

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE

Beale Air Force Base, California

*Category: Flying/Strategic
Mission: Strategic Reconnaissance
and Air Refueling, U-2, TR-1, and KC-135*

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE RECOMMENDATION

Realign Undergraduate Navigator Training and the 323rd Flying Training Wing from Mather Air Force Base, California, to Randolph Air Force Base, Texas, instead of realigning to Beale Air Force Base as recommended by the 1988 Commission on Base Realignment and Closure.

COMMUNITY CONCERNS

The economic impact will harm an already depressed area.

COMMISSION FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATION

The Commission finds that the DoD recommendation on realignment of Beale Air Force Base did not deviate substantially from the force-structure plan and the final selection criteria. The economic impact will not be severe. Therefore, the Commission recommends as part of the closure of Mather Air Force Base, the realignment of these activities to Randolph Air Force Base.

Bergstrom Air Force Base, Texas

*Category: Flying/Tactical
Mission: Tactical Reconnaissance, RF-4
Cost to Close: \$39.8 million
Savings: 1992-97: \$128 million;
Annual: \$36.3 million
Payback: 2 years*

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE RECOMMENDATIONS

Close Bergstrom and retire the assigned RF-4 aircraft. The 67th Tactical Reconnaissance Wing will be inactivated. Maintain the existing Air Force Reserve units in an enclosed area if the base is converted to a civil airport. Relocate the 12th Air Force Headquarters, 12th Tactical Intelligence Squadron, and 602nd Tactical Air Control Center Squadron to Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Arizona. The 41st Electronic Combat Squadron will remain in place at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base rather than move to Bergstrom Air Force Base as recommended by the 1988 Commission. Finally, move the 712th Air Support Operations Center Squadron to Fort Hood, Texas.

Bergstrom ranked relatively low in the flying/tactical category based on its long-term military value compared with other bases in the category. The base suffers from ground and regional air space encroachment. The regional air space is increasingly stressed by growth in air traffic. There are insufficient suitable air-to-ground or electronic combat ranges nearby for flight training. Finally, the capacity of on-base family housing is below

average compared with that at other bases in the category.

COMMUNITY CONCERNS

The community claimed that Bergstrom simply needs a new mission. It declared that the base is strategically located to support Fort Hood, Texas, with close air support operations and airlift for operational or exercise deployments. The community also was concerned that the closure recommendation was based upon the impression that the base would definitely be converted to a commercial airport. The community minimized the severity of ground and air space encroachment.

COMMISSION FINDINGS

The Commission found that DoD's closure recommendation was not tied to the conversion of the airfield to a civil airport. However, there is an option to maintain the Air Force Reserve unit if the airfield is converted to commercial use. The lack of adequate ranges and increasing encroachment limit the base's overall military value. Other tactical units such as the 149th Tactical Fighter Group at Kelly Air Force Base, Texas, can adequately support Fort Hood. Finally, Fort Hood uses its own Grey Army Airfield for airlift operations.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Commission finds that the DoD recommendation on Bergstrom Air Force Base did not deviate substantially from the force-structure plan and the final selection criteria. Therefore, the Commission recommends that Bergstrom Air Force Base close and that the assigned RF-4 aircraft retire. The 67th Tactical Reconnaissance Wing will be inactivated. The Regional Corrosion Control Facility will remain if it continues to be economical for the Air Force to operate it there. The Air Force Reserve units shall remain in a cantonment area if the base is converted to a civilian airport. If no decision on a civilian airport is reached by June 1993, the Reserve units will be redistributed. If the Reserve units stay but the airport is not an

economically viable entity by the end of 1996, these units would also be redistributed. The 12th Air Force Headquarters 12th TAC Intelligence Squadron and the 602nd Tactical Air Control Center Squadron will relocate to Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Arizona. The 712th Air Support Operations Center Squadron will relocate to Fort Hood, Texas. The 41st Electronic Combat Squadron will remain in place at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base.

Carswell Air Force Base, Texas

Category: Flying/Strategic

Mission: Strategic Bombardment and Air Refueling, B-52 and KC-135

Cost to Close: \$45.6 million

Savings: 1992-97: \$156 million;

Annual: \$45.5 million

Payback: 1 year

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE RECOMMENDATIONS

Close Carswell Air Force Base and transfer the assigned B-52H aircraft to Barksdale AFB, Louisiana. The assigned KC-135 aircraft will be transferred to the Air Reserve Component, and the 7th Bombardment Wing will be inactivated. The 436th Strategic Training Squadron will be relocated to Dyess AFB, Texas. Maintain the existing Air Force Reserve units in a cantonment area.

Carswell AFB ranked low based on its long-term military value compared with other bases in its category. The base is poorly located for wartime bomber or tanker employment. The base has the worst ground and regional air space encroachment in its category. The regional air space will continue to be stressed by aggressive aviation growth in the area.

