

**ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE
JOINT ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE**

June 26, 2012

9:05 a.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Senator Bill Wielechowski, Co-Chair
Representative Dan Saddler, Co-Chair
Senator Bettye Davis
Senator Joe Paskvan (via teleconference)
Senator Joe Thomas
Senator Charlie Huggins (via teleconference)
Representative Eric Feige
Representative Bob Lynn
Representative Pete Petersen

PUBLIC MEMBERS

Colonel Tim Jones
Chief Warrant Officer Curt Brownlow - retired
Major General Jake Lestenkof - retired
Lieutenant General Tom Case - retired (via teleconference)

MEMBERS ABSENT

Representative Craig Johnson

OTHER LEGISLATORS PRESENT

Senator Linda Menard
Representative Steve Thompson
Representative Shelley Hughes
Representative David Guttenberg (via teleconference)

COMMITTEE CALENDAR

BRIEFING REGARDING THE UPCOMING BASE REALIGNMENT AND CLOSURE
ROUNDS AND POSSIBLE RELOCATION OF F-16 AGGRESSOR SQUADRON AND
DEVELOPING STRATEGIES FOR RETENTION OF MILITARY INSTALLATIONS IN
ALASKA

- HEARD

PREVIOUS COMMITTEE ACTION

No previous action to record

WITNESS REGISTER

MAJOR GENERAL THOMAS KATKUS, Adjutant General/Commissioner
Department of Military & Veterans' Affairs
Fort Richardson, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Provided testimony regarding the upcoming BRAC.

STEVE HYJEK, Partner
Hyjek & Fix
Washington, D.C.

POSITION STATEMENT: Speaking as a consultant to the Department of Military & Veterans' Affairs, provided testimony regarding the upcoming BRAC and a strategic plan.

LUKE HOPKINS, Mayor
Fairbanks North Star Borough (FNSB);
Chair, Tiger Team
Fairbanks, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Provided testimony regarding the upcoming BRAC.

DOUG ISSAACSON, Mayor
City of North Pole
North Pole, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Provided testimony regarding the upcoming BRAC.

JIM DODSON, President/CEO
Fairbanks Economic Development Corporation;
Member, AMFAST;
Member, Tiger Team
Fairbanks, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Provided testimony regarding the upcoming BRAC.

ACTION NARRATIVE

[9:05:43 AM](#)

CO-CHAIR BILL WIELECHOWSKI called the Joint Armed Services Committee meeting to order at 9:05 a.m. Representatives Saddler, Feige, Hughes, Lynn, and Petersen and Senators Wielechowski, Davis, Paskvan (via teleconference), Thomas, and Huggins (via teleconference) were present at the call to order.

Public members in attendance were Colonel Tim Jones, Chief Warrant Officer Curt Brownlow - retired, Major General Jake Lestenkof - retired, and Lieutenant General Tom Case - retired (via teleconference). Also in attendance were Representatives Thompson and Guttenberg (via teleconference) and Senator Menard.

Briefing regarding the upcoming Base Realignment and Closure rounds and possible relocation of F-16 aggressor squadron and developing strategies for retention of military installations in Alaska

[9:06:46 AM](#)

CO-CHAIR WIELECHOWSKI announced that this meeting will review statewide concerns regarding possible base realignment and closures, relocation of the F-16 Aggressor Squadron, and to develop strategies for retention of the military installations in Alaska. He opined that it's imperative for the Alaska State Legislature to take action to support Alaska's military bases and personnel for the protection of the nation as well as the security and economy of the State of Alaska. He reminded the committee that this session [the committee] provided funding to hire a consulting group to help the state advocate for Alaska bases, personnel to the federal government, and to the U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) as it continues to review options for base closures and realignments. The DoD plans to cut \$487 billion over the next three years, including moving the F-16 Aggressor Squadron from Eielson Air Force Base to Joint Base Elmendorf - Richardson (JBER).

[9:08:25 AM](#)

MAJOR GENERAL THOMAS KATKUS, Adjutant General/Commissioner, Department of Military & Veterans' Affairs, began by characterizing Alaska's U.S. military as its most significant resource. He then informed the committee that the Alaska Military Force Advocacy and Structure Team (AMFAST) is composed of probably one of the most unseen but formidable resources in Alaska, which are the senior level military personnel that ultimately retire in Alaska and have advised the governor. The governor, he noted, has acted fairly aggressively on some of the advice. For instance, one of Alaska's strongest points is its training through the Joint Pacific Alaska Range Complex (JPARC), which resulted in bringing the bridge across the Tanana River. The bridge opened up the Strykers, which once completed will result in a ground force that will be able to maneuver in land mass larger than Massachusetts. At the same time, the U.S. Air

Force is overhead and the U.S. Navy is offshore. Furthermore, the area is large enough to do cyber and space [training] as well. The bridge, he highlighted, was key in bringing together five major pillars of joint operations, which was due to direct input by AMFAST. The AMFAST has also suggested efforts to make life easier for the military through the legislation providing reciprocity for licensing for military spouses. Additionally, AMFAST has advocated the advancement of Alaska Aerospace efforts as well as a greater presence of the U.S. Coast Guard in Alaska. The U.S. Coast Guard will continue to become an ever critical player as the Arctic expands due to the changing environment. Still, the military in Alaska face major challenges, including a BRAC process that may be on the horizon. The governor has requested [the department] seek professional advice and with the support of the legislature, AMFAST has gathered some professional individuals to help make Alaska an easier place for the U.S. military to do business, which includes driving down the cost of operations.

