not only impact state revenue and small business, but it will have significant effects on schools, churches, and community services. Will the Commission take this into account?

A2. The Commission understands the role that Eielson AFB plays in Fairbank's economic vitality. The Commission understands the significance of this particular recommendation and will perform a full evaluation

Q2. Strategically, Alaska is an important state. It is home to both the United States' missile defense system and the trans-Alaska pipeline. In addition, Alaska has half the coastline of the United States and the perimeter that faces Asia. Eielson AFB's primary duty was to reinforce the troops stationed in Korea. The Pentagon has reduced the number of troops in Korea. Does it make strategic sense to downsize the base?

A2. The most critical consideration in the Commission's evaluation is military of the installation. The Commission will take into account, chiefly, the military value of the base, but will also consider other factors. The Department of Defense delineated the strategic/military value of installations in Alaska based upon jointness, ease of mobility, and the base's strategic role in today's changing global threats. Alaska is a unique and valuable state in both location and resources. The Commission will consider all of these factors in its final recommendation to the President.

Q3. Under the proposed realignment, Eielson AFB would lose all fighter airframes but retain an Air National Guard tanker unit. The base would revert to "warm status" and would be used primarily for training exercises. Eielson is an expensive

base to maintain given the climate of the interior of Alaska. Is it economically viable to maintain Eielson with such reductions in manpower?

A3. The Commission will perform a thorough, accurate, and objective analysis which will take into account, chiefly, the military value of the base, but will also consider other factors. Please be assured that the Commission will make a full evaluation, as prescribed by law, before coming to its conclusions and formulating its suggestions.

Q5. In the coming years, Elmendorf is slated to receive 48 F/A 22 Raptors and the Air Force's new C-17 Globemaster III cargo planes. The recommendations suggest that the air defense of Alaska can be achieved solely through Elmendorf AFB. However, Eielson AFB lies approximately 150 miles closer to the national missile defense silos at Fort Greely than does Elmendorf AFB. Will the Commission consider this in its recommendation?

A5. The Commission will take into account, chiefly, the military value of the base, but will also consider other factors. The Department of Defense delineated the strategic/military value of installations in Alaska based upon jointness, ease of mobility, and the base's strategic role in today's changing global threats. Alaska is a unique and valuable state in both location and resources. The presence of the national missile defense infrastructure in the State is a factor that the Commission will strongly consider.

Q6. Under the current BRAC recommendations, the Fairbanks community feels as though they have received an unnecessary blow. The recommendation to reduce Eielson AFB's status but retain its aerial training component does not recognize the partnership with state and local communities that is implicit in the agreement to periodically close large areas of airspace in Interior Alaska. These closures are a large inconvenience for civilian air operators in the region. If the proposed realignment is to occur, the community may be less amenable to these closures. How will the Commission consider this?

A6. The Commission respects the relationship that forms between military installations and the neighboring communities. However, this is outside of the purview of the Commission in reviewing the DoD's recommendations. Primarily the Commission will consider the military value of the base. The Commission will also take into consideration economic, environmental, and other effects that the closure or realignment of a base would have on the community surrounding that base.

Q7. How can the Community make the Commission aware of information that the Community feels may have been overlooked by DoD?

A7. The BRAC Commission encourages public input into this transparent and objective process. Community groups who wish to submit information for the Atlanta Regional Hearing, scheduled for Thursday, 30 June, are urged to contact their Congressional representative. Additionally, the public may submit comments through the Commission's official website, which is www.brac.gov.

Facts compiled from included press clippings.

**2005 Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission
Suggested Talking Points for Visit to Elmendorf AFB**

- 1. Military value is the most important consideration to the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission (BRAC) as the Commission evaluates the suggestion made by the Department of Defense (DoD) to realign Elmendorf Air Force Base.**
 - While the Commission will evaluate the economic, environmental, and other effects that the closure of the installation could have on the surrounding community but the most important consideration in the Commission's evaluation is the military value of the installation.
 - The Commission understands the unique role that Elmendorf AFB serves in Alaska both as a defender and a projector of force. The installation's military value, as such, will be taken into full account by the Commission.

- 2. The Commission is aware of the human impact that the suggestion to realign Elmendorf AFB could have, should the suggestion be enacted.**
 - The Congress established the Commission as an independent entity to ensure that all critical factors have been evaluated, and that the effects on the surrounding community have been taken into account in the decision to recommend a base for closure or realignment.
 - The Commission will evaluate the economic impact that the installation realignment would have on the larger Anchorage community surrounding the base, while basing its decision almost entirely upon military value.
 - Elmendorf AFB has served in a unique role in the defense of the nation. Home to both the United States' missile defense system and the trans-Alaska pipeline, Alaskans and the nation have benefited from the projection of air power resident at Elmendorf. The Commission will analyze Elmendorf AFB's future role in light of the DoD's recommendations.

