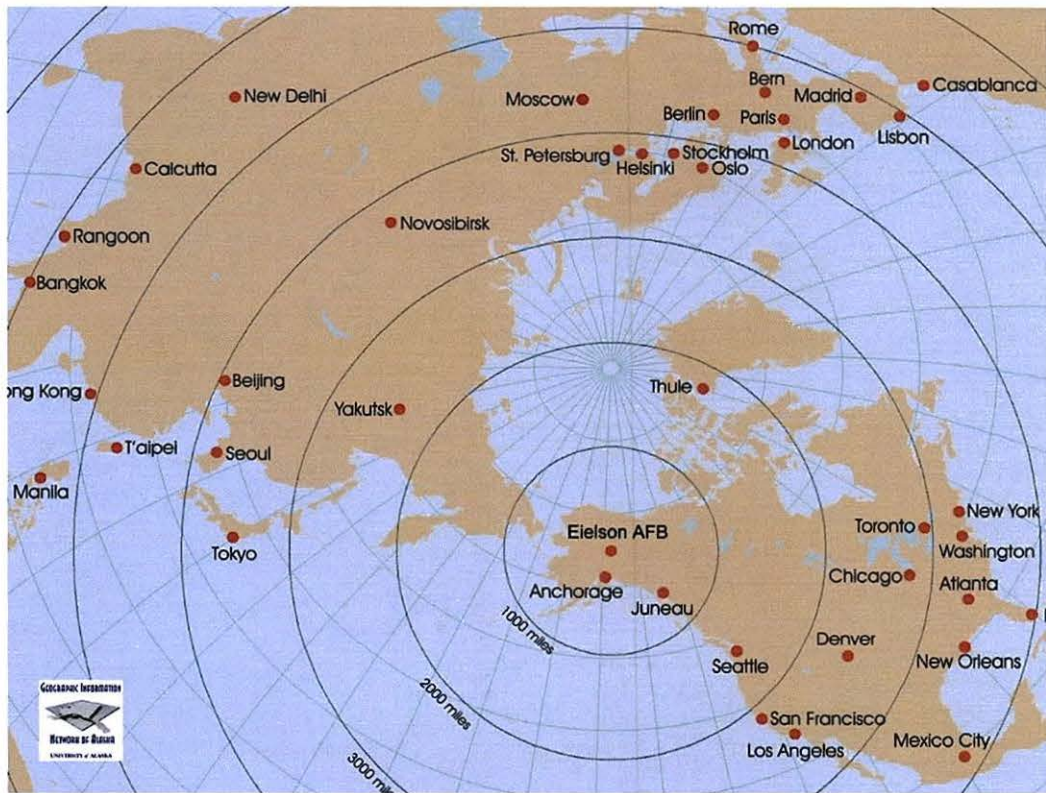


01/19/16  
Joint Armed  
Services  
Committee  
Report, 29th  
Alaska State  
Legislature

<TARGET><BILL></BILL><SUBJECT>01-19-16 Joint Armed Services  
Committee Report, 29th Alaska State  
Legislature</SUBJECT><COMM>JASC29</COMM></TARGET>

# JOINT ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE REPORT

## 29<sup>TH</sup> ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE



**JANUARY 19, 2016**  
**JUNEAU, ALASKA**

## HISTORICAL SUMMARY OF JASC COMMITTEE

The Joint Armed Services Committee (JASC) was enacted in 1999 with the passage of HB 77 sponsored by then-State Representative Lisa Murkowski. The bill was passed just 49 days after it was introduced indicating the urgency the Legislature felt to protect Alaska's military installations from two new rounds of military base closures anticipated when the Base Realignment and Defense Reform Initiative was reestablished by Defense Secretary William Cohen.

JASC's effective date was July 1, 1999 and the committee was established as a "*permanent interim committee of the legislature.*" Article 2, Section 11 of the Alaska State Constitution established a legislative council as an interim committee and gave the legislature the authority to establish other interim committees. The constitution provides interim committees can meet between legislative sessions and perform duties and employ staff as enacted by the legislature. In other words, the interim committee exists longer than standing and special committees which expire at the end of a legislature.

