

November 2005

November 2005						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

December 2005						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Sat/Sun
	November 1 ✓	2 ✓	3 ✓	4 ✓	<u>N/A</u>
	EB	EB	EB	EB	<u>N/A</u>
	7 ✓	8 ✓	9 ✓	10 ✓	11 ✓
	Election Day (United States)			Veteran's Day (United States)	<u>N/A</u>
EB	EB	<u>EB</u>	<u>EB</u>	<u>Holiday</u>	<u>N/A</u>
14 ✓	15 ✓	16 ✓	17 ✓	18 ✓	19 ✓
<u>EB</u>	<u>EB</u>	<u>N/A</u>	<u>EB</u>	<u>EB</u>	<u>N/A</u>
21 ✓	22 ✓	23 ✓	24 ✓	25 ✓	26 ✓
<u>N/A</u>	<u>EB</u>	<u>EB</u>	Thanksgiving Day (United States)	<u>Holiday</u>	<u>N/A</u>
			<u>Holiday</u>	<u>Holiday</u>	<u>N/A</u>
28 ✓	29 ✓	30 ✓			
<u>EB</u>	<u>EB</u>	<u>EB</u>			

Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission

EARLY



BIRD

November 01, 2005

Department of Defense Releases

N/A

National News Articles

Closing Walter Reed: Medical Care Imperiled, But Efficiency Seen

Local News Articles

Local officials, developers vie for Gillem property (Atlanta, GA)

Opinions/ Editorials

Still a BRAC winner (Fort Wayne, IN)

Additional Notes

N/A

Department of Defense Releases

N/A

National News Articles

Closing Walter Reed: Medical Care Imperiled, But Efficiency Seen

Defense Today

Dave Ahearn

November 1, 2005

Walter Reed Army Medical Center, long the top-quality medical treatment facility for Army personnel including the most severely wounded combat veterans, will be closed with no assurance that alternative facilities will provide equal quality or quantity of treatment.

So says Mike Duggan, deputy director for national security/foreign relations with the American Legion, who questions whether Congress actually will provide funds to create equal or better hospital facilities at Bethesda Naval Medical Center in Maryland and DeWitt Army Hospital at Fort Belvoir in Virginia.

The closing of Walter Reed is mandated under the just-approved Base Realignment and Closing (BRAC) plan.

However, the closing of Walter Reed makes sense in that it might be difficult to modernize the aging hospital facility, given that there are restrictions on how high new buildings may rise in the District of Columbia, and given that Walter Reed couldn't easily expand its campus outward because it is in the midst of an urban area, according to Joe Davis, director of public affairs for the Veterans of Foreign Wars.

Walter Reed sits on 113 acres in the heart of the national capital, between Georgia Avenue and 16th Street. If the hospital closes, real estate interests likely would vie to build shopping centers, offices and tract housing on the site, a rare opportunity in the District of Columbia, where most land already is developed excepts for off-limits parks.

An ironic note is that the *raison d'etre* for base closures is that they supposedly will save money. However, closing Walter Reed would require \$988.8 million in upfront, immediate outlays to construct new hospital facilities in Bethesda and at Fort Belvoir, while placing Walter Reed in the ashheap is said to save only \$301.2 million over two decades.

In other words, closing Walter Reed is to cost, immediately, three times-plus more than any eventual savings.

But Walter Reed is outmoded, and large sums would be required to rebuild it at its present site, Davis, of the VFW, said.

Bethesda Naval has no height restrictions for upward expansion, and has ample land for erecting new structures, he said. Further, he said, a large portion of the military and veteran population in the Washington area is in Montgomery County, Md., and Fairfax County, Va., near the two sites where Walter Reed units would be moved.

But Davis voiced some concerns, nonetheless, saying that while Bethesda Naval has a Metro subway station directly across Wisconsin Avenue, there is no subway line near Fort Belvoir, a post served by a traffic-clogged artery, U.S. Route 1, marked by fast-food joints, gas stations and other businesses.

"Traffic's going to be horrible" for any patients heading to Fort Belvoir for treatment, he said. Duggan also made that prediction, saying that "U.S. Route 1 already is at capacity, and this (added medical-facilities traffic) will make it more difficult to get there."

"The VFW's biggest concern is that medical care has to be timely, with a seamless transition" from Walter Reed to the Bethesda and Belvoir facilities, Davis said.

A key criterion here will be whether the quantity and quality of medical care at the new locations aren't inferior to the care provided at Walter Reed, he said.

Throughout its legendary history, Walter Reed has treated presidents and war heroes, and an immense number of others, including military retirees and dependents.

The American Legion opposed the closure of Walter Reed in part because of concerns as to whether other facilities will be ready to take on

the heavy burden of the Walter Reed caseload, where 1.1 million out-patient visits were accomplished each year, Duggan said.

That's the quantity part of the equation.

Then, on the quality side, "severely wounded were returned to Walter Reed," Duggan noted. Typically, field hospitals that may operate in tents provide the most basic level of care for the wounded, and others. Then local medical units, such as post dispensaries, are a bit more sophisticated. Above that, major base hospitals such as DeWitt provide a large step up in medical capabilities.

But often, when severe injuries or rare or advanced diseases are involved, even those major hospitals such as DeWitt will recognize that they are reaching the limits of their abilities to aid patients, and send them to Walter Reed for care.

"We don't think it's a good idea to close any military medical center," Duggan said, much less a hospital that is at the pinnacle of Army medicine.

With a rate of 16,500 in-patient stays yearly at Walter Reed "far exceeding any other major military [medical] facility in the Washington area," Duggan said it is critical that other facilities such as Bethesda and Belvoir be able to handle this caseload well.

A Solution

Rather than take the BRAC approach of closing Walter Reed, it would make sense to renovate aging facilities at the premiere Army hospital, in a phased and gradual reconstruction, Duggan said.

That "could well be a lot less [expensive] than building a whole new hospital" at Bethesda, and another at Fort Belvoir, he said.

Another key factor: the fewer major military medical facilities sites, the easier it would be for terrorists to destroy them in some form of attack, Duggan noted. Concentrating medical facilities

in fewer places makes the job easier for terrorists bent on such an attack. Terrorists have attacked medical facilities in Iraq.

Duggan also questions whether Congress will appropriate the nearly \$1 billion for new facilities needed to replace Walter Reed hospital buildings, noting there are enormous competing interests vying for each federal dollar.

Competition for funding has become intense in this era of enormous federal deficits.

For example, the Navy is criticized because its next-generation DD(X) destroyer would cost \$3.3 billion each for the first two, and perhaps \$2.2 billion to \$2.6 billion for later copies. Lawmakers also have complained about \$14 billion for an aircraft carrier, including development costs, and \$110 million each for Air Force F/A-22 Raptor supersonic stealth aircraft.

If Walter Reed is to be ash-canned, Duggan said it is imperative that new buildings at Bethesda and Fort Belvoir be finished first. "Build it before you tear it down," he said.

There also could be a funding crunch within the military medical establishment, with active-duty military facilities competing for funds against money needed for new facilities of the Veterans Administration, Duggan said.

Elimination of capacity in low-cost, efficient medical facilities also may mean that those in the TRICARE medical program may be forced to turn to expensive private care providers, who may not accept such patients because TRICARE reimbursements to medical personnel and facilities are low, Duggan said.

For all those reasons, he said, it will be a serious misstep to close "the Army's flagship hospital."

Local News Articles

Local officials, developers vie for Gillem property

The Atlanta Journal-Constitution (Atlanta, GA)

Add Seymour Jr.
October 31, 2005

Friday, Fort Gillem officials will picnic, cut birthday cake and hold the 5K Gillem Gallop run/walk in celebrating the base's 64th anniversary. But Clayton County and Forest Park officials are busy planning for the base's short future.

They are in the midst of figuring out just what they'll do with the 1,500-acre site that will cease being a U.S. Army base in the coming years.

"You don't normally have overnight, laid in your lap, 1,100-plus acres to develop," said Forest Park Mayor Charles Hall.

Fort Gillem is one of four Georgia bases that will be closed as part of the 2005 Base Realignment and Closure. The others are Fort McPherson just outside of East Point; the Naval Air Station Atlanta in Cobb; and the Naval Supply Corps School in Athens.

President Bush and Congress have accepted the BRAC Commission's recommendations that would close those four bases along with 18 others across the country.

A group of government and civic leaders has been quietly working on plans to redevelop the site after Fort Gillem is gone.

"But it's difficult for us to do anything yet," said Crandle Bray, the former Clayton County Commission chairman who now heads the Local Redevelopment Authority in charge of overseeing the transformation of the Fort Gillem property.

The U.S. Senate has a few more days to pass legislation to reject the BRAC recommendations, but that is unexpected.

Once that is final, Bray's group will begin formulating plans for the property.

The group won't get all 1,500 acres. Fort Gillem will still house the Georgia Army National Guard, an Army Reserve Intelligence Center, the

Federal Emergency Management Agency, the Red Cross and the U.S. Army Criminal Investigation Laboratory.

"When I talked to [U.S. Army Garrison Commander] Col. Angela Manos, it appears that they're going to keep 450 acres of it," Bray said.

So far, the preliminary plan would split the remaining land into equal fourths for commercial, industrial and residential development and one-fourth untouched since it is unable to be developed.

Local officials aren't the only suitors for the land. Developers have also been clamoring for the base property.

But Hall said local officials have first chance at the land. Either way, the city would have ultimate say over the property since it will be in charge of zoning for it.

Bray said the next step will be awaiting final confirmation that the BRAC recommendations won't be rejected. Local officials will then do a market analysis on the property, followed by a comprehensive plan that would be submitted to the Forest Park mayor and City Council for approval.

"Mayor Hall once said Fort Gillem meant \$300 million to the economy," Bray said. "I predict once we get it developed, it will be three times that benefit to the economy."

Opinions/ Editorials

Still a BRAC winner

Fort Wayne News Sentinel (Fort Wayne, IN)
October 31, 2005

Because the U.S. House refused to reject the recommendations of the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) Commission, northeast Indiana will now be home to one of the largest F-16 Air Guard bases in the nation. (Scrapping the BRAC proposals would require rejection by both House and Senate). That means, among other things, more planes and more jobs.

But 3rd District Rep. Mark Souder is right to inject a note of caution. We won this round, but the "Air Force will be making substantial changes to its own resources and facilities . . ." The Pentagon is re-thinking all its deployments, and that could mean a basic restructuring of the Air Guard itself. Just because we're ahead right now, that doesn't mean we can stop paying attention.

Additional Notes

Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission

EARLY



BIRD

November 02, 2005

Department of Defense Releases

N/A

National News Articles

Govs Press Base Closing Lawsuits

Bush Endorses BRAC Moves

Local News Articles

Fort Meade gears up for influx of jobs
(Annapolis, MD)

Top admiral stands by Oceana (Richmond,
VA)

Opinions/ Editorials

Alabama Gains in BRAC (Beverly Hills,
CA)

Duluth Air Guard's good work prevents base
closure (Duluth, MN)

Additional Notes

N/A

Department of Defense Releases

N/A

National News Articles

Govs Press Base Closing Lawsuits

Kansas City Infozine

Mark K. Matthews

November 2, 2005

With the Pentagon's latest base closing plan all but a done deal, at least three governors -- M. Jodi Rell of Connecticut, Rod Blagojevich of Illinois and Ed Rendell of Pennsylvania -- plan to pursue lawsuits in an effort to save Air National Guard units in their states.

Their renewed pledges of legal action came after the U.S. House of Representatives last week overwhelmingly rejected a measure aimed at stopping the Pentagon's process of streamlining resources at military bases, called Base Realignment and Closure or BRAC.

Observers said last week's vote cements the shutdown of 22 major military bases and the transfer of personnel and equipment at 33 others.

Last week's vote also cleared the way for Connecticut and Illinois to challenge the BRAC recommendations in court. These two states sued to stop the Pentagon from transferring Air National Guard units to other states, but judges said the lawsuits could not proceed until the BRAC decisions became law. Pennsylvania is in the courts, too, to stop Air Guard aircraft from being transferred.

Under the Constitution, each state's National Guard unit is controlled by the governor in peacetime but can be called to federal duty by the president in time of war. Governors contend the Pentagon cannot move the Guard units in question without their permission because they are not under federal authority.

"Federal law is crystal clear on this. You can't move (Air Guard) units around without the consent of their Commander in Chief," said Rich Harris, a spokesman for Rell, a Republican. "And she is not going to give that consent."

At the same time, Pennsylvania officials are embroiled in their own legal battle. A federal judge sided with the governor's office on the Air Guard issue, but the Pentagon last week appealed that ruling.

"It is a matter of state's rights," said Kate Philips, a spokeswoman for the governor, a Democrat. "Gov. Rendell alone has the authority to deactivate the Air National Guard."

Department of Defense officials would not return calls for comment.

The conclusion of the BRAC process effectively caps years of analysis by the military on which bases to close in order to save costs and bolster defenses. In May, the Department of Defense made its recommendations and handed them over to the independent BRAC commission, which reviewed them.

After months of site visits and reports, the BRAC commission voted to shave the number of major base closing from 33 to 22, saving the Naval Submarine Base New London in Connecticut, the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard in Maine and Ellsworth Air Force Base in South Dakota.

The commission also reviewed, and often amended, changes to hundreds of other bases and units across the country.

In September, the commission sent their recommendation to President Bush, who approved the changes that month. With the

agreement of Congress, the changes the BRAC commission recommended will become law.

In its final report, the commission recognized the Air National Guard issue as one of the most difficult, encouraging better interaction between the Air National Guard and the Air Force in future BRAC proceedings.

Bush Endorses BRAC Moves

Air Force Magazine
Breanne Wagner
November 2005

President Bush on Sept. 15 endorsed and sent to Congress the Base Realignment and Closure Commission's recommendations to close 22 major military bases and realign 33 more.

The commission would shutter four Air Force, Air National Guard, and Air Force Reserve Command facilities. There were nine identified for closure on the Pentagon's list.

The BRAC panel rejected the Pentagon's call to close Ellsworth AFB, S.D. It also left open Cannon AFB, N.M., allowing the base to operate until at least 2009 and continue in operation after that if it can acquire a suitable mission.

BRAC legislation permits Bush to either accept or reject the plan that the BRAC panel presented to him. A rejection would have prompted the commission to revise their recommendations, but Bush had signaled that he would not hold up the process. After receiving the commission plan from the President, Congress had 45 days to enact a joint resolution of disapproval or the recommendations would become binding.

In all previous BRAC rounds, Congress had gone along.

The Pentagon's recommendations called for closing 33 major installations and realigning 29 others, for a total annual savings of \$5.4 billion. According to the panel, its proposals would yield \$4.2 billion in annual savings.

Local News Articles

Fort Meade gears up for influx of jobs

The Capitol (Annapolis, MD)

Elizabeth Leis

November 1, 2005

The first 600 employees moving to Fort George G. Meade as part of a massive expansion will be journalists, publishing and information experts who will begin arriving in late 2007, the post commander said.

Personnel from Fort Belvoir, Va., Lackland Air Force Base, Texas, and other leased spaces will bring operations of Soldiers magazine, the Army Broadcasting Service and the Air Force information service to the post.

They'll be the first in a wave of more than 5,000 employees who will arrive at the post through 2010 as part of the federal base realignment process, Col. Kenneth O. McCreedy said. That gives the Army two years to make progress on plans to create massive amounts of space for the new arrivals. Construction of a new facility for the media jobs will be finished in fiscal year 2008.

"(Base Realignment and Closure) will not occur in a vacuum," Col. McCreedy told business executives at a BWI Business Partnership breakfast on Oct. 18. "It will have an influence much wider and with greater impact."

Later this year, Congress and President Bush are expected to approve the move of 5,291 jobs to Fort Meade from bases and leased spaces around the country. Another 15,000 jobs are expected to move Fort Meade over the next decade as the Pentagon shuffles its agencies and the National Security Agency expands at Fort Meade.

The BRAC moves will result in \$4 million in new construction and upgrades to the post, and are expected to pump \$5 billion into the economy over the next five or six years. Slightly more than half of that will be in contracts for services, with another \$1.9 billion in salaries and \$3.75 million in miscellaneous revenues. Less

than 12 percent of the jobs coming to the base will be uniformed military positions.

After the media personnel arrive, another 584 jobs with Defense Military Department Adjudication Activities, which controls security clearances, will be consolidated and moved to Fort Meade by 2010 from offices around the country, including Los Angeles and Boston. Construction for that group will begin in fiscal 2007.

"(The group) is like herding cats because they have never met each other before, and they're being dragged kicking and screaming," Col. McCreedy said. "They're going to be happy in the end, but we need to convince them."

The biggest wave of jobs will be 4,098 in the Defense Information Systems Agency, a combat support agency that handles information technology in various leased spaces and at Fort Monmouth, N.J. The agency won't move until the Army completes a 1 million-square-foot facility for it in fiscal 2010.

In addition to the BRAC moves, another 8,000 jobs will move to Fort Meade as Pentagon agencies move out of Washington-area office buildings.

Not all of the Department of Defense employees will live in Anne Arundel County immediately. Some of those coming from Virginia may choose to commute, while others could move to Howard or other surrounding counties.

The key to accommodating the new jobs may lie in public-private ventures, Col. McCreedy said, citing as an example a 2003 contract with BGE. The company assumes responsibility for providing power, and has agreed to modernize its facilities on the base and bury cables by 2008.

A little-known economic benefit of new federal jobs being moved is around 200 new positions for day-care workers, kitchen aides and other service jobs.

Bridget Boardman, executive director of the West Anne Arundel Chamber of Commerce, said the colonel's speech reminded her that there are several years to prepare for the growth. The expansion of Fort Meade is a mixed bag for some companies, she said.

"It is going to have some degree of negative economic impact as it pertains to individuals because of infrastructure and traffic," she said, although the widening of Route 175 will help.

Robert Leib, chief of staff for the county school system, also said there was enough time to prepare for an influx of students expected to come as employees move their families closer to their jobs.

"We want them to live in Anne Arundel County," he said. "If the schools are going well, they are going to come here."

**Top admiral stands by Oceana
Naval operations chief tells J. Warner he still
opposes closing base**

Richmond Times Post-Dispatch (Richmond, VA)

Peter Hardin

November 2, 2005

WASHINGTON -- The Navy's top admiral is sticking with embattled Oceana Naval Air Station in Virginia Beach as "the most suitable option" for the Navy's East Coast master jet base.

In August, an independent base-closing panel recommended moving the master jet base if major steps weren't taken to curb suburban encroachment.

But Adm. M.G. Mullen, chief of naval operations, said in a letter dated Saturday that the Department of Defense did a thorough analysis earlier this year and concluded that Oceana "remained the most suitable option for an East Coast master jet base for the foreseeable future."

"That position has not changed," Mullen added, in the letter to Sen. John W. Warner, R-Va.,

chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee. Warner released the letter yesterday.

It was some good news, although not conclusive, for defenders of Oceana, who learned last month that Jacksonville, Fla., was abandoning its efforts to capture 250 Navy jets and 12,000 jobs from the Virginia jet base.

"The fact the [chief of naval operations] chose to reiterate the Navy's -- it certainly sounds like to me -- unfettered commitment to staying at Oceana, is certainly something that counts," said Robert Matthias, a Virginia Beach lobbyist and aide to Mayor Meyera E. Oberndorf.

The Defense Base Realignment and Closure Commission ordered the Pentagon to study locating a replacement jet base at Cecil Field or elsewhere. That study has not been completed.

Warner cautioned, "Don't read too much into that letter." It reiterated principles laid out earlier, and which haven't changed, he said.

Mullen's letter was dated two days after the House of Representatives effectively approved the BRAC recommendations for axing 22 major bases and realigning others.

Because federal law requires both chambers of Congress to vote down the BRAC list for it to be rejected, the House vote meant the closures can go into effect.

In July, Pentagon officials said the Navy believed its best long-term choice for East Coast tactical -- or shorter-distance -- aviation "would be to build a new 21st century naval air station."

Opinions/ Editorials

Alabama Gains in BRAC

American Chronicle (Beverly Hills, CA)

Senator Richard Shelby

November 1, 2005

On November 8, the 2005 Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) report will become final. Since the Secretary of Defense first announced his recommendations for BRAC in May,

military bases across the country have presented strong arguments based on military value to the Commission. Alabama was no different.

The Alabama delegation, in concert with local base communities, spent the last several years dedicated to making certain that the Department of Defense, and later the BRAC commission, were well-informed about the tremendous military value Alabama bases play in our national defense. And all of that hard work has paid off.

Our biggest victories came from the Commission's reversal of two of DoD's recommendations that would have removed missions, personnel, and airframes from the state. Maxwell Air Force Base and Gunter Annex was the only Active Duty Alabama military facility recommended by the Department of Defense to lose a mission to a facility in another state. The Operations Sustainment and Systems Group (OSSG), located at Gunter, was slated to relocate to Hanscom Air Force Base, MA, in a research and development (R&D) consolidation. As I continually argued to the Commission, this recommendation had an underlying flaw – the OSSG is a 24/7 operations and sustainment mission for the Air Force, DoD, and joint information technology systems. It is not an R&D group. I am very pleased that the Commission decided to strike this recommendation. It showed that our position was rock solid and that keeping the OSSG in Montgomery not only has significant military value, but its location in Montgomery is good for the warfighter.

The second recommendation that the Commission overturned related to DoD's flawed Air Guard realignments. The 117th Air Refueling Wing will remain in Birmingham. This decision reinforces what I have always known, that the 117th is clearly fulfilling a critical mission for the nation, and it will continue to do so into the future from its Alabama base.

Redstone Arsenal, fundamental to the Army's extensive missile and space research and

development (R&D) programs, will increase by up to 4,000 jobs through the addition of new R&D work. Already home to a majority of Space and Missile Defense Command's (SMDC) missions and a number of Missile Defense Agency (MDA) functions, I am proud that Redstone will gain SMDC's headquarters and additional MDA missions. Further, Redstone will welcome Alabama's first four star command to the state with the arrival of the Army Materiel Command's Headquarters.

Anniston Army Depot was slated to increase in workload and personnel by gaining work from the closure of Red River Army Depot, TX. Much to my disappointment, the Commission recommended that Red River remain open, even though I believe that there was sufficient justification to close that facility due to the excess capacity in the Army industrial base. While Anniston did not gain in this BRAC round, I have every confidence that Anniston will continue to serve the maintenance needs of the Army now and into the future as our Armed Forces continue their work in Iraq, Afghanistan, and elsewhere the War on Terrorism requires our presence.

With Army and Air Force rotary wing training already a major mission at Fort Rucker, the installation was set to receive the Army's Aviation Logistics School through realignment. Unfortunately, this did not occur. I believe this consolidation would have created manpower savings, consistency in training, and force stabilization. We fight jointly and we must train jointly. It would have made sense to move the Aviation Logistics School to Fort Rucker. Yet while the Commission decision means that Fort Rucker will not be the recipient of the new mission, I am confident that this installation will continue to grow as the Army brings forth new missions and platforms for the aviation branch.

Although not in Alabama, the relocation of the Army's Armor School to Fort Benning will have a major and positive effect on Phenix City and eastern Alabama. This realignment will increase permanent personnel at the installation by 2,300, with an additional 8,000 students rotating in annually for training.

It is clear that the Commission recognized the value of our installations, and the final outcome of the BRAC process has Alabama well situated for the future. Throughout this process, Alabama's Congressional delegation and military base communities worked diligently to provide consistent arguments to the Commission based on clear military value, indisputable data, and solid statistics. It was always our goal to underscore how Alabama plays an integral role in the defense of our country. I believe we accomplished our mission, and in doing so, we were able to increase our already strong military presence around the state.

Duluth Air Guard's good work prevents base closure;

Duluth News-Tribune (Duluth, MN)
Eric Chandler
November 2, 2005

Whump. The first mortar woke me up. "Huh," I thought, I'm pretty sure that was a mortar impact. WHUMP. Whoa, that was closer. Ka-WHUMP! After the third round hit, the explosion kind of hurt my ears and you could feel your cot lift a little bit. I leaned over and grabbed my body armor and helmet.

"Dude, are you putting your stuff on?" my buddy asked. He was a few feet away inside the dark tent.

"Oh yeah," I said.

The next two rounds hit a little further away. About then, the high-pitched siren that warns of attacks started to wail. I was grinding my teeth while lying on my back and looking up into the dark. I kept hearing that Talking Heads song... "This is not my beautiful house. This is not my beautiful wife. How did I get here?"

That was my first night at Balad Air Base, Iraq, with the 148th Fighter Wing Bulldogs, back in May. Within a week from that day, we would find out that the Secretary of Defense figured the Duluth Guard didn't need to have airplanes anymore. The initial Base Realignment and

Closure list came out while our F-16s were on final approach to land after flying all the way from Spain. Some of the pilots who flew the Vipers into Iraq got the word not 10 seconds after touching their boots to the soil. "Welcome to Iraq! We're getting BRAC'd." Talk about a kick in the... well, you get the point.

I'd been there at Balad AB for about a week already with a crew called the ADVON team. We got there early to prep the location for the arrival of the rest of the squadron. We'd gotten the bitter news about the "retirement" of our F-16s a few hours before the arrival of the airplanes. I was so furious, I got up and stormed out of the building onto the beige, concrete ramp and paced up and down the taxiway. After I cooled off a bit, I asked myself, "How come there's nobody else out here?" Uh, oh. We were actually under attack at that moment and everybody was taking cover. I was so angry, I'd forgotten they were shelling us.

Fortunately, on Friday, Aug. 26, the BRAC commission decided to amend the Department of Defense's recommendation and allowed us to keep our F-16s. Great news! The president agreed with the commission's recommendations. Even better news! Now, the list gets delivered to Congress for final consideration. The commission and the president obviously don't need any more convincing that the Bulldogs should keep flying.

So, what's the point of writing this piece? The reason is that I wanted to share with the people of Duluth what their friends and neighbors have been doing up at the airport for the past few years. Good work has been done by people that are probably too modest or quiet to say what they did. Good thing I'm neither modest nor quiet.

The Bulldogs were activated after Sept. 11 to fly top cover for America. We flew patrols over our nation's cities. On the first anniversary of Sept. 11, we were flying from three locations, one of which was an operation which kept a 24-hour airborne presence over the East Coast. I can draw you a map of New York and D.C. from memory.