COMMUNITY CONCERNS

The community claimed that many subelement scores were incorrect and that the "corrected" scores would change the overall rating for the base. The community minimized the impact and severity of air space encroachment, citing excellent procedures and equipment used to control aircraft in the Dallas/Fort Worth Airport area. Similarly, it declared that the existing ground encroachment in both the clear and accident zones will decrease. The community was also concerned about the disposition of the base hospital. The hospital serves the active-duty military members and their dependents as well as many retirees. The community was also concerned about the economic impact on a region already hard hit by other cuts in the defense industry.

COMMISSION FINDINGS

The Commission found very few errors in the subelement scores, and the full Air Force process was validated by the GAO. Carswell AFB is in an area of continued aviation growth and strong pressure on regional air space. Additionally, there is commercial and residential encroachment in the protected zones off either end of the runway. The poor location for wartime employment and ground and air space encroachment limit the base's future military value.

Much of the on-base housing is unusable because it is under renovation and the contractor has defaulted. The Air Force projects this housing to be unusable for the extended future.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Commission finds that the Secretary's recommendation on Carswell Air Force Base did not deviate substantially from the force-structure plan and the final selection criteria. Therefore, the Commission recommends the closure of Carswell AFB and the transfer of the assigned B-52 aircraft to Barksdale AFB, Louisiana. The assigned KC-135 aircraft should transfer to the Air Reserve Component.

The 436th Strategic Training Squadron will relocate to Dyess AFB. The existing Air Force Reserve units will remain in a cantonment area.

Castle Air Force Base, California

Category: Flying/Strategic
Mission: Strategic Bombardment,
Air Refueling, and Combat Crew Training
School: B-52 and KC-135
Cost to Close: \$99.2 million
Savings: 1992-97: \$63.0 million;
Annual: \$52.7 million
Payback: 2 years

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE RECOMMENDATIONS

Close Castle Air Force Base and transfer the assigned B-52G conventional aircraft to K.I. Sawyer AFB, Michigan. Transfer the assigned KC-135 aircraft to other Active or Reserve Component units. Transfer the B-52 and KC-135 Combat Crew Training mission to Fairchild AFB, Washington. The 93rd Bombardment Wing will be inactivated.

Castle AFB ranked relatively low based on its long-term military value compared with other bases in the category. The base is in a relatively poor location for wartime bomber employment. Its ranking also suffered because of its relatively poor location for wartime and peacetime air-refueling operations. The base endures local ground and regional air space encroachment. The regional air space is being increasingly stressed by growth in air traffic. Finally, the condition of the facilities at Castle AFB is below the average of other bases in the same category.

COMMUNITY CONCERNS

The community claimed that Castle AFB was incorrectly categorized as a flying/strategic base when, in its opinion, the primary mission of the base is initial training of B-52

and KC-135 aircrews. It declared Castle AFB has unique attributes to perform this training mission, including its many aircrew-training devices, access to numerous airfields, and transient student quarters. Finally, it believes that moving the training mission would be short-sighted because the longevity of the B-52 is in question.

COMMISSION FINDINGS

The Commission found that the base was properly categorized along with other flying/strategic bases. It is in a poor location for wartime bomber and tanker employment. Regional air space and local ground encroachment also degrade its overall military value. The DoD force-structure plan includes the B-52 aircraft until past the turn of the century.

RECOMMENDATION

The Commission finds that the Secretary's recommendation on Castle Air Force Base did not deviate substantially from the force-structure plan and the final selection criteria. Therefore, the Commission recommends closing Castle AFB and transferring the assigned B-52 aircraft to K.I. Sawyer AFB. Transfer the assigned KC-135 aircraft to other Active or Reserve Component units. Transfer the B-52 and KC-135 Combat Crew Training missions to Fairchild AFB, Washington.

Eaker Air Force Base, Arkansas

Category: Flying/Strategic

Mission: Strategic Bombardment and Air Refueling, B-52 and KC-135

Cost to Close: \$18.5 million

Savings: 1992-97: \$221.0 million;

Annual: \$52.9 million

Payback: Less than 1 year

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE RECOMMENDATIONS

Close Eaker Air Force Base and transfer the assigned KC-135 aircraft to other Active or

Reserve Component units. Retire the assigned B-52G Air Launched Cruise Missile aircraft. The 97th Bombardment Wing will be inactivated.

Eaker AFB ranked relatively low in the flying/strategic category based on its long-term military value compared with other bases in the category. The base is in a relatively poor location to support wartime bomber employment. Its ranking also suffered because of the limited opportunity for peacetime use of tanker assets and access to bombing ranges. The base experiences some current restrictions on access to bombing ranges and expects future restrictions as well. Finally, the capacity of the facilities is below the average of other bases in the same category.

