

Testimony of Brigadier General Sidwell
Adjutant General of the Missouri National Guard
Before the Base Realignment and Closure Commission
St. Louis Regional Hearing
June 20, 2005

Members of the commission and members of Congress, on behalf of the citizen soldiers of the Missouri Air National Guard I'd like to thank you for the opportunity to discuss my thoughts and concerns regarding some of the recommendations made in the Base Realignment and Closure Report (BRAC). As the Adjutant General of the Missouri National Guard, one of my primary responsibilities is the defense of Missouri and the United States. The realignment of the 131st Fighter Wing and relocating the nation's most capable air superiority fighter, the F-15C Eagle, will significantly detract from this mission.

Our nations National Security Strategy states, "Defending our Nation against its enemies is the first and fundamental commitment of the Federal Government". The National Defense Strategy makes protecting the U.S. homeland the highest priority for the Department of Defense. However, it appears homeland defense was not adequately considered when the BRAC 2005 attributes to military value were developed. By not creating accurate attributes, BRAC 2005 created a military value rating system that does not reflect a unit's actual military value and therefore, the BRAC of 2005 will be realigning and closing Air National Guard bases which are crucial to the homeland defense mission based on what I feel are flawed criteria. I agree with Senator Bond that the Air Force BRAC process substantially deviated from BRAC statutory criteria and the

Force Structure Plan and the recommendation to remove the 131st substantially deviates from BRAC requirements.

For example, the questions used to determine the first military value of a unit were related to air traffic control restrictions, prevailing weather, proximity to training airspace, proximity to low level routes, and auxiliary airfields. These questions do not reflect current or future mission capabilities. Common sense tells me that if you were assessing the military value of a base and its infrastructure, different questions should be asked. The first question would determine the location of all the alert sites relative to major metropolitan areas, critical infrastructure, and industrial assets. The second question, which seems particularly important, would be the scramble capability to get to these areas of interest. And lastly, I would ask what aircraft gives you the best capability once you get there. None of these items were quantitatively evaluated.

Let's take a look at the way the Air Force made its decision and the four military values.

The first military value accounts for 46% of the overall military value score. With such a high weighting, if the #1 defense strategy is to secure the United States from direct attack wouldn't my questions be a better gauge to a unit's military value. The 131st Fighter Wing is an alert site in a geographically strategic location and would have scored extremely high using these criteria. How can military value be judged without looking at a bases strategic location within the continental United States and its ability to accomplish the homeland defense mission? From my perspective, value has to be equated to requirements as well as capabilities.

Military value #2 deals with the condition of the base infrastructure. Questions used to determine a unit's score dealt with ramp area, runway dimensions and hangar capability. With the weighting of military value #2 equaling 41%, shouldn't the questions be tailored to the defense strategy? For instance, wouldn't questions regarding infrastructure to support the alert mission, response takeoff times, and determining the number of runways available for alert operations be more suitable questions? Had these questions been asked, the 131st Fighter Wing with its existing alert site, its munitions facility, and site plan would have maximized the military value #2 score. Lambert's infrastructure is capable of supporting the alert mission and has already done so.

Military value #3, weighted at 10 percent, addresses the ability to accommodate contingency operations. Air National Guard bases are typically set-up for follow on operations in support of active duty components, and not set-up for the initial wave of mobility processing. The 131st Fighter Wing has been tasked for various contingencies and worldwide deployments and completed the operation successfully every time it was called upon. In addition, Lambert is located at one of the largest international airports in our country. The city of St. Louis and citizens have always answered the call and have been willing to provide the flexibility required to conduct any and all operations. The questions used in determining military value #3 did not measure the true capability of this unit's contingency operation capability.

Military value #4 addresses the cost of operations and manpower and is weighted at only 2.5%. Now, tell me, does this pass the common sense test? Is that all the value we give our capable and experienced Air Guard members? Although the questions used in determining the military value were valid considerations, military value #4 still did not

capture true cost and manpower factors. For example, the 131st Fighter Wing's cost of operations was never taken into account. Had this been evaluated as a sub-criteria, it would have been determined that the 131st Fighter Wing has the lowest budget, the most efficient manpower, and according to Air National Guard, Logistics division, the lowest cost per flying hour of any F-15 unit in the Combat Air Forces.

The 131st Fighter Wing also utilizes a joint runway use, avoiding all costs associated with operating a runway. These costs include fire protection, air traffic control facilities and personnel, and cable maintenance. In fact, the city has leased to the state all the land the wing currently utilizes for 2 cents per year through the year 2023. Additionally the wing has limited infrastructure and overhead. This avoids the hospital costs, billeting upkeep costs, and base housing costs to name a few.

What we have here are sub-criteria that do not adequately address the need of homeland security nor adequately reflect the true value of the 131st Fighter Wing. It is my opinion that the decision process was flawed and I urge the commission to take a detailed look at how these recommendations were reached.

In summary, with their newly constructed alert facilities, the 131st Fighter Wing has the capability to continue contributing to the homeland defense mission. The base was indeed given a low military value, however the questions asked do not reflect its actual value to the military, nor do they address any contributions to the homeland defense mission. If you look at the 131st Fighter Wing's real military value and apply military judgment, you will see they provide a tremendous capability at a strategic location with a superior aircraft in the heartland of our country.

Thank you again for allowing me to speak with you today.

Testimony of Colonel Mike Brandt
131st Fighter Wing Commander
Missouri Air National Guard
Base Realignment and Closure Commission
St. Louis Regional Hearing
June 20, 2005

Good Morning Commissioners

I want to thank you for the opportunity to talk about the 131st Fighter Wing, its mission and our capabilities.

As the commander of this historic Fighter Wing it should come as no surprise that I am terribly disappointed to see a BRAC recommendation that takes our aircraft.

It should also come as no surprise that I am very passionate about this unit, the people, and what we do.

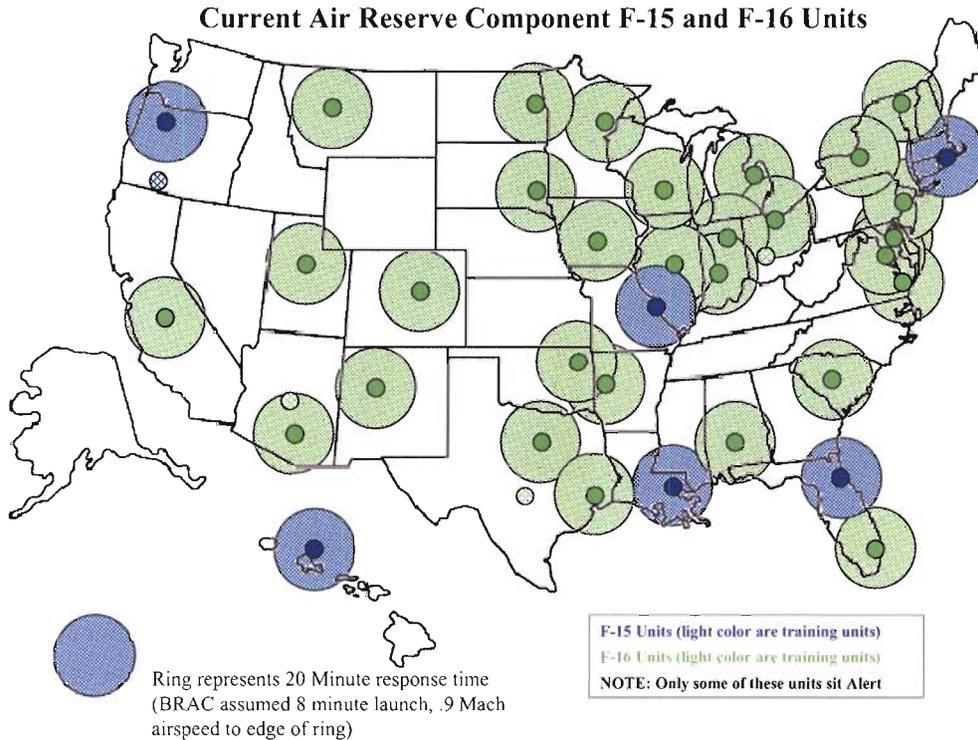
I don't know if I can represent a unit 82 years old in eight minutes without passion but I will try.

I will put aside my passion and talk about the mission of the 131st Fighter Wing and how it protects the critical infrastructure in the heartland of America.