While that was going on, the Bulldogs were tasked to go from being an Air Defense Unit to being a General Purpose unit (a unit that drops bombs). We had to do this in a new type of F-16, the C-model instead of the F-16A, while simultaneously doing air defense alert around the country. That's like trying to learn how to use your new laptop computer... while you're running. Everybody needed to get a new qualification in night-vision goggles, learn how to use the laser and infrared technology in a targeting pod and figure out how to use precision-guided munitions. The pilots and maintainers worked unbelievably hard at their new tasks and excelled at them. Two months before we went to combat they said, "Oh, we almost forgot... learn how to use this new reconnaissance (TARS) pod...now." Um... O.K. And we did. In 18 months, the squadron got new airplanes, in a new mission, attended three major exercises to practice our skills and we went to war. Combat's quite a final exam.

Our maintenance troops helped us launch more than 400 sorties from a location you might call unpleasant. A temperature of 110 degrees on the ramp was a normal situation. Sandstorms. Did I mention mortar attacks? And we never lost a single scheduled sortie because of maintenance. Not one. And every single one of our weapons hit its target. That means bad guys don't show up to work tomorrow and the innocents that live next door do. We also took pictures with our targeting pods and TARS pods, which helped our troops on the ground steer clear of ambushes and snipers while performing raids to seize weapons caches and insurgents. Technology doesn't make these things happen. People do.

Your Bulldogs are combat veterans now. They did Duluth proud. I'm glad the BRAC commission saw that good people matter more than which beans get counted on a chart. I knew why we should stay open. I just thought you should, too.

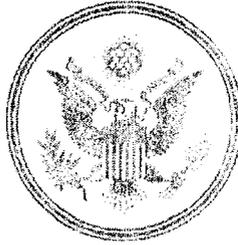
Eric Chandler is an F-16 pilot with the 148th Fighter Wing Bulldogs. The views expressed by the author are his own as a private citizen and do

not necessarily reflect the opinions of the 148th Fighter Wing leadership or staff.

Additional Notes

Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission

EARLY



BIRD

November 03, 2005

Department of Defense Releases

N/A

Additional Notes

N/A

National News Articles

N/A

Department of Defense Releases

N/A

Local News Articles

New owners rough out Gillem's future; (Atlanta, GA)

National News Articles

N/A

Colorado Springs, Colo., economic growth will slow; forum says (Colorado Springs, CO)

Local News Articles

New owners rough out Gillem's future; Fort to close after 64 years

The Atlanta Journal-Constitution (Atlanta, GA)
Add Seymour Jr.
November 3, 2005

As Belvoir Grows, Communication Will Keep Pace (Washington DC)

On Friday, Fort Gillem officials will picnic, cut birthday cake and hold the 5K Gillem Gallop run/walk in celebrating the base's 64th anniversary.

Governor names council to assist in redeveloping Brunswick base (Augusta, ME)

But Clayton County and Forest Park officials are busy planning for the base's short future.

City budget includes \$5,000 for BRAC (Huntsville, AL)

They are in the midst of figuring out just what they'll do with the site that will cease being a U.S. Army base.

Reading the odds in 7-4 Oceana vote (Hampton Roads, VA)

"You don't normally have overnight, laid in your lap, 1,100-plus acres to develop," said Forest Park Mayor Charles Hall.

War goes well, Self tells base council (Little Rock, AK)

Opinions/ Editorials

N/A

Fort Gillem is one of four Georgia bases that will be closed as part of the 2005 Base Realignment and Closure. The others are Fort McPherson just outside of East Point; the Naval

Air Station Atlanta in Cobb County; and the Naval Supply Corps School in Athens.

President Bush and Congress have accepted the BRAC Commission's recommendations that would close those four bases along with 18 others across the country.

A group of government and civic leaders has been quietly working on plans to redevelop the site after Fort Gillem is gone.

"But it's difficult for us to do anything yet," said Crandle Bray, the former Clayton County Commission chairman who now heads the Local Redevelopment Authority in charge of overseeing the transformation of the Fort Gillem property.

The U.S. Senate has a few more days to pass legislation to reject the BRAC recommendations, but that is unexpected.

Once that is final, Bray's group will begin formulating plans for the property.

The group won't get all 1,500 acres. Fort Gillem will still house the Georgia Army National Guard, an Army Reserve Intelligence Center, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, the Red Cross and the U.S. Army Criminal Investigation Laboratory.

"When I talked to [U.S. Army Garrison Commander] Col. Angela Manos, it appears that they're going to keep 450 acres of it," Bray said.

So far, the preliminary plan would split the remaining land into equal fourths for commercial, industrial and residential development and one-fourth untouched since it is unable to be developed.

Local officials aren't the only suitors for the land. Developers also have been clamoring for the base property.

But Hail said local officials have first chance at the land. Either way, the city would have ultimate say over the property since it will be in charge of zoning for it.

Bray said the next step will be awaiting final confirmation that the BRAC recommendations won't be rejected. Local officials then will do a market analysis on the property, followed by a comprehensive plan that would be submitted to the Forest Park mayor and City Council for approval.

"Mayor Hall once said Fort Gillem meant \$300 million to the economy," Bray said. "I predict that once we get it developed, it will be three times that benefit to the economy."

Colorado Springs, Colo., economic growth will slow, forum says

The Gazette (Colorado Springs, CO)

Wayne Heilman

November 3, 2005

Economic growth in Colorado Springs will slow next year and through most of 2007, according to the latest forecast from the Southern Colorado Economic Forum.

While the forum doesn't expect the local economy to slide back into a recession, consumers are likely to cut back on spending for cars, televisions and restaurant meals to afford higher gasoline and heating prices, said Fred Crowley, the forum's senior economist.

"Higher energy prices are changing people's spending patterns," said Crowley, who also is an associate research professor at University of Colorado at Colorado Springs. "Total retail activity will remain unchanged, but more of it will be going for gasoline."

The forum's forecast is a highlight of its annual business forum today Thursday at the Antlers Hilton hotel in downtown Colorado Springs. The event also includes a keynote address by Paul Tiffany, adjunct professor at University of California Berkeley; a panel discussion and a real estate workshop.

The forecast calls for local payrolls to expand by 2.7 percent next year, trailing state job growth of 3 percent during the same period.

Unemployment is expected to decline slightly at both the local levels, but local retail sales will grow more slowly than this year.

Even as growth slows both locally and nationally, Crowley said the Springs economy will avoid a downturn because of the arrival of more than 12,000 troops to Fort Carson starting next year from base closures and other military unit realignments.

The Springs economy also will benefit from recent announcements from Barclays Plc, Intel Corp. and Northrop Grumman Corp. that the companies will add nearly 1,000 jobs during the next several years as part of corporate expansions, Crowley said.

"I still believe we are in a strong growth pattern, in part driven by higher than previously estimated population growth," Crowley said. "We believe there are at least 25,000 more residents in El Paso County than the state has estimated."

The forum also will debut an indicator that measures business costs in the Springs. The Cost of Business Index measures wages, benefits, rents, property taxes and electric rates; the forum forecasts that those costs will increase 3.6 percent next year.

Surging benefit and rental rates are pushing business costs higher and likely will reduce profits and slow expansion by local firms, Crowley said.

The forum is the local economic research arm of the UCCS College of Business and is supported by the school and other 26 sponsors, including The Gazette.

As Belvoir Grows, Communication Will Keep Pace

The Washington Post (Washington DC)
November 3, 2005

As members of the communities surrounding Fort Belvoir, you no doubt have many questions and concerns regarding future development of

the installation in light of the 2005 base realignment and closure (BRAC) recommendations.

On Oct. 18, during Fort Belvoir's community update breakfast, I had the opportunity to share information regarding BRAC and the implications for Fort Belvoir and our neighbors with many of your local elected officials. This breakfast was just one of many venues we use to communicate, synchronize and coordinate with community leaders. Our intent is to ensure that Fort Belvoir continues to be a good neighbor as we provide world-class services to the soldiers and agencies that call the installation home today and those who will come here in the future.

Immediately following the release of the BRAC recommendations in May, Fort Belvoir made a commitment to keep the local community informed. We have steadfastly maintained that commitment in a wide range of venues. Since my arrival on July 11, my team and I have briefed more than a dozen community groups, civic organizations, chambers of commerce and local government committees on BRAC's projected impact to allow key community decision-makers to anticipate the change at Fort Belvoir and to aggressively plan on behalf of their communities.

The future of Fort Belvoir and the surrounding communities is inextricably linked. The entire Fort Belvoir civilian workforce and a large portion of our military workforce resides off post. Our military members who live on the installation look to our neighboring communities for shopping, recreation and other activities. The issues that concern you, such as transportation, air quality and development, also concern Fort Belvoir.

Those who aren't familiar with the BRAC process may not realize that it's a dynamic process requiring the continuous refinement of data. Fort Belvoir and the organizations identified to move here are constantly revising plans and planning assumptions based on the most current data available. As the data change, we update the leaders of your community so

they, too, have access to the most current information while planning on your behalf.

We are now conducting a survey and analysis of transportation needs for Fort Belvoir's current workforce and for those workers identified to come to Fort Belvoir. We expect to have preliminary results in December. As with all information we gather, we will share the results with planners at the local, state and federal levels.

I remain committed to keeping you, our neighbors, informed as Fort Belvoir moves forward. The six-year implementation period proposed in the BRAC recommendations requires an ambitious timeline and constant coordination with all of our stakeholders.

I plan to continue to send updates to your local newspapers in the future. Meanwhile, I welcome the opportunity to meet with community groups, civic organizations and other stakeholders.

Through continuous communication, synchronization and coordination, we will find solutions that allow Fort Belvoir to excel at its mission of providing world-class services in support of the national defense while remaining a valued neighbor in the Northern Virginia landscape.

Col. Brian W. Lauritzen, garrison commander at Fort Belvoir, talks about the proposed base realignment and closure (BRAC) plan, which is under consideration by Congress. The plan would add thousands of jobs to the post.

Governor names council to assist in redeveloping Brunswick base

The Associated Press State & Local Wire (Augusta, ME)
November 2, 2005

Gov. John Baldacci on Wednesday named most of the 25 members of a panel that will work with local groups in Brunswick and Topsham to redevelop the Brunswick Naval Air Station when it closes.

The Advisory Council to the Office of Redevelopment, Re-employment and Business Support is made up of local, regional and state officials.

"We join today to recognize another important step in the successful redevelopment of Brunswick Naval Air Station," Baldacci said.

The Base Realignment and Closure Commission voted Aug. 24 to shutter the Brunswick Naval Air Station as part of the military's massive reorganization. Barring congressional intervention, the decision becomes final next week.

It's expected to take six years to close the 3,200-acre base, which is home to P-3 Orion surveillance aircraft and C-130 Hercules cargo planes.

The Advisory Council group will focus on four areas: retraining workers, supporting existing businesses, recruiting new businesses and general development efforts, Baldacci told reporters at a Hall of Flags news conference.

Members include business leaders, union officials, legislative leaders, education leaders and a tribal representative.

The 25-member council will work with local redevelopment councils in Brunswick and Topsham to "bring together all of the needed resources and assets within our state to address this challenge," Baldacci said.

"Although the closure announcement was the most unfortunate and ill-conceived decision, I believe that we must now look at this as an opportunity to redefine and move the Mideast region and our state forward in a new direction," he said.

City budget includes \$5,000 for BRAC Recommendations should become law by December

Huntsville Times (Huntsville, AL)
Thomas R. Tingle
November 02, 2005

With word that as many as 4,000 new jobs could be coming to the Madison area as part of the Base Realignment and Closure recommendations, the city has appropriated an additional \$5,000 toward the effort, and more money could come at a later date.

Mayor Sandy Kirkindall said the new 2005-06 operating budget for the city, adopted by the City Council on Oct. 10, includes an additional \$5,000 for the local BRAC group.

The Department of Defense Base Realignment and Closure process is virtually complete and the recommendations of the BRAC Commission should go into effect in mid-November. Those recommendations have already been approved by the President.

The original figures showed as many as 1,700 new jobs coming to Redstone Arsenal, but the latest numbers may be higher and families could be moving to the area as early as 2007.

Last week, Air Force Lt. General Trey Obering was at Redstone Arsenal for the ground breaking of the second phase of the Von Braun Office Complex. Obering said if BRAC is approved, there could be as many as 2,200 people that will be moving into the area, to support the Missile Defense Agency.

When adding 2,200 jobs to the 1,400 expected to come with the Army Material Command Headquarters, and a few hundred with other units coming to Redstone Arsenal, the total is more than 4,000 people.

Congress can either vote to reject the BRAC recommendations, which is unlikely, or do nothing.

Madison contributed \$50,000 to the BRAC effort in 2004 and added another \$15,000 this summer. The total amount of money that the city has contributed to the BRAC effort is \$70,000.

Earlier this year, Kirkindall said city officials are predicting that a lot of these people will move to

Madison and the city has plans in place to accommodate a population of 63,000 residents."

Reading the odds in 7-4 Oceana vote

The Virginian-Pilot (Hampton Roads, VA)
November 3, 2005

The Virginia Beach City Council did the right thing last week — postponing a vote to limit development around Oceana Naval Air Station — but it might not have done it for the right reasons.

The vote would have restricted the kinds of things that could be built on 30,000 acres subject to the loudest noise from Oceana's jets. The 7-4 vote delays a decision on the so-called "overlay district" until late November.

Between now and then, officials hope to get a consultant's forecast on the Beach economy with and without Oceana, and to finish parsing the Navy's position on its future as a master jet base.

Waiting for all that is only prudent governance. But it's not clear what it could change in either case.

According to the Richmond Times-Dispatch, Adm. M.G. Mullen, chief of naval operations, said in a letter over the weekend that Oceana "remained the most suitable option for an East Coast master jet base for the foreseeable future."

What Mullen meant by "foreseeable" will come under considerable scrutiny, but according to the Times-Dispatch, the letter doesn't go much beyond the Navy's past positions on the subject, and leaves everyone waiting on a more definitive statement, expected before the end of the year.

That uncertainty doesn't help officials trying to climb off the fence. If the financial analysis shows Virginia Beach would do well without Oceana, some city leaders already leaning that way might decide to roll those dice. That's a gamble with the financial future of the city, but

those are quite simply the stakes in the debate over Oceana.

The presumption has been that most members of the City Council and the public are committed to keeping Oceana's jets flying, but that may be changing.

Last week's vote was supposed to be nothing more than the city's endorsement of a commitment it made in May to protect Oceana under the Joint Land Use Agreement. JLUS must be the basis of any future coexistence for Virginia Beach and the Navy, and the council's pause before implementing it may be uncomfortably telling.

Jacksonville recently rejected the jets offered it by an angry Defense Base Realignment and Closure Commission, so Virginia Beach's hand has considerably strengthened. That might have something to do with last week's delay. So might the still-standing prospect of a BRAC order to bulldoze 3,400 homes, although they would have been unaffected by the vote.

Joining worried homeowners in all this are some of the Beach's real estate interests, including folks with eyes on the Oceanfront, who are raising a quiet but persuasive cry that an overlay district would cripple redevelopment at the resort.

If there are whole neighborhoods ready to bid farewell to Oceana's jets, along with plenty of moneymakers, there may also be a few members of the City Council ready to do the same. The movement doesn't yet appear to be large enough to win the day, but its momentum is growing.

The delay gives that movement a chance to really get rolling, and that's worrisome. No matter what the financial report says, no matter whether the Navy commits to Oceana for 10 years or 50, making the base unwelcome is unwise.

The understanding contained in the Joint Land Use Agreement is itself not enough to protect Oceana. The Beach will have to do more. But if city leaders are unwilling even to commit anew

to those restrictions, then Oceana's future is sealed.

War goes well, Self tells base council

Arkansas Leader (Little Rock, AR)

Garrick Feldman

November 2, 2005

The top commander at Little Rock Air Force Base says the war in Iraq is going much better than the way the media are portraying the fighting there.

Brig. Gen. Kip Self, commander of the 314th Airlift Wing, told members of the Little Rock Air Force Base Community Council on Monday that progress is being made in Iraq despite the bloodshed there.

"Every day, Iraq improves," Self said.

Schools, roads, hospitals and other infrastructure are being built every day, while the Iraqi military is taking more responsibility in the fight against the insurgents.

The base has played a key role in the Iraqi war, as it has in Afghanistan and before that in the first Gulf war.

"Afghanistan is the benchmark," the general said. "We've done amazing things."

He said more than 400 personnel from Little Rock Air Force Base are deployed in the Iraq and Afghanistan war zones, and more will be on the way in January.

Several C-130s are deployed in those areas, along with more than 50 others, including two C-130Js, from other bases.

The general said the C-130s are dependable carriers that can make long and short deliveries and stay in theater for a long time.

Self would not be specific on how many more planes and new personnel LRAFB would gain after the Base Realignment and Closure Commission recommendations are implemented.

"BRAC is good news for Little Rock," Self said. "We're not going to get worse."

Under a Pentagon recommendation that called for shutting down scores of military facilities, the base here would have received several dozen more planes and some 4,000 new personnel, but the commission did not accept all of the Pentagon's recommendations and voted to keep several more bases open, reducing the number of new missions here.

N/A

President Bush and the House of Representatives have accepted the BRAC Commission recommendations, and the Senate is expected to follow suit.

The latest estimate is that the base will get a handful of new planes and perhaps a few hundred more personnel.

"We train the best crews and maintain the best planes," the general told the community council. "If we're not better tomorrow than we were today, I have failed you," Self said.

He told the luncheon that Gen. William R. Looney, the new commander of the Air Education and Training Command — which operates Little Rock Air Force Base — has asked the base to reach out to community members and let them fly the planes assigned to the base and see for themselves how their tax dollars are spent.

"I have a mandate from Gen. Looney to get council people in the air," Self said.

He invited council members to fly with him in one of the C-130Js to see how the new planes measure up.

Self also pointed out that new construction continues on base all the time, including new housing now under private management.

"Little Rock Air Force Base is a model for other bases," the general said.

"We're in this together," Self said. "I cannot do this job without you."

Opinions/ Editorials

N/A

Additional Notes

BRAC Commission Early Bird

Use of these articles does not reflect official endorsement.
Reproduction for private use or gain is subject to original copyright restrictions.

Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission

EARLY



BIRD

November 04, 2005

Department of Defense Releases

N/A

National News Articles

The end of BRAC 2005

BRAC chairman: Body won't hold more meetings

Local News Articles

House votes to realign bases (Philadelphia, PA)

BRAC spurs M&A in Harford (Baltimore, MD)

The next mission for Ellsworth? (Sioux Falls, SD)

Opinions/ Editorials

Reading the Odds in 7-4 Oceana Naval Air Station Vote (Norfolk, VA)

Additional Notes

N/A

Department of Defense Releases

N/A

National News Articles

The end of BRAC 2005

Fairbanks Daily News Miner
November 4, 2005

The epitaph on the latest military downsizing effort was written last week in Washington, D.C., but it seems that hardly anyone noticed. The House, by a vote of 85-324, rejected a proposal to override a domestic military reduction plan forwarded by the independent Base Realignment and Closure Commission and carrying the support of President Bush. It was a popgun of an end to what began in May with fireworks of protest from communities across the country, with Fairbanks among them. Opposition in Congress, where some members had threatened this and that to disable the initial downsizing plan, fizzled due to changes made by the review commission and because Congress itself became consumed with other matters, such as a series of devastating hurricanes and vacancies on the Supreme Court.

Congress could only reject the review panel's plan, which carries the force of law absent a rejection, if both chambers agree to do so. Joint rejection isn't going to happen, so the plan will now stand, meaning the nation can begin to save the billions of dollars spent annually on what the Pentagon and the Department of Defense often describe as "excess capacity." Basically that means the military has too much stuff and too

much space for what it believes its needs are and will be.

The downsizing will save billions annually and, with Congress' approval, help pay for Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld's continuing transformation of the military for future war fighting and defense needs and the repair and upgrade of the military's infrastructure.

A part of those savings will come from Eielson Air Force Base, whose A-10 aircraft are being transferred under the realignment. The base's F-16s will remain, however, because of the review panel's ultimate rejection of the Pentagon's original idea of emptying the base and having it be no more than an occasional training facility.

With Congress' action last week, the preservation of Eielson as an active base is secure for now. And, in a happy coincidence, the Fairbanks area learned in recent days, too, that the loss of the Eielson A-10 personnel will be offset by the arrival of nearly 900 additional soldiers at Fort Wainwright for a new helicopter unit.

This community has fared well overall, in part because of the argument made on Eielson's behalf.

One of the last entries about Eielson Air Force Base in the public comment section of the BRAC Commission's Web sites says this about the base and the reasons it should remain open: "I encourage the 2005 BRAC committee to remove Eielson Air Force Base from 'The List' simply because we need Eielson. We need the jobs it provides, we need the training it provides, and the nation needs it, PERIOD."

The process itself, due to the decision of Congress not to reject the BRAC Commission's revised reduction plan, now has a "period" on it, too.

BRAC chairman: Body won't hold more meetings

The Associated Press
November 4, 2005

WASHINGTON — The military base-closing commission has decided not to conduct any additional meetings but may respond to questions from Congress or the Pentagon about its controversial recommendations concerning Oceana Naval Air Station, the panel's chairman said.

"The consensus is that we should leave everything the way it is," said Anthony J. Principi, head of the Defense Base Realignment and Closure Commission.

The BRAC Commission decided in August that more than 200 Navy fighter jets based at Oceana should relocate to Cecil Field, a former Navy base near Jacksonville, Fla., unless Virginia and the city of Virginia Beach take a series of steps to stop residential and commercial development around the base.

Local officials have balked at the most dramatic commission demand — that they condemn homes and businesses in high-risk crash zones around Oceana — while agreeing to several moves aimed at limiting new encroachment in the area.

Principi on Thursday termed that stand "unfortunate and disappointing" and said it calls into question claims by city officials that they want to be good partners with the Navy to secure Oceana's future.

He also warned again that the presence of homes and businesses along Oceana's flight paths is dangerous to both residents and naval aviators and has forced the Navy to make critical changes in the way it trains pilots.

A new generation of noisier, more powerful aircraft arrives over the next decade, Principi added. The service will have little choice but to find a new home for those fighters unless encroachment around Oceana is brought under control, he said.

But the BRAC chairman acknowledged that, for the short term, the jets are likely to remain at Oceana. After indicating in August that the Navy's return would be welcome, Jacksonville

Mayor John Peyton announced last month that the city prefers not to re-open the base and will continue developing the property as a business park.

Afterward, Principi considered reconvening the commission, which has completed its work, to address the situation.

Principi said he believes Florida Gov. Jeb Bush remains interested in redeveloping Cecil Field as a Navy base.

"I think it would take the cooperation of the city of Jacksonville" to meet the BRAC Commission's requirements for re-opening the field, he added.

Principi said that after an exchange of e-mails over the past week, commissioners agreed that they'll entertain questions from Congress or the Pentagon about the impact of Jacksonville's withdrawal on their report, though he added that no questions have been posed.

"We want to be as helpful and as cooperative as we can," he said.

Local News Articles

House votes to realign bases

New Egypt Press (Philadelphia, PA)
Lauren Bigge
November 3, 2005

WASHINGTON, D.C. - The House of Representatives voted Thursday to allow for the 2005 Base Realignment and Closure Commission's recommendation that Fort Dix, McGuire Air Force Base and Lakehurst Naval Air Engineering Station become a new joint base.

The new joint base will receive up to 47 additional Army, Navy and Marine aircraft and over 1,000 new positions. It will be host to Marine, Navy, Army, Air Force and Coast Guard personnel.

A bipartisan group of legislators attempted to vote down the BRAC recommendations through

House Joint Resolution 65. The resolution was voted down 324-85.

The original BRAC recommendations that were released May 13 by Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld eliminated all aircraft at the New Jersey National Guard's 1,500-member 108th Air Refueling Wing at McGuire. Congressman Jim Saxton(R-3) whose district includes Fort Dix and McGuire, urged the BRAC Commission to reconsider. At the last minute, they agreed to provide a squadron of newer KC-135R aircraft, which saved the 108th. The eight new KC-135R models will replace the 108th's 16 older KC-135Es, which were destined for retirement.

"The fact that we are getting newer models is gravy," Saxton said. "BRAC is a case of zero-sum gain. The New Jersey Guard will have airplanes and a mission to carry out in the future. The BRAC Commission voted to keep Lakehurst Navy base open, expand Fort Dix and expand McGuire Air Force Base. With new planes for the 108th, we have seen a clean sweep."

The nine-member BRAC Commission voted in late August to create a joint service installation in South Jersey, which would be the only Army/Air Force/Navy base in the country. Management functions will be handled by a central commander at McGuire. The federal panel also voted to close Fort Monmouth and the Willow Grove Naval Air Station in Montgomery County, Pa. The vote to close Willow Grove is expected to yield over 500 jobs to McGuire, and include a net increase of about 30 aircraft, 21 of which are helicopters.

"Fort Dix, McGuire Air Force Base and Lakehurst Naval Air Engineering Station and the more than 20,000 people who live or work there will continue to serve the nation at a merged and renamed installation called Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst," Saxton said. "I have spent years working with the Department of Defense to invest over \$1 billion to upgrade infrastructure, promote joint cooperation between the services and obtain new aircraft and missions. We now have a 60-square mile, Army-Navy-Air Force

superbase that is modern, potent and indispensable."

According to a press release from Saxton's office, all Navy and Marine Corps aircraft and their support personnel will be sent from Willow Grove to McGuire, as would Marine Light Helicopter Attack Squadron 775 Detachment D from Cambria Regional Airport in Johnston, Pa. Mobilization assets from Aberdeen, Md., Washington Navy Yard, Wash. D.C., and New London, Conn. will be sent to Fort Dix.

The BRAC Commission had also voted to send four Reserve commands from Pennsylvania, New York, Illinois and Edison, North Jersey to Dix. The Northeast Regional Readiness Command headquarters are to be located at Fort Dix. In addition to acquiring the Northeast RRC headquarters, the commission stated that Fort Dix should gain both the headquarters of the 78th Division Training Support - currently located at the Kilmer Army Reserve Center in Edison - and the 244th Aviation Brigade from Fort Sheridan, Ill. They also recommended a Maneuver Enhancement Brigade be established at Dix, and that Equipment Concentration Site 27 there be relocated to Lakehurst.

"Fort Dix is the Number One deployer of Reserve troops in the United States," Saxton said. "McGuire is the Number One tanker base on the East Coast and creates an 'air bridge' to Europe and the Middle East. And Navy Lakehurst builds the backbone to our aircraft carriers, the backbone of the U.S. Fleet.

The federal panel held hearings and completed their recommendations in late August, then sent them to the White House. President George W. Bush approved the recommendations and sent the BRAC report to Congress on Sept. 15. Under BRAC law, Congress has 45 days to disapprove the recommendations. The window to reverse the recommendations closes Nov. 7.