COMMUNITY CONCERNS

The community claimed that Eaker AFB is close to many air-refueling tracks and removing assigned KC-135s will exacerbate a regional peacetime air-refueling tanker shortfall. It also stated that Eaker AFB has better weather than many northern strategic bases. The community was especially concerned with the economic impact of the closure.

COMMISSION FINDINGS

The Commission found that, although Eaker AFB is close to many designated air refueling tracks, it is still relatively distant from an area of high air-refueling requirements. Eaker AFB is in a relatively poor location for wartime bomber and tanker employment. The cost to close Eaker AFB is low, and the payback is achieved in less than one year. The economic impact on the community from the closing of Eaker AFB will be among the most significant in the Air Force.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Commission finds that the Secretary's recommendations on Eaker Air Force Base did not deviate substantially from the force-structure plan and the final selection criteria.

Therefore, the Commission recommends the closure of Eaker AFB. The assigned B-52 aircraft will be retired, and the assigned KC-135 aircraft will be transferred to other Active or Reserve Component units.

England Air Force Base, Louisiana

Category: Flying/Tactical
Mission: Tactical Fighters, A-10
Cost to Close: \$40.3 million
Savings: 1992-97: \$176 million;
Annual: \$47.2 million
Payback: 1 year

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE RECOMMENDATION

Close England Air Force Base (AFB) and retire or redistribute all aircraft among remaining Active and Reserve Component units. Inactivate the 23rd Tactical Fighter Wing. Realign one A/OA-10 squadron to Eglin AFB, Florida, and one to McChord AFB, Washington.

England AFB ranked relatively low in the flying/tactical category. The long-term military value of England AFB is limited by available airspace for training and by weather, for which England AFB ranked lowest in its category. The Air Force acknowledged the advantage of England AFB's proximity to Fort Polk, but stated that other bases could support the Army. Also, the cost to close is low while the savings are high.

COMMUNITY CONCERNS

The community argued that England AFB's mix of weather was good for training. It stated that the local air space, low-altitude military operating areas, and availability of higher altitude air space were not adequately considered. It questioned whether the Air Force could meet the Army's needs at Fort Polk if England AFB was closed. The community also stated that DoD understated the combined

economic impact of England AFB's closure and Fort Polk's realignment.

COMMISSION FINDINGS

The Commission found that the air space and weather can impact the military value of the base. With its surrounding air space England AFB can meet current mission requirements but will not be able to support future missions. Concerns that the current mission degraded the base rankings were unfounded. Air Force proposals to provide support to the Army were reasonable and formally endorsed by the Army. Finally, the combined economic impact of the two adjustments was substantially higher than for a single base.

RECOMMENDATION

The Commission finds that the DoD recommendation on England Air Force Base did not deviate substantially from the force-structure plan and the selection criteria. Therefore, the Commission recommends the closure of England AFB and the redistribution of one squadron to Eglin AFB, one squadron to McChord AFB, and the retirement of other remaining assigned aircraft, including the 23rd Tactical Fighter Wing.

Goodfellow Air Force Base, Texas

Category: Training
Mission: Technical Training

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE RECOMMENDATION

As part of the closure of Chanute Air Force Base, Illinois, realign the fuels training to Sheppard Air Force Base, Texas, and realign the technical training fire course to Goodfellow Air Force Base unless a satisfactory and cost-effective contract can be arranged. The 1988 Commission on Base Realignment and Closure

recommended that both of these courses be realigned to Goodfellow AFB.

COMMISSION FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATION

The Commission finds that the DoD recommendation on realignment of Goodfellow Air Force Base did not deviate substantially from the force-structure plan and the final selection criteria. Therefore, the Commission recommends the realignment of the fuels training from Goodfellow AFB to Sheppard AFB and the realignment of the technical training fire course to Goodfellow AFB unless a satisfactory and cost-effective contract can be arranged.

Grissom Air Force Base, Indiana

Category: Flying/Strategic
Mission: Strategic Air Refueling, KC-135
Cost to Close: \$24.9 million
Savings: 1992-97: \$157 million;
Annual: \$48.3 million
Payback: 1 year

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE RECOMMENDATIONS

Close Grissom Air Force Base and transfer the assigned KC-135 aircraft to the Air Reserve Component. The EC-135 aircraft will be retired and the 305th Air Refueling Wing will be inactivated. Grissom AFB ranked below average in the flying/strategic category based on its long-term overall military value compared with other bases in the category. The base's location provides limited opportunity for peacetime use of tankers and access to bombing ranges. Finally, Grissom AFB costs the fourth least to close in the category and the savings generated after closure are substantial.

COMMUNITY CONCERNS

The community claimed that Grissom AFB has no air space restrictions and that

expansion capability is unlimited around the base. The community also highlighted that, because of its distance to the coast, the base's survivability is enhanced due to its mid-western location. Also, the existing ramp can accommodate additional aircraft and the quality of life at Grissom AFB is better than at several bases not recommended for closure.

