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**DEFENSE BASE CLOSURE AND REALIGNMENT COMMISSION**  
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**MEMORANDUM OF MEETING**

**DATE:** 4 August 2005

**TIME:** 1500 hours

**MEETING WITH:** Representatives of Niagara Falls Air Reserve Station

**SUBJECT:** Recommended closure of Niagara Falls Air Reserve Station

**PARTICIPANTS:**

***Guests:***

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**MEETING SUMMARY:** Members of the BRAC Commission staff met with representatives of the Schenectady County and Niagara Falls communities to discuss their concerns regarding the recommended realignment of Stratton Air National Guard Base (ANGB) and the closure of Niagara Falls Air Reserve Station (NFARS). As part of the meeting, the representatives of the Stratton

ANGB base provided a briefing handout while the NFARS representatives provided a revised COBRA run for the installation.

The focus of the Stratton ANGB presentation was on the 109<sup>th</sup> Air Wing (AW). It provides the Nation's only heavy lift capability to remote polar destinations and has the only ski equipped C-130s in the world. The facilities homeland defense team also provides aeromedical evacuation (one of only 10 units in the Guard), counterdrug/border response, and response to chemical and biological attack. The civil support team was the second one formed in the country and (given their proximity to New York City) is one of the most deployed. The BRAC recommendation is to "[r]ealign Schenectady County Airport Air Guard Station, 109<sup>th</sup> Airlift Wing" by transferring four C-130H aircraft to the 189<sup>th</sup> AW (ANG) at Little Rock AFB, AR. This recommendation would result in the elimination of 19 direct and 20 indirect personnel.

Stratton ANGB representatives indicated that "most full time and traditional Guard members will not follow the aircraft to Little Rock AFB, AR. The nearest bases exceed a fifty mile radius from Stratton ANGB with Steward and Syracuse ANGBs in excess of 100 miles. Additionally, the representatives suggested that removing the C-130H will increase the usage of the ski mounted LC-130s and shorten their operable lifespan by approximately 25%.

The Stratton ANGB representatives reiterated issues related to the legality of the proposed realignment of the installations as follows:

1. Proposed movement of aircraft is not related to infrastructure restructuring
2. Recommendations to relocate, withdraw, disband, or change the organization of an ANG unit, unless done so for infrastructure rationalization is inconsistent with the intent of BRAC legislation.
3. The Adjutant General Association of the United States (AGAUS) has validated that programmatic moves of the aircraft is inconsistent with BRAC objectives.

Relative to Homeland Defense, Stratton ANGB representatives stated that the recommendations diminishes the Governor's and the Department of Defense's ability to defend the State by reducing the Governor's ability to respond with airlift to high terror threat areas such as New York City, Buffalo and other highly populated northeast centers.

After the meeting with the Stratton ANGB representatives, a brief discussion followed concerning a revised COBRA estimate for NFARS. The COBRA data had been provided previously to the BRAC COBRA expert (Karl Gingrich). Mr. Gingrich indicated that the data and assumptions of the revised COBRA run appeared to be valid.

\* Denotes individual responsible for completing the memorandum