

BRAC Commission

AUG 31 2005

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August 27, 2005

BRAC Commission  
2521 South Clark Street  
Suite 600  
Arlington, VA 22202

RE: Resolution in Support of Otis Air National Guard Base

Dear BRAC Commission:

- Urge the BRAC to reverse it's own plan to close Otis Air National Guard Base and dissolve the 102nd Fighter Wing.
- The 102nd Fighter Wing is responsible for patrolling the skies of the northeast for homeland defense. It is the closest 24 hour alert unit to intercept air traffic coming to USA, and has been activated on a regular basis. It was among first on the scene on 9/11 and is one of the top fighter wings in the entire Air National Guard.
- The Otis Coalition contends that it makes no sense for our Country to dismantle one of its best fighter wings and close one of the nation's most important air defense installations, especially while our nation is at war.
- Otis ANG Base has a direct, indirect and induced annual economic impact of \$82.3M in Massachusetts, most specifically on the Cape and south shore/coast.
- Otis ANG Base operates the base airport; provides base security and fire services water and sewer to all base tenants. Supports the Coast Guard's Air Station Cape Cod, Coast Guard fisheries training center and marine safety office, and new port security personnel; Army National Guard Camp Edwards. If Otis goes, then it means that all military, homeland defense and public safety operations — including the Coast Guard — are at risk.
- Other users of MMR include: Upper Cape Solid Waste Transfer Station; Cape Cod Septic System Test Center; Bourne Schools, VA National Cemetery; Barnstable County House of Corrections; USDA R&D facility; Air Force PAVE PAWS radar; Upper Cape Water Supply Reserve; FAA Air Traffic TRACON facility etc.
- GAO study documents cost of closing Otis to Coast Guard is at least \$17 million and 100 new personnel. Cost to all other tenants not yet known. There is questionable cost savings.

- If the DoD is going to provide funding for the USCG to operate here why can't it include Otis in that proposal?
- The servicemen and women of Otis ANG are neighbors, family, friends and part of our business community. Their departure will hurt our communities.
- Full time employment at Otis provides almost 500 jobs, representing more than 1 percent of total employment in the adjacent communities of Falmouth, Bourne, Mashpee and Sandwich. In the absence of robust job growth statewide, the loss of these full-time, benefited jobs is extremely meaningful.
- If Otis closes there are no plans to operate the MMR base services that all military tenants require to perform their missions. We do not know who will provide water and sewer to the 600 military housing units; base security; operations of the airport; support to the FAA and the VA.
- There are no plans to provide replacement fire services to all MMR users, PAVE PAWS, or to suppress future fires in the northern 15,000 acres of the base, leaving the towns exposed to a significant public safety hazard.
- Closing the Otis ANG means loss of a strategically important airfield for defending the northeast. It is on Cape Cod, juts out into the Atlantic, providing almost immediate and unencumbered access for fighter jets. Something that can't be accomplished at Barnes IAP.
- The MMR has a long-range master plan --- with initial clearances from local state environmental agencies. It modernizes training facilities, establishes better homeland security training facilities for military and other first responders; and provides a home for expanded Coast Guard operations. This is something not being considered at Barnes IAP.
- Under construction is a new base fire station. Under design is a new air traffic control tower. Future construction plans at the MMR call for modernizing other military facilities to help build cost efficiencies and savings.
- The methodology for the BRAC panels review of Otis failed to take into account all the strategic military values of the installations and the value of all homeland defense operations prior to the Pentagon's recommendation. Otis was not given the same fair shake as other bases during the hearings of proposed base closings.
- We urge the BRAC to remove the Otis Air National Guard Base and save the 102nd Fighter Wing as part of its 2005 Base Realignment and Closure Recommendations.

Very truly yours,  
 Curtis B. Pierson  
 Cape Cod Resident.