COMMISSION FINDINGS

The Commission found that the base was properly graded. The base has no flying restrictions and can expand. However, the distance to air-refueling receivers and primary ranges diminishes the base's military value. Grissom AFB is the fourth lowest cost to close in the category and offers a significant annual savings. Closing the base will have a negative economic impact on the local community. Finally, the condition of facilities at Grissom AFB graded lower than the category average.

RECOMMENDATION

The Commission finds that the Secretary's recommendation on Grissom Air Force Base did not deviate substantially from the force-structure plan and the final selection criteria. Therefore, the Commission recommends the closure of Grissom AFB, the retirement of assigned EC-135 aircraft, the inactivation of the 305th Air Refueling Wing, and the transfer of KC-135 aircraft to the Air Reserve Component.

Loring Air Force Base, Maine

Category: Flying/Strategic

*Mission: Conventional Bombardment and Air
Refueling, B-52 and KC-135*

Cost to Close: \$46.6 million

Savings: 1992-97: \$182 million;

Annual: \$61.8 million

Payback: 1 year

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE RECOMMENDATIONS

Close Loring Air Force Base and transfer the assigned B-52 aircraft to K.I. Sawyer AFB and disperse KC-135 aircraft to Active and Reserve Component units.

Loring AFB ranked relatively low in the flying/strategic category based on its long-term military value compared with other bases in the category. The base's location provides limited opportunity for peacetime use of tankers and access to bombing ranges. The condition of base facilities is below the average of other bases in the category. The cost to close Loring AFB is low and the savings are among the highest of the bases in this subcategory.

COMMUNITY CONCERNS

The community claimed that Loring AFB is the closest base to conventional and strategic targets east of the United States. It also pointed out that Loring AFB has two fully operational runways. Further, it stated that the base is near air-refueling routes, base facilities are adequate to meet current mission requirements, not enough credit was given for improvements to facilities, distance to bombing ranges is not a significant factor, and the Air Force did not adequately consider the economic impact.

COMMISSION FINDINGS

The Commission found that, although Loring AFB is the closest base to potential targets east of the United States, the

advantage is relative when the total mission is considered. Loring AFB is rated lower in military value because of the limited opportunity for peacetime use of tankers and access to bombing ranges. The condition of the facilities is below the command's average and the cost of required upgrades to meet the current and future missions is high. Loring AFB has only one fully operational runway and one prelaunch survivability runway. The annual savings will be one of the highest of the bases closed in the flying/strategic category. The economic impact on the Loring AFB community will be severe.

RECOMMENDATION

The Commission finds that the Secretary's recommendation on Loring Air Force Base did not deviate substantially from the force-structure plan and the final selection criteria. Therefore, the Commission recommends the closure of Loring AFB, the transfer of the assigned B-52 aircraft to K.I. Sawyer AFB, and the dispersal of the KC-135 aircraft to Active and Air Reserve Component units.

Lowry Air Force Base, Colorado

Category: Training

Mission: Technical Training Center

Cost to Close: \$222.5 million

Savings: 1992-97: -\$44.5 million;

Annual: \$42.2 million

Payback: 5 years

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE RECOMMENDATIONS

Close Lowry Air Force Base and redistribute all technical training to the remaining technical training centers. The 1001st Space Systems Squadron Defense Finance and Accounting Service and Air Force Reserve Personnel Center remain at Lowry. The Lowry Technical Training Center will be inactivated.

Lowry's long-term military value was low compared with other bases in its category. Its ranking suffered because base facilities ranked below the category average and the lack of a runway limits its ability to accept additional missions. Additionally, it is the second-least-expensive base to close in this category.

COMMUNITY CONCERNS

The community argued that Lowry was penalized too severely for the lack of a runway and that the DoD criteria placed too much emphasis on runway operations. The community also noted that the base has a favorable cost-per-student-trained ratio when compared with the other technical training centers. It also argued that the closure of Lowry would reduce too much infrastructure in light of the Fiscal Year 1988 decision to close Chanute Air Force Base. The elimination of two large training centers does not allow enough infrastructure to handle a quick surge in training that might be required.

COMMISSION FINDINGS

The Commission found that all training bases were treated fairly and Lowry did rank low in its category. The lack of a runway was considered correctly since it does limit future mission capabilities. However, the lack of a runway did not penalize Lowry when evaluated for supporting the current mission. Three training bases lacking active runway operations were all downgraded equally with regard to future mission capabilities. Lowry's base facilities rated lower than the category average. The Commission found that the cost of training per student is a function of the type of training conducted at Lowry and not a function of the physical properties of Lowry Air Force Base. Concerning the remaining technical training capacity, the closure of Chanute and Lowry removes 33 percent of the training infrastructure. The Air Force's projected accessions are 50 percent of what they were in the 1980s when there were six training centers. Therefore, the one-third reduction in facilities allows for surge capability if and when it is required. The Department of Defense should look closely at

using the excess facilities created by this closure when evaluating the Department's overall facility requirements such as the consolidation of the Defense Finance and Accounting Service.