The House's vote to uphold the BRAC recommendations means that 30 major bases nationwide will close, along with almost 400 Army Reserve and Army National Guard facilities, creating joint centers.

All decisions are final as of December 2005, and all decisions must be implemented within six years.

BRAC spurs M&A in Harford

Baltimore Business Journal (Baltimore, MD)

Robert J. Terry

November 4, 2005

Tri-S Inc., an Aberdeen engineering and information technology company, has been acquired by competitor Log.Sec Corp., the companies said Thursday.

The deal brings together two companies with expected combined revenues this year of \$26 million and gives Log.Sec, based in Warrenton, Va., a presence in an area -- Harford County -- expected to absorb thousands of new jobs in the coming years as military bases close and high-tech research and development work is realigned. The Department of Defense's Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) Commission's recommendations are scheduled to become official next week.

"Given that Aberdeen is an expanding market area ... Tri-S increases our footprint," said Art Sullivan, Log.Sec's vice president for business development, in an interview Thursday.

Log.Sec is planning to retain all 160 Tri-S Inc. employees and keep its Aberdeen office, Sullivan added. The combined company will work closely with many of the U.S. Army units testing new weapons and chemical defenses on the Aberdeen and Edgewood areas of Aberdeen Proving Ground.

These include the U.S. Army Environmental Center and the U.S. Army Developmental Test Command.

The next mission for Ellsworth?

Ellsworth Air Force Base supporters are taking steps to beef up the base to 'BRAC-proof' it against a future round of closings. Sioux Falls Argus- Leader (Sioux Falls, SD)

BRAC Commission Early Bird

Use of these articles does not reflect official endorsement.
Reproduction for private use or gain is subject to original copyright restrictions.

Randy Hascall
November 3, 2005

The Ellsworth Air Force Base of the future could be headquarters for laser weapons and unmanned aerial vehicles that were science fiction not many years ago.

Two months after Ellsworth was saved from a round of base closings, supporters are trying to shape the base's future and make sure its mission is so vital that the nation can't afford to do without it. Attracting new missions is one way to do that.

As the United States develops new technology for fighting and spying, Ellsworth is considered one of the nation's "candidate bases" for new missions and equipment.

"Obviously, our eyes are wide open in terms of things that could possibly come here," said Pat McElgunn, director of the Ellsworth Task Force.

However, new opportunities are rare and competition will be stiff among the nation's bases, so supporters are taking a three-prong approach.

Maintain and upgrade the B-1 bomber with new radar and weapons to ensure the bomber will be vital to the nation's military far into the future

Continue improving base infrastructure with new construction and facilities

Add more missions or operations, such as an Airborne Laser system, unmanned aerial vehicles or a financial services operation

"We need to explore more missions, or new missions," U.S. Sen. Tim Johnson said. "We need to be aggressive on all three strategies."

Nearly \$140 million in improvements were made to the base near Rapid City during the past nine years, but more building projects will be needed, said Johnson, a member of the Senate Appropriations Committee.

Additional money is being requested to replace 60 family housing units and construct a maintenance staff building.

"There are always infrastructure upgrade needs," Johnson said. "We have a base that's essentially a small city."

The Base Realignment and Closure Commission in August rejected a Pentagon recommendation to close Ellsworth and move its B-1 bombers to Texas. The next round of base closures is set for 2013, although many members of Congress expect it to be delayed beyond that date.

"We have eight years minimum," U.S. Sen. John Thune said. "We'll do all we can to survive. That's going to entail more than infrastructure. Construction projects aren't enough."

All three members of South Dakota's congressional delegation have met with high-ranking military officials to talk about Ellsworth's future.

Thune recently met at the base with Gen. Ronald Keys, head of the Air Combat Command, which operates Air Force fighters and bombers. Thune, a member of the Senate Armed Services Committee, said the two discussed the Airborne Laser, a weapons system being developed to detect, track and destroy ballistic missiles in flight. The laser equipment would be integrated into Boeing 747 aircraft.

Ellsworth has space for two 747s. Thune said the base also is well suited to handle an unmanned bomber. Another thing supporters are proposing is joint training missions with allies. The Powder River Basin, where B-1 crews train, is an excellent training route, he said.

During a BRAC process, "single-mission bases become bull's-eyes," Thune said.

The delegation and members of the Ellsworth Task Force are waiting for the Department of Defense to release a new quadrennial defense review so they can learn what types of projects the military are planning for the next four-year

cycle. That review is to be released in early 2006.

"The Air Force is pretty noncommittal and will remain so, I think, until the quadrennial review," Johnson said.

U.S. Rep. Stephanie Herseth said additional missions don't have to be weapons-based. They could include the broader business of the Air Force.

She's hopeful Ellsworth will be selected for a military financial services operation that would bring as many as 700 more jobs to the base. Ellsworth is on a short list with four or five other bases in the running for that operation, and officials have conducted a site survey.

"We have a great track record in South Dakota on financial services," Herseth said. "We have the skills they may be looking for."

A decision could be made in 2006, Herseth said.

As the military looks at new missions in an era of downsizing, it's not likely that a large number of proposals will emerge.

"With that in mind, we're concentrating on increasing the value of the B-1 and enhancing it," McElgunn said.

The B-1 was built in the early 1980s using '70s technology for its basic framework. The Air Force plans to modernize the aircraft, much as it did the B-52, McElgunn said.

The B-1's evolution during the next decade will be technological and won't be obvious to the eye. The upgrades will come in radar, instruments, communications equipment and weapons. The 2006 Defense Appropriations bill includes \$19 million for B-1 digital communications upgrades.

The upgrades are intended to improve the bomber's capability of striking targets with more precision from a higher altitude.

The B-1 was extremely effective in Afghanistan and Iraq, and its global reach is important for possible future threats, McElgunn said.

He and the delegation agree the bomber is likely to be valuable for years to come, probably to 2030 or 2040.

"We aren't building any new bombers yet," Johnson said. "So it's important we keep the B-1 as an incredibly lethal weapon."

Johnson, Thune and Herseth all say they're committed to continued bipartisan efforts to improve Ellsworth and ensure its future viability.

They and McElgunn also stress that the base's remoteness and wide-open airspace will remain a valuable asset to the country, whether it's for the B-1 bomber, a laser-equipped 747 or an unmanned aerial vehicle.

Opinions/ Editorials

Reading the Odds in 7-4 Oceana Naval Air Station Vote

The Virginian-Pilot (Norfolk, VA)
November 3, 2005

The Virginia Beach City Council did the right thing last week -- postponing a vote to limit development around Oceana Naval Air Station - - but it might not have done it for the right reasons.

The vote would have restricted the kinds of things that could be built on 30,000 acres subject to the loudest noise from Oceana's jets. The 7-4 vote delays a decision on the so-called "overlay district" until late November.

Between now and then, officials hope to get a consultant's forecast on the Beach economy with and without Oceana, and to finish parsing the Navy's position on its future as a master jet base.

Waiting for all that is only prudent governance. But it's not clear what it could change in either case.

According to the Richmond Times-Dispatch, Adm. M.G. Mullen, chief of naval operations, said in a letter over the weekend that Oceana "remained the most suitable option for an East Coast master jet base for the foreseeable future."

What Mullen meant by "foreseeable" will come under considerable scrutiny, but according to the Times-Dispatch, the letter doesn't go much beyond the Navy's past positions on the subject, and leaves everyone waiting on a more definitive statement, expected before the end of the year.

That uncertainty doesn't help officials trying to climb off the fence. If the financial analysis shows Virginia Beach would do well without Oceana, some city leaders already leaning that way might decide to roll those dice. That's a gamble with the financial future of the city, but those are quite simply the stakes in the debate over Oceana.

The presumption has been that most members of the City Council and the public are committed to keeping Oceana's jets flying, but that may be changing.

Last week's vote was supposed to be nothing more than the city's endorsement of a commitment it made in May to protect Oceana under the Joint Land Use Agreement. JLUS must be the basis of any future coexistence for Virginia Beach and the Navy, and the council's pause before implementing it may be uncomfortably telling.

Jacksonville recently rejected the jets offered it by an angry Defense Base Realignment and Closure Commission, so Virginia Beach's hand has considerably strengthened. That might have something to do with last week's delay. So might the still-standing prospect of a BRAC order to bulldoze 3,400 homes, although they would have been unaffected by the vote.

Joining worried homeowners in all this are some of the Beach's real estate interests, including folks with eyes on the Oceanfront, who are raising a quiet but persuasive cry that an overlay

district would cripple redevelopment at the resort.

If there are whole neighborhoods ready to bid farewell to Oceana's jets, along with plenty of moneymakers, there may also be a few members of the City Council ready to do the same. The movement doesn't yet appear to be large enough to win the day, but its momentum is growing.

The delay gives that movement a chance to really get rolling, and that's worrisome. No matter what the financial report says, no matter whether the Navy commits to Oceana for 10 years or 50, making the base unwelcome is unwise.

The understanding contained in the Joint Land Use Agreement is itself not enough to protect Oceana. The Beach will have to do more. But if city leaders are unwilling even to commit anew to those restrictions, then Oceana's future is sealed.

Additional Notes

Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission

EARLY



BIRD

November 07, 2005

Department of Defense Releases

N/A

National News Articles

Move With the Job or Quit;

BRAC plan likely to pass

A base-closing brawl

Move to block base closings is defeated

Local News Articles

Quantico attracts 1M s.f. as DoD jobs move south (Washington DC)

A base closing that is desired (Chicago, IL)

New Submarine Escape Trainer Is Feather In Groton Base's Cap (New London, CT)

Beach plans to discuss zoning limits near Oceana (Hampton Roads, VA)

Opinions/ Editorials

Base Realignment and Closure Approved by Congress (New York, NY)

Additional Notes

N/A

Department of Defense Releases

N/A

National News Articles

**Move With the Job or Quit;
Military Base Closures Force Civilian
Employees to Decide**

The Washington Post

Dina ElBoghdady

November 7, 2005

New Jersey resident John Kosinski knows this much about Maryland's Harford County, home to the Aberdeen Proving Ground: It's got the Chesapeake Bay. He prefers the Jersey Shore. It's got one synagogue. His county has about 20. And it's in a state with an official song that derides its neighbors as "Northern scum."

It's also where his job is going under the Pentagon's military base realignment plan, which becomes official tomorrow. To consolidate military installations and save money, as many as 4,000 high-tech jobs, mostly from Northern Virginia, will move to Fort Meade in Anne Arundel County, and 5,000 from New Jersey will move to Aberdeen.

The big question now is how many job-holders will follow those jobs. Most of them are civilians who do not have to go where the military sends them.

Kosinski, for one, may quit first.

"I'm not trying to denigrate Maryland, not at all," said Kosinski, 47, an electronics engineer at Fort Monmouth. "But everybody has a comfort zone when it comes to where they live. And we're being asked to go really far outside of our comfort zone. There are demographic and cultural factors to consider."

Just as Kosinski pauses to cross the Mason-Dixon line, some Northern Virginians hesitate to cross the Potomac River, setting off a new set of personal and professional struggles now that the political battle over what bases to close is over. Military and local officials in Maryland want to persuade Kosinski and other technically skilled, security-cleared employees to move rather than have to search for hundreds of workers to replace them in a tight labor market.

But other communities don't want them to go. In Virginia, Arlington County is not eager to give up 922 workers at the Defense Information Systems Agency, which is moving its headquarters to Fort Meade from Arlington. County officials want to prevail on the scientists and engineers to stay home and look for new jobs instead of moving.

"These are blue-chip people," said Terry Holzheimer, director of Arlington Economic Development. "We will find them another job in our community. We want to make sure that [the agency's] attrition rate is as high as we can get it."

DISA declined to reveal the results of an internal survey that indicates how many of its workers plan to move to Fort Meade. But in a Harris Interactive poll commissioned by the state of New Jersey this summer, less than 20 percent of the Fort Monmouth workers said they definitely would move to Aberdeen.

Maryland officials say they are not worried because the state has a highly skilled workforce that is growing all the time, a steady flow of graduates from world-renowned schools such as Johns Hopkins University, and relationships with some of the world's largest defense contractors, including Northrop Grumman

Corp., one of the state's largest private employers.

"What we are hoping is that as many people as possible move out to Maryland and become Maryland taxpayers," said J. Michael Hayes, Maryland's director of military affairs. "But we are prepared for any scenario."

Besides, Maryland officials say, time is on their side. The jobs should transfer to Maryland gradually over the next five years or so, giving people ample opportunity to sort out their personal lives and find out about Maryland's housing markets and school systems.

"It takes time for people to come to grips with what they really want to do, and quality of life issues always drive these personal decisions," Anne Arundel County Executive Janet S. Owens said. "Many people have no idea where we are right now. They think we're out in the boondocks or something."

Anne Arundel -- home of historic Annapolis, the National Security Agency, the sprawling Arundel Mills mall and Baltimore-Washington International Thurgood Marshall Airport -- hopes to dispel that image in coming months.

For starters, county and military officials plan to reach out to the DISA's workforce. The agency accounts for 4,098 of the 5,291 jobs headed to Fort Meade, according to the base, though the agency says the numbers could be lower. The vast majority of those jobs are currently in Arlington and Fairfax counties, a DISA spokesman said. About 75 percent of the ISA's employees live in Northern Virginia, one to two hours from Anne Arundel County's western half, where Fort Meade is located.

"We know crossing the river is a psychological barrier for a lot of people," said William A. Badger Jr., chief executive of the Anne Arundel Economic Development Corp. "But we need to get the word out that this is a pretty sophisticated market."

That might be a tough sell, especially now, when technically skilled people are comfortable with

their job prospects, said Richard Piske, a recruiting executive who specializes in placing security-cleared personnel in government and contracting jobs.

"In our world, six-figure income people won't cross the river," said Piske, vice president and general manager of Kelly FedSecure in Greenbelt, a unit of Kelly Services Inc. "These people are focused on what they want to do, who they want to do it for, and where they want to do it. The critical question as they start a conversation with us is, 'Where is the job?' Lots of conversations end at that point."

That's where it would end for a DISA budget analyst, who would not consider moving to Anne Arundel County and who spoke on condition of anonymity because the agency instructed its employees not to speak to the press, he said.

"I have no interest in driving two hours to get to work," the analyst said as he strolled the aisles of a Target store not far from the DISA office in Falls Church. "I'm not going to Fort Meade. Most of us can just change jobs and go work at a different agency. There are so many agencies close in around here."

Ditto for his friend, a contract specialist, who has no intention of working or living in Anne Arundel County. "I'm already settled," he said. "My wife works close by. It's just too much. I won't do it."

Military officials say there is plenty of time for reluctant workers to reconsider.

"We believe that most workers will commute for three to four years as they balance personal decisions," Col. Kenneth O. McCreedy, Fort Meade's commander, said at a recent gathering of Maryland military base officials in Crownsville.

But commuting is not a practical option for employees at New Jersey's Fort Monmouth, who in many ways face more of a culture shock if they show up at Aberdeen than the Fort Meade-bound employees of Northern Virginia.

Harford County, population 235,594, is a once rural but fast-growing area north of Baltimore with plenty of rolling farmland, some horse breeding, and the Chesapeake Bay along its eastern border. Monmouth County, population 636,298, is a built-up suburb in the New York area and bordered by 27 miles of beach along the Atlantic Ocean.

Under the Pentagon's plan, 5,085 of the 6,004 jobs headed to Aberdeen are coming from Fort Monmouth, which handles hardware and software engineering for land communications between the military forces and for intelligence gathering.

In a report to the federal base-closing commission, the state of New Jersey argued that a majority of its most senior workers would not move and that Maryland would not be able to fill their jobs with people of equal skill in a timely manner.

Those most likely to move will be the least experienced, creating a "brain drain" that will disrupt and undermine the Army's work, said Frank C. Muzzi, co-chairman of the Patriots Alliance, a group that lobbied to keep Fort Monmouth open.

"Maryland officials will tell you, 'We'll fill the jobs,'" Muzzi said. "They have no concept. It's impossible for them to fill the jobs. You can't just replace 15 to 20 years of experience on these very technical programs with someone right out of school. They're trying to dismiss the problems they are going to incur."

One issue is the dearth of workers in the job market who have security clearances. Clearances can take 12 to 18 months to obtain.

Derek B. Stewart, director for military and civilian personnel issues at the Government Accountability Office, said the federal office in charge of granting clearance had a backlog of 185,000 cases as of February.

Should a large number of workers decide not to move to Aberdeen or Fort Meade, the Army has

a problem, Stewart said. The Office of Personnel Management, which handles security clearances, could pay big bucks to have its contractors expedite clearances.

"Sure, the Defense Department may fill the positions," Stewart said. "But at what cost? This can get expensive in a hurry."

And if it does, it would undermine the cost-saving goals of the military base consolidation process, said Loren B. Thompson, an analyst with the Lexington Institute, a think tank in Arlington.

"The more people you have to clear, and hire, and train anew, the more it will cost the government and hence the lower the savings," Thompson said.

The federal base-closing commission is betting that a large number of employees will move.

"A significant number of researchers and scientists will move in order to stay with the projects they're working on," said Anthony J. Principi, chairman of the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission. "Good scientists follow the good science and research."

Still, the state of New Jersey managed to raise enough red flags about Fort Monmouth that the commission is requiring the secretary of defense to verify that the move to Aberdeen will not disrupt research that aids the war on terrorism.

And that's why all eyes are on people like Kosinski. If he moves, he leaves behind everything from his doctor to his network of babysitters. He leaves behind the beach, just two miles from his home, and the boardwalk. And he leaves behind a far-reaching family support structure.

"With military, you're in the Army. That's your home. That's your family and that's your culture," said Kosinski, a New Jersey native. "With civilians, it's a different set of conditions."

Kosinski tells his colleagues that moving has its advantages. High-level jobs will open up.

Aberdeen won't be rural for much longer, creating opportunities for those who want to speculate on land.

As for himself, Kosinski remains torn. He knows he's marketable. A few private firms have already approached him, just as they had 24 years ago before he accepted a job at Fort Monmouth.

That doesn't make it easier.

"I chose public service, deliberately trading off salary for a certain sense of stability," Kosinski said. "When they come in and say 'move or else,' well, that kind of takes the edge off the sense of stability."

**BRAC plan likely to pass
If Senate OKs overhauls, nearly 2,000 jobs
could be added at Midlands military bases**
The State
Chuck Crumbo
November 7, 2005

A proposed overhaul of U.S. military bases expected to bring 1,900 jobs to three Midlands facilities faces its last hurdle this week in Congress.

The final report of the 2005 Base Realignment and Closure commission, commonly called BRAC, is before the U.S. Senate.

"Its chances of going into effect are good," said Kevin Bishop, spokesman for Sen. Lindsey Graham, R-S.C. Graham, South Carolina's senior senator, spearheaded the state's base-saving efforts in Washington, D.C.

Legislation establishing the BRAC process gives Congress 45 days — or until Wednesday — to reject the report it received Sept. 15 from President Bush.

The U.S. House and Senate chambers would have to pass a joint resolution to keep the report from becoming law.

The proposal cleared its biggest obstacle Oct. 27 when the House overwhelmingly voted 324-85 against a resolution vetoing the report.

There's no similar resolution before the Senate. None is expected to be introduced.

"It's a done deal," said retired Air Force Maj. Gen. Tom Olsen, the local point man of Sumter's efforts to spare Shaw from the Pentagon's ax.

Hammered out over the summer by the nine-member commission, the report calls for closing 22 major military bases and realigning another 33.

Hundreds of smaller installations will be shuttered, shrunk or expanded. The closures and realignments are expected to save the Pentagon about \$4.2 billion a year.

In South Carolina, the report calls for moving:

- 3rd Army Headquarters and as many as 896 jobs to Shaw Air Force Base in Sumter from Fort McPherson in Atlanta
- Nine F-16 fighter jets and 426 active-duty Air Force members to McEntire Joint National Guard Base near Eastover from Mountain Home Air Force Base, Idaho
- Three missions to Fort Jackson in Columbia. Those missions include consolidating the Army's drill sergeant schools, establishing a center for all military services' chaplains to be trained, and establishing a new U.S. Army Reserve Command for the Southeast. About 615 jobs would be added to the Columbia post.

The new military jobs in Sumter and Richland counties could pump \$200 million a year into the local economy, officials said.

That would be added to the three bases' combined economic impact of \$3 billion a year.

While the Midlands is a big gainer, Charleston will be losing about 900 jobs with the closing of a Navy engineering command, a Defense

Department payroll office and the transfer of positions from a Navy research and development facility.

The status of two installations in Beaufort County — the Marine Corps Air Station and the Marine Corps Recruit Depot at Parris Island — was virtually unchanged.

Adding the missions to local bases is expected to be completed within six years, but the 3rd Army's move to Shaw could take up to 10 years to complete, Olsen said.

All of the bases will have to expand or build new facilities, which will take money. Olsen said building costs are likely to be spread out over several years.

Columbia leaders already have contacted the commands slated to move to Fort Jackson and McEntire, making presentations about the community, schools and local job opportunities, said Donald "Ike" McLeese, president and chief executive officer of the Greater Columbia Chamber of Commerce.

The community has been ready to pitch in and help in establishing the new missions, McLeese said, but the military has been waiting for the final act of the base closing process to end.

Sumter officials are tackling a number of issues, from housing to schools, in anticipation of the 3rd Army's arrival, Olsen said.

The proposal initially called for the transfer of 817 jobs to Sumter, but updated information shows that number will climb to 892 and could be higher, Olsen said.

"We don't know how much more," Olsen said. "There's a sizable support unit that would come along."

The support unit would include personnel and finance employees, Olsen said.

"The big question is how they are going to flow in. They can't all come at the same time."

**A base-closing brawl
Governors say they'll fight to save Air
National Guard units**

US New and World Report

Bret Schulte

November 14, 2005

Just when it seemed the long fight over the Pentagon's latest round of base closings and realignments was over, a handful of states are hoping to make a last stand in federal court.

The Base Realignment and Closure Commission's final recommendation to close 22 major military bases and realign an additional 33 breezed through the House of Representatives late last month by a margin of 324 to 85. And with no action on the legislation scheduled in the Senate, the recommendation automatically becomes law this week.

While the legislation marks the formal end of base closings for the foreseeable future, some states see it as only the beginning of a legal battle to maintain control of their Air National Guard forces. "The principle is rooted in . . . the [Second Amendment] rights of states to maintain militias," says Richard Blumenthal, attorney general for Connecticut, which stands to lose its entire squadron of A-10 fighter planes. His case rests on a 1933 federal law that says that any changes in the organization or allotment of state Guard units must have the governor's OK. Nevertheless, the states don't control the Guard's purse strings; the Pentagon does. And the Guard answers to the Pentagon in times of war.

The wrangling started back in August, when the BRAC Commission's final recommendation to streamline military forces included the consolidation of some Air National Guard units across states. A number of those losing planes quickly filed federal lawsuits. In some instances, judges said nothing could be done until the BRAC proposal actually became law--saying, in effect, no harm, no foul. As of this week, expect to hear cries of foul aplenty.

Plane speaking. Pennsylvania, Illinois, Connecticut, and possibly Missouri are poised to push ahead with suits aimed at keeping their National Guard aircraft. Illinois, like Missouri, lost its initial case when federal judges ruled that the lawsuit was premature. Now, Gov. Rod Blagojevich has vowed to continue the fight, calling the BRAC decision to remove all 17 F-16 fighters in Springfield "the wrong recommendation, at the wrong time, for the wrong reasons, on top of being illegal."

Missouri, meanwhile, is mulling over a return to court to protect its 15 F-15 Eagles stationed in St. Louis. Connecticut, whose case had stalled in court, now expects to move forward aggressively. Until now, the only state succeeding in federal court has been Pennsylvania, where Gov. Ed Rendell convinced a federal judge that, as commander of all Guard units, he must give his consent before the Pentagon can move 12 planes out of the Willow Grove National Air Station for reassignment in Arizona. The case is pending on appeal.

Plenty of states have sued in the past to keep bases open for active duty personnel--and quickly lost--but experts say this battle for Guard units enters uncharted territory. It could go as far as the Supreme Court, which would very likely have to settle Second Amendment questions, among others. Still, if history bears out, the chances of states wresting control of military units from the Pentagon are "darn close to zero," says Loren Thompson, a defense analyst with the Lexington Institute. One thing is clear: Neither side is ready to raise the white flag.

**Move to block base closings is defeated
House vote lets BRAC list stand**

Air Force Times

Rick Maze

November 07, 2005

It's all over but the closings.

The House of Representatives failed Oct. 27 to block the proposals of an independent commission to shut dozens of major military facilities and scale back hundreds of others, freeing the Pentagon to begin planning for the

personnel and unit moves and construction required to make the closure and realignment of bases possible.

By a 324-85 vote, the House shot down a last-ditch attempt to reject the proposals of the Base Realignment and Closure Commission.

Rep. Ray LaHood, R-Ill., was the chief sponsor of the resolution of disapproval that, if it had passed, could have prevented the closures and realignments recommended in early September by the bipartisan BRAC Commission.

LaHood's interest was not the possible closure of a major base, but rather an attempt to rescue the 183rd Fighter Wing, now based in Springfield, Ill., from a realignment that would move the unit and aircraft as part of an Air National Guard consolidation.

"I believe it is wrong that we are closing and realigning bases while we're at war," LaHood said. "Is that the message we want to send to 140,000 troops in Iraq?"

The prevailing sentiment among House members, however, was that they're glad to get the base-closing process behind them.

Rep. Joel Hefley, R-Colo., a senior member of the House Armed Services Committee who wanted the 2005 base-closing round delayed because of the war, said rejecting the current recommendations would result in another base-closing process next year or the year after.

Another round might lead to entirely different results, he warned, with bases that escaped the current round possibly selected to be shut or have substantial reductions in personnel, operations and payroll in a future round, he said.

The final list is a relief for many communities. The Defense Department had recommended 33 major closures, while the commission headed by former Secretary of Veterans Affairs Anthony Principi approved just 22. And, the Pentagon's own recommendations were less extensive than feared.

Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld had talked in recent years about needing to reduce military infrastructure by as much as 20 percent, which could have meant up to 100 bases would be closed.

Hefley said this could be the end of base closings by commission because the process is flawed and there is a question of whether the savings are worth the turmoil that the process causes for communities.

Savings from the current closures and realignments are estimated to be \$15.1 billion over 20 years, with a \$5 billion startup charge to pay for construction, moves and preparing bases for other uses. This is far less than the \$50 billion savings first claimed by the Defense Department, he said.

Flaws include the Pentagon's initial reluctance to provide Congress and communities with any information about how it selected bases to be closed, citing national security needs, he said.