To that end, let's examine the current disposition of Air Reserve Component F-15s and F-16s across the continental United States and Hawaii.

SLIDE

F-15 bases are in Blue
F-16 bases are in Green



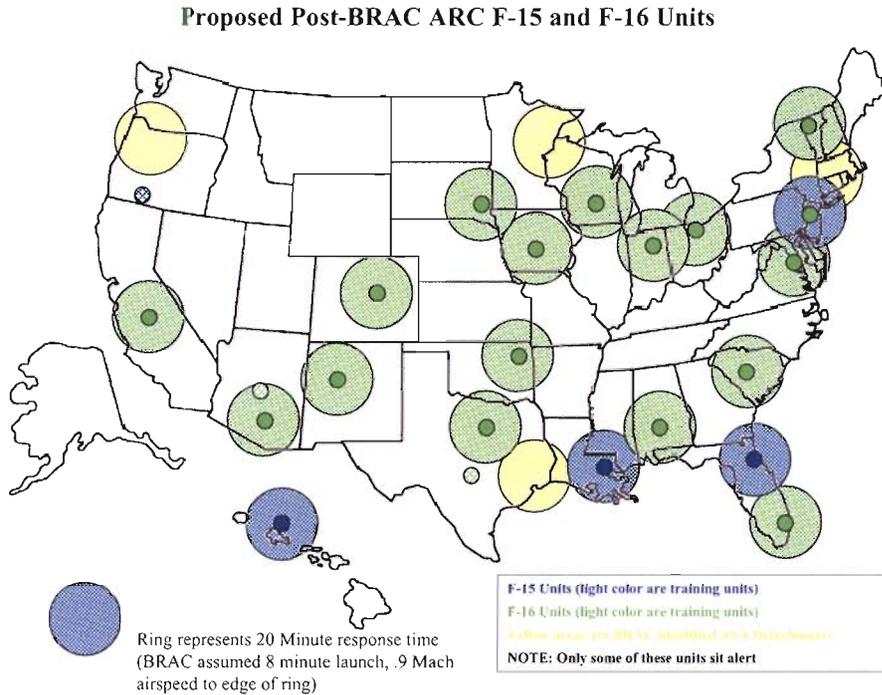
The circles represent a 20 minute scramble response capability at .9 Mach.

All Air Reserve Component bases are shown, **BUT** not all of them sit alert.

The small hatched circles are training bases.

SLIDE

Here we see the F-15 and F-16 units after BRAC. Notice the gap in coverage in the heartland.

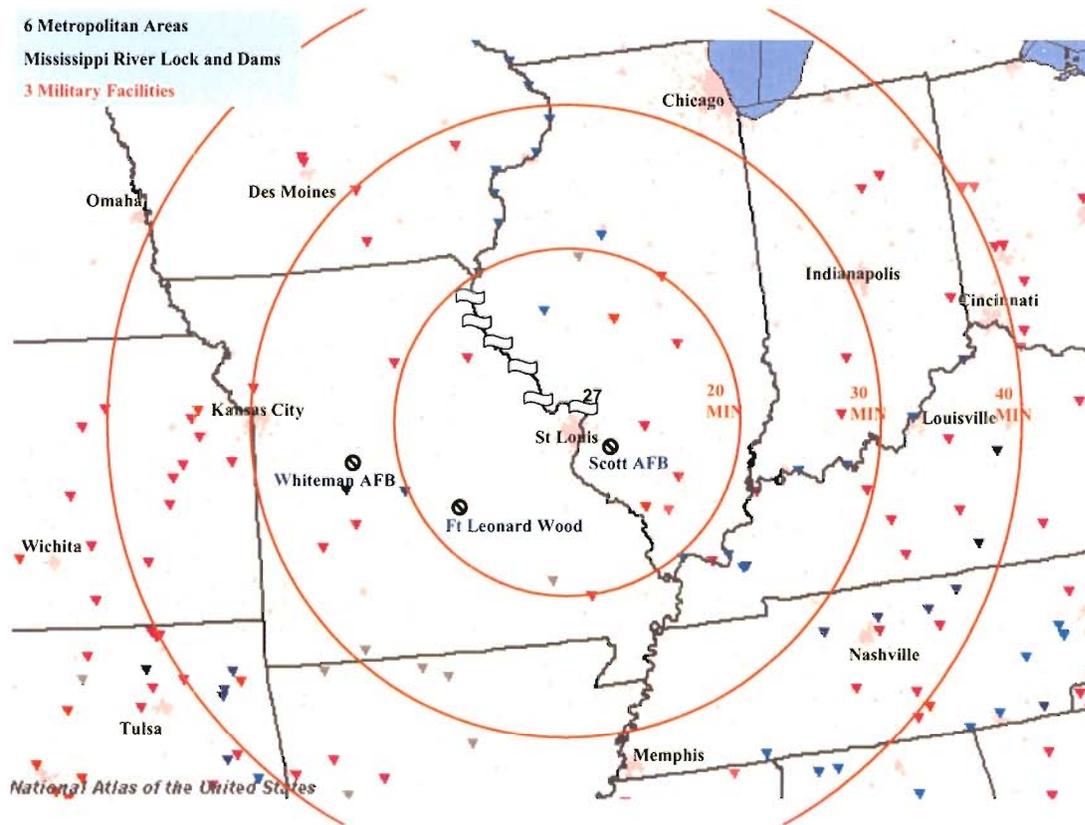


The yellow circles represent proposed alert detachments.

Once again only some of the bases shown here sit alert.

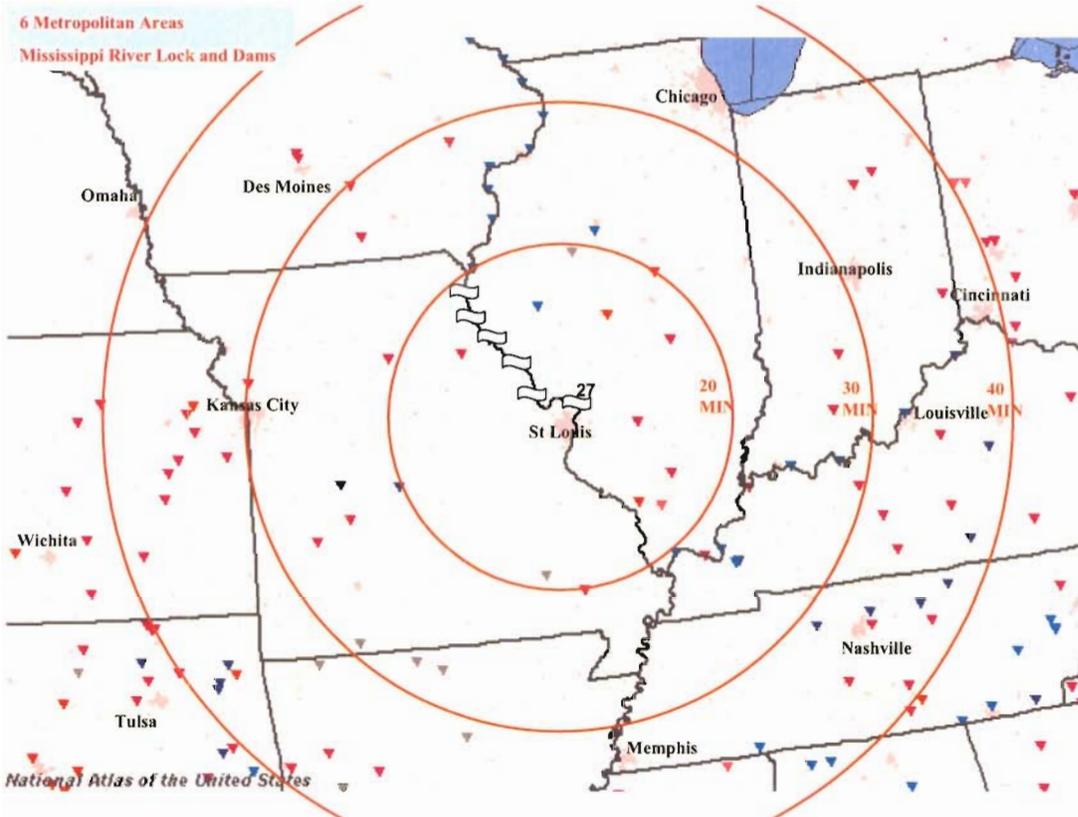
SLIDE

Now we highlight several key military facilities.



