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USNORTHCOM reassures Colorado Senator about Cheyenne Mountain

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U.S. Northern Command Public Affairs

PETERSON AIR FORCE BASE, Colo. – Adm. Timothy J. Keating, commander of North American Aerospace Defense Command and U.S. Northern Command, hosted U.S. Senator Wayne Allard, (R-Colo.) which included a tour of the command center at NORAD and USNORTHCOM headquarters Friday, Oct. 6.

Keating discussed with Allard plans to relocate daily operations at the Cheyenne Mountain Directorate to NORAD and USNORTHCOM headquarters and plans to maintain the Cheyenne Mountain facility for use on short notice.

“We discussed with him the advantages that are resident in that center, both equipment and personnel, and our plans to continue to place Cheyenne Mountain on warm stand-by,” Keating said.

In a joint press conference with Keating following his visit, Allard said, “I was concerned about Cheyenne Mountain being shut down, frankly. Those concerns have been alleviated.”

“I’m pleased with what I’m seeing as far as readiness for this country, and security measures taken since 9/11,” Allard said. “I certainly feel safe as a citizen here in the United States, and I feel safe as a member of Congress. I’ve expressed some concern in the past about combining NORAD and NORTHCOM but am pleased about what I am seeing there.”

Keating discussed the cost involved in combining the directorate at Cheyenne Mountain with the center at NORAD-USNORTHCOM headquarters.

Keating noted, “We will have more people in the same, secure area, here in this headquarters. We’ll have Canadians and Americans and interagency partners literally in the same room. We will also have (increased) capability with a very highly classified intelligence center, two planning rooms and a large command center floor, all of them within 10-15 feet of one another, a situation we don’t enjoy now.”

Regarding Cheyenne Mountain’s “warm stand-by” status, Keating said, “We’ll retain that capability to adjourn there, if the intelligence situation recommends it. We’re aiming for an hour – it may take a little bit longer than that.”

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Photo by MC1(AW) Shane Wallenda

Adm. Timothy J. Keating, commander of U.S. Northern Command and North American Aerospace Defense Command, and Sen. Wayne Allard speak with reporters during an Oct. 6 news conference at USNORTHCOM and NORAD headquarters at Peterson Air Force Base, Colo.

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