Rep. Gene Taylor, D-Miss., a longtime opponent of the base-closing process, said he hopes this is the last commission.

"Let's do our job and not hide behind some commission to do it for us," he said of deferring to others decisions that could be made by Congress.

Like LaHood, Taylor said the latest base closings are badly timed, not only because the nation is at war, but because the military is in the midst of a transformation that may change basing needs.

"When you close a base, you close it forever," Taylor said.

The base-closing law that created the 2005 commission — the fifth time Congress and the Pentagon have turned to an independent body to decide base closings — gives Congress 45 days from the time it receives the list of recommendations to block it with an up-or-down vote, with no opportunity to make changes.

A vote in the Senate is now pointless because of the House's defeat of LaHood's resolution.

Local News Articles

Quantico attracts 1M s.f. as DoD jobs move south

Washington Business Journal (Washington DC)
Joe Coombs
November 7, 2005

A Stafford County developer is bringing 1 million square feet of office space to the edge of the Marine Corps base in Quantico.

The potential \$300 million development comes at a time when military jobs are migrating to secured locations and the Interstate 95 corridor is growing in Prince William County.

The combined impact of the Pentagon's moves and the regional population's outward push have created a demand for such a large-scale development -- decidedly atypical for the mostly rural region surrounding the Quantico base.

"It will be a very tenant-driven development," says David Newman, a sales and leasing associate with Silver Commercial Development, developer of the project. "We know that there are jobs moving that way, and we'll have the space to provide setbacks and other measures. That puts us in an ideal spot." Design work has started on a pair of Stafford County buildings at the Quantico Corporate Center, adjacent to the south gate of the Marine base in Prince William County. Silver Commercial's planned 12-building complex will cater to defense companies and other contractors that provide support for national security.

The 85-acre project -- between Interstate 95 and Route 1 just south of the Prince William County border -- also will include 22,500 square feet of retail. The development will have the flexibility to accommodate newly minted security requirements for buildings that house military workers.

About 3,000 workers are slated to move to Quantico as result of the recent Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) proceedings. The newcomers include members of the Naval Criminal Investigative Service from the District and the Army Criminal Investigation Command at Fort Belvoir.

Silver Commercial is actively talking with a Fortune 500 defense contractor about leasing a 220,000-square-foot structure that would be the first building at Quantico Corporate Center, says Phillip Baxter, the project's director of sales. Other defense contractors, including BAE Systems and Northrop Grumman, have been approached regarding a planned 140,000-square-foot spec building at the site, Baxter says. Both buildings could deliver next fall.

Fredericksburg-based Silver Commercial snatched up the property in February after a development agreement failed between the property's former owners, Baxter says.

"When we took a look at the property, BRAC was starting up and the anti-terrorism security requirements were taking shape," he says. "Call it dumb luck or good timing, but we were fortunate."

Changes in military operations aren't all that's driving growth in southern Prince William County. As Greater Washington's population and job base continue to swell, outlying counties such as Prince William and Loudoun are projected to handle the bulk of the activity.

Prince William is expected to add nearly 135,000 residents and more than 56,000 jobs by 2020, according to research compiled by the Census Bureau.

Among the other notable projects active on the I-95 corridor: Quantico Center is a 60-acre development by Manassas-based Norman Realty in Dumfries near the north side of the Quantico base that will include 700,000 square feet of office, hotel and retail when complete. Rivergate is a proposed 720-unit condominium development by Arlington-based IDI Group in Woodbridge on the Occoquan Harbor Marina.

"There will be increased demand for office space near Quantico," says Kurt Stout, senior vice president at Grubb & Ellis' District office. "It's in anticipation of BRAC, but a lot of this was already in motion before BRAC. It's a demographic trend. You have growth occurring further and further out into the suburbs."

A base closing that is desired

Chicago Tribune (Chicago, IL)

November 6, 2005

When the military announces another round of base closings, the news sends chills through cities and towns fearful of losing a source of good jobs and a steady flow of cash generated by the troops.

Not so in Concord, Calif. The city, located about 20 miles from Oakland, actually asked federal officials to shut down the Concord Naval Weapons Station, hoping to develop the land. The Defense Department agreed to close a roughly 5,200-acre portion of the property -- quite enough to stir up Concord.

"Everybody is very, very excited about it," says Jim Forsberg, Concord's director of planning and economic development. "It represents a major opportunity to do good things for our city."

The Concord property is on the current list of U.S. military base closings that has been approved by President Bush. If Congress doesn't reject that list in the next two weeks or so it becomes law. Thanks to the hot real-estate market and some high-profile successes with former bases, the current wave of closings is very different from past efforts. Some cities and towns are eager to start planning what to do with these bases, and big-name real-estate developers are angling for the properties.

Even the military, which in the past has often given the land to local communities, has caught on to the real-estate boom.

In the current round of base closings, developers expect the military will try to sell more former bases at market value, potentially bringing millions into the federal coffers. This shift sparked a niche industry of insurers, lawyers and lobbyists specializing in turning massive tracts of government land into housing, shopping centers and parks. The Navy, which by the nature of its business owns lots of valuable waterfront property, has hired real-estate consulting firm Jones Lang LaSalle to advise it.

"It used to be 'Clean it up, give it to city,'" says Jill Votaw, a spokeswoman for the Navy's program-management office for Base Realignment and Closure. "The current administration says, 'Wait a minute that property is worth some money -- maybe we should get some back for the taxpayers.'"

Some sought-after properties on the 2005 BRAC list, according to developers and the Association of Defense Communities, might include the Concord Naval Weapons Station, Ft. McPherson in Atlanta, Ft. Monmouth in New Jersey and the main campus of the Walter Reed Army Medical Center in northern Washington, D.C.

Developers, like Lennar Corp. and Actus Lend Lease, are actively analyzing the properties. Others are quietly assessing opportunities and waiting to pounce on some of the 22 major bases that were ordered closed by the commission.

"I can't imagine all the significant developers in the U.S. are not doing what we are," says Jeffrey Simon, a senior vice president of development at Actus Lend Lease, a subsidiary of Australian developer Lend Lease. "They are looking at the list, putting together what they know about the properties and when the time is right they will go after them."

Towns like Concord hope to replicate what happened at the El Toro Marine Air Corps Station in Orange County, Calif., just west of Irvine, which was sold early this year in a closely watched auction.

Fort turns 64 on a sad note;

Set to close, Gillem stirs fond memories
The Atlanta Journal-Constitution (Atlanta, GA)
Add Seymour Jr.
November 5, 2005

Carl Rhodenizer didn't know where Atlanta --- let alone the Atlanta General Depot --- was located when the Army sent him here in 1951.

But the Virginia native grew so close to "The Depot," now known as Fort Gillem, that he never again lived more than five miles from the base.

That's why Fort Gillem's 64th anniversary party on Friday evoked sadness for some longtime Clayton County residents. With the base scheduled to close, there won't be many more celebrations.

"It's been a trying experience for me, especially to think back on the history that brought me here," said Rhodenizer, a retired banker and now a Clayton County commissioner.

Four Georgia military bases --- Fort Gillem, Fort McPherson in East Point, the Naval Air Station in Cobb County and the Naval Supply Corps School in Athens --- will be shut down as part of this year's Base Realignment and Closure process.

Any hopes to keep the forts open died last week when Congress declined to reject the Pentagon's recommendations. President Bush had already approved the base closures.

The state will actually gain 7,400 jobs as other Georgia bases absorb missions from phased-out installations in other states. But 7,233 jobs directly tied to Georgia's four closing bases will be gone, including more than 2,700 civilian jobs.

Pentagon officials expect to save more than \$1.3 billion over the next 20 years by shutting down Fort McPherson and its satellite base, Fort Gillem, alone.

The 1,500-acre Fort Gillem has been part of Clayton County since 1941, when it was established as the Atlanta General Depot. It's a

sprawling mix of warehouses and older brick buildings outside Forest Park. Parts of it have an industrial feel, while other areas --- including two lakes, a tennis court, a playground and a softball field --- look like a giant park.

In 1974 the base was named for former Fort McPherson commander Lt. Gen. Alvan C. Gillem. The base's main duty remained the same --- training supply soldiers and maintaining and processing equipment used in every major conflict since World War II.

"I remember when we were shipping stuff for fallout shelters all over the country," said L.C. Mathis, who worked at the base in the 1960s and '70s. "One of the things they required in the fallout shelters was candy. I don't know why, but it was like the little blocks of different flavors of hard candy."

Supplies weren't all sweet. During World War II, soldiers from Forts McPherson and Benning guarded the base's chemical and engineer supply areas, which were thought to be vulnerable to German sabotage.

The base was also home to an automotive school and a coffee roasting plant that ground some 50,000 pounds of coffee beans a day to serve soldiers. Both those missions ended in 1956.

Mathis remembers Fort Gillem as a fun place. As a child growing up in Clayton, he and his friends fished in the base's lakes, crawled through pipes and played on forklifts.

"A kid could just walk right onto the base back then," said Mathis, now 58. "They had a lot of stuff going on over there for a kid, 'cause this was the country back then."

The Depot's enlisted personnel became part of the community because many lived on the base for several years at a time. Some, like Rhodenizer, never left.

Rhodenizer met his future wife while serving at the Depot. And three months before his enlistment was up, he met Hugh Dixon,

Jonesboro's mayor at the time, and Van Stephens, a local banker.

"These two guys came to me and said, 'would you be willing to stay in Clayton County if we got you a good job?' " Rhodenizer said. "They hired me, and three mergers and 41 years later I was still here."

Nowadays, the base fire department works with the city of Forest Park. Neighborhood children are routinely brought on base to enjoy the playgrounds --- after passing through guarded gates. People from across metro Atlanta flock to monthly parties at the Getaway Club.

Lt. Gen. Russel Honore, handpicked by President Bush to oversee Hurricane Katrina efforts, said the community connection works both ways.

"We work here, we shop here, we get gas here," said Honore, who's based at Fort Gillem. "Fort Gillem will always be part of this community, and we'll just serve it in different ways as decided by our leadership. We'll continue that partnership as long as we can."

The base pumps \$300 million annually into Clayton's economy and employs nearly 1,100 people, which makes it the county's third-largest employer. Clayton officials expect losing the base to cause short-term economic problems --- particularly for smaller businesses in the area. Long-term plans call for a mix of residential, commercial and industrial uses for the base.

"I predict once we get it developed, I think it will be worth three times that [\$300 million]," said Crandle Bray, who leads local planning for the base's future development.

Still, it won't be the same, said Mathis, who now owns the Old South Restaurant down the road from the base.

A lot of his business will disappear as the base gradually closes. "I guess it'll be like seeing your old neighborhood torn down," Mathis said.

New Submarine Escape Trainer Is Feather In Groton Base's Cap

Officials break ground for \$17 million facility New London Day (New London, CT)

Anthony Cronin
November 6, 2005

Groton — The Navy has broken ground on a new, \$17 million submarine escape trainer at the Naval Submarine Base and anticipates the high-tech training facility will be ready in the summer of 2008 to train submariners.

The groundbreaking ceremony on Wednesday included local leaders and Navy officials, who welcomed the new construction for the base, which this summer faced the threat of a shutdown as part of the Pentagon's round of base closings and consolidations.

Tony Sheridan, president of the Chamber of Commerce of Eastern Connecticut, said the ceremony meant a lot to him and other local leaders in attendance because it was concrete evidence that the base will remain an important component of this nation's submarine force.

"The fact that the Navy is building this new facility is also a very strong statement that they're here to stay," Sheridan said. "That's what makes this base a unique facility, unlike any other facility in the country," he added.

Sheridan said the \$17 million project will mean more construction jobs in the months ahead. The prime contractor for the facility is M.A. Mortenson Co. of Minneapolis, Minn. The projected completion date for the escape trainer is July 2008.

Sheridan said he and other officials at the groundbreaking, including John Markowicz, who heads the Subbase Realignment Coalition, and G.D. "Denny" Hicks, a retired Navy captain and key player in the save-the-base efforts, recognized the importance of the construction project. "A few months ago, we were worried about having a base there," Sheridan said.

The new escape trainer will complement the base's existing submarine escape immersion

equipment. The escape trainer will include a 36-foot-high "Rapid Ascent Tower," which will be used for officers and sailors at the Naval Submarine School as well as for pre-deployment training for Groton-based submarine crews.

The escape training facility will allow sailors to experience the physical and psychological effects of a pressurized escape from a submarine. It also will help sailors gain and build confidence in the Navy's escape equipment and its methodologies. Besides the actual trainer, the new facility will include additional training and administrative areas, medical offices, maintenance and storage.

Beach plans to discuss zoning limits near Oceana

The Virginian-Pilot (Hampton Roads, VA)
Jon W. Glass
November 5, 2005

VIRGINIA BEACH — The City Council on Tuesday will discuss the possibility of halting new homes and businesses in high-risk areas around Oceana Naval Air Station.

The council is considering the sweeping measure to satisfy a demand by the federal base-closure commission that Virginia Beach stop incompatible development in Accident Potential Zone 1 off of Oceana's runways.

Mayor Meyera E. Oberndorf said the council has not decided whether to adopt the proposal, which is expected to be controversial.

The council plans to ask the city Planning Commission to review the proposal and issue a recommendation at the commission's Dec. 14 meeting.

A majority of council members have ruled out condemning and buying homes and businesses in APZ-1, so the proposed changes to the city's zoning ordinance are another way the city can show its commitment to protecting Oceana, Oberndorf said.

The federal Defense Base Realignment and Closure Commission called on the city to roll back existing development and halt further encroachment on the base or risk losing Oceana's jets.

"We're trying to find ways to accommodate the needs of the Navy and the long-term residents," Oberndorf said.

She said council members want the proposal to get a full public airing. They anticipate opposition from developers and property owners.

The proposal would change the city's zoning code to coincide with Navy guidelines for incompatible uses in APZ-1.

As of Sept. 1, the city estimated that there are 235 undeveloped parcels in the APZ-1, covering 137 acres and valued at about \$30 million.

The proposed revisions go far beyond the restrictions the City Council is considering for an overlay district on top of moderate and high jet-noise zones around Oceana.

If adopted, the zoning ordinance changes would ban property owners from building homes, apartments, restaurants, shops and many other businesses on undeveloped land in APZ-1. That includes parts of Virginia Beach Boulevard and London Bridge Road.

The restrictions would effectively put an end to "by-right" development. Such development — projects that don't need council approval for zoning or use changes — has been one of the Navy's biggest concerns.

Several by-right housing projects now under way in APZ-1 would be unaffected, city officials said.

The changes would leave many land owners with few options to develop their property, city officials acknowledged. The Navy considers manufacturing and industrial uses compatible in the APZ-1, but those uses might be unsuitable next to existing homes, shops and offices.

Because the changes could reduce property values, the city may have to compensate some land owners, Deputy City Attorney Bill Macali said.

R. Edward Bourdon Jr., a n attorney who represents developers, said the proposed changes are essentially a downzoning and would be "plain and simply a regulatory taking away of property rights." He said the city would have to pay for that.

Owners could rebuild or enlarge existing homes and businesses, but could not increase density. Owners of single-family homes, for example, could not replace them with duplexes, even if the underlying zoning allowed it, Macali said.

Developers with building permits, site plans or preliminary subdivision plats approved before the changes are adopted would be exempt, City Planning Director Robert J. Scott said.

Opinions/ Editorials

Base Realignment and Closure Approved by Congress

TPMCafe (New York, NY)
Eric Massa
November 6, 2005

Congress recently approved the Presidents plan to move forward with the latest round of Base Closings in New York, and across the country. On October 28th the House disagreed to H.J. Res. 65, to disapprove the recommendations of the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission, by a recorded vote of 85 ayes to 324 noes with 1 voting "present", Roll No. 548.

This administration, including the Department of Defense, and Secretary Rumsfeld continues to stay the course. We can no longer afford more of the same. We need to change the way we think and react, and our government has to be more fluid. The whole purpose of BRAC was to streamline the military in a post cold war era, this occurred before 9/11, and now we must

adapt to the current status of the world and our unique situation.

We need leadership that is willing to be open and accountable for the decisions we make, and more importantly we need responsible leaders who are willing to change the course when the time calls for it. And now more than ever, we continually hear people calling for it.

BRAC is another example of this administrations inability to adapt, and continue their assault on our working families. The cost of BRAC, is not cheap. Closing military installations to build new ones in a time of war, is costly. Relocating thousands of people to new homes in new regions costs time, effort and resources.

The administration believes that by closing these bases we are streamlining our military and preparing it for future threats and attacks from rogue nations, and terrorist organizations.

The strategy behind BRAC is fundamentally flawed. This administrations goal to streamline the military began before 9/11 occurred. Now we have troops in combat situations in two different theaters. Our soldiers, marines, sailors and airmen are constantly being shipped around the world. We now have a global war on terrorism, and the world is not the same place it was when the administration decided to do this.

This plan is as short sighted as the President's plan to invade Iraq.

This plan affects the international community, our country, and our local communities. We will have to bring tens of thousands of troops home from places like Europe, and decrease our visibility with the international community. Families across the country will be moved to new locations, a good percentage will have to do this while a loved one is serving abroad. Rumsfeld's plan to design these super-bases will isolate the military from our local communities,

cost our country billions of dollars, and take jobs away from places where economic development has been built around these bases.

By moving forward with these base closings, we add more unnecessary stress to our soldier's lives, as they have to prepare for their families to be uprooted while they are on a tour of Duty. This stress can easily lead to small mistakes, like forgetting to recalibrate a gauge, or leaving a wrench inside an engine, which could lead to someone getting hurt.

At a time of war, when half of our forces in Iraq and Afghanistan are our National Guard and Reserve, closing these basis forces an invisible tax upon these troops to have to travel further for necessary monthly training. This means taking more time off from work to compensate, and having to pay more money for traveling costs.

I spoke about this before on my website here:

It is step 2 in my four point plan to support our troops now. For example, in my district, the 29th Congressional district of New York, targeting of the Horseheads Naval Reserve Center alone will force Guard and Reserve personnel from all over the Southern Tier to travel many additional hours to report for duty. These extra hours off from work and the cost of transportation to a more remote site are all burdens on these volunteers. This is one of the main reasons that I so strongly oppose the closing of the Horseheads facility.

The Horseheads facility and its personnel are not alone in this. There will be thousands of people across the country forced into the same situation as people here in the 29th.

This plan to continue forward in the face of everything going on is flat out stupid. It affects so many different people, on many different levels, and knowing how this administration pays attention to detail, I am very concerned with this plan proceeding.

I am not alone in this. My former commanding officer General Wes Clark also believes this round of BRAC is ill conceived. Congressman

Gene Taylor (D-MS) has sponsored amendments to halt BRAC, and trying to delay the base closings.

Gene Taylor sponsored an amendment to the FY2004 Defense Authorization bill that would have repealed the 2005 BRAC round. The amendment passed the House of Representatives, but during negotiations, the Senate stripped the provision from the final version.

During debate on the FY2005 Defense Authorization bill, Taylor advocated delaying BRAC by two years. Again, the Senate balked under pressure from the White House and additional threats to veto funding for the military.

The bottom line is, this administration does not listen. They stay the course, time and time again, even when their decisions are mistakes. While the recommendations the BRAC commission came up with compared to what Rumsfeld wanted are moderate, this closure and realignment is not what our military needs. It's time to support new leaders who will listen, and will not succumb to a blind ideology because they are worried about getting re-elected.

We have seen first hand, what happens with our National Guard gone when a natural disaster strikes. Closing these bases, is simply going to leave more areas vulnerable and less equipped to respond, not just to an international crises but a national one as well.

We need leaders who are willing to listen, adapt, be held accountable, and change the direction our country is heading.

Additional Notes

Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission

EARLY



BIRD

November 08, 2005

Department of Defense Releases

N/A

National News Articles

Maine Senators Want Pentagon To Donate Shuttered Bases

State officials renew lawsuit for Air National Guard planes

Local News Articles

Denver community proves there's life after a base closes (Boston, MA)

Federal government might want to keep doomed Atlanta bases (Washington DC)

Post's housing plan ready to go (Columbus, GA)

Military Reshuffle Could Bring 60,000 People To Area (Baltimore, MD)

Opinions/ Editorials

Five Shipyards Too Many; (Washington DC)

A tale of two cities and two bases (Hampton Roads, VA)

No to BRAC; yes to homes (Norfolk, VA)

Additional Notes

N/A

Department of Defense Releases

N/A

National News Articles

Maine Senators Want Pentagon To Donate Shuttered Bases

Congress Daily
Megan Scully
November 7, 2005

Maine's senators plan to introduce an amendment as early as today to the FY06 defense authorization bill that would require the Defense Department to give military property scheduled for closure to local redevelopment authorities. Under this year's base-closure process, the Pentagon may, among other options, auction off defense property -- a move that would help the military recoup some of the environmental cleanup and other costs associated with closure. The amendment would require the Pentagon to first offer the property to the community before seeking private developers. "This amendment focuses on one goal: to allow the communities that are losing the personal and economic relationships with their military neighbors, through closure or realignment, every opportunity to control their own destiny," according to a Friday "Dear Colleague" signed by Sens. Olympia Snowe and Susan Collins, both R-Maine.

The Maine delegation has opposed this year's base-closure round that threatened thousands of jobs in the state. In August, the independent Defense Base Closure and Realignment

Commission spared Portsmouth Naval Shipyard from being closed as the Pentagon recommended, but went ahead with its plan to shut down Brunswick Naval Air Station. "After you rip the heart and soul out of a community, you're going to ask them to pay for it?" asked Paul Hirsch, president of Madison Government Affairs, which does base-closure consulting work, and a senior staffer on the 1991 commission.

The Snowe/Collins amendment could draw support from senators representing the 33 major bases scheduled for closure over the next several years, but not everyone is convinced it is the right way to proceed. One Senate aide noted that requiring the military to first offer property to redevelopment authorities "shortchanges" other potential groups that would benefit from using the property. It would no longer require the Pentagon to determine whether installations could be used to help the homeless or be transferred via "public benefits conveyances" to veterans groups or other organizations, the aide said. While the amendment would give most communities a first crack at redeveloping closed properties, it also includes an exception that would allow the Defense secretary to transfer the property to agencies within the Defense and Homeland Security departments "if such action is necessary in the national security interest of the United States," according to the Friday letter.

State officials renew lawsuit for Air National Guard planes

Newsday
November 7, 2005

HARTFORD, Conn. (AP) _ State Attorney General Richard Blumenthal returned to federal court Monday to stop the federal government from removing Air National Guard aircraft from Bradley International Airport in Windsor Locks.

Acting on behalf of Gov. M. Jodi Rell and other state officials, Blumenthal said the federal government cannot be relied upon in an emergency. He cited the tardy response by the Federal Emergency Management Agency to Hurricane Katrina in late August.

"It's inept and incompetent at providing disaster relief. We have to rely on ourselves," he said. "Katrina demonstrates irrefutably that we cannot rely on the federal government in the event of natural disasters or even security emergencies."

Blumenthal said federal law prohibits the relocation or withdrawal of National Guard or Air National Guard units without the agreement of the governor.

Rell said in a statement that the "security and safety of this state's citizens" are at stake.

"I will not sit idly by as our rights are violated and our security is compromised," Rell, a Republican, said in a statement.

State officials this summer sued to keep the guard base off the closure list. The recommendation of the Base Realignment and Closure Commission to move to Massachusetts A-10s assigned to Connecticut's 103rd Fighter Wing took effect Monday.

The U.S. Justice Department, which represents the Pentagon in the lawsuit, did not immediately respond to a telephone call seeking comment.

In addition to Rell, Sens. Joe Lieberman and Christopher Dodd, both D-Conn., and U.S. Rep. John Larson, D-Conn, are part of the lawsuit against federal officials. Bradley airport is in Larson's district.

President Bush endorsed a plan on Sept. 15 to close 22 major military bases and reconfigure 33 others, leaving their fate to Congress. He had until Sept. 23 to accept the entire report from an independent commission and send it to Congress, or return it to the commission for further work.

In his lawsuit, Blumenthal said transferring or retiring the 103rd Fighter Wing's aircraft would eliminate Connecticut's only Air National Guard fighter squadron.

"Transfer of these aircraft out of Connecticut would deprive the governor of a vital homeland

security asset, degrade her ability to defend the security of Connecticut's citizenry and leave Connecticut without a single Air National Guard aircraft assigned within its borders or under the governor's command," he said in the lawsuit.

He also said the recommendations by the base closing commission and Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld to transfer or retire aircraft assigned to the Bradley Air Guard unit are unlawful because the Base Closure Act does not grant the base closing commission the authority to change how a unit is equipped or organized, Blumenthal said.

Rumsfeld and the commission did not obtain the approval of Rell to change the branch or organization of the 103rd Fighter Wing, he said.

Connecticut lost its bid to keep the Bradley realignment off the list, but stopped a plan to close the Navy submarine base in Groton. The base closure commission rejected the Pentagon's proposal to shut down the sub base.

Local News Articles

Denver community proves there's life after a base closes

Christian Science Monitor (Boston, MA)
Mark Sappenfield
November 8, 2005

It holds lessons for latest communities on closure list.

When the long and winding path of the Pentagon's base-closure process comes to an end Tuesday, as the list of bases to shutter becomes law, scores of towns across the country will take their first steps toward an uncertain future - shorn of the military jobs and identity that defined them for generations.

Yet here, not far from what was once Lowry Air Force Base's Runway 4, Amy Ford pushes her daughter on a park swing, surrounded by new homes and fresh-cut lawns. Now, 11 years after the base closed, Lowry is one of Denver's trendiest neighborhoods - and living proof that

there is life after Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC).

Although Lowry has had the good fortune of being near one of America's fastest-growing cities, it has matched those advantages with foresight, strong cooperation, and determination to plow through a process often fraught with bureaucratic frustrations. Now, as more towns face the prospect of life without their bases, Lowry serves as a road map of what these communities must do if they are not only to survive, but flourish.

"At first they were shocked and they fought it, but now they've come full circle and it's been such a boon for them," says Kenneth Beeks of Business Executives for National Security in Washington. "They've turned it into a showcase."

From the entrance on Quebec Street, Lowry does give the appearance of showing off. The homes sprouting along the Sixth Avenue Parkway turn their many-windowed facades and ample garages toward the street, looking every bit a suburban estate. Blocks away, streets curl around eateries and cafes where the latte crowd can preen and be seen.

It is the scene that BRAC communities dream of - a 7,000-job military base replaced by a thriving neighborhood of six schools and 3,000 homes, some of which sell for as much as \$2 million. In all, Lowry has generated \$4 billion for the area since 1994.