[9:13:11 AM](#)

STEVE HYJEK, Partner, Hyjek & Fix, informed the committee that Hyjek & Fix is a small consulting firm in Washington, D.C., that specializes in installation realignment and the promotion and enhancement of installations. Hyjek & Fix has been heavily involved in the military procurement area for DoD, NASA, and the State Department. In terms of his personal background, Mr. Hyjek related that he came to Washington, D.C., in 1974 from Vermont and spent eight years working for U.S. Senator Bob Stafford. In 1981 Mr. Hyjek worked for the Secretary of the Army in legislative affairs, which is where he met his current business partner, Mr. Fix. Mr. Hyjek specified that he worked specifically with chemical demilitarization, environmental restoration, and government procurement with the U.S. Congress. In 1986 Mr. Hyjek joined a small law firm, but in 1989 Hyjek & Fix was formed. Hyjek & Fix is a small government relations company of about 10 staff. He highlighted that in 1995 Hyjek & Fix represented the State of Alaska during that BRAC round, which was a competitive procurement much like this time. In 1995 Hyjek & Fix was the prime contractor team with Gold & Leavengood (ph), which worked through a process including the realignment of Fort Greely and protecting all the installations in the state. In fact, Hyjek & Fix has participated in every base closure round since 1988 in some fashion. However, Hyjek & Fix recognizes the need as a small firm to partner with other [larger organizations]. In the case of responding to AMFAST's request for proposals in Alaska, Hyjek & Fix composed a team

including Cassidy & Associates. The team of four will begin visits to military installations in Alaska in order to compile information and identify trends, strengths, and challenges in order to develop a strategic plan that includes items that communities, the state, and DoD can do.

9:16:37 AM

CO-CHAIR WIELECHOWSKI recognized staff from the offices of U.S. Senator Lisa Murkowski and U.S. Senator Mark Begich.

9:16:59 AM

MR. HYJEK then began his briefing by relating that he will review some of the issues outside of Alaska that impact military installations. He stressed that BRAC is included in his briefing, although it's not the sole focus of his efforts. The purpose of this visit, he explained, is to develop an action plan that will be presented to AMFAST as well as the governor and the legislature. He then noted that he will use some backup slides from the U.S. House Armed Services Committee that will provide a feel for the national budget and personnel impacts that will trickle down to Alaska. He reiterated that Hyjek & Fix was competitively selected by an RFP issued by the state and DMVA is the agency to which the firm reports directly. Mr. Hyjek then directed attention to slide 3, which summarizes the team, its roles and responsibilities, and its reporting chains. On this contract and project, Mr. Hyjek is the primary point of contact, although he teams with Barry Rhoads, LTC, JA, USAR (Retired), President, Cassidy & Associates. General Chandler is an advisor to the team. He reminded the committee that Hyjek & Fix was selected for the 1995 process when the largest concern was with regard to the U.S. Army side. If there is a BRAC or force structure adjustments authorized, the U.S. Navy will be a bit of a challenge. Still, the team has to be prepared to address all elements of the military presence in the state with a holistic strategy including academia, industry, and the state. He emphasized that at least 20 states have hired consulting teams or organized military affairs councils to proactively impact the process in Congress. The 2005 round illustrates that those who are proactive and have earlier involvement do much better. He highlighted the change in dynamics between the State of Alaska, its delegation, the state government, and DoD from 1995-2005, particularly since U.S. Senator Ted Stevens, former chairman of DoD appropriations, is no longer involved and the differences between the active and reserve component have to be addressed. He reminded the committee that in 1995 the U.S. Army

and the Army Guard were "banging heads" while the U.S. Air Force and Air Force Guard were "very tight." The dynamic has changed now that the U.S. Army is facing reductions of 80,000 people between now and 2022 and will eventually result in tensions [between the U.S. Army and Army Guard]. Since 2005 the U.S. Army went through a process of growth that it's now undoing. In fact, last year Congress adopted the Budget Control Act of 2011, which lead to the force structure adjustments proposed by the U.S Air Force. Mr. Hyjek emphasized the need to leverage the president's national military strategy that places an increased emphasis on the Pacific Rim, which should work to Alaska's advantage.

[9:23:21 AM](#)

MR. HYJEK returned to the Budget Control Act. He reminded the committee that in the past when the debt ceiling was up for renewal it was a done deal, but that changed last year. As a result, Congress made a deal with the administration to adopt the Budget Control Act, and thus there are some bills to pay. The Act included the following two primary elements: \$1.3 trillion of known cuts, of which a significant portion, \$478 billion, was from DoD and [\$1.3] trillion in sequestration. Although the Washington, D.C., Super Committee was created to solve the aforementioned problems, it did not and thus there is the potential for an additional \$1.2-\$1.3 trillion in cuts to the federal budget effective January 13, 2013. Mr. Hyjek related his belief that there will be a delay in sequestration and it won't occur next year. However, today sequestration is planned and there will be \$478 billion in cuts from October 1, 2012 to 2022. If sequestration occurs, that will be over \$1 trillion, which is dramatic to the point of no joint strike fighters, cutting divisions, and cutting carrier groups. The House Armed Services Committee provided the numbers of cuts that would result in only the Budget Control Act, which are related in slides 14-15. He highlighted the loses as follows: U.S. Army - 80,000 people; U.S. Marine Corp. - 20,000, U.S. Air Force - 10,000; U.S. Navy - 3,000.

[9:26:11 AM](#)

CO-CHAIR WIELECHOWSKI inquired as to whether there are any estimates regarding the impacts to Alaska.

MR. HYJEK replied no, nothing more than the Air Force's force structure proposal that is currently in jeopardy in Congress. The Air Guard piece has been put on hold and the 18th Aggressor

Squadron is in a dynamic situation. In rough terms, Mr. Hyjek related his understanding that there would be a reduction in force of about 1,200-1,400 over the next few years. Those numbers are a mix of active duty, civilians, and Guard personnel.