Scott AFB is located 27 miles away and is the headquarters for the Air Forces' Air Mobility Command and the U.S. Transportation Command.

This map focuses on the area around St Louis and represents the Area of Operations for the 131st Fighter Wing.



The inner ring depicts the 20 minute scramble response. (108 NM as used in the BRAC report). In addition there are rings for a 30 and 40 minute response.

The metropolitan areas represent a total population of nearly 10 million people, not including the smaller cities and towns throughout the area. These metropolitan areas are some of the largest cities in America including:

18 = St Louis (2.6M)

24 = Cincinnati (2.0M)

29 = Indianapolis (1.6M) 9.5 M people

39 = Nashville (1.2M)

44 = Memphis (1.1M)

50 = Louisville (1.0M)

The confluence of the Missouri, Mississippi and Illinois rivers occurs just above St. Louis. The Mississippi has a lock and dam system to allow extensive barge traffic. The banners shown here on the Mississippi represent these locks and dams.

SLIDE

Of particular interest is Lock 27 located at St. Louis. Construction of the lock began in 1946 and was completed in 1953 at a cost of \$40 million dollars. If this lock was rendered unusable the consequences would be catastrophic. There aren't any detours around a disabled lock.



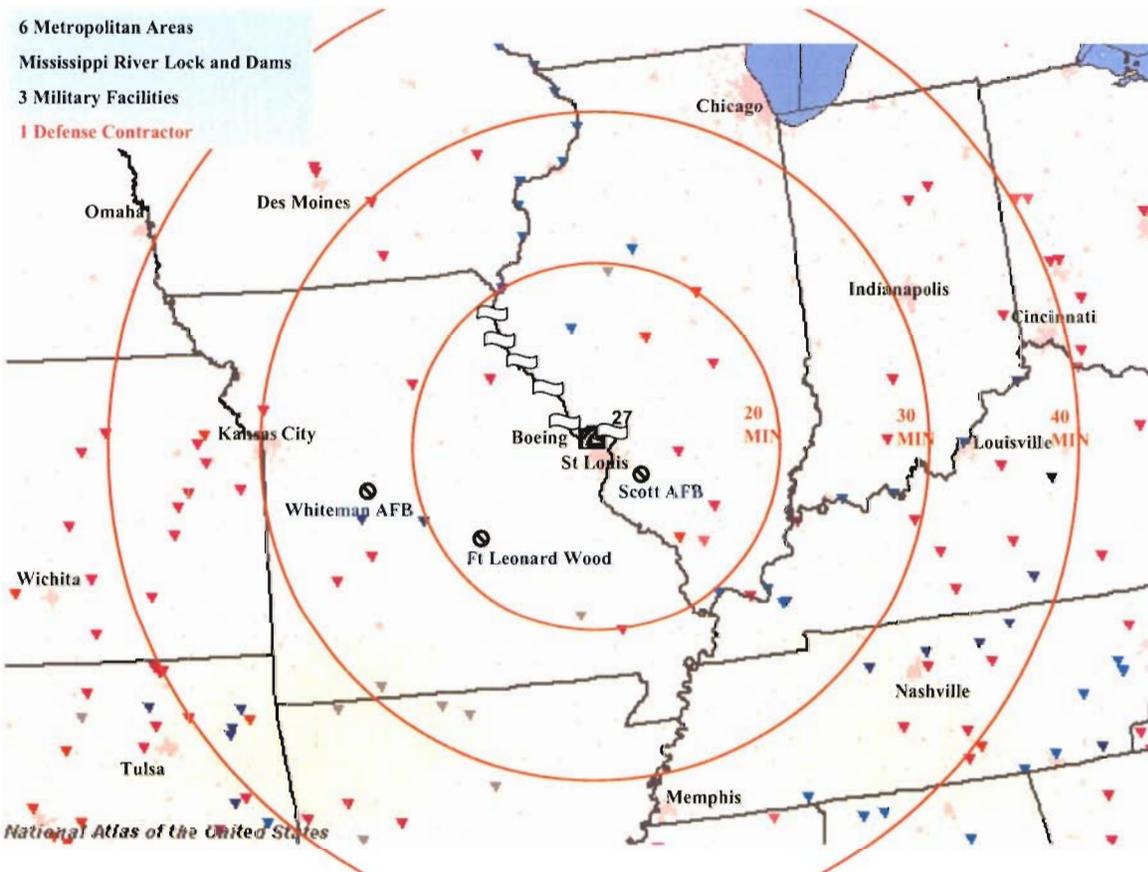
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Fort Leonard Wood is 133 miles from St. Louis and is the Home of the Maneuver Support Center, U.S. Chemical, Engineer and Military Police Schools, as well as the Center of Excellence for Homeland Defense & Rapid Assessment and Initial Detection (RAID).

Whiteman AFB is located 146 miles to the west and is the only B-2 base in the world.

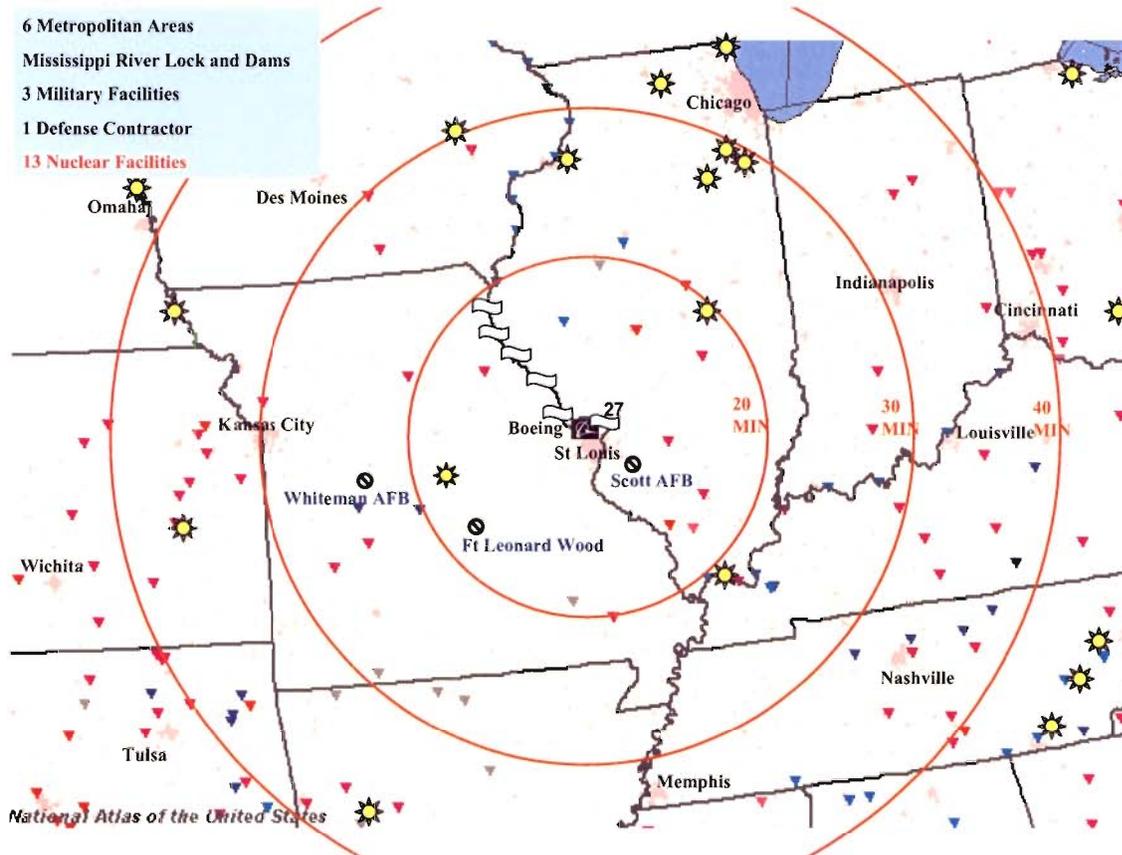
SLIDE

All across the area there are many vital industrial sites, for example the Boeing Manufacturing plant in St Louis. This plant produces the **F-15E Strike Eagle**, **F/A-18E/F Super Hornet**, **JDAM**, **Harpoon Block II**, and the **Standoff Land Attack Missile** to name just a few.



