

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE
HOUSE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON MILITARY AND VETERANS' AFFAIRS

February 27, 2025

11:19 a.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Representative Ted Eischeid, Chair
Representative Andrew Gray
Representative Carolyn Hall
Representative Zack Fields
Representative Dan Saddler
Representative David Nelson
Representative Jamie Allard

MEMBERS ABSENT

All members present

COMMITTEE CALENDAR

PRESENTATION(S): Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson Mission Brief
and Command Priorities

- HEARD

PREVIOUS COMMITTEE ACTION

No previous action to record

WITNESS REGISTER

COLONEL LISA MABBUTT, Instillation Commander
Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson
Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Offered the Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson
Mission Brief and Command Priorities presentation.

ACTION NARRATIVE

[11:19:09 AM](#)

CHAIR EISCHEID called the House Special Committee on Military
and Veterans' Affairs meeting to order at 11:19 a.m.
Representatives Gray, Nelson, Fields, Hall, Saddler, and
Eischeid were present at the call to order. Representative
Allard arrived as the meeting was in progress.

**PRESENTATION(S): Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson Mission Brief
and Command Priorities**

[11:20:07 AM](#)

CHAIR EISCHEID announced that the only order of business would be the Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson Mission Brief and Command Priorities presentation.

[11:20:56 AM](#)

COLONEL LISA MABBUTT, Instillation Commander, Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson (JBER), offered the Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson Mission Brief and Command Priorities presentation via PowerPoint [hard copy included in the committee file]. She began the presentation on slide 2, which displayed a map of Alaska as it relates to the northern hemisphere of the earth and its relative position to the allies and adversaries of the U.S. She continued to slide 3, which highlighted the role that JBER plays both as a community and military installation. She moved to slide 4, which displayed a graphic that outlined the various military entities that exist on JBER.

[11:29:34 AM](#)

COLONEL MABBUTT continued the presentation on slide 5, which displayed a map of the Anchorage area and specific areas of development and improvement on JBER. She explained a series of measures being taken at JBER to improve Alaska's military readiness should the event of war break out in the Pacific region of the globe.

[11:35:35 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE ALLARD asked if the population of people experiencing homelessness is causing comfort and security concerns among leaders of JBER.

COLONEL MABBUTT answered that the Air Force has had a few people who are experiencing homelessness on JBER land and said that the Air Force is working with the Municipality of Anchorage to address the issue of people experiencing homelessness on military and federal lands.

[11:40:03 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE SADDLER asked Colonel Mabbutt how JBER is working to improve its energy resilience and asked about the progress of the Highland Road Methane Project. He asked if there are any prospects for the Alaska State Legislature to provide nuclear energy for the Air Force and JBER.

COLONEL MABBUTT answered that she would follow up with data regarding the Highland Road Methane Project and explained that JBER has "phenomenal relationships" with Doyon, Limited and Chugach Electric, and said that JBER is working on other energy resilience studies that would allow for more opportunities to store power on the base. She said that Eielson Air Force Base (EAFB) would be where the pilot program for nuclear energy would be conducted.

[11:44:55 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE FIELDS asked how the Trump Administration's executive orders regarding energy and federal grant funds are affecting JBER's ability to provide itself energy security. He touched on Representative Allard's remarks regarding people experiencing homelessness and said that the Municipality of Anchorage is short-staffed by 75 police officers and park staff, which is leading to dangerous encampments.

[11:46:49 AM](#)

COLONEL MABBUTT responded that she is deliberately taking on the energy resilience exercise on JBER as a means to report any deficiencies to her chain of command.

[11:48:12 AM](#)

CHAIR EISCHEID commented that the issue of people experiencing homelessness in Davis Park was the "number 2" concern of his constituency.

[11:48:46 AM](#)

COLONEL MABBUTT resumed the presentation on slide 6, which listed a series of goals of the broader mission of JBER. She continued through slides 7-8, both of which highlighted what the term "Ready Community" means with regard to both military and community readiness on JBER.

[11:55:14 AM](#)

CHAIR EISCHEID emphasized that the number one issue of his constituents was education.

[11:55:25 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE ALLARD said she is alarmed by contingency, emergency, readiness, and response being the top worry of the JBER wing commander.

COLONEL MABBUTT assured Representative Allard that she was not actively concerned with the readiness of the JBER community and said that it was simply her mandate to ensure that the JBER community is ready for anything.

[11:57:50 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE FIELDS asked Colonel Mabbutt if the concern of JBER community members with regard to education was due to the "devastating cuts to programs and rise in class sizes that would result if the legislature was not successful in funding schools." He assured Colonel Mabbutt that his caucus was committed to passing an education funding bill.

COLONEL MABBUTT, in response to Representative Fields' first question, answered yes.

[11:59:26 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE SADDLER reminded members that the present meeting was that of the House Special Committee on Military & Veteran's Affairs, not the House Education Standing Committee. He then asked if there are any environmental issues or rehabilitation projects that would be of concern to the Alaska State Legislature.

COLONEL MABBUTT answered that JBER has an environmental team and close relationships with both state and federal regulators that ensure that preventative maintenance and construction are properly overseen.

[12:02:33 PM](#)

CHAIR EISCHEID shared his appreciation for the dialogue regarding education.

[12:02:44 PM](#)

COLONEL MABBUTT emphasized that schools are one of the top draws for military members when they receive a base assignment and said that quality schools are an "incredibly important retention tool" for military members.

[12:03:57 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE ALLARD said, "I appreciate your comments, but I would encourage you to tread lightly with the political aspect of it, because that's what I'm hearing from you." She encouraged Colonel Mabbutt to take up any concerns regarding education with her chain of command.

[12:04:50 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE SADDLER asked if the higher level of security surrounding JBER is to be sustained for the foreseeable future.

COLONEL MABBUTT explained that access to JBER is still allowed; however, visitors without a "trusted traveler" card must enter through the visitor center to be processed before they are allowed on base.

[12:09:18 PM](#)

CHAIR EISCHEID commented that he "seriously appreciates" the service and work of Colonel Mabbutt and JBER as a whole.

[12:10:38 PM](#)

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the committee, the House Special Committee on Military & Veteran's Affairs meeting was adjourned at 12:10 p.m.