### JASC MEMBERSHIP, AS OF JANUARY 2016

The law directed the membership to be composed of **five members of the State Senate** appointed by Senate President, **five members of the State House of Representatives** appointed by the Speaker of the House:

**Chair:** Senator John Coghill  
**Co-Chair:** Representative Gabrielle LeDoux

Senator Pete Kelly	Representative Dan Saddler
Senator Anna MacKinnon	Representative Bob Lynn
Senator Click Bishop	Representative Wes Keller
Senator Bill Wielechowski	Representative Geran Tarr

AND **six public members** appointed jointly by the presiding officers recommended by:

- The Alaska chapters of the major military service organizations; the Association of the United States Army, the Air Force Association, the Navy League of the United States, and the Marine Corps Association.
  - Chick Wallace, Civ. Aide to Army Secretary
- United States Coast Guard representatives

- All attempts to contact Chief Warrant Officer Kurt Brownlow, 17<sup>th</sup> Division, U.S. Coast Guard (retired) have been unsuccessful. JASC co-chairs Representative LeDoux and Senator John Coghill have sent a letter to Admiral Abel requesting he appoint a new representative of the U.S. Coast Guard for JASC.
  
- The Mayor of the Municipality of Anchorage
  - George Vakalis, Colonel, U.S. Army, Retired
  
- The Mayor of the Fairbanks North Star Borough
  - Tim Jones, Colonel, U.S. Army, Retired
  
- The Adjutant General
  - Tom Case, Lt. Gen, Air Force, Retired
  
- The Alaska Federation of Natives and the Alaska Municipal League –
  - Jake Lestenkof, Maj. Gen, AK Guard, Retired

(BIOGRAPHIES OF PUBLIC MEMBERS OF JASC ARE IN THE APPENDIX.)

## ACTIVITIES OF JASC DURING 2014 and 2015

During 2014 the activities of the JASC were under the leadership of the Co-Chairs Representative Dan Saddler and Senator Pete Kelly. Co-chair Saddler and his staff were the point of contact for the committee in 2014.

During 2015 the activities of the JASC from January through March were under the leadership of the Co-Chairs Representative Lora Reinbold and Senator John Coghill; and from April through December of 2015 JASC was under the leadership of Co-Chairs Representative Gabrielle LeDoux and Senator John Coghill.



**JASC Meeting February, 2015.** (From Left to Right): Brigadier General Mike Bridges; Senator John Coghill, Adj. Gen. Laurie Hummel, Lt. General Russell Handy, Anchorage Mayor Dan Sullivan, Representative Lora Reinbold, JASC Staffer Elijah Verhagen, Bob Doehl, Lt. Col. Henry Schantz, Senator Bill Wielechowski, FNSB Mayor Luke Hopkins, Lt. Gen. Tom Case.

## JASC REPORT FOR CALENDAR YEAR 2014

### JASC MEETING – FEBRUARY 13, 2014

Co-chair Representative Dan Saddler convened the meeting by explaining the Joint Armed Services Committee (JASC) was established in the 1990s and its mission is to monitor and address potential realignments of military facilities in the state, to advocate for the missile defense system, to seek out ways to attract new missions to Alaska bases, and to support increased joint military training in Alaska's facilities. The mission is especially important as the nation faces tremendous budget pressures. Alaska's military services and agencies are essential to the national defense, our joint training and preparedness, our force projection, the safety of our people and the state's economy.

He said the committee would get an update from three of Alaska's military leaders: Lt. General Russell Handy, Commander of the Alaskan Air Command (and others), Maj. General Michael Shields, General of the U.S. Army Alaska, and Deputy Commander of the United States Alaska Command, and Maj. General Thomas Katkus, Commissioner of the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs.

### SUMMER 2014 – FIELD TRIP TO FORT GREELY MISSILE DEFENSE SITE



Legislative members of JASC and staff visited Fort Greely Missile Defense Site on September 3, 2014. Ft. Greely currently has 26 interceptor missiles.

JASC members on the tour were Sen. Pete Kelly, Sen. John Coghill, Rep. Doug Isaacson, Rep. Dan Saddler, Rep. Eric Feige, Rep. Geran Tarr, Major General Jake Lestenkof, Retired, and Col. Timothy Jones, retired.

Heather Shadduck, staff to Senator Pete Kelly also attended the tour.

In 2002, after the United States withdrew from the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty, the U.S. Army relinquished direct Army control of Fort Greely and the Missile Defense Command took control of Fort Greely. In the summer of 2002 MDC began installing anti-ballistic missiles at Fort Greely. In December 2014, \$50 million was approved by Congress as an installment to a \$1.1 trillion spending plan to increase the number of interceptor missiles to 40 as part of a missile defense expansion plan.