[9:27:05 AM](#)

MR. HYJEK highlighted that personnel costs are a significant cost factor within the DoD budget. Therefore, the view was to address personnel, which is either done via BRAC or force structure adjustments. He noted that there will also be significant cuts in modernization and military construction. Mr. Hyjek then explained that 10 USC 2687 specifies that anything above 300 people, full-time equivalents or more, can be considered within the BRAC process. He further explained that 10 USC 993 governs movements of personnel and reductions of force outside of 10 USC 2687. Those areas not covered by BRAC, 10 USC 2687, view opportunity through force structure adjustments to begin reducing personnel in hopes of obtaining BRAC authorization. He reminded the committee that the U.S. Secretary of Defense has requested two rounds of BRAC, one in 2013 and one in 2015, but he hasn't yet received approval. Force structure adjustments aren't always bad and can sometimes be good. For example, the Guard picked up a number of remotely piloted aircraft (RPA) missions over the last two years because of the use of more RPAs in theatre. The issue is whether there is analysis to back up the decisions or are decisions made and then conduct analysis is developed to justify those decisions. The aforementioned is the concern the delegation and Congress has with the Air Force in terms of its proposals within Alaska. Currently the U.S. House and Senate Armed Services Committees have "bought back" all the personnel reductions and aircraft retirements proposed by the U.S. Air Force for fiscal year 2013. Therefore, \$782 million was cut elsewhere in the DoD budget. Additionally, the U.S. Senate Armed Services Committee has stated that there can't be any force structure adjustments until the Government Accountability Office (GAO) develops a process for those non-BRAC areas where force structures are occurring. He noted that the process would be available in March 2013, at which time [the committee] will consider implementing legislation.

[9:31:57 AM](#)

CO-CHAIR WIELECHOWSKI inquired as to the point at which something is required under 10 USC 2687, BRAC statute.

MR. HYJEK, reading from 10 USC 2687, said: "The operative number for a closure of installations is a military installation of at least 300 personnel that are authorized or employed at the installation." Therefore, a closure of any installation with 300 personnel or more must be performed under BRAC. Realignment is a reduction of more than 1,000 people of more than 50 percent in the number of civilian personnel authorized to be employed. For instance, if there are 300 people [at a military installation] and 151 will be impacted, BRAC will cover it. In further response to Co-Chair Wielechowski, Mr. Hyjek explained that Eielson Air Force Base (Eielson) isn't considered a realignment rather it's considered a reduction in force and a relocation, which is found under 10 USC 993. He pointed out that the planned actions for Eielson fall below 10 USC 933, but additional people will be impacted during phase 2 such that it would induce 10 USC 993. The Air Force has split the package so that the initial action doesn't trigger 10 USC 993 until it has moved the planes from Eielson to JBER and made personnel reductions and then there would be a second wave of reductions because of redundancy due to the co-location of aircraft with the personnel currently at JBER. Although the Air Force and its general counsel believe the Air Force is in compliance with the law, [Alaska's Congressional] delegation disagrees.

CO-CHAIR WIELECHOWSKI inquired as to whether anyone has ever challenged the legality of such actions. He related his understanding that the changes at Eielson will impact thousands of people, which would seem to fall under 10 USC 2687.

MR. HYJEK answered that to his knowledge he doesn't know of any legal challenges. Since the delegation believes the Air Force's plans for Eielson impinge upon the intent of 10 USC 2687 and 10 USC 993, the legislation adopted in the U.S. Senate Armed Services Committee would statutorily hold all actions until GAO reviews the current processes and provides supplemental processes for consideration by the Armed Services Committee. He noted that this impacts the U.S. Army, which was planning to propose significant reductions overseas in fiscal year 2014.

9:35:40 AM

MR. HYJEK explained that the U.S. House Armed Services Committee did the buyback and the U.S. Senate Armed Services Committee did the buyback as well as the requirement for GAO to develop processes for things not currently covered by 10 USC 2687 or 10 USC 993. The [processes] are due to the Armed Services

Committee by March 31, 2013. Because of particular Air Force issues, [the committee] proposed the creation of an eight-member group to review the roles and the missions of the active component versus reserve component in terms of reductions. The proposed commission is part of the package currently before Congress and will be subject to negotiation before the final DoD authorization act.

CO-CHAIR WIELECHOWSKI inquired as to the limitations of force structure adjustments.

MR. HYJEK specified that [force structure adjustments] are [changes that fall] below 1,000 personnel in 10 USC 993 or the BRAC closure or realignment language mentioned earlier. He offered to provide the committee an informational document.

9:37:36 AM

MR. HYJEK, returning to his presentation, directed attention to the last bullet on slide 5 and said that clearly Congress wants (indisc.) forces from overseas prior to considering significant reductions in facilities or personnel in the U.S. The aforementioned could come into play in terms of relocation of equipment and personnel currently overseas that could make sense to relocate to Alaska. He offered to discuss the aforementioned further off the record as it hasn't been vetted with any of the agencies involved. Moving on to slide 6, he stressed that the Tiger Team, the Alaska State government, Alaska's Congressional delegation, and the consultants have impacted the U.S. Air Force in terms of how it's moving forward and has bought some time to continue to work the situation with the 18th Aggressor Squadron. The aforementioned was illustrated when the general officer was named to the Site Activation Task Force (SATAF), which is generally not a general officer led activity. The U.S. Air Force has been pressed with regard to the process. Ultimately, if the process is done right and appropriate for the government, that has to be recognized. However, if the process has been flawed, that's a different matter. Although the recommendation by USAF can't be [ignored], one can ensure that they follow the appropriate processes in the future. Therefore, there has been pressure to include an environmental assessment that includes public scoping and comment. At this point, Mr. Hyjek wasn't prepared to recommend a full-blown environmental impact statement (EIS) because it has to be considered in terms of future actions. Mr. Hyjek noted that he and General Chandler have passes to the Pentagon, and therefore have access to talk with staff. That face-to-face access is very important and

helpful. The U.S. Air Force has indicated that there will be a cost in the first year, which wasn't in the budget. The only way to pay for that cost is to do a below threshold reprogramming. The DoD has the ability to [authorize] a below threshold reprogramming to a certain level, which they would be within in this case. The delegation is considering actions with the Appropriations Committee to identify any funds associated with the proposed relocation of the 18th Aggressor Squadron as an item of special interest. If it's designated as an item of special interest, then it must go to the DoD comptroller and the committees for consideration. He told the committee that U.S. Senator Begich has specified nominations that he doesn't intend to forward until he receives answers to questions he has posed to USAF.