RECOMMENDATION

The Commission finds that the DoD recommendation on Lowry Air Force Base did not deviate substantially from the force-structure plan and the final selection criteria. Therefore, the Commission recommends the closure of Lowry Air Force Base and that all technical training be redistributed to the remaining technical training centers or relocated to other locations. The 1001st Space Systems Squadron, Defense Finance and Accounting Service, and the Air Force Reserve Personnel Center remain open, in cantonment areas as proposed by the Secretary of Defense.

MacDill Air Force Base, Florida

Category: Flying/Tactical

Mission: Tactical Fighter Training and Joint Headquarters, F-16

Cost to Realign: \$31.0 million

Savings: 1992-97: \$53 million;

Annual: \$20.4 million

Payback: 2 years

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE RECOMMENDATIONS

Realign and partially close MacDill Air Force Base. The aircraft realign to Luke AFB, Arizona; the Joint Communications Support Element moves to Charleston AFB, South Carolina; the airfield closes; and the remainder of MacDill AFB becomes an administrative base.

The long-term military value of MacDill AFB is limited by pressure on air space, training areas, and low-level routes. MacDill AFB is not located near Army units that would offer joint-training opportunities. MacDill

AFB also has ground encroachment. Drawdown in the force structure results in the need for one less F-16 training wing. DoD did not recommend full closure because of the high cost to relocate two large joint headquarters.

COMMUNITY CONCERNS

The community argued that the reduction in the base's hospital staff associated with the population drawdown will reduce support to a large retired population and increase CHAMPUS costs. While it acknowledged air space congestion, the community argued that air space problems and accident potential in the Phoenix area are significantly worse. Loss of the airfield was also presented as degrading the ability of the joint headquarters to fulfill their missions. In particular, the community argued that a classified mission at MacDill AFB required a dedicated airfield. The community also expressed the concern that realignment was the first step toward closure.

COMMISSION FINDINGS

The Commission found that MacDill AFB was located in an area with increasing pressure on air space and therefore restricted training capabilities. The increased CHAMPUS costs associated with base closures were factored into the Air Force analysis. The CHAMPUS program was developed to address medical needs of all nonactive duty beneficiaries since DoD policy precludes manning a hospital solely to meet the needs of a retired population. In this case the increased cost was due to the large number of retirees.

The Commission examined the broad comparisons between Phoenix and Tampa raised by the community. Detailed review revealed that resulting force structure was below historic highs and that air traffic procedures were workable. The Commission also noted that Luke AFB has exceptional training air space to the south, which is connected to Luke AFB by established routing.

Arguments that the missions DoD plans to retain (both unclassified and classified) at MacDill AFB require a military airfield were

found wanting. The Commission also noted the high cost of total closure and the low cost and reasonable savings of realignment.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Commission finds that the Secretary's recommendations on MacDill Air Force Base did not deviate substantially from the force-structure plan or the final selection criteria. Therefore, the Commission recommends the realignment and partial closure of MacDill AFB; the realignment of the aircraft to Luke AFB, Arizona; the movement of the Communications Support Element to Charleston AFB, South Carolina; and the closure of the airfield. The remainder of MacDill AFB becomes an administrative base.

March Air Force Base, California

Category: Flying/Strategic
Mission: Air Refueling, KC-10

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE RECOMMENDATION

Realign 45 Air Force Audit Agency manpower authorizations from Norton Air Force Base, California, to the National Capital Region instead of March Air Force Base as recommended by the 1988 Commission on Base Realignment and Closure. The remaining 139 manpower authorizations will be transferred to March Air Force Base as directed by the 1988 Commission.

COMMISSION FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATION

The Commission finds that the DoD recommendation on realignment of these limited manpower authorizations did not deviate substantially from the force-structure plan and the final selection criteria. Therefore, the Commission recommends the realignment of the 45 Air Force Audit Agency manpower authorizations from Norton AFB to

the National Capital Region and the transfer of 139 manpower authorizations from Norton AFB to March AFB.

Mather Air Force Base, California

Category: Flying Training
Mission: Navigator Training, T-43 and T-37

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE RECOMMENDATIONS

Realign the 940th Air Refueling Group from Mather Air Force Base to McClellan Air Force Base. Leave the 323rd Flying Training Wing Hospital open as an annex to McClellan Air Force Base instead of leaving the 940th Air Refueling Group at Mather Air Force Base and closing the 323rd Flying Training Wing Hospital, as recommended by the 1988 Commission on Base Realignment and Closure.