Much credit goes to Lowry's location on the eastern edge of Denver, where developers are eager to snatch up open land. But Lowry's success hints at broader lessons. After all, Lowry has achieved prosperity even as redevelopment at El Toro Air Station - located in a similarly desirable area, California's Orange County - has stalled.

The difference is in how local officials approached the closures. While those involved with El Toro remained divided for years over what to do, officials in Denver and nearby

Aurora began to move forward together before the base closed in 1994.

The key was thinking entrepreneurially - finding a way to shape the base to meet the greatest need of the surrounding community. For Denver, that meant new housing. In other places, "where you don't have a location that is easily absorbed, that's when you have to get creative," says Thomas Markham, director of the Lowry Redevelopment Authority (LRA).

For Ms. Ford, Lowry was an easy sell. She had never wanted to leave downtown Denver, where the supermarket and the symphony were equally accessible, and where the gas lamps of LoDo radiated an energy that suburbia could not approximate. Yet she and her husband were just starting a family, and the cramped quarters of downtown apartments were too small.

Lowry was the obvious answer, and now she wouldn't want to live anywhere else. "There are all these amenities within walking distance - you can get ice cream, drop off dry cleaning, or even buy stuff for your dog," says Ford. Planners "obviously knew who was going to move in."

Yet reminders of the neighborhood's past remain. Some are quaint, like the two massive hangars that loom above the rooftops of Lowry, or thoroughfares that follow the odd angles of one-time runways. Others are less endearing - like the day men in hazmat suits came to Ford's garden looking for traces of asbestos.

It is a legacy many bases face as the military seeks to clean up land it polluted. Here, the military and state agencies disagreed over how much asbestos remained and how much of a threat it posed - leading to the episode with the hazmat-suited men, who ripped up gardens and quarantined backyards in sealed tents.

The upshot was that the neighborhood was safe, but it highlighted the often stuttering process of handing over federal property to local authorities. In fact, the LRA is still waiting to receive several parcels of Lowry that have yet to be cleaned. "If we'd had a timely cleanup, we

would be done today," says Mr. Markham. "You have to have patience and flexibility."

Delays have hit the process since Day 1. Construction on the town center fell behind schedule, too, and Jeff Tetrick remembers moving his business into Lowry when the town was little more than a plan on paper and a thicket of construction workers.

"It was a real leap of faith," says Mr. Tetrick, chief financial operator of Pinnacol, Colorado's largest provider of workers' compensation insurance. "We had 550 employees and no place for them to walk to for lunch."

Now, however, it has proved a popular location. Some employees have moved to Lowry. "It feels like a little Pinnacol town," says Tetrick. "Our employees love working here so much that they stick around and play at movies and in the town center."

Federal government might want to keep doomed Atlanta bases

The Associated Press State & Local Wire
(Washington DC)
Jeffrey McMurray
November 7, 2005

The Department of Defense didn't want them, but a department of something else just might.

Georgia is losing four military installations as part of a base closure process that becomes official this week. However, the good news is local officials may be months - if not weeks - away from learning what the future holds for the prime real estate the Pentagon is leaving behind.

"We've lost, and we've lost absolutely utterly," said Tom Salter, who led the community group that tried to save some of the Atlanta bases on the closure list. "Unless somebody decides to get a revote, which is highly unlikely, it is a done deal."

With that reality, phase two of the process is just beginning.

Because three of the state's condemned bases are in the Atlanta area - Fort Gillem, Fort McPherson and Naval Air Station-Atlanta - Georgia may have less trouble than most states at finding takers for the land. In fact, its problem may be too many takers.

Federal agencies get the first crack at taking over the land, and they have only a month to indicate whether they desire to buy it from the Pentagon. Gen. Philip Browning, who led the panel that shepherded the state through the process, said there are already rumblings about possible federal suitors for the Atlanta bases.

While nothing is official, Browning said the Federal Emergency Management Agency has expressed an interest in acquiring storage space at Gillem and developing a regional headquarters at McPherson. NAS-Atlanta could be an attractive hub for the National Guard, he said.

The Athens Navy school, also on the Base Closure and Realignment Commission's list, would likely yield its space to a Georgia college or university.

"When BRAC becomes law, then the clock begins," Browning said.

Although most communities would love for the federal government to retain the land of their doomed bases, Atlanta might be an exception because it would have had no trouble selling the property, likely at a higher price.

All four of the bases have community support groups that are developing reuse plans, involving various commercial and real estate interests. That kind of development would be subject to local taxes, while a transfer to another federal agency would not.

"Obviously the communities want the opportunity to have a realistic reuse plan," said Fred Bryant, executive director for the McPherson-Gillem Foundation. "Depending on what the federal organizations might pick up, that could negatively impact being able to reuse the property."

At Gillem, the independent BRAC panel required that about 300 acres be kept under Pentagon control as a special enclave. That would leave about 1,100 acres, Bryant said, either for the federal government to take over or the community to develop.

Once the federal government determines whether it wants any of the closed properties, the communities get to make their case for what they would like to do with them. Browning estimates the future of the bases could be known as early as January.

**Post's housing plan ready to go;
Already talk of expansion, since Fort Benning
didn't then know about new armor school**
Columbus Ledger-Enquirer (Columbus, GA)
Mick Walsh
November 7, 2005

With groundbreaking set for February on a historic \$630 million project to modernize housing areas at Fort Benning, there's already talk of a possible Phase II to the plan.

That's because when the Army chose Clark Pinnacle Family Communities to finance, construct, renovate and manage approximately 4,200 family homes at Fort Benning and the Ranger training facility in Dahlonga, Ga., the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission decision to transfer the Army's Armor School to Fort Benning was a year away.

"The numbers may have to be adjusted," said Phil Cowley, project director for Clark Pinnacle, a joint venture between Clark Realty of Bethesda, Md., and the Seattle-based Pinnacle.

But for now, until the Army launches a housing marketing analysis as troops arrive at Fort Benning over the next few years, the Community Development and Management Plan -- a part of the Army's Residential Communities Initiative -- is ready for activation.

"The Army's program to privatize housing is going to work out great for the soldiers and their

families," said Jim Wiggins, the post's RCI chief. "We look at it as 'one stop shopping.' "

By that he means housing residents will be dealing with a single landlord, much like anyone living in nearby apartment complexes.

"Need help with your plumbing? Call Clark Pinnacle." Wiggins said. "They'll have representatives actually working at each of the housing areas."

The Army, Wiggins said, is committed to improving family housing as a means of sustaining the quality of life for approximately 15,500 soldiers and family members.

And Clark Pinnacle, which will now receive the soldiers' Basic Allowance for Housing each month as a form of rent, is committed to carrying out the Army's desires.

Terms of the deal

Official approval of the project came last month from Congress.

Approximately \$400 million in private sector debt and equity has been raised and will be spent during the 8-to-10-year initial development phase of the project, said Cowley, a West Pointer and former member of the 75th Ranger Regiment.

"This is no short-term deal," he said. "It's a 50-year partnership."

The Army's investment is about \$57 million. The building and renovation process will be spread out over 10 years; the Clark Pinnacle team will manage that housing for the remaining 40 years of the deal. The project is valued at about \$2.3 billion over the life of the contract.

Blueprints provided by Cowley, vice president for construction Chris Hirst and investor manager Lon Sperry depict planned communities along the lines of the Florida panhandle town of Seaside.

Neighborhoods will include such amenities as village centers, pools, basketball courts, tennis courts, play fields, picnic shelters and nature/fitness trails.

"We're competing with off-post neighborhoods," said Cowley. "What we're building is not the same old military housing complexes you're used to seeing."

Architect Torti Gallas and Partners of Silver Spring, Md., designed the Benning homes in Mission, Colonial Vernacular, and Arts and Crafts styles. All new homes, which will average about 1,900 square feet, will be EnergyStar-compliant.

"We'd like to have no two homes on the same street be the same color," said Cowley, "just like an old-styled neighborhood. We also plan on having sidewalks on both sides of the street."

Each house or duplex will have two-car garages and two off-street parking spaces.

And that's just the outside of each structure.

Extensive surveys were taken on post last spring.

Focus groups of post housing residents were asked what they would like to see in their new homes.

How about each home being wired for state-of-the-art phone, cable and Internet service?

Done.

What about a facility in the garage to wash the clay and mud off boots?

Done.

What about fenced-in patios?

Done.

"What our soldiers want and need might be entirely different from what a soldier at Fort Belvoir might need," Wiggins said. "Our

soldiers spend a lot of time in the field. They don't have muddy boots at Belvoir."

The McGraw Manor-McBride area on post will be the first to feel the wrecking ball.

What is now 952 housing units will be 600 single family homes after construction is complete. What about the historically significant homes on Main Post, one of which once served as home to Dwight Eisenhower?

No wrecking ball for them.

"There are 493 such homes," Cowley said. "And a majority of them have already been updated. We've identified some lacking modern conveniences. For example, we'll be adding a second bathroom to some. But since they are historic homes, there are certain things we can and cannot do to them."

There will be 27 phases of building all told, all of them in areas now occupied by post housing subdivisions.

Clark Pinnacle expects to work closely with local subcontractors and suppliers once the project kicks off in February.

In addition to this project, Clark Pinnacle is financing, developing, building and operating military housing at the Presidio of Monterey and Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey Bay, Calif.; Fort Irwin, Moffett Field and Camp Parks in California; and Fort Belvoir, Va.

Military Reshuffle Could Bring 60,000 People To Area

Baltimore Sun (Baltimore, MD)

Justin Fenton

November 8, 2005

Harford County officials said yesterday they are expecting at least 58,000 people to flood the region surrounding Aberdeen Proving Ground over the next decade from a reshuffling of the nation's military bases that will be signed into law today.

State officials have said Central Maryland could see 60,000 settle in the region as a result of new military and private-sector positions, many of which Harford County says it could see in its immediate area. Estimates of job totals - particularly those in the private sector - have climbed throughout the process, and officials say that will likely continue.

"My sense is that the numbers of people coming in will change dramatically and keep increasing," said Aris Melissaratos, the state's director of economic development.

The two epicenters of expansion are Fort Meade in Anne Arundel County and Aberdeen Proving Ground. Fort Meade expects 5,300 government jobs, while APG recently revised its projection to more than 6,100 new jobs.

In two to six years, those jobs - plus tens of thousands of contractors - are expected to spark an unprecedented influx that has federal, state and local leaders discussing billions of dollars in upgrades to infrastructure.

Maryland was one of the top gainers in the realignment process, possibly the winner. Melissaratos said differing estimates have the state at or near the top, along with Texas and Georgia.

Harford, with a population is 235,000, expects most of APG's new workers to settle there, with others landing in Baltimore and Cecil counties. The three jurisdictions have teamed up for a marketing effort to entice new businesses and developers.

"We made promises, now we have to perform," said Harford County Executive David R. Craig.

The county's director of economic development, J. Thomas Sadowski, told stakeholders yesterday that the expected number of jobs on-post and through contractors translates "conservatively" to 58,557 people. The number was calculated by multiplying the number of new jobs by the average household size.

"That's growth that we can target and shape," he said.

A handful of other projects not related to the base realignment plan could add another 5,000 jobs, he said.

Craig signed an executive order yesterday authorizing the formation of a planning and advisory commission to help the county accommodate the new jobs. Money for transportation projects will be expected to come from the federal government, but state and local officials are preparing to bear the burden of paying for new schools and police and fire protection.

The National Security Agency estimates it will hire three contractors for each of its 7,500 new counterterrorism jobs, most of which will be placed at Fort Meade. The number of new government and private jobs there could surpass 40,000.

Anne Arundel County Executive Janet S. Owens said the county has been planning for this influx for years, and has placed transportation and education issues at the top of its agenda.

Congress had until yesterday to overturn the Pentagon's recommendations for base realignment, which includes the closure of 22 major bases and the restructuring of 33 others. President Bush approved the list in September, making the expiration date merely a formality.

At APG, the Pentagon's original plan was to include a net increase of 2,200 on-post jobs. But officials said those numbers were altered after a change in how the military accounted for the outgoing ordinance school's personnel, raising APG's tally to 6,100.

Opinions/ Editorials

Five Shipyards Too Many;

The Pentagon Should Focus on Paring Down Private-Sector Facilities

The Washington Post (Washington DC)

John Shephard Jr. and Harvey Sapolsky

November 8, 2005

The latest base realignment and closure (BRAC) plan has prompted the usual round of complaints and disputes over which military bases should be closed, as well as sighs of relief from supporters of the bases that were spared. But a bigger question has been overlooked in arguments over the plan: Why doesn't the BRAC process also focus on the private-sector operations that the government supports at great and often wasteful expense?

These are the arsenals, assembly lines and shipyards that build and overhaul the nation's weapons -- and do essentially nothing else. They are too costly to maintain at a time when there is no need for them, and yet they go unconsidered in the periodic BRAC processes.

For example, four large government-owned shipyards and six large private shipyards work on warships. The government-owned yards do only repair and overhauls; the private ones do new construction. All are underutilized, having been geared for the Navy's Cold War fleet. The government yards tend a Navy that is roughly half the size it was in 1990. The private yards are able to build more than five times the number of ships that the Navy is ordering now. Maine's Portsmouth Naval Shipyard, which specializes in nuclear submarine overhauls, was on this year's BRAC plan, and its eleventh-hour reprieve blew an opportunity. Yet closing Portsmouth would have made only a small dent in the problem: There would still be too many yards building and maintaining too few ships.

The merger wave that has swept the defense industries has done nothing to reduce excess capacity in shipbuilding. The Big Six private yards were once owned by six different corporations, but now they are owned by just two: General Dynamics and Northrop Grumman. While there have been some savings from consolidating component purchases, the post-Cold War era yielded a change only in corporate logos.

The warship-building market won't fix the problem; there is essentially only one customer: the U.S. Navy, which has a taste for fast,

complex and expensive ships. No naval combat ship costs less than a billion dollars, and most cost a lot more. For practical, political and strategic reasons, the Navy can't seriously opt for foreign sourcing. Moreover, the Big Six yards have few options besides the Navy; most other navies buy locally or get their ships used from the United States. Commercial shipbuilding, which uses capital-intensive, mass-production methods and cheap labor, is a hyper-competitive, unprofitable business that already has too many yards chasing a handful of ship orders.

The private yards are wards of the Navy: public yards with private ownership. As long as they stay open, they get some Navy business. The Big Six are capable of delivering 20 to 25 ships a year and were building at nearly that rate during the Reagan administration's defense buildup. In the 1990s the rate dropped to seven or eight a year. Recently, it's been as low as four or five. No wonder shipbuilding costs have skyrocketed. With the costs of running all these facilities apportioned to fewer ships, and Congress making sure that each yard has a project, the government reaps no economies of scale. Worse, the underuse of each facility will prevent enough new capital investment to ensure that the best yards stay modern and technologically robust. Because these shipyards employ thousands of people, often in areas where their economic presence is dominant, they are hard to close. As with large military bases, closure means significant local economic hardship and a war with the local congressional delegation.

But hard decisions need to be made. In the end, the number of yards should be halved. The Navy spends about \$10 billion a year on shipbuilding and major refits, and the total is not likely to grow, given fiscal constraints. Sharing the appropriation among five yards instead of 10 would be more efficient and less costly. Three construction yards can easily accommodate the eight to 10 ships a year needed to sustain a fleet of 250 to 275 ships that seems to be the Navy's future.

Yet there must be compensation for the corporations that own the private yards, the laid-off workers and the communities that will face significant unemployment and potential decline. The communities will need money to start new industries and rebuild their economic lives. These restructuring costs, normal for any business, should have been paid a decade ago. It is better to pay them now than to have continuing underutilization in naval construction, with its higher unit costs and debilitating politics.

John Shephard Jr. is a former senior vice president of Northrop Grumman. Harvey Sapolsky is director of the Security Studies Program at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

A tale of two cities and two bases

Daily Press (Hampton Roads, VA)

Dana Dillon

November 8, 2005

I read with interest the Oct. 22 opinion piece ("City did what was necessary to protect Fort Eustis") describing the efforts of the Newport News mayor, City Council and city manager to save Fort Eustis from closure under the Base Closure and Realignment Commission. Fort Eustis and Fort Monroe were identified as potential bases to be closed or realigned. Newport News Mayor Joe Frank and the City Council had a strategy to save Fort Eustis, while Hampton Mayor Ross Kearney had a grudge to settle.

While Newport News worked to save Fort Eustis, Kearney and council members Charles Sapp, Angela Leary and Randy Gilliland worked to fire the city manager, George Wallace. As a result of their actions they sacked the only person experienced in dealing with BRAC. Wallace was the city manager who waged two successful campaigns that assisted in keeping Fort Monroe off the BRAC list. The Kearney-led city government, supported by Sapp, Leary and Gilliland, fractured the city along racial lines over the firing of Wallace, causing a recall vote for Gilliland, and presided over the loss of

Fort Monroe and its 1,000 jobs, plus the loss of tax revenue generated by the fort.

Now Kearney wants control over the disposition of Fort Monroe. Something that important must be supervised by a component body, not one led by Kearney and his three loyal supporters.

No to BRAC; yes to homes

The Virginian-Pilot (Norfolk, VA)
November 6, 2005

Faced with the loss of 12,000 jobs and millions of dollars, Virginia Beach leaders say they won't condemn any houses to protect Oceana Naval Air Station.

Good.

The Navy never asked the city to do any such thing, even in the crash zones at the ends of the base's runways. Only the Defense Base Realignment and Closure Commission did, a ridiculous and poisonous overreaction to the encroachment that has crowded the base over the decades.

Members of the Virginia Beach City Council confirmed in a poll by Pilot reporters what has been politically obvious for weeks now: There is no support for taking anybody's house to protect Oceana's jets and jobs.

Since it had been ordered "to establish a program to condemn and purchase all the incompatible use property located within the Accident Potential Zone 1," the City Council's position pretty much ensures that Virginia Beach won't comply with the letter of the BRAC order, unless it passes an ordinance it never uses, and which most citizens oppose.

Still, most political leaders were keeping that quiet while the threat to move the jets to Jacksonville remained real. Once Jacksonville decided it didn't want the planes, the reason for keeping quiet evaporated, and people who live near the base received a welcome reassurance that their homes are safe.

Although the threat to Oceana isn't quite over -- Jacksonville has months to change its mind -- BRAC Chairman Anthony Principi has sounded a much more conciliatory note.

"If we as a commission accomplish anything, it is that we have brought the parties to the table," he said. "Ultimately, it's up to the communities and the state and the Navy to arrive at a solution." Strange but welcome words coming from the man who orchestrated BRAC's bitter slap at Virginia Beach over its decades of disregard for the base and its mission.

But since the punishment for not complying with BRAC's demands -- losing the jets to Jacksonville -- appears to be gone, it looks increasingly as if Principi's wish has been granted. Virginia Beach and the Navy will be left to find their own way, together, to protect Oceana.

That hasn't worked particularly well over the decades, but real progress has come in the past few years.

Virginia Beach still must find some way to change how many houses and what kinds of businesses it will allow in crash and high-noise areas. A vote is expected in November, the same month the city expects a consultant's report on the economic impact of Oceana. The Navy, for its part, must find some way to protect its mission without strangling the economic future of its host.

Condemnation was never going to be politically possible in a city that values property rights above all. The City Council's rejection should put an end to worries that City Hall will take people's property.

A few folks will continue to declaim against the 11 members of the City Council, but for more reasonable citizens, last week's decision provides a welcome end to an agonizing distraction, and an opportunity to finally focus on the real issues remaining in the quest to keep Oceana's jets flying from Virginia Beach.

Additional Notes

Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission

EARLY BIRD

November 28, 2005

Department of Defense Releases

N/A

National News Articles

Senate votes to end offset in survivors' annuities

Local News Articles

Defense: Base Closure Plan Clears Its Final Hurdle

Additional Notes

N/A

Department of Defense Releases

National News Articles

Senate votes to end offset in survivors' annuities

Final approval would give extra \$993 monthly

Rick Make

November, 28 2005

Over Pentagon objections, the Senate has approved a \$9.3 billion two-part plan for improving military survivors' benefits.

It wasn't even a close call. By a 93-5 vote, the Senate attached an amendment to the 2006 defense authorization bill that increases survivors' annuities when a service member dies on active duty or in retirement from a service-connected cause. It also sets Oct. 1, 2005, as the new date by which retirees would be limited to 30 years of paying premiums in

order to buy survivors' coverage. This is three years earlier than current law.

Neither provision is included in the House of Representatives' version of the defense bill, leaving the fate of the proposals to negotiations between the House and Senate. Cost and the Defense Department's opposition are likely to be key issues in the discussion.

"It is nice to see senators stand up and do the right thing," said Steve Strobbridge of the Military Officers Association of America, one of the many military and veterans' groups that has made this its top legislative issue for the year. "Now, we have to convince the House of Representatives to go along."

Strobbridge said the Defense Department's opposition would not mean much, as long as it was not a veto threat.

"We have heard the Pentagon oppose many things before that Congress has ended up passing. In fact, the Senate vote shows that Congress is our friend, not the administration, regardless of the party in charge, when it comes to personnel benefits."

Sen. Bill Nelson, D-Fla., chief sponsor of the amendment, said the two changes are aimed at correcting longtime flaws in the survivors' benefits system and are especially important to pass at a time when U.S. troops are dying in foreign wars.

"Taking care of widows and orphans is a cost of war," Nelson said.

The overwhelming vote came Nov. 8 after Sen. John Warner, R-Va., the Senate Armed Services Committee chairman, suddenly dropped his opposition to the bill. One day earlier, Warner said he would offer a substitute measure asking for a study of

survivors' benefits instead of making any changes. He cited the cost; the fact Congress had made several improvements in retirees' and survivors' benefits in recent years and Defense Department opposition as reasons to oppose Nelson's effort.

His tune changed under pressure from military and veterans' organizations and after Warner discovered he would have trouble blocking Nelson's amendment.

About 55,000 affected

About 55,000 survivors, mostly widows, would be helped by a provision of Nelson's amendment that ends the practice of offsetting military survivors' benefits by the amount received in dependency and indemnity compensation, a survivors' benefit paid by the Department of Veterans Affairs. The military benefit is known as SBP, and the VA benefit is known as DIC. The result is a loss of \$993 a month in benefits, which is the amount of the VA benefit.

Military associations used some of the same arguments they had made in recent years to eliminate the similar offset in military retired pay for those also receiving veterans' disability compensation. "SBP and DIC payments are paid for different reasons," said a Military Officers Association of America point paper. SBP is a portion of the retired pay earned by the deceased member and payable to the survivor. DIC is an annuity from VA as compensation when military service causes premature death, the point paper said.

In a policy statement expressing opposition to the amendment, the Defense Department said it is common in the private sector for a beneficiary to have to choose only one benefit if more than one is available. Defense officials said it is also possible for survivors of those who die on active duty to avoid the offset by designating dependent children as SBP beneficiaries while the spouse would receive DIC.

The second part of Nelson's amendment involved a decision by Congress in 1999 to set a limit on how long military retirees must pay premiums. In 1999, Congress agreed with military associations that 30 years was long enough for premiums to be paid. But, because of funding constraints, the 30-year cutoff was delayed until Oct. 1, 2008, when anyone who is age 72 or older and has been retired from the military for 30 years or longer will no longer have SBP premiums deducted from retired pay. Nelson's

amendment advanced the effective date by three years.

Local News Articles

Defense: Base Closure Plan Clears Its Final Hurdle

Lexis Nexis
Tom Ichniowski
November 28, 2005

The Pentagon has begun to carry out an independent commission's blueprint to shut 22 major military posts and make changes at many others. When Congress failed to reject the panel's plan by Nov. 9, that gave the Dept. of Defense authority to proceed with the closures. DOD says it must start the shutdowns by Sept. 15, 2007, and finish work four years after that.

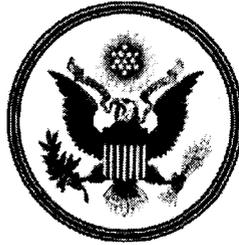
DOD proposed closing 33 major installations (ENR 5/23, p.12). The Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission said 12 of those should stay open and added one closure not on DOD's list. Other bases will see work force gains or losses. The panel said the plan will require about \$21 billion in up-front costs. That includes construction at bases adding personnel.

Opinions/ Editorials

Additional Notes

Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission

EARLY



BIRD

November 29, 2005

Department of Defense Releases

N/A

National News Articles

No cutbacks seen as deal nears on 2-yr extension of base budget

Local News Articles

Kingsville trains sight on other Navy base

Mission team to visit Cannon

Leader of Sub Base Effort Joins Economic Diversification Group

BRAC work group expects to follow City Council's lead

Additional Notes

Department of Defense Releases

National News Articles

No cutbacks seen as deal nears on 2-yr extension of base budget

The Daily Yomiuri (Tokyo)
November 28, 2005

The Japanese and U.S. governments have entered the final stage of negotiations to extend for two years the agreement on the host nation support budget for U.S. troops in this country,

which is to expire in March 2006, without major reductions, government sources said.

Tokyo proposed reducing its share of the burden and reaching a special 5-year accord starting from fiscal 2006, but Washington strongly opposed this reduction.

A government official said: "We don't yet know the impact of the realignment of U.S. forces in Japan. We're extending the agreement on a provisional basis."

The so-called sympathy budget for fiscal 2005 totaled 237.8 billion yen. Japan pays 68.9 billion yen for facilities such as family housing and 29.8 billion yen for welfare for Japanese employees working at U.S. bases, based on the Japan-U.S. Status of Forces Agreement.

Local News Articles

Kingsville trains sight on other Navy base

Express News – Military Writer
Sig Christenson
November 27, 2005

Once seemingly dead in the water, Kingsville's hopes for landing a lucrative Navy jet training mission now on the East Coast have found new life, but a hard fight lies ahead.

South Texas boosters of Kingsville Naval Air Station think they can snag all or part of the training mission now at Oceana Naval Air Station, Va., thought to have a \$1.5 billion economic impact on the Virginia Beach region annually. They say logic and common sense are

on their side, as are a steep set of federal rules for keeping Oceana.

"We're not the ones who said they have a problem at Oceana," said Kingsville Economic Development Corp.'s Dick Messbarger, who noted that one ex-chief of naval operations, retired Adm. Vern Clark, thought about closing the Virginia base. "We just think we have a very good business case that gives the Navy a very attractive alternative."

The problem with Oceana is people. There just may be too many of them in the Virginia Beach area, where the specter of encroachment on the base and its F/A-18 aviator training has raised questions in Navy circles about the continued viability of Oceana.

Those problems, which include light pollution that prevents aviators from landing as if they were approaching an aircraft carrier in the dead of night, prompted the 2005 base closure commission last summer to mark it for shutdown.