**AUGUST 24, 2014 – JASC LETTER TO U.S. ARMY ENVIRONMENTAL  
COMMAND:**

JASC Co-Chairs Representative Dan Saddler and Senator Pete Kelly submitted a letter to the U.S. Army Environmental Command with comments on the U.S. Army's 2020 Force Structure Realignment Supplemental Programmatic Environmental Assessment (SPEA) specifying concerns about the Army's proposed Alternative I which would have significant negative impacts in Alaska and encouraging the Army to conduct a site-specific Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to "thoroughly assess the significant negative impacts that would be created in the surrounding these installations, and the entire State of Alaska." The co-chairs offered the full cooperation assistance of the JASC in such an evaluation.

## JASC REPORT FOR CALENDAR YEAR 2015

### FEBRUARY 12, 2015 - GENERAL MIKE SHIELDS' MEET AND GREET

#### QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION

##### **Representative Saddler:**

1. Is there a website where people can post comments or provide information in support of the upcoming listening sessions?

No, there isn't. The Army is asking for comments at the listening session and not through a website or e-mail.

2. What is the split between the Active Duty and Army National Guard when it came to reductions? What is the percentage of reductions that the Army National Guard is looking at?

This addresses only Active Duty forces. For any information about the National Guard, please contact them.

3. Are these reductions linked to continued sequestration? What is the long-term outlook?

Without relief from sequestration within the Budget Control Act of 2011 and sequestration-level caps in FY 16 and beyond, the Army will be required to further reduce Army end strength below 450,000 and likely to 420,000. If sequestration is lifted, reductions to 420,000 would not be required.

##### **Senator Bishop:**

1. Has the Army experience in Alaska benefited our operations in Afghanistan?

Yes. In particular, the Northern Warfare Training Center offers many training opportunities that are directly applicable to operations in other mountainous areas.

2. Senator Bishop requested some bullet points of the Army significance in Alaska so he could prepare comments for the listening sessions.

Alaska has a lot to offer the Army: strategic location; unparalleled training opportunities; community integration with military. However, the Army has to make difficult decisions about where to cut forces.

##### **Senator Coghill:**

1. What other things are important for the state to address on the importance of the Army in Alaska.

Alaska has a lot to offer the Army: strategic location; unparalleled training opportunities; community integration with military. However, the Army has to make difficult decisions about where to cut forces.

2. After thanking Maj. Gen. Shields on reduced road congestion from maneuvers, he asked, if the state can assist in any other ways to improve access to training lands? He commented on road access to bridge across to Delta.

We appreciate our great partnership with the state and are always willing to work on mutually beneficial initiatives.

3. Senator Coghill asked if our bases were responsible for the entire northern hemisphere relating to intelligence.

The collection of intelligence is achieved by many organizations, both joint and multinational. Our Army forces in Alaska do not have intelligence gathering as a primary focus.

#### **Representative Reinbold:**

1. Requested a flyer on listening session times and locations that can be provided to JASC members prior to February 17.

Flyer was provided on February 13. (Flyer is located in the Appendix of this report).

#### **FEBRUARY 17, 2015 – JASC MEETING:**

Representative Lora Reinbold chaired the meeting. JASC met and heard briefings from **Lieutenant General Russell J. Handy**, Commander of Eleventh Air Force, AK NORAD, and JBER; and **Adjutant General Laurie Hummel**, newly appointed Commissioner of the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs.

**Lt. General Handy** noted that in 1941 there were six mission-ready military aircraft in Alaska with 22,000 military men and women with “very poor command and control and no infrastructure.” With the recognition of Alaska’s strategic global position, the Alaska Highway was built in 1942.

There are now 32 military installations, 12 major installations, and about 72,000 active-duty, guard, reserve, and families in the state, along with 80,000 to 100,000 veterans. Lt. General Handy stated that one in five Alaskans have direct military involvement. The Department of Defense injects about \$1.5 billion a year into the Alaska economy, about 18 percent of the state’s economy.

Lt. General Handy noted NORAD is responsible for surveillance warning and aerospace control and said that Russian activity in the Arctic has increased and the Russians are building infrastructure and are considering ports and bases along the Arctic front to support

economic interests in oil and gas. While Russia is trying to demonstrate its global presence, Lt. General Handy said “the number of bombers and aerial refueling tankers is dwarfed by the capability of the United States Air Force.”

He said all the Air Force assets that are now “assigned on U.S. soil are under the Eleventh Air Force.” He said the Eleventh Air Force manages a number of facilities that contribute to readiness with two large operations and maintenance contracts managed by the Pacific Regional Support Center and run by Alaska Native corporations. He said the Air Force has a 10 year contract with ARCTEC to support the 15 long-range radar sites across the borders of Alaska for \$422 million. Chugach Federal Solutions manages a \$184 million contract for installation support at King Salmon Air Base, Eareckson Air Station, and Wake Island.

