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# Board of Supervisors Memorandum

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November 8, 2011

**Location of the United States Air Force MQ-9 Remote Split  
Operations Unit at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base**

**Background**

Davis-Monthan Air Force Base is one of three finalist locations being considered by the United States Air Force for their MQ-9 Remote Split Operations (RSO) Unit. The MQ-9 is a medium-to-high altitude, long endurance Unmanned Aircraft System (UAS), and its primary missions are close air support, air interdiction; and intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance.

Arizona is already a nationally recognized leader for UAS's; we are the home of the world's largest UAS training center, located at Fort Huachuca. Location of the MQ-9 RSO Unit at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base would help keep Arizona at the forefront of the UAS community and result in job creation and economic growth. In 2009, the Arizona aerospace and defense industry accounted for 93,800 jobs, labor income of \$6.9 billion and gross state product of \$8.8 billion.

**Recommendation**

I recommend the Board of Supervisors pass the attached resolution (Attachment 1) in support of the location of the United States Air Force MQ-9 Remote Split Operations Unit at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base and authorize transmission of the attached letter of support for same (Attachment 2) to the United States Air Force.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "C. Huckelberry".

C.H. Huckelberry  
County Administrator

CHH/mjk – November 2, 2011

Attachments

RESOLUTION NO. 2011-\_\_\_\_\_

RESOLUTION RELATING TO THE LOCATION OF THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE  
MQ-9 REMOTE SPLIT OPERATIONS UNIT AT  
DAVIS-MONTHAN AIR FORCE BASE IN TUCSON, ARIZONA

WHEREAS, Pima County, Arizona and the City of Tucson have an opportunity to gain a new mission and additional jobs at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base; and

WHEREAS, Davis-Monthan Air Force Base is the location of the 12<sup>th</sup> Air Force/Air Force South and the 612<sup>th</sup> AOC, which is the Air and Space Operations Center that provides command and control communications, system testing, execution and intelligence surveillance for South America, Central America and the Caribbean; and

WHEREAS, Davis-Monthan Air Force Base provides the most mission oriented, forward looking community supported and strategically valuable option that can be cost effectively used by the Air Force for the acceptance of the new MQ-9 Remote Split Operations (RSO) mission; and

WHEREAS, location of the MQ-9 RSO Unit at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base ensures operational success, since the linkages between the Remotely Piloted Aircraft (RPA) unit and Davis-Monthan Air Force Base's existing missions, specifically the 612<sup>th</sup> AOC, the A-10s in the 355<sup>th</sup> Fighter Wing, the assigned personnel recovery capability and electronic combat missions, provide critical opportunities to train, integrate and grow combat tactics to maximize the Air Force's combat power; and

WHEREAS, excellent communications and data infrastructure exist at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, including 24/7/365 capability in a non-weather impacted environment with significant available bandwidth and room to grow; and

WHEREAS, basing the MQ-9 RSO unit at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base increases joint activities and training opportunities with Fort Huachuca's Center of Excellence and the Yuma Marine Corps Air Station's tactical center of excellence; and

WHEREAS, Davis-Monthan Air Force Base has large-scale existing facilities and space for build-out to meet mission requirements; and

WHEREAS, the Tucson and southern Arizona communities provide dedicated and superior support to the Air Force, its installations and its airmen and airwomen. Community support organizations such as the DM-50 and the Military/Community Relations Committee, the Arizona congressional delegation, local elected officials and the community as a whole support the Base, its personnel and its continued growth in Tucson; and

WHEREAS, Tucson's low cost of living and large availability of low cost, quality housing provides service members and their families a superior standard of living and the Air Force substantial cost savings over other more expensive locations; and

WHEREAS, the industrial and academic programs in the Tucson community and across Arizona are already aligned to the RPA mission from research and development through operations – providing strategically valuable synergies; and

WHEREAS, Arizona boasts extraordinary flying conditions with an ideal climate and an average of 340 clear flying days annually; and

WHEREAS, Tucson is not subject to natural disasters (hurricanes, tropical storms and tornados) and is an emergency relocation site for many other United States Air Force and United States Department of Defense command and control operations because of its excellent weather, advanced technology and large size; and

WHEREAS, Pima County has a long history of working with Davis-Monthan Air Force Base to improve community access and mobility and has fully cooperated with Davis-Monthan Air Force Base in the construction and extension of Kolb Road, Golf Links Road and Alvernon Way, improving Base access and improving overall community mobility; and

WHEREAS, in 2004, Pima County allocated \$10 million in voter approved General Obligation bonds to support the viability of Davis-Monthan Air Force Base and will continue to purchase and protect the departure corridor; and

WHEREAS, Pima County will consider allocating General Obligation bond funding to reduce or mitigate the noise impact on residential properties within the approach zone.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF PIMA COUNTY, ARIZONA that the location of Tucson, and superior facilities available at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, make Davis-Monthan Air Force Base the ideal location for the active duty MQ-9 Remote Split Operations Unit, which would command and control Remotely Piloted Aircraft.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors is hereby authorized and directed to transmit a copy of this Resolution to the Secretary of the United States Air Force, the Under-Secretary of the United States Air Force, the Chief of Staff of the United States Air Force, the United States Air Force Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations, Plans and Requirements and the Director, Legislative Liaison in the Office of the Secretary of the United States Air Force.

Passed by the Board of Supervisors of Pima County this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2011.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chairman, Board of Supervisors

ATTEST:

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

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Clerk, Board of Supervisors

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Deputy County Attorney

**MARC NATELSKY**

November 8, 2011

Individual Letters to:

The Honorable Michael Donley  
Secretary of the Air Force  
1670 Air Force Pentagon  
Washington, DC 20330-1670

General Norton Schwartz  
Air Force Chief of Staff  
1670 Air Force Pentagon  
Washington, DC 20330-1670

The Honorable Erin Conaton  
Under-Secretary of the Air Force  
1670 Air Force Pentagon  
Washington, DC 20330-1670

Lieutenant General Herbert J. Carlisle  
Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations, Plans and Requirements, Headquarters U.S. Air Force  
1670 Air Force Pentagon  
Washington, DC 20330-1670

Major General Lori Robinson  
Director, Legislative Liaison, Office of the Secretary of the Air Force  
The Pentagon, Washington, DC  
1670 Air Force Pentagon  
Washington, DC 20330-1670

**Re: Location of the MQ-9 Remote Split Operations Unit at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base in Pima County, Arizona**

Dear Addressee:

The purpose of this letter is to encourage you to select Davis-Monthan Air Force Base as the location of the MQ-9 Remote Split Operations (RSO) Unit for remotely piloted aircraft. A copy of Pima County Board of Supervisors Resolution No. 2011-\_\_\_, passed by the Board on November 8, 2011 in support of the location of the MQ-9 RSO Unit at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, is enclosed for your information.

Pima County actively supports the United States Air Force and military missions of Davis-Monthan Air Force Base in our community. We believe the existing technical and physical infrastructure located at Davis-Monthan make this facility ideal for locating the MQ-9 RSO

Unit, and we would be happy to answer any questions you may have regarding Pima County's relationship with Davis-Monthan Air Force Base and our support of locating the active duty MQ-9 RSO Unit at the Base.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Ramón O. Valadez, Chairman  
Board of Supervisors

C.H. Huckelberry  
County Administrator

ROV/CHH/mjk

Attachment

- c:     The Honorable Sharon Bronson, Vice Chair, Board of Supervisors  
          The Honorable Ann Day, Member, Board of Supervisors  
          The Honorable Ray Carroll, Member, Board of Supervisors  
          The Honorable Richard Elías, Member, Board of Supervisors