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# Congress of the United States

## House of Representatives

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(325) 675-9779

August 22, 2005

BRAC Commission

AUG 23 2005

Received

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

Dear Chairman Principi:

I am writing in connection with the DoD recommendation to consolidate the B-1 fleet at Dyess Air Force Base. Some questions have been raised concerning pending litigation regarding the Realistic Bomber Training Initiative (RBTI), which is only one of the many training ranges used by the B-1s at Dyess. I would like to put this matter into perspective.

The litigation involves the Air Force's environmental review process. I understand that the Air Force is preparing a Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS) to address the concerns that have been raised. The U.S. District Court issued an order on June 29, 2005 that imposes certain restrictions pending the completion of the SEIS. Specifically, aircraft may not fly lower than 500 feet Above Ground Level (AGL) in one portion of RBTI and no lower than 12,000 feet Mean Sea Level in another portion.

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Since the altitude for ranges were not included in the MCI score, the temporary restriction on RBTI altitudes does not affect Dyess's MCI score or its ranking. The Air Force confirmed this in its July 19, 2005 Inquiry Response.

There is no impact to the MCI score for the Bomber MCI as a result of instrument route altitude restrictions. Altitudes were not factored into consideration of instrument routes when calculating MCI scores.

It would be unfair for the Commission to implicitly reduce Dyess's MCI score for a temporary altitude restriction for one particular range, when altitude was never a factor in determining the MCI score for Dyess, Ellsworth or any other Air Force base.

2. The B-1 fleet at Dyess uses many ranges other than the RBTI. In fact, the Air Force data shows that Dyess has far more ranges within 300 nautical miles than Ellsworth.

	<b>Dyess</b>	<b>Ellsworth</b>
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SR	20	0
Scoreable Capacity	12	0
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IMC Weapons		
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Electronic Combat	8	0
Lights Out	33	3

With respect to low level training, Dyess has other opportunities to accomplish low level training at altitudes below 500 feet and has far more opportunities than Ellsworth. In its July 19, 2005 Inquiry Response, the Air Force stated:

The training requirement to fly at 300 ft AGL, however, can be accomplished at restricted ranges. Given that possibility, Dyess still has access to closer low altitude ranges and airspace than Ellsworth.

3. The restriction on the use of RBTI is only a partial one and most of the range is still available for training. In the July 19, 2005 Inquiry Response, the Air Force stated that "[e]ven at 500 ft AGL, the RBTI is still valuable." Moreover, the shift from training at 300 feet to training at 500 feet is not significant since the B-1 drops its weapons from far above this level.

4. The restriction is only a temporary one, subject to the completion of the SEIS. There should be no presumption, at this time, that this limited restriction will be continued once the SEIS is completed.

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