SLIDE

Now we add the nuclear sites within the area.

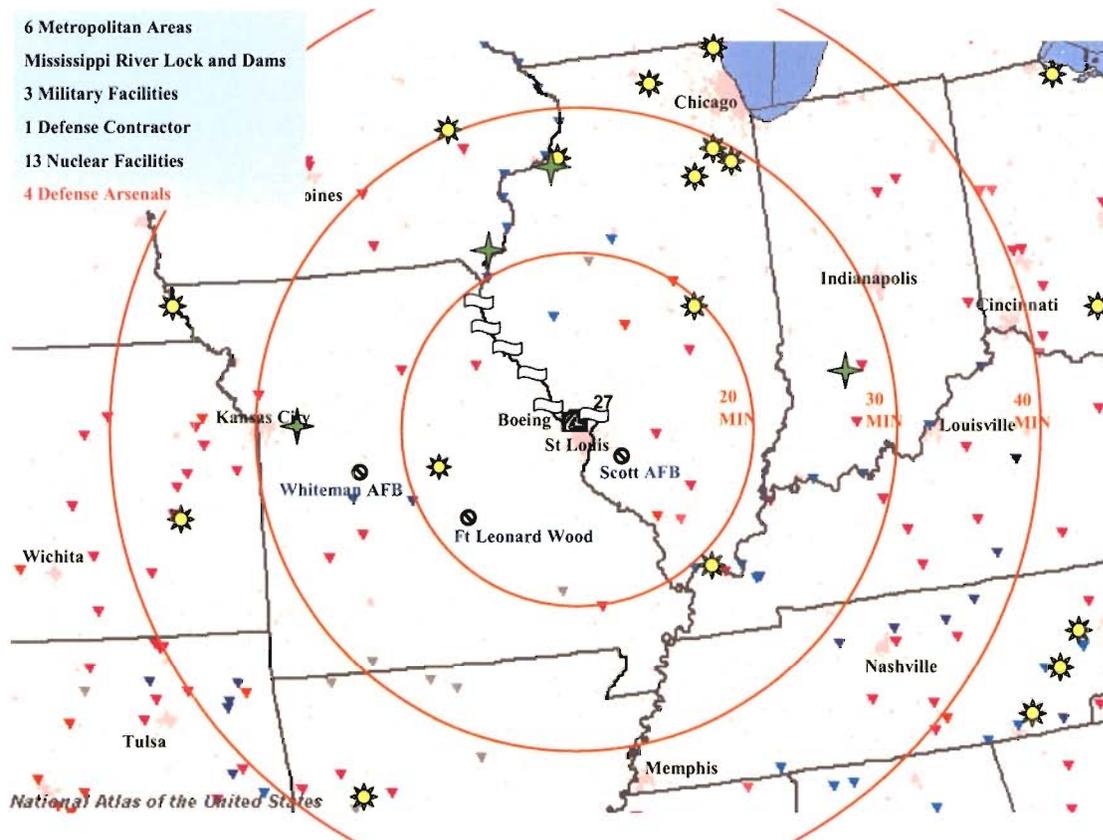


The Nuclear Plant at Paducah, Kentucky is the only uranium enrichment plant in the country.

Calloway nuclear plant is located in central Missouri and on Sept 12, 2001 the 131st Fighter Wing scrambled to protect this very plant.

SLIDE

Continuing we now add arsenals as depicted with green stars.



The Arsenal in **Crane, IN** is the only operational white phosphorous conversion plant in North America.

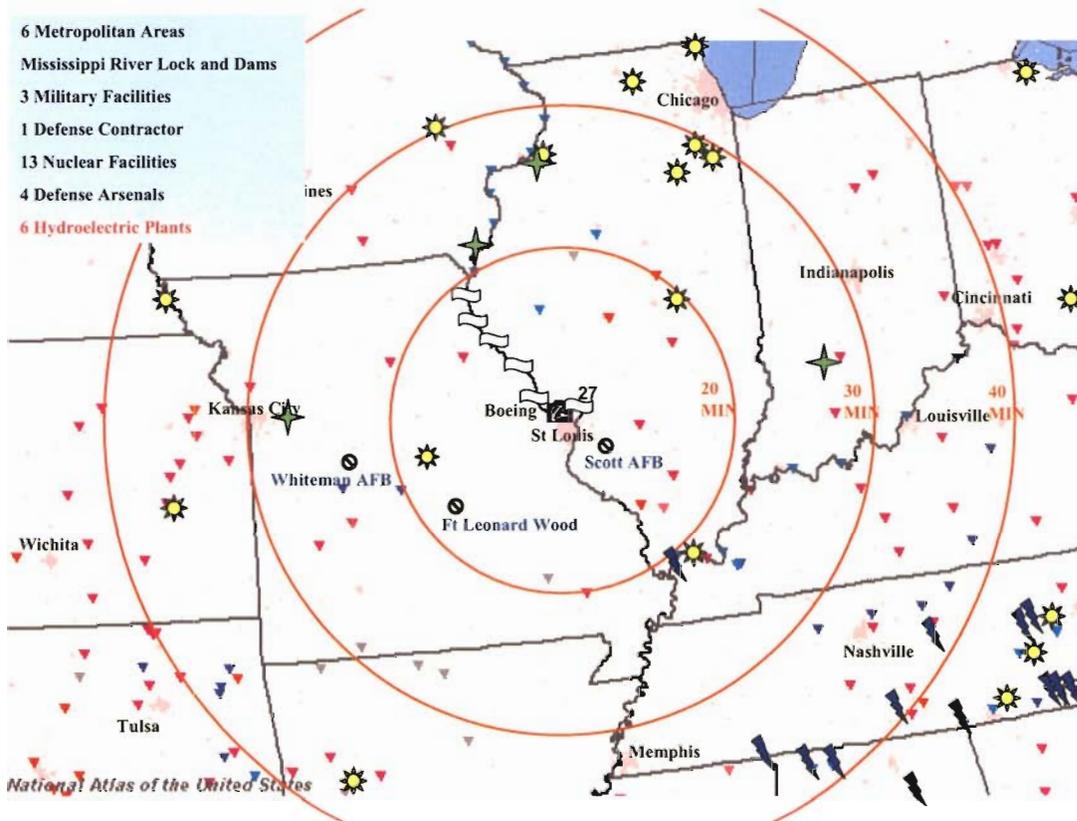
The **Rock Island Arsenal** is located next to the Quad Cities. It is the largest government-owned weapons manufacturing arsenal in the western world.

The **Lake City Arsenal** is next to Kansas City. It is the largest small-arms (5.56-20mm) manufacturing plant in the world. 5.56 mm is the small arms ammunition used by the forces currently deployed in Iraq and elsewhere around the world.

The **Iowa Army Ammo plant** is located in the southeast corner of Iowa. It is a one of a kind natural resource that provides “total munitions solutions” for the defense industrial base,

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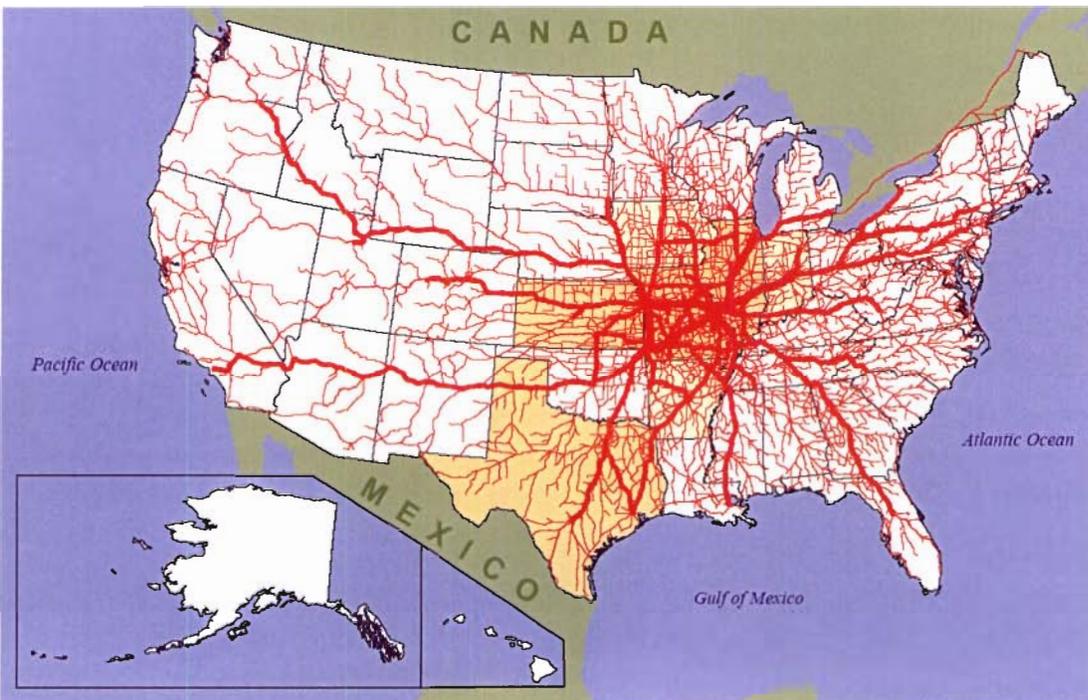
Next we add the major hydroelectric plants, which are depicted on this slide. The closest one to St Louis is located at Paducah, Kentucky. The rest are in the Tennessee Valley area.