Lt. Gen. Handy discussed the Joint Pacific Alaska Range Complex (JPARC) and the vastness of the training space in Alaska with its nearest competitor in the Lower 48 being one-sixth the size of JPARC.

He discussed Eielson Air Force Base and its 63-year-old coal-fired combination heat and power plant. He said funding is in place to replace two of the boilers that need to be replaced. He said the good news for Fairbanks is that the U.S. Air Force announced that Eielson is the preferred alternative for the first overseas base for F-35. He said the record of decision on the environmental impact statement for the F-35 is planned for the summer of 2016 “to keep us on track for a first aircraft in 2019.”

Lt. General Handy also announced the Army is bringing a Gray Eagle UAV company to Alaska. He said the Gray Eagle is not just for readiness for combat, but is a powerful weapon system and can be used for disaster response.



Handy said there is a \$138 million earmark for the missile defense system in Alaska which is a partnership between the Missile Defense Agency, Space and Missile Defense, and the

Alaska National Guard. Part of that program includes decommissioning the Clear Air Force Station heat and power plant in October 2015.

Handy said the Alaska delegation does not want sequestration and that national security could use more money and predictability, but that the Budget Control Act of 2011 reemerges in 2016. He said from a military perspective he wants everyone to understand that there will be significant implications, because “most of what we’re looking at in 2016 assumes that we are not in sequestration.” Handy said the legislature could stress to Congress how big of an impact sequestration would have.

Senator Coghill asked how the Legislature could help with personal issues, like post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and family problems when military personnel return home. Handy said one of the best ways to take care of these men and women is to ensure their families are cared for while they are deployed, including quality public school education for the children and helping teachers understand the needs of military kids.

Chairwoman Reinbold introduced newly appointed **Commissioner of the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs, Colonel Laurie Hummel**. Hummel noted that Alaska has a Dual Mission Force, with a state mission under Title 32 and they are sometimes called to federal status under Title 10. She said most Alaska guardsmen have been called to Title 10 missions “*time and time again.*”

She said the Air Guard is led by Brig. Gen. Tim O’Brien and the inbound Air Guard commander will be Col. Karen Mansfield. Alaska has two Air Guard wings: the 168<sup>th</sup> air refueling wing at Eielson runs the KC-135 tanker fleet and the Space Warning and Surveillance Squadron at Clear Air Station. The Air National Guard also has the 176<sup>th</sup> Wing at JBER which has broad responsibilities such as combat search and rescue, tactical and strategic airlift, air control, and rescue coordination.

Commissioner Hummel said the Alaska Military Youth Academy is partnered with the National Guard, and it is consistently in the top five Challenge programs in the country. She said a study conducted found that every dollar invested in these programs yields considerable savings in societal costs.

The commissioner said she hopes to increase rural outreach by bringing division representatives to rural exercise missions, improving public relations, and connecting better to veteran service organizations, including national offices. She said many female veterans do not think of themselves as veterans and or having access to those services.

Commissioner Hummel addressed the timeline for investigating potential misconduct and malfeasance with the Alaska National Guard by the federal Office of Complex Investigations (OCI).

Hummel guaranteed that leadership will take the OCI report and Judge Patricia Collins’ special investigation and use them “in every possible manner to increase the capacity of the National Guard and to build and/or rebuild an effective command climate.” There were five areas noted in the OCI report that were turned over to internal teams, and the sixth issue was a finding of fraud and was addressed in an external federal audit.

She said there is a new special victim counsel on staff, loaned from the National Guard Bureau, and she deals exclusively with sexual assault victims. She stated although all of the results are not in, no illegal activity was found, but there were administrative mistakes in accounting.

Hummel identified the need for additional legal assistance within the guard. The Judge Advocate General (JAG) officers and attorneys are overworked in a stressful environment. She said she has requested help from the National Guard Bureau with temporary help or preference at paralegal schools to fill empty slots. The bureau is very receptive, she added.

**In conclusion, the commissioner said she is also focused on getting the state code of military justice into statute and hiring someone to coordinate that effort with the legislature.**

Co-Chair Reinbold invited Fairbanks North Star Borough Mayor Luke Hopkins to address JASC and explain to them the "Tiger Team". Mayor Hopkins said when the downsizing issues came around, which included moving F-16s, the Tiger Team was created to include members of Congress, the assembly, the Alaska State Legislature, and non-elected officials to meet every week. The assembly provided funds for studies and consultants.

He said while there is a level of comfort the F-35s will be stationed at Eielson AFB, there is still work to be done so the Tiger Team will continue meeting. He reminded the committee Alaska is in competition with other states for forces and expenditures and the Tiger Team is continually bringing up issues of how to respond to the needs that they think the Fairbanks North Star Borough should have and serve the military.