[9:42:44 AM](#)

SENATOR PASKVAN asked whether Mr. Hyjek sees any potential to prove that the effects on Eielson are actually a realignment under 10 USC 2687 and not a reduction under the force structure adjustment. In other words, how close is the change to Eielson to realignment such that the action would be in violation of the BRAC law, he asked.

MR. HYJEK, based on discussions with colleagues, delegation staff, and USAF staff, opined that the U.S. Air Force has been careful enough in splitting the package to not violate 10 USC 2687. However, it ultimately may be construed as a pre-BRAC movement.

SENATOR PASKVAN inquired as to how much more dramatic it would have to be to classify as realignment or closure.

MR. HYJEK clarified that it wouldn't be a closure because the 168th Air Refueling Wing will remain as well as the mission support elements at Eielson. In terms of breaking the threshold on 10 USC 2687, if all the actions proposed for the 18th Aggressor Squadron were conducted in a single phase in a single year, he believed that would constitute a realignment under 10 USC 2687 given the aggregate numbers of people impacted. With the committee's permission, he offered to check the numbers and provide the committee with an answer later.

CO-CHAIR WIELECHOWSKI related his belief that although these proposed actions may not be a direct violation of the law, the actions clearly violate the intent of the law.

[9:45:43 AM](#)

SENATOR THOMAS read from materials from a Fairbanks meeting, as follows: "Congress permits the Air Force to undertake its proposed plans in assuming the final Air Force decisions are to implement cumulative reductions of military personnel at Eielson Air Force Base in excess of 1,000 as is currently proposed." Senator Thomas opined that the reductions are being done in a piecemeal manner [although the total numbers will be in excess of the realignment and closure thresholds]. He characterized the process as disingenuous.

MR. HYJEK said that he couldn't argue with that view.

[9:47:20 AM](#)

MR. HYJEK, returning to his presentation, moved on to the U.S. Army. The U.S. Army (Army) is looking at an 80,000 personnel reduction between 2014 and 2022. Whether the Army will propose personnel reductions in fiscal year 2014, which would mean they would have to be proposed in February in advance of the GAO recommendations, is unknown. If the Army waits for the GAO recommendations/rules, they would have to wait until 2015 which would compress the amount of time to reach the 80,000 personnel reduction. On the other hand, if the Army goes forward before the GAO recommendations, it could be challenged in terms of the proposed reductions without knowing the GAO policies. Regardless of the military branch, he surmised that [DoD] would say that it has identified a threshold and hasn't identified where the reductions would take place and wouldn't do so until the GAO recommendations are available. He opined that the department, in a risk reduction effort, would have to propose the thresholds and wait to see what the process looks like. Therefore, he suggested that next year would be a significant personnel focused DoD budget process. The Army has went through the process of developing an initial draft of a force mixed design study, which has been submitted to the U.S. Secretary of the Army for consideration and will eventually be submitted to the U.S. Secretary of Defense for concurrence. He noted that the Army has been very methodical in terms of the force mix based on the requirements and ability to fund the personnel. Once the force design is developed, one must determine the reductions and the management details. The initial phase of reductions in the Army is expected to be overseas reductions. He predicted that the pressures of the budget will result in increased tensions between the active and reserve component of the Army. He then turned to the announcement of the last

element of the 16th Combat Aviation Brigade, which was a completion of the force structure adjustment that was well in advance of the Budget Control Act and part of the Army's retooling of personnel. He emphasized that the aforementioned wasn't related to the Budget Control Act or anything related to the 18th Aggressor Squadron. Mr. Hyjek reminded the committee that there has been testimony by Army leadership before the Armed Services and Appropriation Committees indicating that they feel positive about the Army presence in Alaska and at this time they don't see significant changes in growth or reductions in Alaska in terms of USARAC. However, that doesn't mean there won't be some adjustments nor does it mean seeking new missions in Alaska should be abandoned. Mr. Hyjek clarified that Alaska doesn't want to be in a defensive posture but rather needs to be in a calculated offensive posture in order to shrink wisely.

9:52:49 AM

MR. HYJEK then explained the BRAC process. Firstly, BRAC must be authorized by the U.S. Congress. He noted that the legislation for the new BRAC round looks very similar to 2002 legislation for the 2005 BRAC. The legislation identifies the process and basic timelines. He explained that DoD performs analysis that results in teams of the various services creating packages and on a date certain DoD identifies its proposed realignments and closures. The President in conjunction with Congress identifies eight nominees, including a chairman for a commission that must be nominated and confirmed by the U.S. Senate. A professional staff of independent experts is hired and once the list is identified by the DoD, the commission reviews all the recommendations substantively to include site visits as well as regional hearings. He noted that there is also the opportunity for members of Congress to testify before the commission, which is generally kept separate from the regional hearings. Once the commission receives all the information, it identifies its findings and votes on each action individually by each installation. Once the commission approves the final package, it's enrolled into legislation that's submitted to Congress. Congress has a certain period of time in which to accept or reject the legislation in toto, after which the legislation goes to the President who has a certain time to act. Once it becomes BRAC law, it supersedes anything previously adopted by Congress and DoD has five years to implement the BRAC Commission recommendations. He then directed attention to slide 17 that relates the eight BRAC criteria used in the last BRAC round and slide 18 that provides a historical timeline for the 2005 BRAC.

9:56:11 AM

CO-CHAIR WIELECHOWSKI remarked that it's important to know what the state can do. He then inquired as to Mr. Hyjek's sense of the politics in Washington, D.C., in terms of whether a BRAC will be authorized.

MR. HYJEK responded that a BRAC will be authorized, the question is when. There is significant resistance to authorizing a BRAC in an election year, but the administration is facing \$478 billion in cuts. Therefore, Mr. Hyjek opined that a BRAC will likely be authorized for 2015. However, he expressed concern if the BRAC is authorized in 2013 for a 2015 execution because it would use 2012/2013 data. Historically, BRAC's are authorized by Congress three fiscal years ahead of implementation, which provides time to BRAC-proof an installation, review strengths and weaknesses and adjust accordingly, and provides time to gather knowledge/data and arguments to pose to thwart realignment or closure. Although Mr. Hyjek related his belief that a BRAC will be authorized, he acknowledged that it's possible it could be postponed to 2017. However, it would be very difficult to reach the \$478 billion by 2022 if the BRAC decision isn't reached until 2015.

