BRAC Spotlight

Greater Synergy Breeds More Capability

As part of a 2005 BRAC Recommendation realignment, the U.S. Air Force Research Laboratory Sensors Directorate, Hanscom, MA is relocating to Wright Research Site (WRS) at Wright-Patterson AFB, OH (WPAFB). The consolidation includes relocation of the Outdoor Radar Range facilities at Rome, NY and the laboratories and anechoic chambers at Hanscom AFB, MA to WPAFB.

The mission consolidation integrates research facilities for a reduction in laboratory square footage and support staff. The combination will provide significant savings in infrastructure maintenance and staff support at two other operating locations. The Sensors Directorate will relocate 160 staff positions to Wright-Patterson from Hanscom and Rome AFBs.

Q: Please briefly explain the primary objectives of the relocation for the Air Force and greater WPAFB and DoD communities.

A: The relocation moves the sensors research missions from Rome, NY and Hanscom AFB, MA to a single Sensors Research Center of Excellence at WPAFB. The location of the entire directorate mission at one location will provide synergy in Electro-Optical (EO)/Radio Frequency (RF) materials and devices research and EO/RF sensor and countermeasure techniques. The relocation of the directorate's Outdoor Range will also provide synergy in space and airborne radar research and development of enhanced detection, tracking and handoff of airborne & ground targets. The single operating location will improve coordination within the directorate and with our customers to reduce development time of sensors technology for air, space and cyberspace applications.

Q: Please detail the completed and forward-looking objectives of the move.

A: The consolidation includes renovation of 57,000 ft2 of laboratory space to accommodate relocation of basic and exploratory research facilities for development of EO/RF materials and devices and EO/RF sensors and countermeasures. The relocation requires 92,000 ft2 of new construction for office space, an Indoor Range, and an Outdoor Range. The expanded office space will accommodate the additional 160 members of scientist and engineering technical staff that are relocating from Hanscom AFB and Rome, NY facilities.

The Indoor Range facility consolidates the capability of multiple anechoic chambers to one R&D anechoic chamber with multiple operating modes. The Outdoor Range facility will support the outdoor radar range relocating from Rome, NY. Currently, we have completed construction of the new office building and Outdoor Range building. The Indoor Range building construction is nearly complete with the anechoic chamber integration scheduled for completion in May 2011. The relocation of the radar range facility from Rome, NY is planned for completion by the end of 2010 while the relocation of laboratory equipment and people from Hanscom AFB, MA is planned for August 2011.

Q: Please explain how the relocation of the Sensors Directorate is intended to enable greater readiness for Air Force and joint warfighters in facing 21st century threats (i.e. research, development, technology fielding, etc.)

A: The consolidation will increase the likelihood of fielding interoperable systems, reduce overlapping infrastructure, and increase the efficiency of operations. In addition, it will provide greater synergy across technical capabilities and functions and positions the Air Force to exploit co-located scientific, technical and acquisition expertise.

Q: Please speak to any future goals/initiatives for the Directorate at WPAFB and the Air Force at large.

A: The consolidated sensor technology research capability provides key infrastructure for development of multi-use sensors for aircraft, spacecraft and small/mini/micro UAV applications. The sensor research is focused on providing autonomous, agile and reconfigurable sensors for adaptability to future sensor platforms. The application of small and adaptable sensors will be key to implementation of the system of systems concept for multi-INT data collection. The sensor technology development will directly support collection and transmission of information that are essential to the execution of network centric warfare.

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