The possibility of Oceana relocating quickens the heartbeat of Texans such as former Corpus Christi Mayor Loyd Neal, who figures Kingsville has a 50-50 chance of winning part of its mission. Asked to rate his confidence level as low, medium or high, though, he demurred, citing past disappointments.

"The problem we have had all along is the Navy. The uniform Navy is just holding on to Oceana with all five fingernails," Neal said, predicting that the battle over its future "is going to be a tug of war."

The 2005 Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission, commonly referred to as BRAC, gave state and local officials in Virginia Beach until spring to find solutions to encroachment issues or risk losing the flight training mission to Jacksonville, Fla., which was home to another naval air station, Cecil Field, until it closed more than a decade ago.

Jacksonville has since bowed out of the contest for Oceana's master jet training base, citing

pressure from area residents who do not want to be exposed to the noise from the fighter planes. Florida Gov. Jeb Bush hasn't given up on the mission, but no specific plans have emerged from Tallahassee.

BRAC this year ordered 22 major bases closed, including Brooks City-Base and Ingleside Naval Station.

Kingsville isn't the only town outside the East Coast interested in obtaining the jet training base. Clovis, N.M., home of Cannon AFB, was touted as a site for the Oceana-based planes after BRAC ordered its F-16 mission moved elsewhere, essentially shuttering the installation.

But South Texans say they've got everything the Navy needs — lots of sunny days, quiet skies and large swaths of ranchland with nothing more on it than cattle. They say the region has 18,000 nautical square miles of sky unfettered by commercial jets — an area the size of Rhode Island. They note Ingleside as a natural deep-water port for an aircraft carrier, if it's open.

"I think in the long term, the Navy needs to look at a base where they can train for the next 40 or 50 years," said Kingsville Economic Development Corp.'s Messbarger, who is aiming to obtain the Fleet Replacement Squadron, whose aviators learn to fly the F/A-18, but also to get other Navy missions down the line.

"We don't think there's any place on the East Coast or the West Coast, with the exception of South Texas, where you have the airspace, the weather, close proximity to the gulf and 3 million acres of ranchland to train over," he added.

The BRAC order, however, says nothing about Kingsville. It requires the state of Virginia and its communities of Virginia Beach and Chesapeake to put a stop to continued encroachment at Oceana. Among the commission's lengthy set of requirements is an order to condemn and buy thousands of homes and businesses in the base's Accident Potential Zone 1.

The communities have until March 31, 2006, to map a plan, but the Virginia Beach City Council will not condemn the homes in the zone off the north and south ends of Oceana's runways. Councilman Harry E. Diezel said residents turned out in force to oppose the move, and Mayor Meyera Oberndorf dismissed the idea.

Efforts to develop a plan continue, but a new economic analysis splashed cold water on the notion that complying with the BRAC order and keeping the base will come without a price.

Losing Oceana would cost the city 12,380 jobs, reduce the population and cost the city \$177 million in tax revenue over 20 years, according to a report by RKG Associates, a consultant in Durham, N.H. But the cost of condemning 3,407 homes and 189 businesses alone was estimated to top \$650 million.

Complying with the BRAC edict also would cost \$89 million in municipal revenues over 20 years, with 3,500 jobs lost by 2025.

"The relocation, and particularly a wholesale relocation, initially would create really a monumental fiscal impact on the local area and the region, as a matter of fact," said Diezel, one of 11 members on the Virginia Beach council.

Mayor Oberndorf suggested Virginia Beach would craft an alternative to condemning homes that might win Navy support. But when pressed on whether she could bypass part of the edict issued by the congressionally created commission, she replied, "Thank God there is a separate court system where we could point out some of the problems that have occurred since this BRAC."

Oberndorf has other options. Adm. Michael G. Mullen, chief of naval operations, supports keeping Oceana. Former Clinton-era White House Chief of Staff Leon Panetta points to Sen. John Warner, R-Va., and chairman of the Armed Services Committee, as a formidable foe of any Oceana relocation plan.

Corpus Christi's Neal called Warner an "800-pound gorilla" in Congress. When asked how

Texas could get around the senator, he listed retirement among three possibilities.

"In politics, there are two things that change things: funerals and weddings," he quipped.

Congress could get into the act, as it did after President Clinton tried to slow the hemorrhaging of jobs after the 1995 BRAC's closure of Kelly AFB in San Antonio. Clinton sought to privatize civil service jobs at Kelly, rather than move them to other states.

There is little likelihood of the commission revisiting the matter. One BRAC commissioner, retired Air Force Brig. Gen. Sue Ellen Turner, said she wasn't sure if the panel could reconvene and issue a new decision if Florida and Virginia failed to comply with the prior order.

"Anything's possible, but I don't know," she said. "I don't think there's a precedent for it."

One expert familiar with the closure process said the law creating BRAC required commissioners to wrap up business by Sept. 8, when it sent its final report to President Bush. Under the closure edict, Virginia Beach has until March 31 to make proposed corrections. Florida has until Dec. 31, 2006 to comply with the commission's orders.

Though BRAC's order did not provide a Plan C if Virginia and Jacksonville failed, it left open one sliver of hope for Kingsville backers. In a single sentence, the commission said, "The secretary of defense is directed to cause a rapid, complete due diligence review of the offer of the state of Florida to reoccupy the former NAS Cecil Field and to compare this review against any plan to build a new master jet base at any other location."

There's no guarantee that Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld would move part or all of Oceana to Kingsville — even if he has the authority to do so. The Navy insists that it wants to train its fliers on the East and West coasts, and Kingsville's most ardent supporters acknowledge it.

"There's a cultural bias in the Navy for the master jet base to be on the East Coast," said Bob Rasmussen of the Texas Military Preparedness Commission

"Texas needs to continue to argue the merits and needs to continue to present NAS Kingsville as a positive option," he said. "In time, I think that's going to be accepted."

Mission team to visit Cannon

Freedom Newspapers

Kevin Wilson

November 29, 2005

They're not exactly sure where their trip will end, but supporters of Cannon Air Force Base insist they're making great time.

An eight-member mission team from the Air Force is scheduled to visit Cannon today to begin evaluating possible new missions for the base.

The Base Closure and Realignment Commission rejected the Pentagon's proposal in August to close Cannon, opting instead to keep it open temporarily. Cannon's three F-16 squadrons will be moved, and the base will close if a new mission can't be found by Dec. 31, 2009.

Randy Harris of the base support group Committee of Fifty said the Air Force visit, scheduled to wrap up on Friday, is good news for Cannon.

"We know this is a very good sign and a very good first step that the Air Force is following what the BRAC legislation said," Harris said. "You have to make sure the data you collect is current and you have to get the true picture of what exists in New Mexico."

Community leaders have said the Air Force team is coming to assess the base's infrastructure, and they plan to meet with the mission team while they're here.

"Our job is to represent our communities, and our communities' relations to Cannon Air Force

Base," Portales Mayor Orlando Ortega said. "That's what we've been doing from day one, and we'll continue to do that. Part of our role is to welcome them to the community, to express the value of Cannon being located in eastern New Mexico."

Should Cannon receive a new mission, New Mexico's congressional delegation expects the base's available airspace will weigh heavily on what type of mission will arrive.

"We obviously feel that Cannon is well-suited for a flying mission," said Matt Letourneau, a spokesman for U.S. Sen. Pete Domenici, R-N.M. "That would be our preference, but we're not going to be telling them we want this or that.

"They're there as observers. They're not policy makers, they're not making decisions. They're going to evaluate what they see in terms of facilities. We've obviously communicated our feelings about Cannon numerous times all the way from the Secretary of Defense to the Air Force secretary."

The public affairs department at Cannon declined Monday to answer questions specific to the tour and said an Air Force representative would be available for that purpose today.

Even before the final BRAC hearing in August, there have been many suggestions for new missions, including the Joint Strike Fighter.

Earlier this month, Congress agreed to language that ensures construction projects continue at Cannon as the Pentagon seeks a new mission.

Without the language that addressed Cannon's status, funding would not have been obligated for bases and programs closed or realigned during this year's BRAC process.

"The whole BRAC process had to take its course, and it did," Ortega said. "Our congressional delegation has done a very, very good job of moving this process in a positive direction for ... Cannon Air Force Base and the communities."

What future Cannon and the community will see, and when that will happen, is still up in the air.

“Are we 10 percent (toward a new mission)? Are we 90 percent? That’s speculation,” Harris said. “The thing is, we’re not waiting two or three years. In the next few months, we’ll see this process come to fruition.

“No one gains anything by waiting. It’s not to the benefit of the Department of Defense to wait either, because they have budgets, they have timelines. Everyone’s got to move forward.”

Leader of Sub Base Effort Joins Economic Diversification Group

Anthony Cronin
Day Staff Writer, Business
Published on 11/29/2005

New London — The board of directors of the Southeastern Connecticut Enterprise Region has nominated its executive director, John C. Markowicz, to serve on a newly formed commission exploring further diversification of the region's economy.

The board made the unanimous recommendation to Gov. M. Jodi Rell, who created the commission after the Naval Submarine Base in Groton was removed this summer from a list of bases the Pentagon had recommended be shut down. Rell has said the panel will explore ways to ensure that southeastern Connecticut's economy better diversifies in the coming years so it can withstand any future efforts to close or consolidate the base.

Markowicz, who also serves as chairman of the regional Subbase Realignment Coalition that fought the base-closure recommendation, said his agency hasn't heard back from the governor's office regarding the nomination. The commission is searching for candidates for its nine-member executive committee.

The board of the enterprise region, or SeCTer, nominated Markowicz during its annual meeting this past week. SeCTer, based in New London,

is a public-private economic development agency that serves New London County.

The Eastern Connecticut Workforce Investment Board in Norwich this past week also nominated its executive director, John Beauregard, to serve on the commission.

Earlier this month, Rell named a Northeast Utilities executive to head the new commission after its former chief took a job overseas. Rell said Douglas G. Fisher, who directs economic and business development for the Berlin-based utility, replaced Dana Cosgrove of Old Saybrook.

Local businessman Gary Bennett, the former chief executive of the former Analysis & Technology in North Stonington, is serving as the commission's vice chairman. The commission will study ways of expanding southeastern Connecticut's \$10 billion-plus economy and will develop strategies to avoid having Pentagon budget-cutters again target the submarine base.

The Pentagon plan to close the base sent shock waves throughout Connecticut, with state officials warning that the shutdown could lead to a \$3 billion-plus impact on the state's economy and the potential loss of more than 30,000 jobs. The sub base, the nation's oldest and first such base, employs more than 11,000 military and civilian personnel and has an annual payroll of more than \$450 million.

The base is considered one of the important stanchions supporting southeastern Connecticut's economy.

In related news, SeCTer elected new board members for the 2005-06 fiscal year, including Nicholas Mullane, president; John W. (Bill) Sheehan, first vice president; Robert Giffen, second vice president; Mary Ellen Jukowski, secretary, and Richard Brown, treasurer.

Directors elected to serve terms expiring in 2008 were David DiBattista; Richard Erickson; Mark Hamilton; Jukoski; Carmelina Kanzler; Jerry Lamb; Naomi Otterness; Christopher Pearson;

Dennis Popp; Charles Seeman; Demian Sorrentino; Marjorie Valentin, and Glenn Wilson. Tricia Barkley, acting director of the Greater Mystic Chamber of Commerce, was elected to a term that will expire Dec. 31, 2007.

BRAC work group expects to follow City Council's lead

The Virginian-Pilot
Jon W. Glass
November 29, 2005

VIRGINIA BEACH — A regional working group met Monday to discuss ways to keep Oceana Naval Air Station's fighter jets but held most of its meeting behind closed doors. The group, appointed by Gov. Mark R. Warner and composed mainly of elected local and state officials, met privately for 45 minutes to discuss "legal issues and strategies to prevent the realignment or closure" of Oceana.

Afterward, state Sen. Kenneth W. Stolle, the group's chairman, said the panel will take its lead from the Virginia Beach City Council on how to respond to the federal Defense Base Realignment and Closure Commission.

The council will hold a special closed session at 4 p.m. today to discuss legal matters involving Oceana. The council is not expected to discuss anything in public.

In December, the council is scheduled to vote on a series of proposals – including land purchases and restrictions on new development – to protect Oceana and to satisfy conditions imposed by the BRAC Commission for keeping the jets.

Stolle, a Beach Republican, said a key concern is whether the city's plan will be accepted by the Defense Department's inspector general, which must certify whether Virginia Beach, Chesapeake and the state have complied with BRAC's demands.

The most controversial condition requires Virginia Beach and the state to create a program to condemn and buy homes and businesses in

Accident Potential Zone 1, the area around Oceana where the risk of a jet crash is greatest.

Most council members and some legislators, including Stolle, have said they oppose condemnation. Many also are opposed to buying homes from willing sellers in APZ-1.

Instead, the council is considering banning development that the Navy considers incompatible with Oceana – including homes, hotels, shops and most offices – in APZ-1.

Mayor Meyera E. Oberndorf said she hopes the council will implement parts of a joint land-use study completed in May with the Navy.

Among the proposals endorsed in that study is an overlay district that would tighten development restrictions in the loudest jet-noise zones. A sticking point is how that would affect redevelopment of the resort area.

City Planning Director Robert J. Scott said city officials have been meeting with Navy representatives to work out a solution.

At Monday's meeting of the South Hampton Roads BRAC Working Group, held at the convention center, Norfolk Mayor Paul D. Fraim briefed the group on an initiative to protect the region's military facilities.

The BRAC decision on Oceana was "a wake-up call" for Hampton Roads, where military dollars make up about one-third of the economy, Fraim said.

Early next year, the Navy will decide whether to move one or more aircraft carriers from Norfolk to Japan and elsewhere, Fraim said.

"We have not strategically prepared for this," Fraim said. He noted that Florida and other states have aggressive lobbying efforts to protect and expand their military facilities.

The regional push is led by the Hampton Roads Mayors and Chairs Caucus, which includes leaders of 16 cities and counties.

Frain, the caucus' chairman, said he hopes the state and local governments with the biggest stakes would contribute about \$1.2 million the first year. He said the money would be used to hire lobbyists and a small support staff.

Opinions/ Editorials

Additional Notes

Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission

EARLY BIRD

November 30, 2005

Department of Defense Releases

Bottom Line

National News Articles

N/A

Local News Articles

Forum focuses on BRAC issues

Team arrives at CAFB

BRAC May Create New Jobs For Poor

Legislator Opposes Buying Homes To Satisfy BRAC

Base's End Stirs New Dreams

Additional Notes

Department of Defense Releases

Bottom Line

The Hill

November, 30 2005

BASE CLOSURE. The Rhoads Group is helping the Port of Corpus Christi Authority, which manages the Gulf port, with "post-BRAC property transfer and economic development," according to its lobbying registration. The team includes Barry Rhoads, the group's CEO and a former deputy general counsel to the Base Closure and Realignment Commission during

the Bush 41 administration; Colin Chapman, a former chief of staff to Rep. Don Young (R-Alaska); and Tanya Morrison Long, a former aide to ex-Rep. Max Burns (R-Ga.).

Local News Articles

Forum focuses on BRAC issues

Patrick Buffet

Case mate staff writer

November 30, 2005

Fort Monroe's garrison workforce received some good news about the Base Realignment and Closure process during a Nov. 15 town hall meeting at the post theater.

As of midnight Nov. 9 when the BRAC recommendations became law, all government civilian employees assigned to activities designated for closure or realignment outside the commuting area are authorized unlimited leave accrual, according to Barry Buchanan, the installation's Civilian Personnel Director and acting deputy to the garrison commander.

Furthermore, those stashed away days can be used to attain retirement eligibility when the installation is closed, "cashed in" if another federal government job is found elsewhere or paid in a lump sum upon regular or early retirement. Ordinarily, any leave time over 240 hours is forfeited.

BRAC Commission Early Bird

Use of these articles does not reflect official endorsement.
Reproduction for private use or gain is subject to original copyright restrictions.

Garrison employees could also be offered retention incentives if they opt to stay on the job through the BRAC process, Buchanan explained during his town hall presentation. He said the command “completely understands” if employees decide to seek other employment sooner rather than later, but they will offer incentives to those who continue to contribute their expertise through closure.

Other perks for employees who stay include a job swap program in which the government will pay all moving expenses, as well as opportunities to attend additional training to become more competitive. “The bottom line is that we’re going to do everything we can to help those employees who want to stay in the workforce,” Buchanan said.

Employees who meet the requirements for early or regular retirement may also see severance packages at the end of the BRAC process. The Department of Defense has authorized Voluntary Separation Incentive Payments and Voluntary Early Retirement Payments. For more information about these programs visit www.cpms.osd.mil/bractransition.

During the town hall meeting, garrison employees were also provided a fact sheet that contained Web references for BRAC information and support programs for families, frequently asked questions and a personal message from the garrison commander.

“BRAC is about teamwork,” the message explained. “Our mission ahead may seem sad, but its purpose could not be nobler. Fort Monroe’s sacrifice will ultimately benefit U.S. service members ... we cannot lose sight of that fact.

“As we move forward, we must also be prepared to address future job opportunities,” Evans continued. “More than two-thirds of the jobs at Fort Monroe will remain in the Tidewater area. Others will relocate with Accessions and Cadet Command to Fort Knox, Ky. The rest (of the employees) will begin the search for new jobs elsewhere, and some will stay until Fort Monroe closes.

“Regardless of which category you may fall into, I encourage research and open dialogue ... And please assure your friends and family that caring for our workforce is the top priority of every military and civilian leader on this installation.”

The fact sheet also provided the following questions and answers about Fort Monroe’s closure to “inform community members and help them discuss the BRAC process more accurately, which, in turn, discourages rumor and exaggeration.” Employees were asked to keep in mind that some of the answers given are based on planning data that is known at this time, and the information is subject to change.

Q: I have a family member/friend who works at Fort Monroe. Will that employee lose his/her job?

A: Based on the published realignment milestones, it appears that most of our employees will remain working at Fort Monroe for at least 5 years.

Q: Will garrison jobs be phased out or all end at the final closure date?

A: We hope to retain the majority of our workforce until closure; however, at some point, we will not need to backfill the positions of employees who retire or transfer to other jobs.

Q: In what order will post facilities be shut down? Who will be the last to go?

A: HQ TRADOC, NERO, NETCOM and ACA are scheduled to move to Fort Eustis in FY2011. Army Accessions and Cadet Commands will move to Fort Knox in FY2010. Other tenants will move according to their own schedule, some leaving as soon as FY2009, but all will depart no later than FY2011.

Q: Will the post continue to pursue major construction projects like the new Wherry Housing units? If not, can the money allocated for that project be diverted to other post improvements?

A: Fort Monroe removed 88 units of Wherry Housing. These deconstructed units will not be replaced. All MCA projects here have been cancelled as a result of BRAC. This money will be reprogrammed, but not to Fort Monroe.

Q: What is the guidance on planning future facility improvement projects like office renovations/repainting/new furniture/housing upgrades?

A: We will do our best to accommodate our customers, within reason. We are not going to recklessly expend government funds on projects that will not provide a cost benefit for the time a customer is here. DPW will retain enough funding for maintenance and repair projects.

Q: How long will the post continue special events like Music under the Stars and the summer concerts?

A: Summer concerts will continue as long as commercial sponsors are willing to contribute funds to support the operating costs and the existing customer base remains on the installation. The Music Under the Stars concerts will continue for the foreseeable future.

Q: Will activities like youth services, the bowling alley and the fitness center remain open until the end or will they be the first to shut down?

A: MWR services will continue as long as there is a customer population to support and funding is available to sustain operations.

Q: When will the Fort Monroe PX cease operations?

A: AAFES has an existing set of BRAC guidelines that provides timelines and internal controls for the protection of assets during closure. Some AAFES activities will remain operational as long as there is a customer base and funding is available to sustain operations. Ultimately the Fort Monroe furniture store will move to Fort Eustis. Sales associates will be

transferred to local AAFES stores whenever possible.

More Qs and As will be published at a later date, the fact sheet noted. Future issues to be discussed include ordnance disposal and BRAC's estimated cost savings.

Team arrives at CAFB

Freedom Newspapers

November 30, 2005

An eight-member mission team from the Air Force arrived Tuesday at Cannon Air Force Base to begin evaluating possible missions for the base.

Randy Harris of the base support group Committee of Fifty said the Air Force team spent the day collecting data, which will help determine Cannon's future. Community leaders have said the Air Force team is here to assess the base's infrastructure.

Matt Letourneau, a spokesman for U.S. Sen. Pete Domenici, R-N.M., said the mission team is tasked with evaluating Cannon's facilities and will not make decisions regarding future missions.

Capt. Andre Kok of Cannon Public Affairs said plans to make an Air Force spokesman available for comment Tuesday fell through. Kok declined comment on Tuesday's visit.

Domenici and Sen. Jeff Bingaman, D-N.M., have been pressing the Pentagon to find a mission for Cannon since the federal Base Closure and Realignment Commission placed it in "enclave" status in the summer. The base will close in 2010 unless a new mission is found before then.

Domenici and Bingaman plan to attend a Thursday meeting with community leaders and the mission team at Clovis Community College.

The mission team is scheduled to be in town until Friday.

Domenici has said the visit is a sure sign the Pentagon is taking seriously the congressional delegation's push for a new mission.

"There is no question that the base's physical and air space assets, along with strong community support, can be put to use by the Defense Department," he said. "I believe this evaluation team will learn that firsthand."

Earlier this month, Congress agreed to language that ensures construction projects continue at Cannon as the Pentagon seeks a new mission.

Without the language that addressed Cannon's status, funding would not have been obligated for bases and programs closed or realigned during this year's BRAC process.

BRAC May Create New Jobs For Poor

Baltimore Sun

November 28, 2005

By Larry Carson, Sun reporter

With thousands of defense-related jobs coming to Maryland in the next few years, local social services officials see a golden opportunity for poor people to get better jobs, especially in high-priced suburbs in Howard, Anne Arundel and Harford counties near the targeted bases.

The Aberdeen Proving Ground area is expected to get 27,000 new jobs in the next decade, said Rick Walker, Harford County's assistant director of social services. Officials in Howard and Anne Arundel counties expect the first 5,300 jobs coming directly to Fort Meade will be followed in five or six years by two or three times more private defense and support jobs. Those are the positions social services officials hope their clients can get access to.

Walker said he's enthusiastic about the possibilities for people looking for a new chance.

"It's clearly going to change the local economy. We're really excited about it. We're looking at it as a wonderful opportunity for our [welfare recipients] to use that as a launching pad for their families," Walker said.

Welfare clients who stop receiving cash assistance typically work as day care providers,

sales clerks, cashiers, bank tellers, receptionists or nursing assistants, said Charlene Gallion, Howard County's social services director. The new jobs could offer better income and benefits, she said.

"We want people to be employed, but we also want them to be offered jobs that have career potential. Not all of our customers are low-skilled," she said.

Andy Moser, president and chief executive officer of the Anne Arundel County Workforce Development Corp., said he's thinking along the same lines.

"The state Department of Labor has a \$1.2 million planning grant from the federal government" to prepare for the coming jobs, he said.

"We've been working with the Anne Arundel County social services. The big thing right now is we're trying to find specific information on what jobs are coming. That's what the planning money can do," Moser said.

Howard County has a relatively small welfare population, but with the state's lowest unemployment rate (2.8 percent) and among the highest housing costs, Gallion and Gerald M. Richman, chairman of the county's social services board, see a chance for some people to escape the entry-level, no-benefits treadmill.

"We understand our customers need higher than minimum wage to live in Howard County. Our goal is to target some of those positions coming available and match them with people in our caseload," said Gallion.

Dick Story, Howard County's economic development CEO, said the opportunities are real, though not immediate.

"There's time to plan for it. Everybody's going to have to get together now. There's going to be a real crunch finding the people to do the jobs, at all levels," he said.

"If you put a pin in a map of Fort Meade and start drawing circles, 40 percent of that circle will cover Howard County," Story said, and the already tight suburban labor market will only help people trying to transform their lives.

The notion of finding new opportunities for poor residents won praise from other officials.

"I think there are going to be opportunities. The trick will be to package the employment opportunities and get the word out to the

contractors," said Anne Towne, director of Howard County's Association of Community Services, an umbrella group for 150 private social agencies.

"It's a fabulous idea. We need stronger linkages with economic development and human services. We need to be building much stronger partnerships," said Susan Rosenbaum, director of Citizen Services in Howard, the county agency that administers funds for nonprofit social agencies in the county.

Gallion said Richman brought the idea up as officials searched for new ways to help welfare recipients, noncustodial parents who owe child support and people who get food stamps, to better their lives.

"This is all in its infancy," Richman said, but his vision is part of his determination to make a difference after six years on the social services board.

The biggest problems facing agency clients are transportation for those without cars and earning a living wage. The nationwide military base closings that are predicted to bring thousands of jobs to the Anne Arundel-Howard area struck him as a unique opportunity.

"I want to get something done," Richman said.

"This is my last year. I want to dedicate it to something productive."

In a new cooperative relationship with the appointed, volunteer board, Richman will work on the project with Larry C. Pinkett, assistant director for Howard County's Family Investment Program, who Gallion said will scour the lists of clients for likely prospects.

"Our numbers are small enough that we should be able to look at what we have," Gallion said. Howard has 287 cash welfare recipients, and she estimates half could have potential for the new jobs. Noncustodial parents making child-support payments could swell the pool.

"Why shouldn't the board interface with local agencies, state economic authorities, Howard Community College and high schools in an effort to engage ourselves in attracting as many of these jobs to our local economy as possible?" Richman said.

"We have to take a real hard look at what our [labor] pool is. This could really be a fantastic thing for our community and our customers," Gallion said.

Tonia Bouldin, 29, of Ellicott City hopes the new jobs can help her.

A single mother of two daughters, ages 11 and 1, she's off cash assistance and earned her General Educational Development diploma in September. She's still receiving food stamps and health insurance, and with guidance from social services, she's working part time at a Columbia day care center and planning to take a medical billing course in January at Howard Community College.

The job, at \$7.50 an hour with no benefits, isn't enough to support her family, she said, so she lives with her mother.

"I have to see the job as a steppingstone. My goal is to go somewhere to get a job that I could support myself with," she said.

Legislator Opposes Buying Homes To Satisfy BRAC

Norfolk Virginian-Pilot

November 27, 2005

By Jon W. Glass

VIRGINIA BEACH A key state legislator said he is more concerned about satisfying the Navy than in complying with conditions imposed by a federal base-closing commission for keeping jets at Oceana Naval Air Station. State Sen. Kenneth W. Stolle, R-Virginia Beach, is chairman of a panel appointed by Gov. Mark R. Warner to address the demands of the federal Defense Base Realignment and Closure Commission.

