

The Commission found that the DoD rationale for relocating the 304th Rescue Squadron (Air Force Reserve) is no longer applicable; the Commission recommends they remain in place. This recommendation is consistent with the Commission's Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve Laydown Plan.

## COMMISSION RECOMMENDATIONS

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The Commission found that the Secretary of Defense deviated substantially from final selection criterion 1, as well as from the Force Structure Plan. Therefore, the Commission recommends the following:

Realign Portland International Airport Air Guard Station, OR. Realign the 939th Air Refueling Wing (AFR). Distribute the KC-135R/T aircraft assigned to the 939th Air Refueling Wing (AFR) to meet the Primary Aircraft Authorizations (PAA) requirements established by the Base Closure and Realignment recommendations of the Secretary of Defense, as amended by the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission. Establish the 507th Air Refueling Wing (AFR), Tinker Air Force Base, OK as a twelve Primary Aircraft Authorizations (PAA) KC-135R/T wing. Operations and maintenance manpower for four PAA aircraft from the 939th Air Refueling Wing will realign to Tinker Air Force Base, OK. The 939th Air Refueling Wing's Expeditionary Combat Support (ECS) is realigned to Vandenberg Air Force Base, California.

Realign the 142<sup>d</sup> Fighter Wing (ANG). Distribute the 15 F-15 aircraft assigned to the 142d Wing (ANG) to meet the Primary Aircraft Authorizations (PAA) requirements established by the Base Closure and Realignment recommendations of the Secretary of Defense, as amended by the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission.

Establish 18 PAA F-15 aircraft at the 142d Fighter Wing (ANG), Portland International Airport Air Guard Station, OR.

Establish 18 PAA F-15 aircraft at the 159th Fighter Wing (ANG), New Orleans ARS, LA.

The 142<sup>d</sup> Fighter Wing's Expeditionary Combat Support elements, along with the 244<sup>th</sup> and 272<sup>d</sup> Combat Communications Squadrons (ANG), and the 304<sup>th</sup> Rescue Squadron (AFR), will remain at Portland and Portland will continue to support a homeland defense alert commitment. The 214<sup>th</sup> Engineering Installation Squadron (ANG), a geographically separated unit at Jackson Barracks, LA, is relocated onto available facilities at New Orleans.

The Commission found that this change and the recommendation as amended are consistent with the final selection criteria and the Force Structure Plan. The full text of this and all Commission recommendations can be found in Appendix Q.

## ELLSWORTH AIR FORCE BASE, SD, AND DYESS AIR FORCE BASE, TX

### RECOMMENDATION # 109 (AIR FORCE 43)

ONE-TIME COST:	N/A
ANNUAL RECURRING COSTS/(SAVINGS):	N/A
20-YEAR NET PRESENT VALUE:	N/A
PAYBACK PERIOD:	N/A

## SECRETARY OF DEFENSE RECOMMENDATION

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Close Ellsworth Air Force Base, SD. The 24 B-1 aircraft assigned to the 28th Bomb Wing will be distributed to the 7th Bomb Wing, Dyess Air Force Base, TX. Realign Dyess Air Force Base, TX. The C-130 aircraft assigned to the 317th Airlift Group will be distributed to the active-duty 314th Airlift Wing (22 aircraft) and Air National Guard 189<sup>th</sup> Airlift Wing (two aircraft), Little Rock Air Force Base, AR; the 176th Wing (ANG), Elmendorf Air Force Base, AK (four aircraft); and the 302nd Airlift Wing (AFR), Peterson Air Force Base, CO (four aircraft). Peterson Air Force Base will have an active duty/Air Force Reserve association in the C-130 mission. Elmendorf Air Force Base will have an active duty/Air National Guard association in the C-130 mission.

## SECRETARY OF DEFENSE JUSTIFICATION

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This recommendation consolidates the B-1 fleet at one installation to achieve operational efficiencies. Ellsworth (39) ranked lower in military value for the bomber mission than Dyess (20). To create an efficient, single-mission operation at Dyess, the Air Force realigned the tenant C-130s from Dyess to other Air Force installations. The majority of these aircraft went to

Little Rock (17-airlift), which enables consolidation of the active-duty C-130 fleet into one stateside location at Little Rock, and strengthens the Air National Guard squadron to facilitate an active duty association with the Guard unit. The other C-130s at Dyess were distributed to Elmendorf (51-airlift) and Peterson (30-airlift) to facilitate active duty associations with the Guard and Reserve units at these installations.

## COMMUNITY CONCERNS

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The Rapid City, SD, community criticized DoD's proposal on the grounds of national security, military value, cost, and economic impact. Representatives believe consolidating all B-1 bombers at one base poses significant security threats because a single accident or attack could wipe out or delay a major weapons platform. The community questioned DoD's military value criteria and selection process because Ellsworth scored higher than Dyess in three of four criteria. The one lower score, in the most heavily weighted criteria, was inaccurate according to the community because it did not reflect Ellsworth's proximity to low-level flying routes or mission supporting airspace. Further, representatives contended that operating the entire B-1 fleet at one base was inherently inefficient and would exceed the cost of maintaining two separate bases. They also questioned why Ellsworth was not considered for a tanker mission backfill when it ranked fifth for the tanker MCI score out of all Air Force bases evaluated - far higher than many other bases receiving tankers under DoD's proposal. Finally, the community asserted closure would have a very significant economic impact.

The Abilene, TX, community asserted DoD's recommendation to relocate their C-130s to bases with lower military value scores substantially deviated from the selection criteria. Further, the DoD proposal ignores the operational, training and maintenance efficiencies attained at Dyess with its 29 C-130H models. Last, it would cost more in military construction funding to relocate their aircraft to Little Rock than to keep them at Dyess along with the additional B-1s the base is slated to receive, thereby violating criteria five.

## COMMISSION FINDINGS

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The Commission found that Ellsworth is an outstanding installation. It has vast unencroached air space, is sparsely populated and has diverse terrain.

In reviewing DoD comparative military value scoring methodology for airspace and airspace training ranges the Commission found that the methodology was fairly and consistently applied, but it was narrowly focused and did not consider range utilization and the value of a range to specific aircraft. Because of this, the Commission found that Ellsworth's airspace training range was more valuable than identified in the scoring methodology.

The Commission found that consolidating the B-1 fleet would reduce the number of bomber bases from five to four. The Commission found that the closure of Ellsworth would not result in a savings, but a cost. A significant portion of Ellsworth savings are tied to military personnel savings, but those savings would not be realized since efficiencies gained by the consolidation would not occur because the Air Force planned to use those positions for other missions, thereby negating savings and adding costs to move them.

The Commission also found the cost for military construction at Little Rock Air Force Base was significantly underestimated and therefore the military construction costs associated with this recommendation were much higher. Further, the Commission found that the military personnel movement linked to the distribution of C-130s from Dyess Air Force Base, TX to Little Rock, AR, Elmendorf Air National Guard, AK and Peterson Air Reserve Station is inefficient because it resulted in a net increase in personnel managing and maintaining the C-130s.

Additionally, the Commission found that protracted litigation in the primary airspace training range at Dyess could potentially impact readiness to the B-1 fleet if the temporary restriction were made permanent. Last, the Commission found that Ellsworth is the second largest employer in South Dakota and the closing of the base will have significant economic impact on the community. This impact would be significantly higher than DoD's average impact on the community.

## COMMISSION RECOMMENDATIONS

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The Commission found that the Secretary of Defense deviated substantially from final selection criteria 1, 2, 3, 5 and 6, and the Force Structure Plan. Therefore, the Commission has rejected the recommendation of the Secretary.