- 3. The Congress established the Commission as a non-political, transparent, and independent entity to perform a thorough evaluation, through a process set out by law, of the bases suggested for closure or realignment by DoD.**
 - The Commission serves to ensure that all pertinent factors have been evaluated and that the impact that the suggestions to close or realign a base would have on the surrounding community, have been taken into full account.
 - The Commission encourages public input. Community groups wishing to submit information that they feel may have been overlooked by DoD, are encouraged to contact their Congressional representative. Additionally, the public may submit comments directly through the Commission's official website: www.brac.gov.

Facts compiled from included press clippings.

**2005 Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission
Suggested Q's & A's for Visit to Elmendorf AFB**

Q1. The combined proposed cuts for military presence in the State of Alaska are substantial. Estimates suggest that roughly 4,800 jobs will be lost in Alaska. Most of these jobs are located at both Elmendorf AFB and Eielson AFB. Is there a reason that the Air Force installations seem to have been targeted for reduction by the DoD?

A1. The statute establishes the criteria. As outlined by the statute, the Department of Defense placed priority on military value; while also taking into consideration economic, environmental, and other effects that the closure or realignment of a base would have on the community surrounding that base. Information that was gathered in the analysis of a base, with the exception of information that is sensitive to national security, will be made accessible to the public. Part of what constitutes DoD's determination of military value is jointness, ease of mobility, and the base's strategic role in today's changing global threats.

Q2. Strategically, Alaska is an important state. It is home to both the United States' missile defense system and the trans-Alaska pipeline. Traditionally, air power has served in the state as a means of strategic deterrence. Elmendorf AFB is the primary means of defense with Eielson AFB acting as its back-up. Will Elmendorf AFB be able to perform this role independent of Eielson AFB?

A2. The Commission will perform a thorough, accurate, and objective analysis which will take into account, chiefly, the military value of the base, but will also consider other factors. The Department of Defense delineated the strategic/military value of installations in Alaska based upon jointness, ease of mobility, and the base's strategic role in today's changing global threats. Alaska is a unique and valuable state in both location and resources. The Commission will consider all of these factors in its final recommendation to the President.

Q4. Under the proposed realignment, Elmendorf AFB would transfer 24 of its assigned F-15C jets and 21 of its assigned F-15E jets. Does this suggest that Elmendorf will receive any newer-generation aircraft in the future?

A4. The question of what will happen with a base after its realignment is under the purview of DoD rather than the BRAC Commission. DoD will continue to work with communities to ensure the best possible outcome. The Congress established the Commission as an independent entity to evaluate--in a thorough, non-political and accurate way, as prescribed by statute--the suggestions made by DoD to close or realign bases around the county.

Q5. In the coming years, Elmendorf is slated to receive 48 F/A 22 Raptors and the Air Force's new C-17 Globemaster III cargo planes. The decision to merge the resources of Kulis Air National Guard Base into Elmendorf AFB would bring an additional eight C-130 aircraft, three HC-130s, and several HH-60 helicopters. Will

Q5. Continued

Elmendorf be able to accommodate this infusion of equipment in addition to the increased personnel presence on the base?

A5. The Commission will perform a thorough, accurate, and objective analysis which will take into account, chiefly, the military value of the base, but will also consider other factors. In its determination of military value, DoD considered multiple factors, such as jointness, ease of mobility, and others. The Commission will base its recommendations almost entirely upon military value and will take into account these very complex and intertwined elements which make up the military value of a base.

Q6. If the DoD recommendations are approved, Elmendorf AFB and Fort Richardson will both be realigned to become a joint base. This large fusion of resources will be difficult to manage. Will the Commission consider the capability of a base to manage suggested resource changes in making its final recommendation?

A6. The ability of an installation to support the DoD's recommendations will be closely analyzed by the Commission. Currently, Elmendorf AFB and Fort Richardson share a unique relationship fostered by their close proximity to each other. The Commission understands the challenges presented by the creation of a joint base and will consider all factors in arriving at its final decision.

Q7. How can the Community make the Commission aware of information that the Community feels may have been overlooked by DoD?

A7. The BRAC Commission encourages public input into this transparent and objective process. Community groups who wish to submit information for the Atlanta Regional Hearing, scheduled for Thursday, 30 June, are urged to contact their Congressional representative. Additionally, the public may submit comments through the Commission's official website, which is www.brac.gov.