9:58:53 AM

MR. HYJEK, continuing his presentation, directed attention to slide 19 and addressed what Alaska can do. Drawing from his experience working with various states, he urged Alaska to speak with one voice and have a state coordinated effort. He recalled a situation in 1993 in which two installations in the State of New York "trashed each other in the BRAC process" and as a result both installations were closed and the assets were moved. Therefore, there doesn't need to be any competition within the state and the state needs to speak with one voice even when the proposal for the 18th Aggressor Squadron has the ability to pit friends and neighbors against one another.

CO-CHAIR WIELECHOWSKI mentioned that the legislature passed a resolution opposing the proposal for [the 18th Aggressor Squadron at] Eielson, which illustrates speaking with one voice. He opined that the state understands that everyone will suffer if Eielson is lost.

MR. HYJEK said that it's also important for communities to become engaged in an organized manner. For example, the

benefits of the Tiger Team at Eielson are apparent. He told the committee that in some states with a single overarching council, [the adjutant general] TAG is often a member as are representatives from various communities who meet quarterly to update, identify issues, and ensure there is a homogeneous view going forward. Other states have military affairs councils in each community that receive state funding to go to Washington, D.C., and speak with one voice. Other states have a high level state commission that meets in a group of officials from the state administration with an advisor, a non-voting member, from each community. The point, he emphasized, is that communities need to feel ownership and membership [in the process].

[10:03:17 AM](#)

CO-CHAIR SADDLER inquired as to what state has used the best approach with BRAC.

MR. HYJEK answered that in terms of numbers, the State of Kansas was the most effective in the last round because it gained the First Infantry Division from Europe and gained 18,000 full-time equivalents in BRAC 2005 and didn't lose anything. The most military friendly state, which has afforded it the ability to avoid being on the defensive side, is the State of Texas. Mr. Hyjek acknowledged that Alaska is a very military friendly state, but pointed out that DoD would say that Texas does all it can to support its installations.

[10:05:23 AM](#)

MR. HYJEK, returning to his presentation, encouraged use of a strategy that feeds into the strategic plan rather than having independent actions. Therefore, in some states with a BRAC Commission the TAG and the lieutenant governor are involved in order to ensure the same strategic plan is being promoted by the state. He noted that he is on day one of five-day trip from which he ultimately hopes to develop recommendations that he can present with the strategic plan in July or August. He emphasized that the military has related that it's more inclined to stay in states that do things for the military. For example, windmill turbine power generation poses an encroachment issue for military installations. Some states have already taken the initiative to identify legislative and regulatory guidelines ensuring that no wind power turbines will be located on a site that will pose a future or current encroachment problem. He pointed to Luke Air Force Base in Arizona as an example because they spent three years developing a managed growth campaign to

control land development and control compatible development such that there was noise abatement and attainment. Therefore, when Luke Air Force Base went from the F-16 to the F-35, the prior state measures resulted in zero people impacted by noise. Mr. Hyjek opined that he needed to become an energy expert in Alaska because from a BRAC perspective energy and base operation support costs aren't a positive for Alaska. He stressed the need to develop ideas that can be executed and supported in Alaska that will dramatically impact the base operation support costs, which includes energy. He reviewed a situation in which economic power rates were offered to military installations in New York where the air base's utility costs decreased by 25 percent or more. He mentioned the military bill of rights in various states that offer military families support, which he will review as well as creative actions that can be taken for transportation.

[10:13:05 AM](#)

SENATOR PASKVAN inquired as to the highest risks to Alaska's military facilities in addition to the current reduction activity at Eielson Air Force Base in comparison to other military jurisdictions.

MR. HYJEK, drawing from his review of the 2005 BRAC data, the Grow the Force data, and a force structure assessment that reviewed installations, stated that Alaska's largest issues are costs. For example, one Alaska installation ranked high in terms of mission performance in the 2005 BRAC data, but ranked 97th out of 100 in cost. Again, under the Budget Control Act environment cost will be a huge driver. Furthermore, the last BRAC was a force realignment effort to move pieces in the Air Force and it focused on the Guard and the Reserve components. In the Army the focus was to bring people home from overseas and doing so under the underlying BRAC process. This BRAC, he emphasized, focuses on active duty installations as they provide the largest payback in the face of the budget cut. He opined that the reserve component is probably less threatened than the active component in comparison to last time. Although it's not a concern for Alaska, industrial operations test facilities are an area that will be under scrutiny in future BRACs. Mr. Hyjek acknowledged Alaska's huge strategic importance, but expressed the need to develop a campaign that clarifies Alaska's strategic importance and benefits. The cold training Alaska offers is important as well.

[10:17:19 AM](#)

CO-CHAIR WIELECHOWSKI inquired as to how the weighting of the criteria is developed, particularly in terms of the recent focus on the Pacific theatre.

MR. HYJEK directed attention to the criteria located on slide 17, of which the top four are military value criteria. The weight on paper, he emphasized, is on military value in DoD rules and BRAC legislation. The last four criteria are "tie breakers". However, as he stated earlier, what really occurs is a review of the last list and a review of the major quantitative metrics to determine on [what facilities] to focus. Take the example of Army maneuver bases. Training maneuver acreage is important and those bases in the top six of maneuver acreage won't be considered. The bottom five [in training maneuver acreage] are then reviewed and the bean counters enter the process and determine the first list of what [facilities] should be considered [in a BRAC]. By the point the process reaches the senior adult leadership review in DoD, it can be difficult to turn around.

[10:19:40 AM](#)

MR. HYJEK, in response to Co-Chair Saddler, confirmed that the process will be the same as 2005. Those who form the various service BRAC teams will first review the past process, then review the weak links in major categories and focus on those.

CO-CHAIR SADDLER asked if the lack of updated information is a common avenue of appeal or challenge.