## **FEBRUARY 23 - 24, 2015 – U.S. ARMY COMMUNITY LISTENING SESSIONS**

In January, the U.S. Army announced it was continuing to reduce its active-duty end-strength from a war-time peak of 570,000 to 450,000 by the end of FY2017, a cumulative reduction of 120,000 Soldiers. If sequestration level cuts are imposed in FY2016 and beyond, end-strength would be further reduced to 420,000 Soldiers by FY19, a cumulative loss of 150,000 Soldiers. Thirty installations across the United States were being evaluated for potential reductions.

The loss of a brigade at JBER could total 5,000 troops and 9,000 dependents – a total of 14,000 in population, as well as Department of Army civilians at JBER. That's 4.5 percent of Anchorage's total population. Army payroll in Anchorage is \$500 million, not including the civilian payroll. Source: Anchorage Economic Development Corporation (AEDC)

Fort Wainwright was facing a potential loss of up to 5,800 Soldiers and Department of Army civilians. Such a cut would leave the base's workforce at 1,600. Almost twenty-five percent of the population is military or military dependent in the Fairbanks North Star Borough. (Source: "Programmatic Environmental Assessment for Army 2020 Force Structure Realignment" by the U.S. Army released July 2014)

*In a worst-case scenario, the main Army units of both JBER and Fort Wainwright could be cut, forcing the departure of as many as 10,800 troops and 19,000 dependents within a year and a half. That would amount to a loss of about 4 percent of the state's total population.*

Twenty-eight out of 40 members of Alaska's House of Representatives and fourteen of 20 members of the Alaska State Senate will potentially see their districts be directly affected by Army force structure reductions.

At the listening sessions, the Department of Army provided a brief overview of the stationing decision process; however, the primary purpose was to give members of the communities an opportunity to provide comments and input.

Representative Reinbold attended the Anchorage listening session. Senator Coghill, Senator Bishop, and Reinbold staffer Elijah Verhagen attended the listening session in Fairbanks. Senator Coghill submitted written testimony and testified at the Fairbanks listening session.



The theme of the written and oral testimony submitted by members of JASC was that ***“ALASKA IS VERY IMPORTANT STRATEGICALLY TO AMERICA’S MILITARY.”***

Alaska, using northern routes, connects three continents. Army personnel in this state can get to many places around the globe very quickly. That means our soldiers can either “make

things happen” or “prevent bad things from happening” in very quick order. Alaska gives the U.S. military a big advantage, especially in the Pacific.

Recent geopolitical issues like emerging military power of China, Russia’s reestablishment of Arctic military bases and the growing importance of the Arctic as a military arena continue to make Alaska bases strategically important.

The proximity of infrastructure to Alaska’s bases, such as the Alaska Railroad and the Port of Anchorage, provide for easy transportation of heavy equipment. Major airfield runways provide for quick deployment.

Eielson AFB is strategically superior considering that aircraft deployed from the base can reach 95 percent of the world’s industrialized nations within 9 hours. The Eielson-based KC-135’s are continually on short-notice alert in support of interceptors defending our airspace.

The State of Alaska is a strong partner with the Department of Defense. The State built the bridge over the Tanana River, expanded access to Point MacKenzie and eventually to JPARC, and share valuable air space for additional training.

**Alaska is a premiere training ground for U.S forces and our allies**

The Joint Pacific Alaska Range Complex (JPARC), which is the largest military training area in the United States, consists of all the land, air, sea, space and cyberspace used for military training in Alaska, providing unmatched opportunities for present and future Service, joint, interagency and multinational training.

Today, the JPARC is comprised of approximately 65,000 square miles of available airspace; 2,490 square miles of land space with 1.5 million acres of maneuver land; and 42,000 square nautical miles of sea and airspace in the Gulf of Alaska. The JPARC provides a realistic training environment and allows commanders to train for full spectrum engagements, ranging from individual skills to complex, large-scale joint engagements.



Each year, thousands from the U.S. military services, federal, state and local agencies, allied nations and nongovernmental organizations receive training in JPARC. In addition to home-station training for Alaska-based units and smaller unit training events, JPARC hosts three to four large-scale exercises annually.

The total approximate acreage for maneuverable training grounds of JPARC is more than 1.5 million acres, which is bigger than the state of Delaware. Our training areas have multiple advantages include: year-round accessibility; joint-live fire; live-virtual-construction instrumented architecture for brigade-level training; and support for all conventional weapons systems

Fort Wainwright has been ranked the Army's No. 1 Post for maneuverability (Source: BRAC reports). The State helped pay to build the Tanana Bridge, finished in 2014, which provides dependable, year-round access to the JPARC.