SLIDE

Missouri is the crossroad of America and the “Gateway to the West.” When we look at this map, which depicts the amount of truck traffic that passes through Missouri, it becomes readily apparent that the 131st sits at one of the transportation hubs of America.

Missouri is the Crossroads of America and the “Gateway to the West”



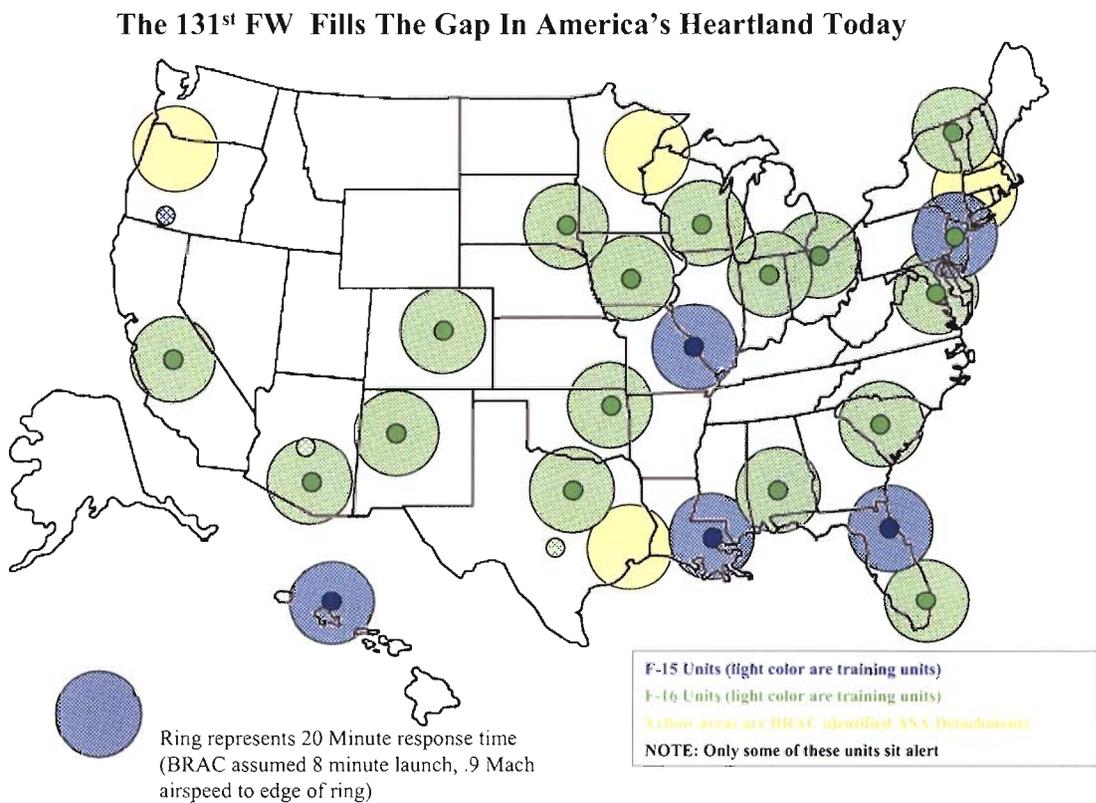
Disruption of this transportation network, which funnels across a series of bridges near St. Louis, would have a devastating effect on the nation’s economy. Nuclear Waste shipments also use these roads.

SLIDE

The good news:

The 131st Fighter Wing has been performing this air sovereignty mission for nearly two years.

As you can see, the 131st Fighter Wing fills the gap in America's Heartland.



The 131st was asked, then tasked, to defend this area by First Air Force. We protect these six major population centers, these three major military sites, these numerous critical industrial sites and countless locks and dams.

We want to be sure you, the BRAC commission, understands that when this tasking was received, we modified and enhanced our facilities to support the air sovereignty mission. We installed aircraft shelters, living accommodations, command and control systems, alarms and lights with some money from 1st Air Force but mainly from our own funds.

We don't know if the Air Force was aware that the 131st is tasked to perform the air sovereignty mission. But we wanted you to know.

We accomplish our mission with the F-15C aircraft that will remain in the inventory for another 20 years and is the overwhelming choice for the air to air mission, at home or away, today and tomorrow.

In closing, the 131st Fighter Wing is tasked to defend a major portion of America's heartland.

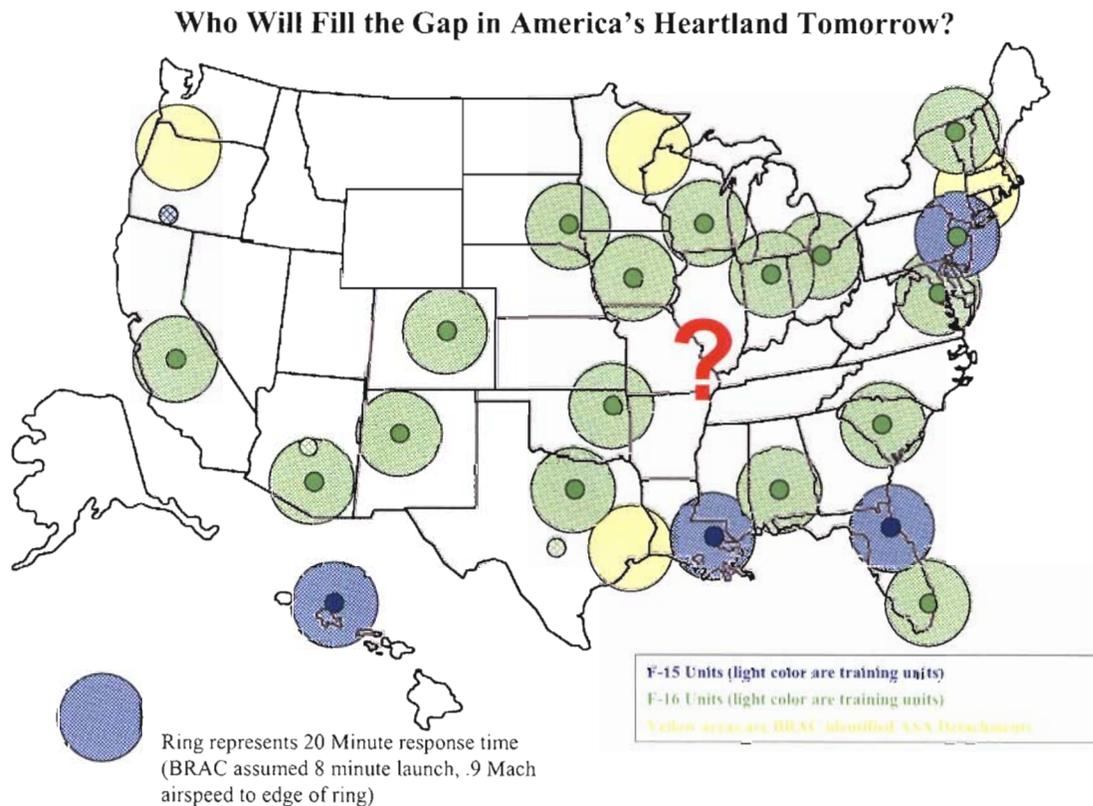
St. Louis is indeed the gateway to the west and the crossroads of our country's transportation systems, where countless industries work to produce key products that are essential to our nation's economy and our defense.