MR. HYJEK confirmed that flawed data is generally one of the largest issues used in the appeal process for the BRAC process. He clarified that his concern is if a BRAC is authorized in a tight timeframe for the BRAC execution, the data used will be prior to the legislative authorization. Therefore, if the state doesn't think ahead, it won't have the ability to impact the data and would be in a more negative position.

[10:21:45 AM](#)

CO-CHAIR SADDLER asked whether there is a last minute suite of acts states typically do when [a BRAC seems imminent].

MR. HYJEK answered that most often the governor steps forward to work the BRAC. Often states facing base realignment and closure put forth a significant chunk of funding on the table to address

weak links, such as an infrastructure gap or encroachment issue. Although economic impacts can be a factor in keeping facilities open, the next BRAC will face a lot of pressure to ignore those waving flags and raising the economic impacts of realignment or closure and rather focus on why they shouldn't agree with the DoD experts who have identified particular installations.

[10:23:07 AM](#)

GENERAL LESTENKOFF recalled that during the 2005 BRAC, the Air Force used the criteria that Air units shouldn't be located on a single base. Part of the aforementioned guidance moved the [Air Force] from Kulis Air National Guard to Elmendorf Air Force Base. There is an Air National Guard wing at Eielson, which would be the sole occupant of that base. He asked if any thought has been given to that.

MR. HYJEK pointed out that the 18th Aggressor Squadron is still at Eielson and he will operate on that assumption until something changes. If that changes, adjustments will be made in the future. He related that he is reviewing options not in the U.S. as well as existing and future missions that could locate at Eielson, with or without the presence of the 18th Aggressor Squadron. He emphasized that he will be in a calculated offensive mode and maintain the position of negotiating from strength not weakness. In terms of joint basing and independent wings, there seems to have been a mixed message from 2005. Although some efficiencies were gained, Mr. Hyjek wasn't sure they would be the main topic in the next round.

GENERAL LETENKOFF inquired as to the percentage of base costs from Eielson that are being borne by the National Guard.

MR. HYJEK responded that he didn't know, but added that he will be traveling there soon and receive a briefing.

[10:26:14 AM](#)

CO-CHAIR WIELECHOWSKI asked if there are any other bases in Alaska [besides Eielson] that would potentially face risk.

MR. HYJEK answered that at this time, he couldn't identify any risks that would be posed to any other installation in Alaska.

[10:26:53 AM](#)

CO-CHAIR SADDLER asked whether Mr. Hyjek has the assets, assistance, and information to do his job well in Alaska.

MR. HYJEK began by saying that the TAG and its staff have been very supportive. However, since it's the early days of the process and he expressed the need to wait until the end of the week in terms of the data. He highlighted that the level of information he foresees and the level of people he plans to meet don't seem to match some of the other states with which he has and continues to work, which could be driven by schedule and other concerns. Therefore, he expressed the desire to reserve judgment until a later date.

CO-CHAIR WIELECHOWSKI inquired as to the timeline for issuing the report.

MR. HYJEK informed the committee that next week or the week after that he will provide to the TAG, and perhaps the committee in an appropriately confidential manner, a "hot wash" of his visit. The aforementioned will serve as the basis for the preparation of a strategic plan. That strategic plan will first be a draft with AMFAST. He noted that he provides each installation with its portion of the strategic plan for review prior to the report being published. He expressed hope that a strategic plan would be available between the end of July and mid-August.

CO-CHAIR WIELECHOWSKI offered the committee's support.

[10:29:50 AM](#)

MR. HYJEK, concluding his presentation, reiterated the need for the state to be active, visible, support military affairs councils in communities. Mr. Hyjek characterized Hyjek & Fix as a force multiplier that is relatively effective so long as there's a collaborative effort with the installation commanders and command groups as well as the MAGCOMs, and the state to do its job. Going forward, he stressed the need to address base operation support (BOS) cost and inform others of the strategic importance of Alaska. Hyjek & Fix will seek the legislature, the governor, and local community leaders to actively engage with the Pentagon and other agencies. He expressed the need to include the Division of Homeland Security (DHS) and not lose the U.S. Coast Guard in the shuffle. Although DHS isn't part of the BRAC, it is tangentially because anything that impacts an installation where it's co-located would impact it. He related hope that he can develop ideas for the legislature and that

Congress will resume focus on the rights and responsibilities of congressionally directed spending. There are, he believes, actions next year that will allow him to obtain congressionally directed spending, which could be beneficial in Alaska to identify key areas to pull forward a project identified in a future year's DoD plan for construction. Mr. Hyjek informed the committee that although he is objective oriented and committed to winning, it requires everyone pulling in the same direction to accomplish that. In conclusion, he continued to encourage the state to speak with one voice and be proactive.

10:33:33 AM

MAJOR GENERAL KATKUS thanked the committee for its support in getting one voice heard.

10:34:07 AM

LUKE HOPKINS, Mayor, Fairbanks North Star Borough (FNSB); Chair, Tiger Team, began by providing the committee a handout. He then informed the committee that he has made a funding request to the FNSB Assembly, which is providing about \$100,000 and an additional \$40,000 to hire consultants. The public private Solutions Group was selected because during the 2005 BRAC they delved into the Air Force's projected savings of the proposal to move Eielson. [Solutions Group] found the [projected savings] inaccurate and the 2005 BRAC then used the numbers from Fairbanks and pushed back on the move. He noted that Fairbanks is a member of the Association of Defense Communities as is the State of Alaska. The Tiger Team, he explained, has questioned the cost savings the Air Force has been putting forward for the F-16 move, particularly since the Air Force's numbers [in terms of cost savings] and personnel have been a moving target. He questioned why the Aggressor Squadron would move from Eielson if the Asian-Pacific connection is the focus. Moreover, the Air Force says that the proposed move will cost \$5.6 million in 2013, the first year. In short, Mayor Hopkins characterized the proposal as a 2005 BRAC redo, as is illustrated by some of the information he provided to the committee. As the Tiger Team has met, he related that he has been concerned with the push back against the relocation and the strategy to move forward with strengthening Eielson in the Fairbanks community. During his meetings with Undersecretary Terry Yonkers Deputy Assistant Secretary Kathleen Ferguson of the Air Force for Installations, Environment and Logistics, Mayor Hopkins learned that community partnerships and training grounds are important in terms of the infrastructure improvements in JPARC. He recalled that there