COMMISSION FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Commission finds that the DoD recommendations did not deviate substantially from the force-structure plan and final selection criteria. Therefore, the Commission recommends the realignment of the 940th Air Refueling Group from Mather Air Force Base to McClellan Air Force Base and the retention of the 323rd Flying Training Wing Hospital as an annex to McClellan Air Force Base.

Moody Air Force Base, Georgia

Category: Flying/Tactical
Mission: Tactical Fighters, F-16
Cost to Close: N/A
Savings: N/A
Payback: N/A

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE RECOMMENDATIONS

Close Moody Air Force Base and redistribute all aircraft to modernize other Active and Reserve Component units. The 347th Tactical Fighter Wing will be inactivated.

Moody AFB's long-term military value compared unfavorably with other bases in its category. Its ranking suffered because of weather and its location in a region where special-use air space is being stressed increasingly by growth in air traffic. Additionally, it is the least costly base in its category to close.

COMMUNITY CONCERNS

The community argued that Moody AFB was incorrectly downgraded for air space and that the weather does not downgrade the base's ability to meet its mission. The community also noted that the base was recently identified as the best in the Air Force and has growth potential for a composite wing, potential that was not considered by the Air Force. It also

argued that the closure of Moody AFB was an example of the Air Force's failure to consider support to the Army.

COMMISSION FINDINGS

The Commission found that Moody AFB's minor training limitations are successfully managed and the wing can meet its training needs. While an increase in commercial aviation is evident, the routing around Moody AFB's air space and repeated examples of the Federal Aviation Administration providing additional air space to Moody AFB argue against training capability decreasing in the future. Sorties have been lost to weather, but the Air Force has successfully overcome this problem in the past and should be able to do so in the future. The closure of Moody AFB provides only small savings, and that justifies leaving open what has been recognized as one of the best bases in the Air Force for installation excellence.

RECOMMENDATION

The Commission finds that DoD substantially deviated from selection criteria 1, 2, and 3 in recommending the closure of Moody Air Force Base. Specifically, DoD did not adequately consider the military value of Moody AFB in its assessment of the extent of the impact of weather and air space problems. Therefore, the Commission recommends Moody AFB remain open.

Mountain Home Air Force Base, Idaho

Category: Flying/Tactical
Mission: Tactical Fighter and Electronic Warfare, F-111 and EF-111

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE RECOMMENDATIONS

Realign the remaining F-4G aircraft to the Idaho and Nevada Air National Guard; inactivate the 35th Tactical Training Wing;

maintain the 41st Electronic Combat Squadron at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Arizona; realign the EF-111 aircraft assigned from Mountain Home Air Force Base to Cannon Air Force Base, New Mexico. Establish a composite wing at Mountain Home AFB.

COMMISSION FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATION

The Commission finds that the DoD recommendation did not deviate substantially from the force-structure plan and the final selection criteria. Therefore, the Commission recommends the following: Realign the remaining F-4G aircraft to the Idaho and Nevada Air National Guard; inactivate the 35th Tactical Training Wing; maintain the 41st Electronic Combat Squadron at Davis-Monthan AFB, Arizona; realign the EF-111 aircraft assigned from Mountain Home AFB to Cannon AFB, New Mexico. Establish a composite wing at Mountain Home AFB.

Myrtle Beach Air Force Base, South Carolina

Category: Flying/Tactical
Mission: Tactical Fighters, A-10
Cost to Close: \$54.4 million
Savings: 1992-97: \$76.0 million;
Annual: \$30.2 million
Payback: 2 years

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE RECOMMENDATIONS

Close Myrtle Beach Air Force Base and redistribute all aircraft to modernize other Active and Reserve Component units. Inactivate the 354th Tactical Fighter Wing. The DoD recommendation also states that there be one active squadron each at Shaw AFB and Pope AFB.

Myrtle Beach AFB's long-term military value was low compared with other bases in its category. Its ranking suffered because of

weather, ground encroachment, and its location in a region where special use air space is being stressed increasingly by growth in air traffic. Additionally, the cost to close is low while the savings are high.

COMMUNITY CONCERNS

The community argued that Myrtle Beach AFB was incorrectly downgraded for ground encroachment and that the weather does not downgrade the base's ability to meet its mission. The community also noted that the base was recently identified as one of the best in the Air Force and has the potential to house a composite wing, which was not considered by the Air Force. It also argued that the closure of Myrtle Beach AFB was an example of the Air Force's failure to consider providing close-air support to the Army.

COMMISSION FINDINGS

The Commission found that all flying/tactical bases were treated fairly and Myrtle Beach AFB did rank low in its category. It does have training limitations and projections indicate increasing pressure on air space. Weather and air space do degrade Myrtle Beach AFB's military value and justify its low ranking. The base has low closure cost and favorable savings.