As a military planner and experienced combat pilot, I wonder:

Who will defend these assets?

SLIDE

I wonder:
Who will fill the gap in America's Heartland tomorrow?



The answer is up to you.

The decision is in your hands.

Thank you for your time.

factors that I believe the Commission must consider before you make final recommendations as you fulfill your critical role.

Indeed, you have heard from Senators Bond and Talent, Congressmen Akin, Clay and Cleaver and military experts about important information regarding recommended closures and realignments in Missouri. You have heard convincing arguments detailing why some of the recommended decisions for Missouri run counter to the National Security interests of the United States and contrary to the purposes of the BRAC process.

Our ultimate responsibility is to protect the American people. Our military is charged with carrying out this duty; and as we move forward with this important process we are obligated to make the right decisions. We accept the requirement to close or realign bases in this state. But I urge you to thoughtfully consider the recommendations with regard to the 131st Air National Guard Wing at Lambert, the Army Human Resource Command Center in St. Louis and the Defense Finance and Accounting Service (DFAS). In each case we must be certain that our military and American taxpayers are being best served by the adoption of these recommendations.

As we reflect on the information that Col. Brandt provided, which clearly depicts a hole in the protection of our heartland and its critical infrastructure, I am greatly troubled. I am confident my colleagues

Governor Fletcher of Kentucky, Governor Daniels of Indiana and Governor Bredesen of Tennessee share my concern. The Air Force used many criteria and sub-criteria then weighed them carefully in its recommendations, but I question if the formal process correctly determined what force structure most effectively defends the homeland and, in particular, the heartland. I believe that when examined thoroughly you will find the Air Force sub-criteria were flawed and lacking inclusion of critical homeland security needs.

I agree with the Air National Guard Adjutants General who say the failure of the Air Force to include the Air Guard input into their BRAC recommendations led to a disproportionate loss of Guard units, including the 131st. You no doubt have heard from several of my fellow governors who feel the same way. Consequently, I urge the Commission to carefully evaluate at the June 30th hearing in Atlanta the validity and decision process leading up to the final recommendations by the Air Force concerning Air Guard units.

9/11 taught us that the today's threat is no longer just an external threat puncturing our national borders. The threat we face is an unpredictable, asymmetrical attack intended to weaken our economic and military capabilities and inflict massive casualties on our civilian population.

We must be prepared to defend against that threat and future threats at any place and at any time.

As we speak today, the 131st is protecting many critical defense installations, including: Whiteman Air Force Base (home of the B2 bomber), Fort Leonard Wood (U.S. Army Maneuver Support Center) and Scott AFB, (Headquarters for U.S. Transportation Command and Air Mobility Command). The 131st also currently protects critical industrial sites depicted in Col. Brandt's testimony, including: the Calloway Nuclear Power plant, the Boeing plant in St. Louis, the Paducah Gaseous Diffusion Plant which conducts Uranium enrichment as well as large civilian population centers such as Kansas City, St. Louis, Chicago, Indianapolis and Memphis.

The BRAC recommendations stress the use of Air Sovereignty Alert (ASA) sites, which require specific response capabilities. The 131st Fighter Wing is equipped with the F-15C, arguably the fighter best suited for homeland defense. When requested by higher authority it has provided ASA level support. To meet the mission requirements of its ASA tasking the 131st spent over a million dollars of its own budgeted funds to upgrade ASA required infrastructure. Why stand up new ASA sites, when the 131st has the capability and has demonstrated the ability to effectively protect our heartland? This proposed plan is particularly troublesome because

according to internal Air Force documents dated April 19, 2005 no cost savings are realized for 63 years in 2071. And who will meet the heartland's defense needs when these fighters are gone?

The Air Force has stated that "enclaves" will be created to assist governors with our homeland defense mandate; yet this concept has not been clearly defined. What capability and roles will these units have? Are "enclaves" equipped to effectively carry out a homeland defense mission? Why is an "enclave" preferable to closing a facility and allowing the city and state to redevelop the property? These questions must be clearly answered before we adopt this new force structure policy.

Realignment of the 131st Fighter Wing may look fine to some on paper from a distance, but as the Governor of Missouri, I need to know the answer to the question, "Who will protect the critical infrastructure and assets when the 131st is gone?"

With regard to the Human Resources Command Saint Louis (HRC-STL), we agree that the consolidation of these facilities is necessary and is in the best interest of taxpayers. However, we have questions regarding the creation and construction of a new 60-plus million dollar facility at Fort Knox, when there is a recently built, mission specific facility already in operation here in Saint Louis. As the HRC-STL panel discussed,

consolidating the three centers into the Saint Louis facility makes good, common sense. We have a highly trained and experienced workforce of personnel records specialists; the facility has an underground command center, secure communications and a surrounding support community that can accommodate growth. The geographic location of the center makes it easily accessible for Army personnel.

The Defense Finance and Accounting Services are also important facilities that are well situated in our state. The cost of moving from their current locations and the wasted buildings that will be left behind should be reconsidered as important factors. The loss of human capital is also an important consideration as people are not likely to move to retain these jobs. I understand the desire for consolidation of similar functions, but I believe you should carefully examine all of the implications of this decision.

In conclusion, I thank you for your attention today and for allowing us to present our concerns. I also want to thank all of the witnesses that have testified here today and particularly Senator Bond for his efforts in coordinating this hearing. I recognize the importance and value of the BRAC process. However, I want to make certain that the BRAC process fulfills its intended mission while creating a force structure that is compatible with defending the homeland against current and future threats.

As Governor of Missouri, I had obviously hoped that none of the facilities in our great state would be closed or realigned, disrupting the lives of thousands of hard working Missourians. I have particular concern with the recommendations impacting the 131st, the Army Human Resources Command Center in St. Louis and the DFAS. Our state and the nation may not be well served by the decision to close or realign those facilities. I know you take this seriously. I respectfully ask the commission to review the information provided here today, including Col Brandt's critical infrastructure vulnerabilities presentation, while carrying out your duty in making the right decisions for American taxpayers, our military and those they protect. Thank you again for being here.

I am Major General Roger Lempke, Adjutant General for Nebraska, and president of the Adjutants General Association of the United States (AGAUS). My purpose today is to summarize key BRAC issues from the collective perspective of the fifty four Adjutants General.

The Adjutant General in each state and territory is responsible for the readiness of their respective Army and Air National Guard units. A state employee, the Adjutant General may also be responsible for emergency management and homeland security.

It is important to note that two voices are associated with the National Guard. The Chief, National Guard Bureau, LTG Steve Blum is a Title 10 officer charged with administering the National Guard and providing a link of communications between the states and Department of Defense (DOD). Each Adjutant General works for the state or territorial governor and in this capacity speaks independently. The Adjutants General Association of the United States (AGAUS) brings together Adjutants General of the several states to deal collectively with issues and speak with one voice to the Chief, National Guard Bureau, and the nation.

The Adjutants General Association of the United States is committed to a central leadership role in promoting and supporting adequate state and national security; in promoting the efficiency of the Army and Air National Guards of the respective states, territories and District of Columbia; and in facilitating and improving the administration of National Guard affairs through the Department of Defense and the several States.

To begin with I want to make three points very clear:

1. The AGAUS supports the overall BRAC process as legislated by Congress. We understand and support the need to transform the military and adapt to changing threats and conditions. Indeed, LTG Steve Blum, Chief, National Guard Bureau, has often said that the National Guard has itself transformed from a strategic reserve to an operational force. From our perspective much fine work has gone into the BRAC process.
2. We support the process used by the Army to prepare its recommendations. The process has been inclusive from the beginning. Most importantly, the Army recognized the National Guard's vital role in homeland security while understanding that changing population demographics demanded that armory and reserve center locations be updated and that greater use of joint facilities saves money and promotes training and readiness.
3. The Adjutants General were not involved with the Air Force BRAC process. Until very recently the Adjutants General were excluded from the deliberations to develop the Air Force Future Total Force (FTF) plan, the overarching guide used to develop the Air Force BRAC plan. Reviewing the still incomplete information set released by the Department of Defense has revealed that Air National Guard capabilities and operational efficiencies were not properly assessed resulting in flawed recommendations. You will learn of these in your state and regional hearings.