was also discussion of the unmanned aerial vehicles at Eielson. Deputy Assistant Secretary Ferguson was pleased that following the 2005 BRAC Fairbanks performed a joint land use study from which a technical team and a policy team were established in 2009 to implement the approximately 109 actions called for in the joint land use study to protect against encroachment on the military bases in Fairbanks. There was also discussion of the cost of energy at the bases in Fairbanks. He remarked that it's interesting to review the cost of British thermal units (Btus) in Alaska versus areas where there is the need to cool facilities. With regard to the mention of local economic development dollars, he highlighted that Fairbanks has both an areawide and non-areawide mill rate for economic development. He then mentioned the JPARC value for multi-force training space.

10:41:22 AM

MAYOR HOPKINS pointed out that currently the proposed Eielson squadron relocation provides no financial support for military families. He questioned why there is no financial support, particularly in light of the Housing Assistance Act. Upon discussions with the military to determine how Eielson military families receive the benefit, he learned that it's an Army program for which the funding runs out September 2012. Because this relocation isn't a BRAC issue, the base commander of Eielson would have to request the funds. However, upon further scrutiny one finds that the funds are allocated on a first come, first served basis. The ability for Alaska military families to obtain help when they have to relocate is very important. He then turned attention to the Red Flag Alaska training exercises, which are proposed for next year. There is only two years' worth of training support in the forward budget, and thus he asked General Schwartz what would happen in the third year to which he didn't receive answer. Therefore, Mayor Hopkins expressed suspicion and concern regarding [the continuation] of Red Flag training in Alaska.

10:44:15 AM

MAYOR HOPKINS then turned his attention to the short-term aspects of what can be done to support Eielson Air Force Base. One option would be to form an organization called "Military Communities of the Arctic" or "Military Communities of Alaska." The Joint Land Use Study (JLUS) implementation is about halfway complete and the next items to be implemented by the military and the community require more funding. Although the second

Office of Economic Adjustment (OEA), DoD, grant applied for was turned down because there wasn't enough done, they were encouraged to reapply later. Therefore, [Fairbanks] will have to reach into its own pocket. He expressed interest in any possible capital match to work on the implementation of JLUS.

[10:46:34 AM](#)

MAYOR HOPKINS identified another short-term action as the passage of HB 316 regarding military facility zones. With regard to the issue of active association with the Air National Guard and Eielson, it wasn't achieved. However, he related his understanding that if there was an increase of the Air National Guard tails and an active mission of about 172 Air Force personnel, the installation could meet a larger number of deterred or unable to meet missions for the Air National Guard out of Eielson. The 168th, he related, turns away about two-thirds of its requested missions, and thus four more tails and an active association would provide more opportunities. He reminded committee members that there is a 24-million gallon jet fuel storage depot at Eielson. The other issue that's been discussed is if the Marines are relocated at the beach head in Hawaii and work with the Navy, the Army Stryker Brigade could be relocated from Hawaii to Alaska.

[10:49:20 AM](#)

MAYOR HOPKINS moved on to longer term issues of concern, including Alaska being placed in NORCOM and separated from Pacific Command. He highlighted that from Eielson there could be military involvement in the Arctic development, including forward basing of logistical support for fixed-wing Coast Guard at Eielson as there are lots of hangars. Another aspect the Fairbanks community and the state are working on is the gas distribution network in Fairbanks that could be brought to Eielson. An equalizing of the cost of energy at military bases may result in a lower cost of heat and power at bases. He related that when speaking with Pentagon staff, he understood that the state could provide funds to upgrade the infrastructure in JPARC such as putting the roads in for Stryker movements. He indicated that there's also a funding issue with phase 2 of the railroad that would take the tracks from North Pole to the bridge. Mayor Hopkins then echoed an earlier comment that the best defense is better than the best offense. Keeping that in mind, he highlighted communities such as San Antonio, Texas, and Monterey, California, that entered into agreements and partnerships with the military bases as BRAC actions were

happening. In some of those cases, the BRAC actions were pushed back because there were cost savings for the bases. He then informed the committee that he, Mayor Cleworth, and Mayor Issacson have sent letters to General McLeod and the Secretary of the Air Force pushing back on how the Air Force has said it will perform [the relocation] and the timeline for the draft EIS comments regarding the expansion of JPARC. The three mayors felt that the F-16 move to Anchorage would impact the social economic or environmental justice issue. Since [that impact] wasn't mentioned in the draft EIS, a 60-day extension was requested and granted. Therefore, they have until July 9th to submit comments. Although he didn't recall anyone taking legal actions, the Tiger Team is discussing that option.

[10:55:59 AM](#)

GENERAL LESTENKOFF asked if Mayor Hopkins has noticed any dismantling of buildings or other such activity on the bases.

MAYOR HOPKINS answered yes, adding that there is a 2012 proposal to dismantle a number of older buildings on Eielson. He related his understanding that the aforementioned proposal is part of Military Construction (MILCON) not part of the Air Force restructuring of Eielson. Although the F-16 facilities are proposed to be a cost savings in the report, they are worth around \$200 million in structures. In discussions between the Tiger Team and DoD it was discovered that those buildings could be used for enhanced contracting such that the state [takes over the facilities] in the short term until there are missions available that would use them. He opined that to tear down the buildings would be the wrong thing to do, even though it may cost a bit to maintain the buildings. As an example, the F-15 facilities at JBER weren't torn down and he believes that's where the [F-16] facilities may move. In response to a question, Mayor Hopkins said he has spoken with General Post and Colonel Shell who are following orders. He related his understanding that the second SATAF visit in fiscal year 2014 is likely when they will evaluate and determine whether to tear down the facilities.

