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Re: AFRL, mesa

Warfighter Training Research Laboratory as an ASU COCO

**DRAFT**

The DoD's recommendation to realign Warfighter Training Research Laboratory for synergistic reasons is in error. There are far more synergistic activities underway in Arizona and the potential for the Warfighter Training Research Laboratory in linking with ASU is significant. At a time when Arizona and the private sector are making major investments into the research enterprise at Arizona State University, the Lab is unfortunately on the verge of moving. We feel the spirit of realignment can be followed. The Warfighter Lab, through contractual agreement between the Air Force and ASU, could become an ASU Contractor Owned and Contractor Operated facility guaranteeing enhanced future collaboration, increased training research targeted on the Air Force's mission, and reducing the Air Force's footprint. Cost savings are significant and the university is prepared to invest its own resources to enhance the potential of the Lab.

**Advantages for the Air Force and DOD**

Economic considerations:

- Relocation costs – Saves an estimated \$2 million in one-time relocation costs. (i.e., moving people and equipment to Ohio.)
- New construction capital costs – Saves an estimated \$30 million to replicate existing facilities in Ohio.
- Capital costs of new facilities for expansion of research – Saves an estimated \$10-\$20 million as a result of being part of ASU's Comprehensive Development Plan.
- ASU will invest its own resources in the lab in the range of \$1 -\$2 million per year. (up to \$20 million over next ten years)
- ASU anticipates additional savings from:
  - (a) the uses of some of the lab assets can be expanded to other research grant activities;
  - (b) the sources of research funding can be expanded from just AF to other DOD research units;
  - (c) some current research personnel will have joint appointments and engage in other University education and research activities; and
  - (d) there will be economies of scale as major assets (e.g. simulators) are operated and maintained as part of a larger family of research and educational activities.

Summary of Economic Considerations: Over the next ten years, the Air Force and DOD will save in the vicinity of \$60-80 million by realigning the AFRL as an integral part of Arizona State University.

Military value:

Maintains research and training capability during wartime—closing the site and moving to Wright Patterson Air Force Base in Ohio will likely disrupt the mission of the AFRL's Warfighter Training Readiness Division. AF and AFRL representatives acknowledge that it will take years to regain the current state of mission readiness following a relocation. Warfighter currently has pilots scheduled for next 18 months at their facility. Such a disruption in pilot training research is illogical during a time of war.

Avoids loss of expertise when employees refuse to move. In 1991 seventy percent of the Lab's workforce indicated that would not move to Orlando. Likely similar numbers exist today. The AF has invested large amounts of money in the knowledge base of Warfighters' researchers and staff. By becoming a part of ASU, this valuable national resource would be preserved, and in fact, enhanced over time.

From Warfighter's perspective the potential to tap into university expertise creates significant opportunities for enhanced research. ASU is offering Warfighter's researchers more degrees of freedom in terms of research. New centers are coming on-line at ASU which should lead to increased capabilities of Warfighter. For example, ASU recently competed and won an Army Research Laboratory award of \$43.7 million, over a five year period (nearly \$100 million over 10 years) to establish the Army Flexible Display Center, where flexible displays will be developed that can be continually refreshed with new data and carried in the battle field – a device that will

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revolutionize combat strategy. This is an example of a university-industry-government collaboration that is a model for interaction with Warfighter. On Monday, May 22, ASU opened the ASU Decision Theatre which has as its forte visualization to improve policy decision-making. Given the Lab's focus is training research and simulation there will be numerous areas of overlapping interests such as in the command and control activities of the Lab. ASU continues to invest in research areas that are important to the Lab such as significant ties with Applied Psychology, and others. The research facility being built by ASU adjacent to Warfighter is expected to have synergies with the Lab and 25% of the space of the new facility is in an area of program that overlaps with current Warfighter.

Summary of Military Value: A nation at war needs continuation of the training research functions the Lab provides without disruption. Losing the Air Force's investment in the knowledge base of its researchers who choose not to move, losing significant training time due to moving equipment, personnel and having to secure new facilities would all cause significant disruption. Losing the existing and potential linkages of being located on the campus of a major research university would be a huge loss of potential military value.

As an ASU Contractor Owned, Contractor Operated facility the Air Force would be able to shrink its footprint, continue to control the training research mission and broaden its funding streams by having closer collaboration with Arizona State University. Provided the Air Force continued its present investment, ASU is willing to invest up to \$2 million per year in its research program. As noted there are significant economic benefits and military value benefits to the Air Force.