

U.S. Department of
Homeland Security

United States
Coast Guard



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APR 2 2014

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Murkowski,

This is in response to your letter dated March 26, 2014 regarding the establishment of a permanent air station in Cold Bay.

The forward operating location (FOL) in Cold Bay was first established in 1998 to provide a more rapid response to the potential search and rescue (SAR) cases from crab fisheries in the Bering Sea. Traditionally, Air Station Kodiak personnel establish and man the FOL in October and November to support the Red King Crab season and from the middle of January to end of March to support the Opilio Crab season. Throughout the year, Air Station Kodiak also supports FOLs in the Arctic (Barrow or Kotzebue) and Aviation Support Facility Cordova. Air Station Kodiak does not have the helicopters or personnel to adequately support more than one FOL at any one time.

Although the Cold Bay FOL was established to support SAR missions, non-maritime medical transports from surrounding communities do occur including those from King Cove. During the past five years (2010-14) the total number of non-maritime medical transports originating from King Cove is 22, or approximately four or five per year. Of those 22 non-maritime medical transports since 2010, 16 were completed while FOL Cold Bay was manned and the remaining 6 were completed using helicopters from Air Station Kodiak. Whenever FOL Cold Bay is not operating, non-maritime medical transport from King Cove and the surrounding area would continue to be conducted from Air Station Kodiak.

Non-maritime medical transports are not a core mission for the Coast Guard, but under the guidelines of the U.S. Coast Guard Addendum to the United States National Search and Rescue Supplement, Section 4.8, Non-Maritime EMS Response, the Coast Guard can respond to non-maritime medical transports on a not to interfere basis.

An updated study has not been completed to determine the cost of a permanent air station or air facility at Cold Bay; the last study was completed in 1987 (AC&I Project Proposal Report for Aleutian Islands Air Facility at Cold Bay, Alaska) for fiscal year 1989 with an estimated cost of \$54.9 million (in 1987 dollars) for a permanent party air station.

Subj: RESPONSE TO YOUR LETTER DATED MARCH 26, 2014
REGARDING KING COVE

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The estimate above is only a facility estimate and does not include aircraft and associated resource hour costs. Two additional MH-60T Jayhawks helicopters would be required, in addition to staffing needs, 23 personnel (5 pilots and 18 maintainers) per aircraft, and requisite operations and maintenance funding to support this request. The acquisition of two MH-60Ts is approximately \$52.2 million. An additional \$11.4 million in recurring funds (OE) is required to crew, operate, and maintain these two aircraft.

My Senate Liaison Office at (202) 224-2913 would be pleased to respond to any further questions you or your staff may have.

Sincerely,



DANIEL P. WALSH
COMMANDER, U.S. COAST GUARD
CONGRESSIONAL AND GOVERNMENTAL
AFFAIRS STAFF
BY DIRECTION