Facts compiled from included press clippings.

**2005 Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission
Suggested Talking Points for Visit to Elmendorf AFB**

- 1. Military value is the most important consideration to the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission (BRAC) as the Commission evaluates the suggestion made by the Department of Defense (DoD) to realign Elmendorf Air Force Base.**
 - While the Commission will evaluate the economic, environmental, and other effects that the closure of the installation could have on the surrounding community but the most important consideration in the Commission's evaluation is the military value of the installation.
 - The Commission understands the unique role that Elmendorf AFB serves in Alaska both as a defender and a projector of force. The installation's military value, as such, will be taken into full account by the Commission.

- 2. The Commission is aware of the human impact that the suggestion to realign Elmendorf AFB could have, should the suggestion be enacted.**
 - The Congress established the Commission as an independent entity to ensure that all critical factors have been evaluated, and that the effects on the surrounding community have been taken into account in the decision to recommend a base for closure or realignment.
 - The Commission will evaluate the economic impact that the installation realignment would have on the larger Anchorage community surrounding the base, while basing its decision almost entirely upon military value.
 - Elmendorf AFB has served in a unique role in the defense of the nation. Home to both the United States' missile defense system and the trans-Alaska pipeline, Alaskans and the nation have benefited from the projection of air power resident at Elmendorf. The Commission will analyze Elmendorf AFB's future role in light of the DoD's recommendations.

- 3. The Congress established the Commission as a non-political, transparent, and independent entity to perform a thorough evaluation, through a process set out by law, of the bases suggested for closure or realignment by DoD.**
 - The Commission serves to ensure that all pertinent factors have been evaluated and that the impact that the suggestions to close or realign a base would have on the surrounding community, have been taken into full account.
 - The Commission encourages public input. Community groups wishing to submit information that they feel may have been overlooked by DoD, are encouraged to contact their Congressional representative. Additionally, the public may submit comments directly through the Commission's official website: www.brac.gov.

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**2005 Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission
Suggested Q's & A's for Visit to Elmendorf AFB**

Q1. The combined proposed cuts for military presence in the State of Alaska are substantial. Estimates suggest that roughly 4,800 jobs will be lost in Alaska. Most of these jobs are located at both Elmendorf AFB and Eielson AFB. Is there a reason that the Air Force installations seem to have been targeted for reduction by the DoD?

A1. The statute establishes the criteria. As outlined by the statute, the Department of Defense placed priority on military value; while also taking into consideration economic, environmental, and other effects that the closure or realignment of a base would have on the community surrounding that base. Information that was gathered in the analysis of a base, with the exception of information that is sensitive to national security, will be made accessible to the public. Part of what constitutes DoD's determination of military value is jointness, ease of mobility, and the base's strategic role in today's changing global threats.

Q2. Strategically, Alaska is an important state. It is home to both the United States' missile defense system and the trans-Alaska pipeline. Traditionally, air power has served in the state as a means of strategic deterrence. Elmendorf AFB is the primary means of defense with Eielson AFB acting as its back-up. Will Elmendorf AFB be able to perform this role independent of Eielson AFB?

A2. The Commission will perform a thorough, accurate, and objective analysis which will take into account, chiefly, the military value of the base, but will also consider other factors. The Department of Defense delineated the strategic/military value of installations in Alaska based upon jointness, ease of mobility, and the base's strategic role in today's changing global threats. Alaska is a unique and valuable state in both location and resources. The Commission will consider all of these factors in its final recommendation to the President.

Q4. Under the proposed realignment, Elmendorf AFB would transfer 24 of its assigned F-15C jets and 21 of its assigned F-15E jets. Does this suggest that Elmendorf will receive any newer-generation aircraft in the future?

A4. The question of what will happen with a base after its realignment is under the purview of DoD rather than the BRAC Commission. DoD will continue to work with communities to ensure the best possible outcome. The Congress established the Commission as an independent entity to evaluate--in a thorough, non-political and accurate way, as prescribed by statute--the suggestions made by DoD to close or realign bases around the country.

Q5. In the coming years, Elmendorf is slated to receive 48 F/A 22 Raptors and the Air Force's new C-17 Globemaster III cargo planes. The decision to merge the resources of Kulis Air National Guard Base into Elmendorf AFB would bring an additional eight C-130 aircraft, three HC-130s, and several HH-60 helicopters. Will

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Q6. If the DoD recommendations are approved, Elmendorf AFB and Fort Richardson will both be realigned to become a joint base. This large fusion of resources will be difficult to manage. Will the Commission consider the capability of a base to manage suggested resource changes in making its final recommendation?

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