Today, I will present key issues the AGAUS hopes you will take under advisement.

INFRASTRUCTURE EVALUATION

The Air Force used one standard to evaluate all bases (Active Duty, Reserve, and National Guard). Yet, the concept of operations for National Guard bases is different than for the active duty. Intended as low cost operating locations, Air National Guard facilities often leverage existing civilian capabilities. Examples include the sharing of runways, fuel storage and transport facilities, fire and crash rescue, and buildings. Air Force criteria used to in their military value analysis did not score these kinds of cost savings features. Another low cost feature of ANG facilities is their sizing to support only the flying mission stationed there. ANG facilities do not typically possess excess parking ramp space because they will never be tasked to perform as staging bases for major operations. ANG sites can never compete with active duty bases if staging capability and potential growth is a major requirement. However, some ANG sites do have access to significant civilian ramp space available through cooperative agreements and leases. This, however, was not included in the evaluation. Finally, of the four major criteria used by the Air Force to develop “military value” for each site “cost of operations, manpower, and implications” is ranked the lowest in priority.

Not surprisingly, of the top 47 sites ranked by Air Force military value only two are Air National Guard sites. A primary purpose of the BRAC process is to save money, yet, the low cost operations of ANG sites is not a major factor in the Air Force evaluation scheme.

ASSIGNED AIRCRAFT

Many of the Air Force BRAC recommendations deal with shifting aircraft to increase the number of aircraft in squadrons (referred to as Primary Aircraft Assigned or PAA). We have been told the Air Force has analysis detailing how operational costs will be significantly lower. The Adjutants General do not dispute what the Air Force intends for active duty PAA. However, we do challenge any contention that cost savings from moving aircraft to increase PAA outweigh costs associated with the moves when considering the Air National Guard. We were not a party to the particular analysis by the Air Force. Experience suggests that a small increase in ANG fighter squadron size may be cost effective; but the same does hold true for airlift or tanker missions. Taking this into consideration and leaving the squadron sizes for airlift and tanker squadron as they now (8 PAA) the cost involved with shifting aircraft can be significantly reduced and around a dozen ANG sites that would lose their flying missions and experienced personnel could be kept operational.

RECRUITING AND RETENTION

The loss of aircraft from the ANG and movement of aircraft to fewer sites will have a significant impact on the retention of the most experienced aircrews and maintenance personnel in the Air Force. Unlike active duty personnel National Guard personnel do not just pack up and move to another location. Though claims have been made that retention factors were included in the analysis we cannot find significant evidence of this in the BRAC documentation released so far. This one factor alone could devastate the Air National Guard and hurt our nation’s ability to provide for homeland defense and rapid support of active component forces. We have heard that a “200 mile” radius was used in some manner to mitigate losses; however, numerous instances exist where a 200 mile radius is substantially violated in the shifting of aircraft. We cannot find how the Air Force COBRA cost model factors in the loss of drilling guardsmen to include

recruiting and training replacements. In some cases aircraft are being shifted to locations that already cannot meet manning requirements for current flying operations.

This is a critical area. Once a flying mission is removed from a location the experience loss that accompanies this change can never be recovered.

ENCLAVES

The enclave is a novel concept which the BRAC Commission must decide fits within ground rules determined by Congress for the BRAC process. Our understanding the enclave concept, which is not defined or otherwise addressed in Section 3 of the Base Closure and Realignment Report, is that it keeps some resources important to homeland security in place and serves as a “placeholder” for sites until new missions are identified. From our perspective for an enclave concept to be successful the final outcome for the location should be published along with the initial action. To our knowledge no such plan is available. The gap between removal of operational missions and insertion of new missions to enclaves is of great concern to the AGAUS. We fear new missions will never be identified for many of these sites in which case they will eventually wither and disappear without having the benefit of the rights accorded to sites being closed under the BRAC legislation. Our other concern is that new missions are so distant in the future that the cadre remaining after realignment will be unable to recruit and retain service members for pending but yet unknown missions.

PROGRAMMATICS VERSUS BRAC

The closure of bases and sites logically requires the movement of operational assets, generally aircraft, to other locations. This aspect of the BRAC process is understood by all. We have concerns that portions of the list actually involve force restructuring more than eliminating excess infrastructure. Aircraft retirement and reassignment are considered programmatic actions that are worked using prescribed processes in the military chain of command with civilian oversight. Including force restructuring under the BRAC umbrella eliminates opportunities for adjustments after BRAC recommendations become law. The Adjutants General simply ask the Commission to study this issue carefully.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Adjutants General desire an opportunity to work with the National Guard Bureau and Department of the Air Force to achieve an optimum plan that achieves Air Force objectives to transform and modernize while ensuring the Air National Guard sustains its federal role as an operational force and strategic reserve across the Air Force spectrum of missions and its state role in homeland security. The current BRAC list is very prescriptive in the realignment of flying and supporting operations involving the Air National Guard. A less prescriptive list would enable a renewal of the cooperative attitude that can lead to more robust and agile solutions.

Senator Kit Bond
Opening Statement
Base Realignment and Closure Commission Hearing
St. Louis, Missouri
Monday, June 20, 2005

Admiral Gehman (retired Navy Admiral Harold Gehman, Jr.), General Turner (retired Air Force Brig. Gen. Sue Ellen Turner), and Congressman Hanson (the Honorable James Hanson): Welcome to St. Louis, and thank you for being here. And a special thank you to Chairman Principi who agreed to delay this hearing two weeks in order to give us a chance to begin reviewing the documents released by the Pentagon to date.

We appreciate you providing this opportunity for us to present our concerns about the Pentagon's BRAC recommendations. I would like to note at this point that I have statements from Congresswoman Emerson and Congressman Hulsof that I would like placed in the record.

I am a strong supporter of the BRAC process, having supported each of the previous closure rounds. We must modernize the military to meet the needs of our time. We cannot meet the threats of the 21st century using infrastructure built to meet the needs of the 20th century.

Importance of the Commission's Work to the Closure Process

I very much appreciate Secretary (Commissioner) Principi's public comments that, and I quote:

“We are not a rubber stamp for the Defense Department. We are an independent check on the Defense Department, and at the end of the day we will make our recommendations to the president.”

So it is now up to you to evaluate the DOD proposals on behalf of the American people and make a recommendation to the President.

And it is up to us to provide for you the most current information, as well as outline the deficiencies and deviations we have discovered, to insure that as you complete your critical work – the public is confident that the right choices have been made.

Over the next two hours you will hear more detailed, and substantive arguments from local officials and military experts. Before they speak,

I will try to provide a larger context for their comments.

The Department of Defense has proposed its plan, and under it, a number of Missouri military facilities will be closed and the jobs sent elsewhere. While I never want to see jobs leave the state, I am mindful of the key objective of this process being a more capable and efficient military that protects all Americans.

Let me speak first to efficiency.

With respect to Human Resources Command, the Pentagon's recommendation to relocate and combine three disparate HRC sites at one location does make common sense. It is consistent with the goals of the BRAC process and why I have supported it in the past; it would eliminate duplication, create efficiencies, save money and ultimately, better serve our war-fighter.

What does not pass the common sense test is the recommendation to move out of a no lease facility and relocate this command to Fort Knox, a location with no existing HRC footprint. Such a decision fails to leverage any of the military value of the existing facilities.

It is clear, as you will hear in greater detail from the HRC panelists, that the workforce, facilities, community attributes, geographic location and ultimately the cost of HRC St. Louis all make it the logical place for a co-located Human Resources Command.

The work currently being done at HRC here in St. Louis requires employees with experience as personnel records specialists. Most are civilian employees, but the command also consists of more than 400 active and reserve soldiers. As the Pentagon works to privatize more non-combat functions in DOD it is likely that the size of the HRC civilian workforce will grow.

At present, approximately 15% of the space in the current building is unused. And as our panel of experts will soon describe, a new opportunity has now arisen to accommodate fully and economically the Army's needs – at no cost, rather than at huge new expense.

The building HRC-STL is currently located in was built less than twenty years ago and specifically designed for the personnel command. The building has five floors above ground and three below ground. It has independent power generation capability, an underground command center and secure communications facilities specifically designed for

the command's mission.

