

15 July 2005

**Inquiry Response****Re: BI-0134 (CT-0547) Ellsworth AFB****Requester: Defense Base Closure & Realignment Commission (Mr Arthur Beauchamp)****Question 1: During the recent BRAC Commissioners visit to Ellsworth AFB, SD, it was discovered that the Air Force underestimated the square footage capability at Ellsworth by 80,000 sq feet. Please validate this?**

**Response:** We are unable to address the underestimated square footage capability at Ellsworth because it is not qualified as to type of square footage. If the square footage of the installation is incorrect by 80,000 square feet, it was an installation reporting error. However, even without the error, it would not change the relative MCI ranking of Ellsworth AFB.

**Question 2: Assuming that the square footage was underestimated, what is the impact, if any, on the MCI scoring for Ellsworth given this added capacity? Does it improve? If so, by how many points?**

**Response:** A review of Mission Compatibility Indexes (MCIs) shows Ellsworth AFB received maximum credit for the following attributes that involve square footage/yardage: runways (Question 9), and ramp area and serviceability (Question 8). The square footage reflected by Ellsworth's ability to hangar large aircraft (Question 19) resulted in an installation effective score of 1.46, 1.45 points less than the 2.91 maximum effective score. If the installation had scored the maximum points for the ability to hangar large aircraft, the difference in bomber MCI scores between Ellsworth (48.55) and Dyess (59.85) would be reduced from 11.35 points to 9.90 points. An increase in square footage, therefore, would not result in a revised recommendation to the Commission.

**Question 3: In discussion with Ellsworth personnel and the Ellsworth community, as well as our own analysis we determined that Ellsworth AFB has the basic capacity to beddown all 67 B-1 Bombers in the Air Force fleet with a MILCON investment of about \$69M. While the MILCON cost to prepare Dyess to receive the consolidated B-1 Fleet is \$124M. Can you also confirm this? If so, why not consolidate the B-1 fleet at Ellsworth given this cost savings?**

**Response:** Air Combat Command presented its capacity brief to the BCEG the week of 24 August 04. The \$66.7M was the cost briefed to the BCEG to prepare Ellsworth to receive 2 additional squadrons of B-1s. Ellsworth was presented as capable of receiving 71 B-1s, but as the ramp laydown presented to the Commission clearly shows, the parking density would be extremely problematic. Hangar access and taxiways are blocked. All available ramp space, regardless of location, is completely full making airfield management difficult. No mention is made as to whether the parking plan presented to the Commission conforms to ACC standards for clearance and jet blast considerations.

**Dyess AFB, by comparison, was briefed as able to support 66 aircraft without moving the 28 currently assigned C-130s from the field. COBRA estimated \$124M to move 2 B-1 squadrons to Dyess, and that was the figure on which the BCEG based its recommendation. ACC concluded**

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its site survey of Dyess AFB, 24 June 2005, and estimated \$159M to implement the Air Force recommendation.

Bomber MCI scores clearly indicate Dyess is the best B-1 bomber installation. Dyess has FAA approved training airspace volume 2.3 times that available at Ellsworth AFB giving it a 4.36 effective score advantage. It has superb low level access giving it a 9.10 point lead in the bomber MCI over Ellsworth. The range complex within 300NM also gave Dyess a 3.12 point advantage. Attached are two graphics that depict the airspace for both Ellsworth AFB and Dyess AFB for comparison. This operational environment would be complex and difficult to replicate at other locations and is geographically connected to the installation.

The costs briefed by ACC in its capacity brief for both Ellsworth AFB and Dyess AFB cannot be equivalently compared. The cost estimate for adding two squadrons to Ellsworth AFB does not include the significant base operations support bill or infrastructure build that would be required to host the added aircraft or manpower for a mission increase. The Ellsworth AFB ramp laydown presented to the Commission further confirms the difficulty of basing the entire B-1 fleet at Ellsworth. On the other hand, the 29 June 2005 ACC site survey of Dyess AFB reports the entire B-1 fleet can be comfortably bedded down with room to spare. The Dyess AFB COBRA estimate and subsequent ACC site survey provide the accuracy needed to confidently support the DoD beddown recommendation.

Ultimately, military judgment led the BCEG to weigh the operational advantage of keeping Dyess AFB as the premier B-1 installation against cost and concluded the Dyess AFB airspace and training environment is well worth the investment to train and employ the B-1 fleet.

Approved.



DAVID L. JOHANSEN, Lt Col, USAF  
Executive Officer, Base Realignment and Closure

2 Attachments:

1. Ellsworth - Airspace within 300NM
2. Dyess - Airspace within 300NM