Regarding support to the Army, the Commission found that Shaw AFB, North Carolina, provides the needed support to Army units in the area.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Commission finds that the DoD recommendation on Myrtle Beach Air Force Base did not deviate substantially from the force-structure plan and the final selection criteria. Therefore, the Commission recommends the closure of Myrtle Beach AFB and the redistribution of all assigned aircraft to other Active and Reserve Component units, and that one active A/OA-10 squadron be realigned to Shaw AFB and Pope AFB.

Richards-Gebaur Air Reserve Station, Missouri

Category: Air Reserve Component Base
Mission: Tactical Fighters, A-10
Cost to Close: \$47.6 million
Savings: 1992-97: -\$4 million;
Annual: \$12.9 million
Payback: 5 years

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE RECOMMENDATIONS

Close Richards-Gebaur Air Reserve Station and transfer the 442nd Tactical Fighter Wing to Whiteman Air Force Base, Missouri. The 36th Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron and the 77th and 78th Aerial Port Squadrons will transfer to Peterson AFB, Colorado.

Since the joint-use plan with the Kansas City Department of Aviation, which was envisioned 12 years ago, has not materialized, the Air Force Reserve has borne a substantial portion of the operating costs of this airfield. The economically viable airport that the Air Force anticipated and the expected reduction in costs have not materialized. Therefore, relocating the Reserve activities to an Active Air Force base would achieve significant cost savings. Consideration was given to the recruiting needs of these units to ensure that the realignment meets military requirements and is cost-effective. The long-term effect on training is minimal since Whiteman AFB has similar access to training ranges, low-level routes, and Army exercise areas.

COMMUNITY CONCERNS

The community stated that the units would not be able to use current training ranges and could not support Fort Riley and Fort Sill. It also stated that the move would adversely affect recruitment, retention, and training because of the reduced population available for recruitment. In addition, it stated that the cost

to move was understated because the missile wing would not move as soon as anticipated.

COMMISSION FINDINGS

The Commission found that the Air Force and community's cost estimates for relocating to Whiteman AFB were incorrect. There will be some additional rehabilitation costs for temporary facilities, but the relocation costs would not be as much as envisioned for new construction. The Air Force's payback period would be seven years, not five years. The recruitment area and the travel distance required is within the Air Force guidance. The move will enable the unit to use additional training ranges and support Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri, Fort Riley, Kansas, and Fort Sill, Oklahoma, will get their support from Tinker Air Force Base, Oklahoma.

RECOMMENDATION

The Commission finds that the Secretary's recommendation did not deviate substantially from the force-structure plan or the final selection criteria. Therefore, the Commission recommends the closure of Richards-Gebaur Air Reserve Station, the transfer of the 442nd Tactical Fighter Wing to Whiteman AFB, and the transfer of the 36th Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron and the 77th and 78th Aerial Port Squadrons to Peterson AFB.

Rickenbacker Air Guard Base, Ohio

Category: Air Reserve Component Base
Mission: Tactical Fighters and Air Refueling, A-7, and KC-135
Cost to Close: \$106.1 million
Savings: 1992-97: -\$16 million;
Annual: \$22.7 million
Payback: 5 years

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE RECOMMENDATIONS

Close Rickenbacker Air Guard Base and transfer the 160th Air Refueling Group and

the 907th Tactical Airlift Group to Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio. The 4950th Test Wing will consolidate with the Air Force Flight Test Center at Edwards Air Force Base, California.

Since the Air Reserve Component units located at Rickenbacker Air Guard Base are the predominant users of the airfield, the support costs for these activities are high and the relocation of the units could bring about significant savings. Transferring the units to Wright-Patterson AFB keeps the Air National Guard units in Ohio and reduces the costs to move since the 4950th would vacate usable facilities. Also, moving the Guard and Reserve units to Dayton would increase the overall recruiting area population. In addition, collocation with Active forces will improve operations.

COMMUNITY CONCERNS

The community questioned the costing methodology and claimed that the costs to move the Air Reserve Component units were understated. It also said that the eight criteria were not consistently applied. In addition, it claimed that moving three more flying units to Dayton would cause air space congestion. It also claimed that because Dayton's population is one-half the size of the population of Columbus, recruiting will be hurt.

COMMISSION FINDINGS

The Commission found that the community's cost estimate was for building all new facilities at Wright-Patterson AFB. The community did not recognize that the Air Force was going to use vacated facilities. Small additional increases in air traffic will be manageable. Using the Air Force's recruiting guidelines, locating the units in Dayton does not degrade the recruiting base. The Air Force modified its selection criteria for Air Reserve Component bases first by determining if there was a significant cost savings and then by applying the eight criteria. An underlying concern was the moving of Air National Guard

units across state lines. This did not adversely affect the selection process.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Commission finds that the Secretary's recommendation on Rickenbacker Air Guard Base did not deviate substantially from the force-structure plan and the final selection criteria. Therefore, the Commission recommends the closure of Rickenbacker Air Guard Base, the transfer of the 160th Air Refueling Group and the 907th Tactical Airlift Group to Wright-Patterson AFB, and the consolidation of the 4950th Test Wing from Wright-Patterson AFB with the Air Force Flight Test Center at Edwards AFB.