Stolle said he does not favor condemning or buying homes and businesses around Oceana, which he called a BRAC poison pill. He said BRAC's demand that the city and state spend at least \$15 million a year to buy property in the high-risk areas around the base is unrealistic. It's unlikely that the General Assembly would support using state money on such a long-term and expensive program, he said. An economic analysis released last week said the state would spend \$150 million over the next 20 years if it split the costs with the city.

That would be enough to buy only half of the homes and businesses in Oceana's Accident Potential Zone 1, according to cost estimates.

There's no way the city or the state is going to pay \$7.5 million each for 20 years, Stolle said. Stolle said he opposes buying existing homes in APZ-1 from willing sellers because demolishing those houses would turn the neighborhoods into Swiss cheese. He said he thinks fellow state legislators would support buying development rights or vacant property in APZ-1 to prevent new homes.

The Navy, he said, has never said that rolling back existing development is needed for Oceana to remain the East Coast master jet base or for pilots to be properly trained there.

The BRAC order is not reflective of anything the Navy has asked the city to do, other than tightening restrictions against new incompatible development in accident-potential zones and in the loudest noise zones around Oceana, Stolle said.

There are some things that we're willing to do to comply with the BRAC order and some things we're not, he said.

The 16-member panel that Stolle heads the South Hampton Roads BRAC Working Group will meet Monday to begin mulling its recommendations to the governor.

Fred J. Metz, a retired rear admiral and the only career Navy representative on the governor's BRAC group, said he agrees with Stolle's conclusions.

I think that's the rational way to do it, Metz said. There's no way, I think, that the city can do what BRAC wants them to do.

A decision to reject condemning and buying homes, he said, may be easier now that the mayor of Jacksonville, Fla., has said his city will not pursue Oceana's jets. But even if Jacksonville was in the picture, Metz said, somewhere the city has to make a stand and say, 'Enough is enough.'

Accepting the BRAC conditions, Metz said, would be setting a national precedent over what local and state governments could be required to do to satisfy national defense and security needs. If BRAC was able to get away with this, what signal is the government sending? What kind of threat is that? he asked.

The BRAC panel ruled that Oceana's fighter jets would be moved to the Navy's former Cecil Field outside Jacksonville if Virginia Beach

failed to comply. Opposition in Florida to reopening Cecil Field derailed that option. Metz said the Navy and the city should work out a plan that each side can live with and don't let BRAC drive the decision.

The governor asked Stolle's group to make recommendations by Dec. 1, but Stolle said that deadline will not be met because the City Council has not decided how to respond. The group's goal now is late December.

The city has got to be in the driver's seat on this, Stolle said. We're not going to shove anything down the city's throat on keeping Oceana.

Base's End Stirs New Dreams

Houston Chronicle

November 21, 2005

By John W. Gonzalez, Houston Chronicle

INGLESIDE - From the marina where he docks his boat, sailmaker Daryl Miglia can see giant offshore structures being built at a mammoth facility up the shore.

In the other direction, around a bend along the northern side of Corpus Christi Bay, is Naval Station Ingleside, where a fleet of minesweepers roosts. The Navy ships are out of sight. Soon they will be a faded memory.

Because of the Base Realignment and Closure process, base operations are relocating to other ports, leaving Miglia and other residents to wonder about the fate of this strategic waterfront. Though he retired here from Colorado about a year ago, Miglia already has strong feelings about what could and should become of the base and environs.

"A community college or even a four-year college on that site would be great," he said. But that's just the start.

"I'd like to see something more tourist-oriented to bring people in. It would really help the economy, instead of typical industrial stuff. Bring in cruise ships, maybe some waterfront development, shops, that kind of thing," he said. Miglia said the base closure is a "pretty big deal, but the way things are growing ... I'm not sure the actual effect is going to be as bad as people think."

His optimism isn't unusual here. While lamenting the Navy's departure over the next

few years and the loss of the sense of security that the base gave them, area leaders hail Ingleside's economic vitality and are confident Navy-related losses will be followed by a well-thought-out recovery.

However, with many aspects of the base's decommissioning still unsettled, concerns persist about the 1,000-acre base's future, and differences have emerged on redevelopment strategies.

Some, like Miglia, imagine cruise ships pulling up to the docks, bringing a steady stream of visitors to this low-profile community of 10,000 people. Others envision a continuing military presence as a Coast Guard station or an overseas deployment point. Many believe the base's campus-like setting will see new life as a training center or business park. All those notions assume the land will revert to local control.

When the community turned the site over to the Navy 20 years ago with hopes of luring a major home port that never came, the property deed specified the land would revert to the previous owner, the Port of Corpus Christi, if the base closed.

The port has asserted its claim to the land, but the big question is how much compensation the Department of Defense will seek for up to \$250 million in waterfront improvements and buildings constructed since the base opened in 1988.

Economic impact

Despite vigorous efforts to keep the Navy here, the BRAC commission chose to close Ingleside and shift base operations and assets to East and West coast ports. President Bush has signed off on the recommendations, and local officials said "for sale" signs are going up on homes of Navy-related residents.

A bill filed by U.S. Rep. Solomon Ortiz, D-Corpus Christi, would require the Navy to relinquish the land and improvements without compensation, but local leaders acknowledge they may have to produce large sums of money to seal the deal.

The port has the backing of Ingleside's City Council and San Patricio County's Commissioners Court to lead the redevelopment. Nueces County, which includes Corpus Christi, is clamoring for a place at the negotiating table,

reminding everyone that it helped woo the Navy by approving a \$25 million bond issue in 1985 and is losing several hundred jobs tied to the base.

"Everybody is on the same page," Nueces County Judge Terry Shamsie said. "Everyone is interested in a positive result for South Texas. Everyone wants to see a growing economy and not a setback."

Shamsie said his concerns "go far beyond a piece of land," citing worries about the base closure's impact on Nueces County jobs, businesses, health care and schools.

Shamsie has floated the idea of his county serving as the conduit for federal funds for redevelopment studies, but the city of Corpus Christi joined other jurisdictions in backing the port as the lead redevelopment entity.

The port has taken steps to enforce the deed's reversionary clause, and port commission member Judy Hawley said the entity wants to recoup the land "to be positioned to turn it back into an economic generator right away. The issue is going to be how much does the reversion cost." She, too, hopes base improvements come at little or no cost. "We lost 7,000 jobs. And then to put an additional burden of \$250 million on the community to buy the facilities is very onerous."

The cost isn't likely to be that high, she admitted, because the Navy will remove some assets. Several appraisals will be conducted to value what remains, she said, and then it would be up to area governments to settle on plans and form a "local redevelopment authority" to manage the site.

'Different activities'

Hawley has her own vision about the best uses for the base.

"Certainly there needs to be a maritime use of the waterfront," she said. But there's far more to the site than piers, she noted.

"I think we're going to end up seeing diverse uses of the property, with a number of different activities or economic generators," Hawley said. Still, to minimize problems, "we have to move through this process quickly, and we're going to really need congressional help to do that," Hawley said.

The region is sad to lose the base, she added, "but what would even be worse is if we got hung

up on a long, drawn-out process, or the Navy put such a price tag that recovery would be absolutely impossible."

Officials in Ingleside presume the Navy will be here at least two more years, and they're confident the city has enough momentum to withstand the trauma of base closure.

After all, it's already home to two major offshore fabricators, which assemble oil rigs and other heavy structures. Other port-side facilities will soon be constructed.

Still, "everybody's playing what-if games" about new uses for the base, said Ingleside City Manager Mike Rhea.

"The port is obviously interested in the channel-side improvements — the docks, the wharves, the piers, warehousing — as part of their overall operation," he said.

A wide range of uses is possible for the base's classroom buildings, labs, offices and recreational and dining facilities, Rhea said.

Corporate offices and a technical school campus have been discussed, he said, but no commitments can be made until the Navy relinquishes the site.

Some residents aren't waiting for formal closure to move on, Rhea said.

"We're already starting to see houses hitting the market. As people start getting transferred, we'll see more of that," he said. Yet, as those homes become available, he expects renters and others to snap them up.

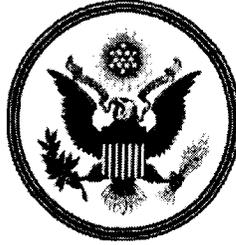
"There will be a negative impact, don't get me wrong," he said. "But we're not all lining up to jump off the Harbor Bridge."

Opinions/ Editorials

Additional Notes

Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission

EARLY



BIRD

November 9, 2005

Department of Defense Releases

National News Articles

Base closures becomes law

Local News Articles

Three Military Bases Become One Fort Dix, McGuire Air Force Base, and Lakehurst Naval Air Engineering Station formed the first tri-service super base.

BRAC finally history

22 major military bases will be closed by 2011

Most of California's losses will be from the Balboa Naval Hospital in San Diego. Some governors are challenging the shutdowns.

Encroachment plan for Oceana forwarded to city planners

Military base changes official

Additional Notes

Department of Defense Releases

National News Articles

Base closures becomes law

Reuters

David Lawder

Nov 8, 2005 8:29 PM ET

WASHINGTON (Reuters) - A blueprint for the first round of U.S. domestic military base closures in a decade became law on Tuesday as a deadline passed with no action by Congress to reject the recommendations.

The Senate, however, rejected a measure which would have required the Pentagon to offer closed military base properties first to the local communities before any other entity.

The amendment to a Department of Defense spending bill was offered by Maine's Republican senators, Olympia Snowe and Susan Collins, whose state faces the closure of the Brunswick Naval Air Station at a cost of 2,420 jobs.

The air base for maritime patrol aircraft was one of dozens of facilities ordered closed or restructured by the Defense Base Realignment and Closure Commission in August.

The commission made significant changes to the Pentagon's original closure plan, ordering that a number of facilities remain open, including a submarine base in Groton, Connecticut, a B-1 bomber base in South Dakota and a naval shipyard in Maine.

But the commission backed the closure of a number of large facilities, including Fort Monmouth in New Jersey, which is to lose 5,272 jobs, Fort Monroe in Virginia at a cost of 3,564 jobs, and Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington D.C., whose 5,630 jobs will be consolidated with the nearby Bethesda Naval Medical Center in Maryland.

Maryland stands to gain some 10,000 jobs from the changes, including most of those lost at Fort Monmouth,

"The BRAC commission has acknowledged what Maryland already knows -- that Maryland is a one-stop shop for military technology, research and development," Maryland Sen. Barbara Mikulski, a Democrat, said in a statement.

The commission, made up of former generals, admirals and government officials, estimated that the closure plan would save the Defense Department \$37 billion over 20 years, freeing up personnel and resources that could be devoted to new missions.

The closures, moves and consolidations must be completed within six years.

A measure to reject the BRAC recommendations failed in the House of Representatives in late October after President George W. Bush accepted them in September.

Although the recommendations have been formally adopted, an aide to the Senate Armed Services Committee said there could still be some legislative amendments adopted to govern their implementation.

The formal adoption of the closure recommendations could trigger another round of lawsuits from states that sought to stop cutbacks at Air National Guard bases.

Missouri, Illinois, Tennessee, Connecticut and Pennsylvania all filed court challenges, but the U.S. Supreme Court ruled they did not have

standing to bring the lawsuits because the decisions were not final.

Local News Articles

Three Military Bases Become One Fort Dix, McGuire Air Force Base, and Lakehurst Naval Air Engineering Station formed the first tri-service super base.

Philadelphia Inquirer

Edward Colimore, Inquirer Staff Writer

November 9, 2005

South Jersey is now officially the home of the nation's first tri-service super base.

Fort Dix, McGuire Air Force Base, and Lakehurst Naval Air Engineering Station became a joint base - by law - at 12:01 a.m. yesterday after the deadline passed for congressional action on the recommendations of the 2005 Base Closure and Realignment Commission.

More than 20,000 people live or work at what is now Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst. The installation will receive as many as 47 additional Army, Navy and Marine aircraft and more than 1,000 new jobs. It will host Marine, Navy, Air Force, Army and Coast Guard personnel.

"It is a 60-square-mile super base that can project U.S. power across the Atlantic when we are at war," said U.S. Rep. Jim Saxton, the Mount Holly Republican who has worked many years to preserve the country's only contiguous Army, Air Force and Navy bases.

"When we're at peace, it has all the modern ranges, advanced military schools, and training facilities needed to maintain highly skilled armed forces," Saxton's statement added.

Congress had 45 legislative days after President Bush accepted the commission's recommendations to reject the base changes. Efforts backed by House members could have killed the changes but were unsuccessful. The key attempt to derail the commission Oct. 27 was defeated, 324-85.

By law, the president's signature is not required on the final recommendations, which took effect yesterday morning.

"South Jersey's military bases already make major contributions to the global war on terrorism," Saxton said. "Fort Dix is the No. 1 deployer of Reserve troops, and McGuire is the No. 1 tanker base on the East Coast, and Navy Lakehurst researches and manufactures the aircraft catapults and arresting gear for all of our aircraft carriers."

The original recommendations released May 13 would have eliminated all aircraft at the New Jersey Air National Guard's 108th Air Refueling Wing at McGuire. But Saxton persuaded the commission to provide a squadron of newer KC-135R aircraft, saving the 1,500-member 108th.

"To eliminate the 108th's airplanes and mission in the 2005 BRAC round was out of sync with what the BRAC Commission had decided in previous rounds," Saxton said.

The eight KC-135R models will complement McGuire's other large aircraft - 32 KC-10 Extenders and 13 new C-17 Globemasters.

The Joint Task Force for Dix and McGuire, a group of elected and former military officials and community leaders, will meet soon for a review, said Jeff Sagnip, a spokesman for Saxton.

"The bases will have to sketch out areas where they can be efficient," he said. "The Army has the institutional knowledge for taking care of the ranges and Forward Operating Base, the Army stuff. The Air Force and Navy have their own areas of expertise.

"The reason the bases survived as the nation's first tri-service super base is that they were working together. They are a model for other joint operations."

BRAC finally history

The Day
Knight Ridder/Tribune Business News

Anthony Cronin
November 9, 2005

And on the 45th day, John Markowicz rested -- finally.

The official 45-day period during which Congress could have officially rejected this year's federal base-closing process quietly expired Tuesday with no action, as expected, taken by the House or Senate.

"It's over. It's finished," said Markowicz, who chairs the regional Subbase Realignment Coalition that fought the Pentagon's proposal to shut down the Naval Submarine Base in Groton.

That 45-day waiting period became a moot point, however, after the U.S. House of Representatives late last month took action that effectively ended the federal base-closure process and ensured that the Groton submarine base would remain open.

The House on Oct. 27 soundly defeated a resolution that would have rejected the independent base-closure commission's report. Under this year's base-closure process, both the House and the Senate would have to back legislation to reject the base-closure list. Since the House defeated any such effort, the nation's fifth base-closure process since 1988 effectively ended.

Nonetheless, Markowicz, a detail-oriented person, said he still wanted to mark the 45-day expiration on Tuesday and know that this year's BRAC process and the prospect of the closure of the nation's oldest submarine base are now history. Once the president passed along the base-closing recommendations to Congress earlier this fall, the House and Senate had 45 days to reject the list.

"Forty-five days has expired and therefore the report stands as issued and Submarine Base New London (its official Navy name) will not be closed," said Markowicz.

The Pentagon had proposed closing the base and transferring the submarines and various

commands to existing bases in Kings Bay, Ga., and Norfolk, Va.

After a lengthy, intense fight that enlisted some of the Navy's top retired brass as well as an influential letter from former President Jimmy Carter, a Georgia native, the independent Base Closure and Realignment Commission overruled the Pentagon's proposal and voted in late August to keep the 687-acre base open.

In May, the Pentagon proposed that the Groton base be shuttered as part of its recommendations of base closings or consolidations. The closing would have been the largest on the 2005 list of base closings and would have caused a severe economic disruption to southeastern Connecticut's economy, as well as sent shudders through the rest of the statewide economy.

The Groton base's shutdown could have resulted in a \$ 3 billion-plus shockwave to the statewide economy and the potential loss of 31,000 jobs, according to a state economic analysis. The base employs about 11,000 active military and civilian employees and has an annual payroll in excess of \$ 450 million.

22 major military bases will be closed by 2011

Most of California's losses will be from the Balboa Naval Hospital in San Diego. Some governors are challenging the shutdowns.

Copley News Service
Otto Kreisher
November 9, 2005

WASHINGTON -- The time for arguing and lobbying over the 2005 base closure process came to an end Tuesday and the time for painful decisions began for scores of communities and thousands of individuals across the nation.

After a decade of congressional resistance and years of expensive lobbying by vulnerable communities, the recommendations of the independent Base Closure and Realignment Commission became official with little public notice.

Congress's failure to reject the commission's conclusions within 45 legislative days since President Bush endorsed them Sept. 23, enables the Pentagon to begin the process of closing 22 major bases, realigning 33 other large facilities and shutting down or cutting back hundreds of smaller military facilities.

But a number of the commission's decisions affecting Air National Guard installations are being challenged in federal courts by governors who claim that the Pentagon cannot eliminate or change a Guard unit without their permission.

That includes Illinois Gov. Rod Blagojevich, who is trying to overturn the decision to remove 15 F-16s of the Illinois Air Guard's 183rd Fighter Wing from the Abraham Lincoln Capital Airport in Springfield, leaving the base with no flying unit.

There are a lot of questions about the competing state and federal authority, said Christopher Hellman, a BRAC expert.

"We'll have to defer to the courts on that," Hellman said.

But Tim Ford, another base closure expert, noted that "the success rate for (court) challenges to BRAC decisions has not been great."

Including the 163 positions at risk in Springfield, Illinois would lose a total of 5,697 military personnel and federal workers under the BRAC recommendations, with the biggest loss coming at the Army's Rock Island Arsenal.

Unlike previous rounds that hit California hard, the state would lose only a net of 2,598 military and civilian defense workers. Most of those would result from a shift of enlisted medical training from Balboa Naval Hospital in San Diego to a multi-service school in Texas.

Communities that will lose all or some of the Defense Department payroll and other spending that have augmented their economies for decades now must scramble to find ways to replace those funds.

And thousands of civilian defense employees will have to make decisions on whether to move with their jobs to the new military facilities -- in most cases hundreds of miles away -- or to seek other jobs where they are.

"The interesting thing about today, it's very anti-climactic," said Ford, executive director of the Association of Defense Communities, an organization that has helped localities rebound from base closures since 1978. "Most communities, after Bush took his action, moved forward" and have begun to plan for redevelopment of the closed bases, he said.

Those communities learned the lessons from previous closure rounds that "the earlier you start, the better off you are," Ford said.

Under the BRAC law, the military must start implementing the commission's recommendations within two years and complete the process in six. Under pressure to cut costs in the face of the prolonged conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan, the Pentagon is likely to move quickly in most cases, said Hellman, an analyst with the Center for Arms Control and Non-Proliferation.

"From a savings perspective, it's in the (Defense Department's) interest to do this as fast as possible," he said.

The process can be slowed down by problems in completing the required environmental cleanup of polluted facilities and delays by the neighboring community in establishing a redevelopment authority to take over a closed defense installation, he added.

Under the BRAC law, federal agencies have first shot at claiming a closing military facility, with state and local authorities coming next.

But Ford and Hellman noted that because the law requires government agencies to pay the military "fair market value" for any property and to assume responsibility for the environmental cleanup, it was unlikely that many federal agencies would want to claim the vacant bases.

Local authorities that claim a closed base also must pay for the property, but the Pentagon remains responsible for the environmental restoration.

Despite pressure from the Pentagon and the White House, Congress blocked another base closure process after the 1995 round. And during the debate in which the House defeated the effort by Rep. Ray LaHood, R-Ill., to reject the commission's recommendations, a number of lawmakers predicted this would be the last BRAC.

But Hellman and Ford both said the military will need to revise its base structure some time in the future and Congress has demonstrated that it does not have the political will to approve such changes.

"They will need something that looks a lot like BRAC to give Congress the cover," Hellman said.

Encroachment plan for Oceana forwarded to city planners

The Virginian-Pilot
Marisa Taylor
November 9, 2005

VIRGINIA BEACH — The Planning Commission is expected to recommend

Dec. 14 whether the city should halt new homes and businesses in high-risk areas around Oceana Naval Air Station.

The City Council voted 11-0 Tuesday to forward the proposal to the commission for review.

If the measure is approved, it would satisfy a demand by the federal base-closure commission that Virginia Beach stop incompatible development in Accident Potential Zone 1 off of Oceana's runways.

A majority of council members have ruled out condemning and buying homes and businesses in APZ-1, so the proposed changes to the city's zoning ordinance are another way to protect Oceana, some council members said.

The Defense Base Realignment and Closure Commission required the city to roll back existing development and halt further encroachment on the base or risk losing Oceana's jets. The council is expected to decide Dec. 20 how to comply with the BRAC ultimatum.

"This is the least toxic of all the options we face," Councilman Bob Dyer said. "All the Navy ever wanted was for us to stop encroachment."

But some council members said they have not yet decided whether such a measure is warranted.

"I'm sort of guardedly open to the idea," Councilman Richard A. Maddox said. "What we need to do is vet this thing and see what people think."

Three homeowners spoke on the matter, one in favor and two against.

Samuel Reid, an Oceana Gardens resident, said he supported the measure as long as the city set up a program to compensate property owners. "It maintains the character of our neighborhood and we get to keep our homes," he said.

Others said the measure didn't go far enough in addressing Navy concerns about encroachment.

If adopted, the changes would ban property owners from building homes, apartments, restaurants, shops and many other businesses on undeveloped land in APZ-1.

The restrictions would effectively end "by right" development. Such development – projects that don't need City Council approval for zoning or use changes – has been one of the Navy's biggest concerns.

The changes would leave many land owners with few options to develop their property, city officials said. The Navy considers manufacturing and industrial uses compatible in APZ-1, but those uses might be unsuitable next to homes, shops and offices.

As of Sept. 1, the city estimated that there are 235 undeveloped parcels in APZ-1, covering 137 acres and valued at about \$30 million.

Because the changes could reduce property values, council members said they plan to compensate some land owners.

Developers described the proposal as something that would hurt property rights.

Owners could rebuild or enlarge existing homes and businesses but could not increase density. For example, the owners of a single-family home could not replace it with a duplex, even if the underlying zoning allowed it.

Military base changes official

Dayton Business Journal

John Wilfong

November 8, 2005

The 2005 federal Base Realignment and Closure Commission's recommendations became law Tuesday, 45 legislative days after President Bush signed off on them.

Wright-Patterson Air Force Base officials said after some last-minute tweaking, the local base expects a net gain of 1,155 jobs.

"The community can be very pleased with the economic opportunities that can come out of this," said Col. Andrew Weaver, commander of the 88th Air Base Wing, headquartered at Wright-Patt.

Base officials already have begun planning for the moves that include losing 131 jobs and adding 1,286 jobs. Weaver said it is too early to tell when any of those jobs will move into or leave the base, but each change called for in the BRAC process must start moving no later than September 2007. Those moves must be complete by September 2011.

He said he has formed a team of military and civilian defense officials to work with local jurisdictions and school districts to help them prepare for potential changes.

Base officials also are planning associated construction projects that will most likely be needed to accommodate the additional missions, Weaver said. He said work is being planned for Area B, though it is too early to estimate costs or size.

The most significant additions to Wright-Patt include the consolidation of the Air Force Research Laboratory's Sensor Directorate from Rome, N.Y., and Hanscom Air Force Base near Boston at Wright-Patt. Also, the pending closure of Brooks City Base in San Antonio is expected to help Wright-Patt be the U.S. Department of Defense's main location for aerospace medicine and human effectiveness, or pilot performance, research. Those moves include the AFRL's Human Effectiveness unit from Brooks and Mesa, Ariz., the Air Force School of Aerospace Medicine and the U.S. Naval Aeromedical Research Laboratory, from Pensacola, Fla.

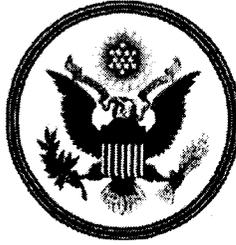
"In a decade or so, Dayton can be known as the place for everything aerospace medicine," Weaver said.

Opinions/ Editorials

Additional Notes

Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission

EARLY



BIRD

November 10, 2005

Department of Defense Releases

National News Articles

Local News Articles

**BRAC Quietly Makes Base Closure
Conclusions Official**

**Steering The Future Of Walter Reed
With Ownership Still in Question, City to
Start Planning**

**Senate OKs money for UAVs
Amendment improves prospects for healthy
GFAFB fleet**

It's official: Eielson to remain open

**BRAC deadline expires;
recommendations now law
The end is in sight for Fort Monroe and 21
other installations; implementation will begin
in 2007.**

**Bush signature finalizes BRAC gains for
area**

BRAC plan becomes law

Additional Notes

Department of Defense Releases

National News Articles

Local News Articles

**BRAC Quietly Makes Base Closure
Conclusions Official**
San Diego Union-Tribune
Copley News Service
November 9, 2005

WASHINGTON – The time for arguing and lobbying over the 2005 base closure process came to an end yesterday and the time for painful decisions began for scores of communities and thousands of individuals across the nation.

After a decade of congressional resistance and years of expensive lobbying by vulnerable communities, the recommendations of the independent Base Closure and Realignment Commission became official with little public notice.

Congress chose not to reject the commission's conclusions within the 45-day window of opportunity after President Bush endorsed them, enabling the Pentagon to begin the process of closing 22 major bases, realigning 33 other large facilities and shutting down or cutting back hundreds of smaller military facilities.

Unlike previous rounds that hit California hard, the state would lose only a net of 2,598 military and civilian defense workers. Most of those would result from a shift of enlisted medical training from Balboa Naval Hospital in San Diego to a multiservice school in Texas.

Communities that will lose all or some of the Defense Department payroll and other spending that have augmented their economies for decades now must scramble to find ways to replace those funds.

Thousands of civilian defense employees will have to make decisions on whether to move with their jobs to the new military facilities – in most cases hundreds of miles away.

"The interesting thing about today, it's very anticlimactic," said Tim Ford, executive director of the Association of Defense Communities, an organization that has help localities rebound from base closures since 1978. "Most communities, after Bush took his action, moved forward" and have begun to plan for redevelopment of the closed bases, he said.

Those communities learned the lessons from previous closure rounds that "the earlier you start, the better off you are," Ford said.

Under the BRAC law, the military must start implementing the commission's recommendations within two years and complete the process in six. Under pressure to cut costs in the face of the prolonged conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan, the Pentagon is likely to move quickly in most cases.