[10:58:52 AM](#)

MAYOR HOPKINS, in conclusion, thanked Alaska's Congressional delegation for its work on this restructuring as it's what will stop the action while the state and local communities will have to work together to increase missions at Eielson Air Force Base. In response to Co-Chair Saddler, Mayor Hopkins agreed to provide

the committee information regarding the composition and process of the Tiger Team.

[11:00:21 AM](#)

DOUG ISSAACSON, Mayor, City of North Pole, began by pointing out that North Pole is centered in the eye of the storm as it's in the middle of Fort Wainwright and Eielson, has the refinery that supplies the fuel, and electric generation that is strategic for the area. Mayor Issaacson recalled that Co-Chair Wielechowski's press release states that the military accounts for 13 percent of Alaska's economy and added that 51 percent of the payroll in the Interior can be attributed to the government. Eielson equals one-third of the economic impact in the FNSB. The loss of people from the proposal may equal two to three times the population of North Pole, and therefore it's critical for housing, employment, and ancillary effects on area businesses.

MAYOR ISSAACSON suggested the following five actions to consider. First, the long-term effectiveness of Eielson might rely on the restructuring of the BLS to be primarily civilian employees. In 2005 the personnel floor was 1,061 positions whereas now the discussion is only 500 or so in military personnel and 200-300 civilian personnel, but the numbers are changing. He questioned whether personnel savings to the military could better be accomplished by restructuring the non-mission essential activities such that those positions are filled by primarily permanent civilian employees because it would stabilize the area and the base. [The North Pole area] has much civilian manpower that is military knowledgeable in most if not all categories. Mayor Issaacson said he was grateful that the consultants are very proficient in speaking the military jargon as well as understanding the military mindset, both of which are critical in determining where the savings really are. He told the committee that during a Tiger Team meeting he posed a second action in which the state pays the personnel costs, \$227 million, which would save billions in negative economic impact. The Air Force responded to U.S. Senator Begich as follows: "The basing of the Aggressors is a long-term strategic issue, and therefore one that cannot be addressed on a yearly or even a (indisc.) basis even if Alaska was willing to provide funding to support." However, he suggested that [the state paying personnel costs] could still be worth pursuing. A third action, as the Tiger Team was told, is for the state to aggressively enter into the dialogue regarding the demolition or repurposing of \$200-\$400 million worth of buildings of which at least \$200 million is in quality

condition. As mentioned by Mayor Hopkins, The F-16 move to JBER is only possible because the F-15 structures weren't demolished. These buildings could be repurposed, even for civilian purposes. Mayor Issaacson also thanked the legislature for passing HB 316. He noted that a January visit to Eielson highlighted that there has been much civilian industrial development since he was stationed there in the 1970s. If the state aggressively enters the dialogue, the state may be able to utilize the buildings and create some private enterprise associated unit type activity on the base. As pointed out earlier, although the associated units with the 168th were perceived as a done deal, they could be used to strengthen the mission at Eielson and encourage new missions to be added when available in the future. Mayor Issaacson informed the committee that Eielson has approximately 900 new houses that would be underutilized and the state being part of the dialogue might result in the [base] housing being more effectively utilized. With regard to the joint land use study, he suggested that the legislature could review the study on a statewide basis as it's a key study requested of communities if they want to back proof themselves. Fourth, Mayor Issaacson explained that Fort Wainwright is able to sell and purchase at the same price to the electric grid, Eielson has a higher cost in its sell back to the grid than it purchases. Therefore, it should be reviewed. Last, he suggested reviving the pursuit of the gas/coal-to-liquids team that existed in Alaska until 2010. Mayor Issaacson concluded by relating that he concurred with Mayor Hopkins' comments.

[11:10:39 AM](#)

JIM DODSON, President/CEO, Fairbanks Economic Development Corporation; Member, AMFAST; Member, Tiger Team, informed the committee that he was chair of the effort to overturn the 2005 BRAC recommendation to close. He then suggested the committee expand its mission to consider future opportunities and threats to the military industry in Alaska as the state learns to deal with and address the value of military beyond [the era of] former U.S. Senator Stevens. With regard to the value of the military in Alaska, Mr. Dodson informed the committee that 16 percent of Alaska's economy is military, 17 percent of Alaska's payroll is military, and 32 percent of Fairbanks' payroll is military. The military has a huge impact [on the state] and should be addressed as would any other industry in the state. The AMFAST recommendations are a comprehensive outline in terms of how the state should proceed while recognizing the need for professionals to develop a strategic plan to address Alaska's military industry. As the process moves forward in developing

[a strategic] plan, this committee will be asked for continual funding as it will be a multi-year process. He echoed the need for those involved to speak with one voice, which requires an engagement plan. Mr. Dodson opined that while it's important to talk about Eielson, it's important to note that AMFAST recommended hiring Hyjek & Fix prior to the announcement of the Eielson restructuring. While Eielson needs to be addressed, one must remember that Alaska's entire military must be addressed as well. In conclusion, Mr. Dodson encouraged the committee to work closer with AMFAST as it has a similar mission as that of the committee in that both address threats to the military industry in the state as well as address the military complex as a valued industry in the state that the state must learn to leverage opportunities such as strategic location, training grounds, and other assets.

[11:15:40 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE FEIGE inquired as to who are the best people in the military industry with which to discuss this.

MR. DODSON recalled that Mr. Hyjek discussed where decisions are made within DoD and the various branches services. He noted that decisions aren't always made for strategic reasons, in fact, sometimes they're made for political and financial reasons. He recalled, in relation to why Eielson was in the 2005 BRAC that the previous chief of staff of the Air Force relayed that there are colonels in the Pentagon who believe Alaska is off the coast of California because that's where they saw it on a map. Therefore, as mentioned by Mr. Hyjek, the plan is to develop a picture of Alaska's value to the military and present it to the appropriate people in the various branches of service and DoD.

[11:17:46 AM](#)

CO-CHAIR WIELECHOWSKI, upon determining there were no further questions, informed the committee that the discussion would be continued once the report is received.

[11:18:04 AM](#)

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the committee, the Joint Armed Services Committee meeting was adjourned at 11:18 a.m.