As the military focuses on the Pacific (and increasingly the Arctic), Alaska can provide training opportunities for valuable allies. Expanding Arctic partnerships include those with Norway, Finland, Sweden and Denmark. Other partnerships include those with Japan, Canada, India, Nepal, Mongolia, and Bangladesh. (Source: Letter from Senator Coghill to General Odierno)

**Alaska has a strong system of benefits and rewards for military personnel.**

There are special, state-funded veterans' benefits in education, home loans, land purchases, and municipal property tax exemptions. The legislature has passed legislation providing special tax credits for employers who hire veterans and for free hunting and fishing licenses for resident veterans with service-related disabilities along with free camping in state parks and one-year free passes on state ferries. The Alaska Railroad offers a 20 percent discount to veterans and active military. A large sector of private businesses in the Southcentral and Interior Alaska offers discounts and special services to military members and veterans.

**APRIL 9, 2015 – COAST GUARD FIELD TRIP - JUNEAU**

Legislative members of JASC and their staff were invited on a two-hour tour of the Coast Guard command center. Participants were allowed to wear Mustang suits and to board the patrol boat for a short ride and explanation of how the Coast Guard boards smaller boats from the patrol boat. They received a demonstration on the firearms equipped on the boat necessary for drug interdictions.



Legislators and staff get tour of Juneau U.S. Coast Guard facilities and try out the Mustang suits. 3<sup>rd</sup> from the left to the right: Joe Byrnes; German Baquero; Representative Gabrielle LeDoux; Chad Hutchison; Representative Bob Lynn; Lisa Vaught.

## **2015 TIGER TEAM MEETINGS**

Chad Hutchison from Senator John Coghill's office regularly attended the Tiger team meetings. Brittany Hutchison of Senator Click Bishop's office intermittently attended Tiger Team meetings, as well. The Tiger Team is a group of interested parties including local city councils, mayors, borough assembly, legislators and staff, Congressional delegation staff, military representatives, Fairbanks Economic Development Corporation, and interested private citizens who meet on a regular basis to discuss issues and events that impact military activities in Interior Alaska. They also discuss ways to improve the infrastructure and enhance communications with the military in the Interior and statewide.

Tiger Team helped organize testimony for the two listening session held by the Department of Army in Fairbanks on February 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> of 2015. The Tiger Team has previously been involved in providing input and public testimony for relocation of the Stryker Brigade, the F-16's, the F-35's, the Eielson BRAC proceedings, JBER's restructuring, and placement of the Gray Eagles at Fort Wainwright.

Meetings attended by Chad Hutchison occurred on Feb 6<sup>th</sup>, 20<sup>th</sup>, & 27<sup>th</sup>; March 20<sup>th</sup>; April 3; May 29<sup>th</sup>; June 12<sup>th</sup>; July 10<sup>th</sup> & 24<sup>th</sup>; August 7<sup>th</sup> & 21<sup>st</sup>; September 18<sup>th</sup>; October 16<sup>th</sup>; and December 4<sup>th</sup>.

## **JUNE 8, 2015 – COAST GUARD FACILITY TOUR – CORDOVA**



On June 8<sup>th</sup>, Representative LeDoux and chief-of-staff Lisa Vaught were invited to tour the seasonally-open U.S. Coast Guard Aviation Support Facility in Cordova.

They learned about the essential search and rescue services that the Coast Guard provides to Alaska's fishing fleet between April and September. They also learned that the U.S. Coast

Guard is not funded by the Department of Defense and therefore not threatened by the same types of cuts proposed at JBER and Fort Wainwright.

## **JUNE 15 - 26, 2015 – NORTHERN EDGE 2015 – ANCHORAGE**

Northern Edge is a joint training exercise between all of the services, designed to increase force preparedness in crises in the Asia Pacific region. The training included large force exercises, joint live fires, and search and rescues missions. On the final day of Northern Edge, JASC members Representative LeDoux and Representative Saddler observed a mass aircraft launch of various aircraft types departing for the JPARC. They also observed flight operations through air combat maneuvering instrumentation and toured the USS Shoup, a Navy destroyer in Alaska for Northern Edge.

## **JULY - DECEMBER, 2015 – BEAR WORKING GROUP – ANCHORAGE**

In response to the proposed force reduction at JBER, Mayor Ethan Berkowitz of Anchorage organized the Base Economic Analysis Review Group (BEAR). The BEAR working group was formed in July to identify the economic challenges and adverse impacts faced by the Municipality of Anchorage, as a result of losing 2,600 soldiers and their families.