Williams Air Force Base, Arizona

Category: Flying/Training

Mission: Flying/Training, T-37 and T-38

Cost to Close: \$26.7 million

Savings: 1992-97: \$222 million;

Annual: \$54.1 million

Payback: 1 year

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE RECOMMENDATIONS

Close Williams Air Force Base and retire or redistribute all aircraft. Inactivate the 82nd Flying/Training Wing. Move the Aircrew Training Research Facility to Orlando, Florida.

Williams AFB ranked low in the flying/training category and lowest for air space encroachment - a problem that is expected to worsen. The condition of its facilities also ranked lowest. Williams AFB's closure will have the least severe impact on its local community of any of the bases in its category.

COMMUNITY CONCERNS

The community argued principally that the Air Force did not give Williams AFB enough credit for its excellent weather and

incorrectly rated its facilities. The community believed that DoD placed too much emphasis on air space without recognizing adjustments made in the region to alleviate encroachment problems. In addition, the community claimed the closure and movement of the Aircrew Training Research Facility will be too costly.

COMMISSION FINDINGS

The Commission found that all flying/training bases were treated fairly and Williams AFB ranked lowest in its category. It has the most severe air space problems - a situation that is projected only to worsen. Projected air traffic growth of 65 percent by 2005, civilian traffic cutting into instrument training, and the potential of a new regional airport are a few of the problems.

The Air Force did consider a recent agreement with the Federal Aviation Administration to improve the utility of one of Williams AFB's Military Operating Areas. However, this adjustment fails to address the more pressing problem of minimum air space. Williams AFB has the minimum air space per sortie considered safe and the least of any flying/training base.

Williams AFB did rate highest in the category for weather. However, even with added emphasis, this rating could not overcome deficiencies in other areas.

Finally, Orlando, in addition to being the least expensive alternative for the relocation of the lab, also provides synergism by collocating Air Force and Navy elements working in the same area.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Commission finds that the Secretary's recommendation did not deviate substantially from the force-structure plan and the final selection criteria. Therefore, the Commission recommends the closure of Williams Air Force Base, the transfer of the Aircrew Training Research Facility to Orlando, Florida, and the

deactivation of the 82nd Flying/Training Wing.

Wurtsmith Air Force Base, Michigan

Category: Flying/Strategic

Mission: Strategic Bombardment and Air Refueling, B-52 and KC-135

Cost to Close: \$29.1 million

Savings: 1992-97: \$256 million;

Annual: \$63.3 million

Payback: 1 year

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE RECOMMENDATIONS

Close Wurtsmith Air Force Base and transfer the assigned KC-135 aircraft to the Air Reserve Component. The B-52G Air Launched Cruise Missile aircraft will be retired, and the 379th Bombardment Wing will be inactivated.

Wurtsmith AFB ranked below average in the flying/strategic category based on its long-term overall military value compared with other bases in the category. The low ranking results from the base's distance to primary low-altitude training routes and peacetime air-refueling training requirements. Finally, Wurtsmith AFB costs the third least to close in the category and the savings generated after closure are high.

COMMUNITY CONCERNS

The community claimed that Wurtsmith AFB has no air space restrictions and that all

operational requirements for the assigned aircraft can be met without interference. The community also stated that closing Wurtsmith AFB would have a significant negative economic impact on northern Michigan. It directly challenged individual ratings of the Air Force Base Closure Executive Group. In addition, it argued for keeping Wurtsmith AFB open and closing K.I. Sawyer AFB, Michigan.

COMMISSION FINDINGS

The Commission found that the base was properly graded. The base has no flying restrictions and can perform all operations required to sustain the mission. However, the distance to scored training routes is significant and lowers the efficiency of the missions at Wurtsmith AFB. Also, tankers must travel a significant distance to air-refueling receivers. Wurtsmith AFB costs the third least to close in the category and offers the highest annual savings of any Air Force base closure. Closing the base will have a severe economic impact on the local community. Finally, K.I. Sawyer AFB graded higher overall in military value than Wurtsmith AFB.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Commission finds that the DoD recommendation on Wurtsmith Air Force Base did not deviate substantially from the force-structure plan and the final selection criteria. Therefore, the Commission recommends the closure of Wurtsmith AFB, the transfer of KC-135 aircraft to the Air Reserve Component, and the retirement of the assigned B-52G aircraft and the inactivation of the 379th Bombardment Wing.