No comparable facility exists at Ft. Knox. Given the unique security requirements that surround HRC, the Army will be required to build a new building at Ft. Knox to accommodate the command. The cost for this facility is estimated to be a minimum of \$60 million, however, no such plans exist in the recommendations – evidence on its face that this does not meet BRAC's own rules of efficiency.

Therefore I believe that when the Commission focuses on the new information we will provide regarding the costs of moving the mission, as well as the fact the building can now be Army-owned rather than leased, you too will conclude that rejecting the Pentagon recommendation to move the Human Resources Command from St. Louis to Fort Knox is the right course to take.

Now I would like to spend a few moments on the issue of capabilities.

Importance of Homeland Defense in BRAC Process

Mr. Chairman, I know everyone involved in this round of BRAC has approached his or her job with a different mind-set than previous rounds.

We are not realizing the “peace dividend.” We are not war-gaming scenarios with Soviet tanks crashing into West Germany. We are not worried about the prospect of Soviet-built bombers being able to strike the U.S. from airstrips in Nicaragua.

Instead of NATO being the bulwark against communism across the ocean, we have created the Department of Homeland Security to be our bulwark against terrorists right here at home.

As the President said in the State of the Union, “Our country is still the target of terrorists who want to kill many, and intimidate us all.”

So the challenge facing the Department of Defense, and now you – but ultimately all of us – is given the new demands on our military, where should our military assets be located, in light of the function they serve?

The BRAC law is clear that military value is the key criteria in guiding the decisions and recommendations. And the very first Military Value criteria to be considered is:

“Current and Future Mission Capabilities”

And what is the mission? That is best described by the National Security Strategy of the United States which states:

“Defending our Homeland against its enemies is the first and fundamental commitment of the Federal Government.”

Additionally the 2004 Force Structure Plan underlying BRAC states:

“Our ongoing global war on terrorism and resulting operational experience call for a reorientation of our military capabilities to contend with these challenges effectively.”

“Elements of the U.S. National infrastructure are vulnerable to catastrophic attack. The interdependent nature of the infrastructure creates more vulnerability, because attacks against one sector – the electric grid for instance would impact the other

sectors as well”

“A single catastrophic attack against the United States is an unacceptable prospect.”

Obviously, in this post-911 world, how and where we defend our homeland presents a much different set of questions than even 5 years ago.

But to me, and probably most Americans, the question before you is a simple one:

Does a BRAC recommendation enhance, detract, or have no effect on the military’s current and future mission to defend our homeland from its enemies?

131st Fighter Wing

Which brings me to the recommendation to eliminate the 131st Air National Guard fighter wing.

I have had the honor of being the Co-Chair of the Senate’s National Guard Caucus for the past 10 years. In that capacity I have had numerous discussions as to what is the current and future role of the

Guard, and whether we are providing them the resources to match their missions.

I have seen the Air National Guard's responsibilities increase dramatically post-911, as they have taken on the primary role of policing the nation's air-space.

In fact, in the days following 9-11, when an unidentified small aircraft was flying near a nuclear power plant in Callaway County here in Missouri, it was the pilots of the 131st who were called into action.

Let me quote from Assistant Secretary of Defense for Homeland Security Paul McHale, in testimony before the House of Representatives last year:

“NORAD guards, patrols, and monitors the skies over Canada and the United States. Each and every day the men and women of the United States Air Force, United States Air Force Reserve, and the Air National Guard secure the skies over major metropolitan areas, historic monuments, and our nation's critical infrastructure. Since September 11, 2001, these

dedicated professionals have executed over 30,000 air defense sorties and responded to over 1700 requests from the Federal Aviation Administration to intercept potential air threats.”

Mr Chairman, let me just note that quite a few of those major metropolitan areas, historic monuments, and our nation’s critical infrastructure are within miles of where we are sitting today.

There are nuclear power reactors, dams and railroad lines, and a Boeing plant that produces our fighter jets. We have stadiums, monuments, large chemical storage facilities, and the uranium enrichment facility in Paducah, Kentucky – not to mention Whiteman Air-force Base and its B-2's.

But now we are facing a recommendation which in effect says, *we plan that each and every day the men and women of the United States Air Force, United States Air Force Reserve, and the Air National Guard WILL SECURE LESS OF the skies over major metropolitan areas, historic monuments, and our nation’s critical infrastructure than they do today.*

This is unacceptable.

So how did it come to this? How did the Air Force allow their BRAC process and deliberations to deviate substantially from the BRAC law and Force Structure Plan?

On the surface, the Air Force has said all the right things. They state in their Analysis and Recommendations that they had established 16 principles to guide their deliberations.

They then state that five of those principles were “defined as imperative” – and two of those five are homeland and air national guard missions.

Their deliberations show that in the earliest stages they include ‘proximity to homeland defense response area’ as part of the “Chief’s Expeditionary Air Force Principles.”

They discussed how to build questions to determine the military value of the homeland security mission. They define Homeland Defense as “the protection of US territory, sovereignty, domestic population, and critical infrastructure.”

And they describe how the Expeditionary AF imperatives includes the need to “cover key sites (homeland defense).”

But in the end, it does not appear that homeland security was factored into the Pentagon’s decision at all. Instead, behind closed doors, the Air Force chose to take a path whereby homeland defense as a factor was considered but then rejected, where homeland defense questions were considered but then rejected, where a homeland security military compatibility index was considered but then rejected.

The result is a BRAC process that asked no questions on homeland defense, that awarded no points for homeland defense, and weighted no answers on homeland defense – so it should be no surprise that a base whose prime mission is homeland defense is slated for closure.

In fact, if your base’s sole mission was to protect critical infrastructure, under the Air Force’s analysis and scoring procedures, you would receive ZERO points for that.

If your mission was to protect civilian populations, if you were in close proximity to a potential response site – ZERO.

But the Air Force did find that factors such as weather and runway length were important enough to assign scores. Distance to training airspace was viewed as important – but not distance to critical infrastructure sites.

25 questions for fighter bases, but none on homeland defense. No questions or points on a fighter base's capability to meet the homeland defense mission, no questions or points on a fighter base's staging area for homeland defense.

But what does the Air Force say in their justification for dismantling of the 131st? They say “the Atlantic City bound aircraft will provide expanded capability for the Homeland Defense mission.”

This suggests that the Air Force uses the homeland defense mission only selectively — when it suits its purpose. Homeland defense was used as a justification for moving planes from Lambert to New Jersey, but not considered in the Air Force's evaluation of the various facilities.

Frankly, I did not believe it when I first learned this was the case.

Even today I find it hard to believe.

Since September 11th, we have seen just how important the Air Guard's role is to our regional security.

It was the Air National Guard that twice has defended the U.S. Capitol from unidentified aircraft, and it was the 131st that we depended on when the safety of a local nuclear power plant was in question.

Mr. Chairman, like I said, I support the BRAC process.

But it is clear that when it comes to the 131st Fighter Wing –in fact all the Air Guard decision-making – somewhere the process got derailed.

Even in its projections of the “cost savings” it is clear the Air Force could not get it right. For if you review, which I have done, the BCEG minutes, you will find that on February 10, 2005 the Air Force believed the payback period would be NEVER, and the cost \$27 million, for closing down the 131st.

Then by April 19, the minutes show the discussion was that it would need a payback period now of only 63 years, and for the first 20 years it would only cost \$22 million.

But then 9 days later on April 28, Lambert closure is combined with Otis ANG Base closure, and suddenly there is a savings – and costs are not mentioned again.

So, for the next twenty years we can pay over \$20 million, in order to eventually save \$1.4 million a year – just to close a strategic basing area for homeland security in the heartland.

While in so doing we make ourselves more vulnerable to terrorists.

We must ask ourselves, “What will be the cost of a single well-executed terrorist attack in this region and are we prepared to live with the consequences?”

The decision to remove the 131st creates a regional vulnerability that stands in direct contradiction to the homeland security principles outlined by the Air Force, the Secretary of Defense and the President.

The AF BRAC process substantially deviated from BRAC statutory criteria and the Force Structure Plan and the recommendation to remove the 131st substantially deviates from BRAC requirements.

It is the duty of the BRAC commission to reject the recommendation to close Lambert Field, lose its strategic central location as a staging area for homeland defense, and disperse its homeland defense mission capable F-15s in the 131st.

Mr. Chairman, when you and other commissioners examine this case, I think you will agree.

Thank you again for your time and consideration.