Mayor Berkowitz appointed Representative LeDoux to this task force, recognizing her experience with military issues as co-chair of JASC and as a representative of a military district. Representative LeDoux and staff attend monthly.

Since the decision to reduce JBER troops was put on hold, the BEAR group has continued to meet and aims to strengthen ties between the military and civilian residents of Alaska. It also recognizes the future threat of Defense drawdowns in Alaska and continues to work with our federal delegation to avoid these potential cuts.

## **AUGUST 3 - 6, 2015 – NCSL LEGISLATIVE SUMMIT – SEATTLE, WA**

Members of JASC Representative LeDoux and Representative Saddler, along with their staff, attended a half-day meeting of the National Conference of State Legislatures military and veterans' affairs task force. The topics covered included military suicide prevention, veteran employment in the private sector, and state support of female veterans. Particularly



relevant to Alaska was a discussion on defense budget cuts and available resources for states and communities facing cuts to their local military installations.

### **FINANCIAL REPORT for 2014 and 2015**

With recent reductions in general fund income, the legislature is exercising budget restraints that affect all areas of the legislature's budget. This has resulted in a change in the funding of the Joint Armed Services Committee which puts at risk the ability for the committee to pay for per diem for the public members of the committee.

FY '13 was funded at a rate of \$92,900 and the total expenditures were \$20,010.96.

FY '14 was funded at a rate of \$94,700 and the total expenditures were \$33,889.90.

FY '15 was funded at a rate of \$95,000 with total expenditures of \$17,480.

FY '16 was funded at a rate of \$12,700 and total expenditures to date are \$12,197.82. There is a current balance of \$502.18.

## **CURRENT STATUS OF MILITARY INSTALLATION REVIEWS IN ALASKA**

Chad Hutchison, staff to Senator Coghill, communicates with Jason Suslavich in Senator Sullivan's office and Nate Bergerbest in Senator Murkowski's office concerning the status of military operations in Alaska through Tiger Team meetings.

Military personnel at Fort Wainwright are anticipated to be reduced from 6,755 to 6,708. The reduction was mitigated with the anticipated arrival of the Gray Eagle drones and the AH-64 Apache attack helicopters starting in July 2015.

In April of 2015, General Mark Milley, Chief of Staff of the Army, agreed that there's a lot of work that needs to be done, before a decision can be made on whether or not to reduce U.S. Army forces in Alaska. An Operational/Operations Plan (OPLAN) focusing Arctic activities is being produced and force reductions have been put on hold at JBER until a thorough review is completed.

## APPENDIX

### Biography of Public Members of JASC

### Correspondence of JASC:

JASC letter Comments on U.S. Army's 2020 Force Structure Realignment  
Supplemental Programmatic Environmental Assessment (SPEA)  
Memo to Presiding Officers Appointing George Vakalis  
U.S. Army Listening Session Flyer  
Letter from Sen. Lisa Murkowski to Gen. Odierno  
Letter from Senator Coghill to John McLaurin, Deputy Director  
Force Management  
Letter from Mat Su Delegation to Gen. Odierno, John McLaurin, and  
U.S. Army Environmental Command  
Letter from Sen. Dan Sullivan to Gen. Odierno  
Letter from AK Delegation to Sec. John McHugh and Gen. Odierno  
Letter to Sen. Murkowski from Lt. Gen. Huggins, Jr.  
Letter from Senator Coghill to Dept. of Army – Request under the Freedom  
of Information Act - Army  
Letter from Representative LeDoux to F-35A Pacific Operational Basing  
EIS

## **BIOGRAPHY OF PUBLIC MEMBERS OF JASC**

### **LIEUTENANT GENERAL TOM CASE – RETIRED**

Tom Case, a retired 3-star Air Force Lt. General, has spent more than 16 years in Alaska. His work history in Alaska includes two Air Force tours of duty, five years as dean of UAA's College of Business and Public Policy (CBPP) and three years as president and chief operating officer of a state-owned, independently operated Aerospace Corporation.

A 1969 graduate of the U.S. Air Force Academy, Tom began his 33-year military career flying in Vietnam. Later, Tom served at the Pentagon, was selected as the first Air Force Chief of Staff Chair on the faculty of the National War College, and eventually went on to command two fighter wings force and the Alaskan Command. He also served as deputy commander and chief of staff for the United States' two largest geographic joint combatant commands.

Tom has a Master of Science degree in Systems Management from the University of Southern California, a Bachelor of Science from the U.S. Air Force Academy, as well as additional education from the National War College, the U.S. Army Command & General Staff College, the Air War College, and Emory University's Advanced Management Program.

### **COLONEL TIMOTHY A. JONES – U.S. Army Retired**

Colonel Tim Jones, retired, was appointed to JASC in Feb, 17, 2012, replacing Bill Brophy as the committee member serving on behalf of the Fairbanks North Star Borough. He is Director of Administration for Doyon Utilities, LLC, a position he has held since November 2011. He took his position with Doyon Utilities after serving 27 years with the U.S. Army.

Colonel Jones is a 1984 graduate of the United States Military Academy and holds post-graduate degrees in Administration and National Strategy. He served in a variety of assignments in both conventional and special operations forces, including combat commands in Panama, Iraq, and Afghanistan. His awards and decorations include the Legion of Merit, Bronze Star for valor, the Air Medal, Master Army Aviator badge, and the Purple Heart.

Colonel Jones' final assignment in his military career was serving as garrison commander at Fort Wainwright from where he retired as a colonel.

## MAJOR GENERAL JAKE LESTENKOF – RETIRED

Major General Lestenkof served in the Army National Guard, as Adjutant General of Alaska. He was also the Federal Regional Director of the Bureau of Indian Affairs for Alaska, in addition to the Deputy Commissioner of Alaska's Department of Regional and Community Affairs.

Major General Lestenkof is noted as highest ranking military officer of Native heritage and is a retired member of the Federal Senior Executive Service.

Major General Lestenkof graduated from Mt. Edgecumbe High School in Sitka. He served in the U.S. Army National Guard from 1959 through 1974 and achieved the rank of Colonel. His service includes posting as Staff Assistant for the Alaska Department of Military Affairs, and 2-1/2 years as Alaska Representative for the Alaska Command/Joint Chiefs of Staff worldwide exercises. His training included U.S. Army Command and General Staff College and the U.S. Army War College. He was awarded Meritorious Service Medal, Army Commendation Medal, Alaska State Commendation Medal, and the Korean Presidential Unit Citation.

## COLONEL GEORGE VAKALIS – RETIRED

Colonel Vakalis, retired, joined the U.S. Army in August 1966 as an enlisted soldier. After attending Infantry Officer Candidate School, he was commissioned as a Second Lieutenant of Infantry in July 1967. He served tours in Germany; Republic of South Vietnam; Fort Bragg, North Carolina; Fort Knox, Kentucky; Fort Leavenworth, Kansas; Fort Jackson, South Carolina; Fort Benning, Georgia; Fort Dix, New Jersey; Fort Lewis, Washington; Fort Ord, California; Presidio of San Francisco, California; Little Rock Air Force Base, Arkansas; and two tours at Fort Richardson.

Colonel Vakalis concluded his 28-year Army career as a Colonel with assignment as the Garrison Commander, U.S. Army Garrison, Alaska, where he was in charge of the three Army posts in Alaska and all aspects of their operations.

After retirement from the Army, Colonel Vakalis served as the Operations Manager for the Municipality of Anchorage; Assistant Superintendent for Support Services, Anchorage School District; and Municipal Manager of Anchorage.

COL. Vakalis has served as a member of the Armed Services YMCA Board and Senator Ted Stevens' task force on Housing for Military Members in Alaska. In addition, he is currently a member of the Association of the United States Army. He has chaired the Military Committee for the Anchorage Chamber of Commerce since 1993, and is a member of their Executive Committee.

COL. Vakalis is a graduate of the University of New Hampshire with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Business Administration and holds Masters Degrees in Personnel Management, and Public Administration from Central Michigan University. He is a 1992 Inductee in the

U.S. Army's Infantry Officer Candidate School Hall of Fame, and has been a resident of Anchorage for nearly 31 years.

#### CHARLES "CHICK" WALLACE

Charles (Chick) Wallace and his wife, Carolyne, left Texas in 1972 to accept a 3-year stint with the University of Alaska Fairbanks. Forty-three years they still make Fairbanks their home. In addition to being a long-time Fairbanks realtor, Chick Wallace is the civilian aide to the secretary of the Army (CASA) in Interior Alaska, serving as a liaison between the community and the Department of the Army. Chick Wallace was selected as CASA in 1997, after being the president of the Polar Bear chapter of the Association of the United States Army. His official role is to "provide individual advice to the secretary of the Army, the chief of staff, Army and commanders at all levels on public sentiment toward the Army," and to "disseminate information about the Army's objectives, roles, requirements and major programs to the public through public speeches, personal contact and other means." (Army Regulation 1-15)