Steering The Future Of Walter Reed With Ownership Still in Question, City to Start Planning

Washington Post

Eric M. Weiss, Washington Post Staff Writer
November 10, 2005

D.C. Mayor Anthony A. Williams (D) said yesterday that the city will create a redevelopment authority to begin studying how to convert the Walter Reed Army Medical Center campus into the District's newest neighborhood.

The historic hospital between 16th Street and Georgia Avenue in upper Northwest is to close

in 2011 as part of the federal base-closing process.

"We want to see this compound opened up and incorporated back into the fabric of our city," Williams said. "The opportunity to redevelop 113 acres in the heart of the city represents tremendous opportunities and, I think, tremendous challenges."

Before the hospital can be offered to the city, the Department of Defense must decide whether it will keep the land. It could also sell the land to the highest bidder or negotiate a sale or transfer to the District, said Del. Eleanor Holmes Norton (D-D.C.). Other federal departments also could request the land.

Communities affected by base closures often create local redevelopment authorities, city planning director Ellen McCarthy said. Those entities negotiate with the Pentagon on any sale or transfer of the property to the community.

Norton said that the District is right to start planning but that there is no guarantee the federal government will sell or give the land to the District.

"Nothing is automatic," Norton said. "The process is not designed to help the District of Columbia."

The historic Army hospital was selected for closure earlier this year by the Base Realignment and Closure Commission. City officials said the commission's recommendations took effect Tuesday.

Stanley Jackson, the deputy mayor for planning and economic development, said he wants some sort of mixed-use project that would create employment once Walter Reed and its 1,300 jobs move to Bethesda. The Pentagon plans to expand what is now the National Naval Medical Center to create a "world-class flagship facility" on the Bethesda campus.

Williams said the new redevelopment authority will prepare a plan that takes into account the desires of the neighborhoods that border the

hospital. He said that the authority's leadership will include residents and that its proposals will be publicly debated.

"The community is going to be engaged slice after slice, step after step," Williams said.

Some want to go further. D.C. Council member Adrian M. Fenty (D-Ward 4), who represents the area around Walter Reed, said he wants the new authority to be headed chiefly by community residents.

Fenty said neighbors want a plan that will preserve open space that connects with nearby Rock Creek Park, single-family housing and neighborhood retail shops along Georgia Avenue.

Williams said he wants the plan completed by the end of 2006, which is also the end of his term as mayor. By starting the planning process now, Williams said, he hopes to avoid the problems other cities have run into while converting military bases.

He studied the experience of San Francisco when it was forced to close several facilities in the 1990s.

The mayor said the closure and redevelopment of San Francisco's Presidio Army base is an example of how to do it right. The base, which has stunning vistas overlooking the Golden Gate Bridge, has been converted into a national recreation center with residential neighborhoods and office space.

He cited the conversion of San Francisco's Treasure Island Naval Station, an effort that has been mired in bureaucratic inertia for years, as the way to do it wrong.

"We've got a great example of how it should be done and a not-so-great example," Williams said. "We want to take the better example."

Staff writer Debbi Wilgoren contributed to this report.

Senate OKs money for UAVs Amendment improves prospects for healthy GFAFB fleet

Grand Forks Herald

Elisa L. Rineheart, Herald Staff Writer

November 10, 2005

An amendment to the Defense Authorization bill will authorize the Pentagon to ramp up its fleet of unmanned aircraft, possibly increasing the number of UAVs destined for Grand Forks Air Force Base.

The Senate approved late Tuesday night a \$218 million provision authorizing the purchase of 29 Predator unmanned aerial vehicles. That's 20 more than originally planned, which increases the new fleet to 38 Predators.

The amendment, authored by Sen. Kent Conrad and co-sponsored by Sen. Byron Dorgan, both D-N.D., could increase the chances of bedding down more Predators in Grand Forks by 2007, Conrad said.

The addition would ease the economic impact caused by the departure of most of the base's flying tankers as mandated by the Base Realignment and Closure Commission.

Global Hawks and Predators are the most widely used combat drones in Iraq and Afghanistan.

"The Senate has agreed that development of the Predator is a worthy investment. And it is an investment that is sure to pay off for both North Dakota and our nation," Conrad said.

The Global Hawk is a high-altitude reconnaissance aircraft that tracks targets using radar and photographic and infrared images.

The Predator provides live video to battlefield commanders on the ground and carries Hellfire air-to-ground missiles.

Second bump

Air Force plans call for the UAVs to be jointly operated by Air Force and North Dakota National Guard pilots from Fargo.

This is the second time this year the Air Force has invested in robotic aircraft. Earlier this year, the service moved \$160 million out of its maintenance budget to buy 15 additional Predators and arm existing ones.

Some experts believe the Pentagon is cutting back funding of manned airplane programs to purchase remotely piloted systems.

But Conrad disagrees.

"I don't think Air Force officials would cast this as a trade off for UAVs," he said. "They've cut back on the FA/22 because of severe budget limitations."

Near sentient

Because of their evolving role, the Pentagon now is referring to UAVs as UASs: unmanned aircraft systems.

According to the latest edition of Air Force Magazine, the systems are expected to become "near-sentient robots able to perform airlift and long-range strike and even air-to-air combat missions."

"I've talked to the companies that are involved and we're going to see very rapid development of new functionality for these systems," Conrad said.

Besides disseminating intelligence, the drones will be able to bombard enemy territory with long-range weaponry, he said.

Conrad said he has written Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, urging him to expand the Global Hawk UAS fleet.

"We are one step closer to making Grand Forks Air Force Base the new home to the next generation of UASs," Conrad said.

The bill still has to be reconciled with the House of Representatives version.

It's official: Eielson to remain open

Fairbanks Daily News-Miner

Sam Bishop, News-Miner Washington Bureau

November 10, 2005

WASHINGTON--A plan to remove all 18 A-10 jets and about 600 military personnel from Eielson Air Force Base became final Wednesday after Congress let the recommendations of a base review commission become law.

The base will be left with about 2,500 military personnel and 18 F-16 jets, according to a statement from the Eielson Air Force Base public affairs office.

"As of now there are no hard dates for the A-10s' departure and no official word on what kind of economic impact this will have," according to the statement. "There is still a lot of planning in the works and these numbers don't reflect possible additions or future plans for Eielson."

In addition to the Eielson changes, the Air Force facility at Galena, a village on the Yukon River 270 miles west of Fairbanks, will be closed.

And at Elmendorf Air Force Base near Anchorage, 42 of the 60 F-15 fighters will move out of state.

The changes will begin within two years and be complete within six, under the plan approved by the Base Realignment and Closure Commission in late August.

President Bush on Sept. 15 forwarded the commission's plan to Congress, which had 45 days to reject it. In the absence of any congressional action, the plan went into effect Wednesday.

Eielson dodged much deeper cuts proposed by the U.S. Air Force in May when the Department of Defense gave its base closure recommendations to the BRAC commission.

The Air Force wanted to remove most of Eielson's personnel and all permanently assigned jets. The base would have functioned as an expanded host site for training exercises eight or nine months a year.

The Fairbanks-based Save Eielson committee and Alaska's congressional delegation, which opposed the Air Force plan in testimony to the commission and raised questions throughout the summer, welcomed the final BRAC decision in August as a partial victory.

The plan will keep the base fully functioning all year, greatly reduce the job losses and maintain strategic jets in Alaska, they said.

Sen. Ted Stevens, in particular, had defended Eielson A-10s as strategically important, due to their proximity to Asia.

Air Force officials, in response to such arguments, said they had "specifically reviewed and considered the impact upon a possible conflict in Asia ... and assessed a minimal impact."

In the end, cuts at Elmendorf were much more substantial than those at Eielson. The Air Force estimated net job losses there at 934 due to the exiting fighters.

However, Stevens and others are not so worried about impacts on Anchorage because the Air Force plans, independently of the BRAC process, to supply Elmendorf with new aircraft in the next few years.

Those include up to 48 new FA-22 fighters and eight C-17 transport jets, according to information from Maj. James Law, director of public affairs for the Alaskan Command at Elmendorf.

The Galena base's closure came at the recommendation of the commission, not the Air Force. The commission decided Alaska didn't need two "forward operating bases." It left open a similar base at King Salmon on the Alaska Peninsula.

Galena community leaders said the closure could eliminate up to a third of the Yukon River village's 340 jobs. The closure also poses problems for facilities shared with the community and school district. For those reasons, the commission asked the Air Force to give Galena time to work out transition plans.

The Air Force has no personnel at Galena. It contracts with a private company to maintain the facility so fighters can land there. It also pays the state to keep the runway clear of snow in winter.

BRAC deadline expires; recommendations now law
The end is in sight for Fort Monroe and 21 other installations; implementation will begin in 2007.

DailyPress.com
Jim Hodges
November 10, 2005

The clock began ticking for Fort Monroe and 21 other military installations scheduled to be closed when the Base Realignment and Closure Commission's recommendations took effect Wednesday.

The 45-day period for Congress to accept or reject the report ended at midnight Tuesday, which means the recommendations became law.

Closing Fort Monroe, built by the Army in 1823, was the most significant action affecting the Peninsula. Its chief tenant, Training and Doctrine Command, will be moved to Fort Eustis.

Fort Eustis, in turn, loses much of its Transportation School to Fort Lee in Petersburg.

Law requires that the Department of Defense - which recommended the changes and others - begin their implementation by Sept. 15, 2007, and all of the moves must be complete by Sept. 15, 2011.

Still being determined is the fate of Oceana Naval Air Station in Virginia Beach, which has until spring to meet a list of requirements set by

the BRAC commission to remain the Navy's East Coast Master Jet Base.

The alternative listed in the BRAC report was for Oceana's jets to be moved to Cecil Field in Jacksonville, Fla., but that city has since withdrawn its support of the move.

Chief among the BRAC requirements for Virginia Beach are halting construction in the high-risk accident zone around Oceana and condemning more than 3,000 homes and businesses within that zone.

The city council voted Tuesday to halt construction in the affected area but has said that it will not condemn private homes.

Bush signature finalizes BRAC gains for area

Huntsville Times
From staff reports
November 10, 2005

Arsenal gets some 5,000 jobs, most of missile work

President Bush signed the 2005 Base Realignment and Closure Commission's recommendations into law Wednesday, cementing Redstone Arsenal's gain of nearly 5,000 jobs, including two top military headquarters and the bulk of the nation's missile defense work.

In August, the BRAC panel voted to relocate the headquarters of the Army Materiel Command, the headquarters of the Army Space & Missile Defense Command and most of the Missile Defense Agency's work from the Washington, D.C., area to Huntsville. Nearly 5,000 military and contractor jobs come with those moves, U.S. Sen. Jeff Sessions, R-Mobile, said in a news release.

The 5,000 jobs number is a net gain that factors in about 1,000 Redstone jobs that would go elsewhere under the BRAC recommendation.

Units slated to leave Redstone include the U.S. Army Munitions, Ordnance and Electronics School, to be consolidated with schools at Fort Lee, Va.; a joint robotics program to be consolidated with work performed at Detroit Arsenal, Warren, Mich.; information systems development to be consolidated with work done at Aberdeen Proving Ground, Md.; and supply work performed for multiple missile and aviation programs to be moved to Columbus, Ohio, and Fort Belvoir, Va.

The House rejected an effort to kill the entire BRAC list in late October and the Senate did not act, sending the list to Bush for his signature.

"Today's action will make the Defense Department more efficient and it has confirmed that our superior bases are enduring ones," Sessions said in a statement.

Overall, Sessions said, Alabama gained about 5,000 jobs and retained about 2,500 jobs the Pentagon had slated for relocation to other states.

Birmingham retained the 117th Air Refueling Wing, keeping 548 jobs.

Montgomery retained the Operations and Sustainment Systems Group at Maxwell-Gunter Air Force Base, keeping 2,065 jobs. The 187th Fighter Wing gained 3 F-16s from Great Falls, Mont., adding 50 jobs, according to Sessions.

Five new Joint Reserve Centers will also open in several communities around Alabama, Sessions said, replacing aging "service specific" centers.

Sessions said Alabama will also benefit from about 10,000 jobs added at Fort Benning, Ga., just across the Alabama-Georgia line.

"A share of these families will settle in housing in Alabama," Sessions said.

BRAC plan becomes law

Great Falls Tribune

Peter Johnson, Tribune Staff Writer

November 10, 2005

As expected, Congress took no action by Tuesday night's midnight deadline to reject the Base Realignment and Closure Commission's plan to reshape military bases.

The passive adoption of the plan left Montana's U.S. senators pleased and Montana Air National Guard officials eagerly awaiting their new mission, which will involve newer, bigger planes and more personnel.

Over the next two years, the installation at the Great Falls International Airport will be converted from an F-16 facility to one capable of handling larger F-15 planes.

The transition is expected to cost \$22 million with much of the work going to local designers and contractors.

It's also projected that MANG will need 76 more full-time personnel and 39 more part-time, "traditional" Guardsmen to fly, maintain and protect the F-15s.

MANG now has nearly 300 full-time employees and an overall strength of 1,000 that includes part-time, drill-status Guardsmen.

"We're very pleased that the BRAC process has been completed and left us with a new flying mission," Col. Mark Meyer, commander of MANG's 120th Fighter Wing, said Wednesday. "The folks who work up here are patriots who want to serve their country, and without a mission, they couldn't serve."

In its mid-May report to BRAC, the Pentagon recommended that MANG's F-16 fighter jets be sent to other states or retired, and that MANG become a training facility. The Defense Department estimated that MANG would lose 107 of its 1,000 jobs, but officials here believed the impact would have been closer to 450 jobs.

Critics fretted that many pilots and mechanics would have had to commute long distances, move from Montana or quit the military if the Montana Guard unit lost its flying mission.

Instead, after lobbying by Montana's congressional delegation and community members, the BRAC Commission voted in late August to amend the Pentagon recommendation and replace MANG's 15 F-16s with the same number of F-15s.

President Bush went along with the BRAC recommendations. Congress had to accept or reject the whole slate, and by doing nothing Tuesday, the plan became law.

"I was confident we would get through those 45 legislative days without objection, and with MANG intact," said U.S. Sen. Conrad Burns, R-Mont. "I am glad to see this period come to a close so we can move forward."

"I could not be happier at how we were able to turn the initial recommendations around for Montana," he added.

"With this final, we can celebrate," U.S. Sen. Max Baucus, D-Mont., said. "Keeping the flying mission in Montana and bringing the F-15s to Montana will be great for our state's economy and will help ensure Montana continues to play a strong role in our nation's future military operations."

Rank and file MANG workers also were tickled.

"I'm excited that the BRAC decision is over and done with," said Staff Sgt. Chad Rearden, who works in MANG's hydraulics shop. "I'm glad I'll still have a good job and be able to stay in Great Falls. And I'm kind of looking forward to training to work on a new plane."

Meyer outlined what he stressed are still preliminary estimates and timetables:

- **Construction**

A team from the National Guard Bureau toured MANG a couple of weeks ago to assess what changes are needed to maintain, operate and protect the larger, two-engine F-15, which will be flying a somewhat different mission.

Maj. Corey Halverson, commander of MANG's civil engineer squadron, said nine maintenance buildings will have to be expanded and one building, the operations building, will have to be torn down and replaced.

Meyer said the current operations building is dated and needs more security for MANG's new mission.

The construction work is projected to cost \$22 million, including \$9.6 million for the new operations building.

MANG already has selected a Great Falls engineering firm, Thomas Dean & Hoskins, to do design work starting next year.

Halverson said he anticipates that Great Falls area firms and workers will do most of the construction.

- **Timing**

"We haven't seen the final paperwork describing the flow of iron," Meyer said, using Air Force lingo for the shift of planes.

It will be a complicated puzzle for the Air Force to make all the shifts in planes called for in the BRAC plan while fighting a war, pulling alerts and training, he said.

The BRAC law says the Air Force must start making the changes by at least Sept. 15, 2007 and complete them by Sept. 15, 2011, Meyer said.

However, he said he is optimistic that MANG can start the conversion fairly early in the process, based on early discussion with the National Guard Bureau.

MANG officials anticipate they'll get money to do the design work on building changes next year, with the construction occurring in 2007, he said.

"We think we'll get the airplanes shortly after that, maybe by 2008," Meyer said.

- **Plane model and training**

Meyer said he's been told MANG will receive newer, C model F-16s, in part because many of the older A models are being retired. He said it is not clear from which active-duty Air Force or Air Guard bases the F-15s will be coming, nor where MANG's F-16s will be sent.

MANG pilots and ground crew members will all need training on the new planes. Pilots are expected to train for three to six months at an Oregon Guard base, Meyer said, while ground crew members could get their initial training at a couple of different bases. They then would do "hot time" training as mechanics on active jets at an F-16 base before returning home.

"There could be a time when we have no airplanes on this installation," Meyer said, adding that could occur after F-16s are removed and while pilots are training elsewhere on F-15s.

"I hope any such gap would be a matter of months, not years," he added.

When the F-16s were first assigned to MANG in 1987, the Montana unit moved up in line in front of some other waiting Guard bases because it was ready to accept them, the wing commander said.

Meyer, 53, was a young pilot back then when MANG converted from F-105s to F-16s.

"The difference in maneuverability and avionics computer controls (between the F-105 and the F-16) was like night and day," he said, adding that he hopes the change to the bigger and more powerful F-16 will come soon enough for him to fly it before he hits retirement age.

Opinions/ Editorials

Additional Notes

Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission

EARLY BIRD

November 14, 2005

Department of Defense Releases

National News Articles

Local News Articles

Will They Come?

Additional Notes

Department of Defense Releases

National News Articles

Local News Articles

Will They Come?

The Washington Post
Dana Hedgpeth, Washington Post Staff Writer
November 14, 2005

Tommy Ellis, a principal in Carlyle Group, stands in a field of grass and brush at routes 28 and 50 in Chantilly, where the worldwide investment company plans to construct two five-story office buildings, with tenants as yet unsigned. The air is heavy with confidence.

District-based Carlyle is among a handful of developers preparing to build here at Westfields Corporate Center, and while each project has its own distinctions -- Carlyle is offering high security, for example -- they incorporate a new reality about the commercial real estate market

in Northern Virginia: Building on speculation is back, thanks to the boom in government contracting.

For developers, that boom has been enhanced by new high-security requirements from the Pentagon and the federal government's desire, articulated in the recent base realignment and closure recommendations, to move some of its employees out of leased office space in areas such as Crystal City to more secure and distant buildings.

Developers expect more demand for office space in pockets of Northern Virginia, especially Westfields, as agencies and contractors hunt for sturdier walls, unbreakable glass and buildings set far enough back from the road to deter attacks. Westfields, an office park of about 1,000 acres, also houses the National Reconnaissance Office, the top-secret agency that designs, builds and operates the nation's reconnaissance satellites.

"It's the who's who of defense contractors out here," said Ellis, pointing to a building at Westfields that houses outposts of Computer Sciences Corp. and General Dynamics Corp.

A new CIA complex is being planned near Westfields, and developers expect the presence of the agency to attract even more contractors eager for office space nearby.

Westfields, which already has about 5 million square feet of office space, just less than the size of the Pentagon, could nearly triple in size. An additional 1.1 million square feet is either under construction or on the drawing board, more

BRAC Commission Early Bird

Use of these articles does not reflect official endorsement.
Reproduction for private use or gain is subject to original copyright restrictions.

construction than most other sub-markets in Northern Virginia have seen in recent years, real estate researchers and brokers said. And much of it is going ahead without pre-leased tenants.

That construction on speculation comes as a dramatic counterpoint to recent history. The technology boom and bust of the 1990s left companies with millions of unleased square feet on their hands, causing vacancy rates to spike and rents to plummet. Caution has ruled since, at Westfields and elsewhere, with most developers signing up tenants before putting up buildings.

Wary voices are still being heard. Brokers point out that tenants have been leasing about 250,000 to 300,000 square feet of office space a year in Westfields, and the 1.1 million square feet that is being built over the next few years could lead to an oversupply.

Some developers and brokers remain reluctant to build "on spec" -- especially with rising construction costs -- until they can get a better fix on whether there is sufficient demand for the buildings under construction. Few can afford to have a building sit empty.

Mark Winkler Co. of Alexandria is selling its Westfields portfolio, which includes some 800,000 square feet of office space plus land that could permit construction of 1.7 million square feet more. It's a sign, some brokers say, that the market has reached its peak. Some say Winkler is getting out and cashing in instead of taking a risk in developing the rest of its land.

And a building that was once leased by the company now known as MCI Inc. still stands empty.

"It's a lot of space coming on line at Westfields," said Malcolm Schweiker, a senior vice president at CB Richard Ellis, a commercial real estate firm. "I don't think there's ever been this much space all at one time."

As questions are raised, a few developers are moving slowly on deciding to build without tenants, while others are pressing ahead quickly.

"Is it too much space coming on?" said Matt Ward, a senior vice president of Alter Group, an Illinois real estate investor that recently bought land in Westfields and plans to build a 300,000-square-foot office complex there in the spring. "That's hard to answer."

He said his firm was still thinking about whether to go ahead without a tenant.

"We're sitting on the sidelines waiting to see," he said.

Oliver T. Carr III, chief executive of Columbia Equity Trust Inc., a District real estate investment trust that has been buying property in Westfields since 2002, is going ahead with construction of a large office building -- without a tenant.

"The only downside would be if government spending curtailed," he said.

The optimists say the opportunity to build high-security buildings at Westfields offers a promising niche.

"Now we're seeing defense contractors are expanding, and they're looking for secure space," said William H. Keech, who manages the Westfields park and is the president of the Westfields Business Owners Association. "Some of these new security requirements like setbacks from roads and having surface parking instead of a parking garage can be met at Westfields and can't be met in other locations."

The stable presence of the National Reconnaissance Office prompted Starco Properties, a real estate developer based at Fort Myer, to go ahead with two buildings, totaling 220,000 square feet, without pre-leasing.

Just last week, BPG Properties Ltd., a real estate investment company in Philadelphia, said it paid \$41.8 million for roughly 100 acres and plans to start construction early next year -- without a tenant -- on a 165,000-square-foot office building and has room to build at least 1 million square feet more. "We can meet any setback requirement, so it's important to begin the first

building soon," said Roy Perry, a senior vice president with the company.

Development at Westfields, once soybean fields and a sod farm, began after Henry A. Long, one of the founders of home real estate behemoth Long & Foster, started buying land in the early 1980s. Keech, who worked with Long at Westfields, said early developers bought the land for \$2.50 a square foot. Developers now pay roughly \$30 per buildable foot for land there.

Long built some office buildings -- some of the first tenants were telephone companies -- and sold off chunks of land to other developers, but the park suffered in the real estate crash of the late '80s and early '90s.

It took off after the National Reconnaissance Office arrived on 60 acres in the center of the park in the early '90s. That drew in defense contractors such as CACI, Lockheed Martin Corp., Northrup Grumman Corp. and Boeing Co. Most buildings in the complex have special areas for doing secret work.

"NRO is the anchor to Westfields much like the Pentagon is to Crystal City," Schweiker of CB Richard Ellis said. "Everybody wanted to be where the NRO is located."

Barely half a mile from NRO, Ellis walked the 41-acre Carlyle site the other day, wing tip shoes in squishy grass, describing the glass and concrete buildings he plans to construct.

"They're probably watching us," Ellis said, laughing as he surveyed the park.

Carlyle, which has a real estate investment fund of \$2.2 billion, is banking that government contracting companies will want high-security features and be willing to pay slightly higher rents for it.

"Not all setbacks are a bad thing . . ." says a flier marketing the building, playing off Pentagon requirements for building setbacks. "The setbacks will be 82 feet from the driveway, but we could do 150 feet back from our

neighbors," Ellis said, showing off space on the grassy lot that could be used to deter car bombs. The buildings will have windows that won't shatter and reinforced concrete walls that would help prevent them from collapsing like a pancake if attacked.

Carlyle plans to spend between \$65 million and \$95 million on the project -- about 15 percent more than it would on construction without the high-security measures -- and wants to get rents in the low \$30s a square foot, slightly more than the going rates in the mid- to high-\$20s a foot in other buildings at Westfields.

While Ellis argues that his high-security buildings could give a contractor a slight edge over competitors, other developers argue there is no need to offer costly security measures for contractors who do not necessarily have to comply with the same strict rules as government agencies do. And some are not so sure about how fast Westfields will develop.

"You've got new faces showing up, and they've got hot money and they want to turn it into a product rather than sit on the land," said Randall M. Griffin, president of Corporate Office Properties Trust, a Columbia real estate investment trust and one of the largest landlords in Westfields with 2 million square feet of space.

This month, Griffin is finishing a roughly 200,000-square-foot building he built without a tenant. He is waiting to see when to go ahead with a 600,000-square-foot project.

"Sometimes it's all a game," Griffin said. "You rush to be the first to be ready to go with a building, but he who is at the end of that cycle could get hurt pretty badly."

Opinions/ Editorials

Additional Notes

Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission

EARLY



BIRD

November 15, 2005

Department of Defense Releases

National News Articles

Local News Articles

Opinions/ Editorials

Haste made waste in Oceana buyout

Beale remains safe as BRAC deadline passes

Additional Notes

Department of Defense Releases

National News Articles

Local News Articles

Opinions/ Editorials

Haste made waste in Oceana buyout

The Virginian-Pilot
Knight Ridder/Tribune Business News
November 12, 2005
(Posted on November 14, 2005)

Nov. 12 - If Virginia Beach officials felt bullied into the \$15 million purchase of property near Oceana Naval Air Station, that's nothing to how citizens feel now.

There's no question that the Defense Base Realignment and Closure Commission was angered by the City Council's 2003 decision to rezone the old Seashire Inn property on Laskin Road to allow 72 high-end condos in a place buffeted by noise from Oceana's jets.

But BRAC was also angry about the city's invitation that hotel officials consider building a hotel near the new Convention Center, plans for a new city gateway along 19th Street, and another on Laskin Road, not to mention years of City Council disregard for the Navy's opposition to projects far bigger than this one and far closer to Oceana.

As reported by Pilot staff writers Marisa Taylor and Jon Glass, city officials were facing intense pressure from the state to buy John Mamoudis' property before the condos could be built. Officials didn't have time to research the deal adequately, or even to figure out the property's real value.

Trying to send BRAC a message it was serious about protecting Oceana, the city made in two weeks a deal that should've taken months. The clear and only winner in this whole affair is Mamoudis, who is millions of dollars richer for the City Council's hasty decision.

Taxpayers are \$15 million poorer, an amount equal to more than 3 cents on last year's city tax rate.

The Navy is no more protected, because the property isn't in the area with the highest likelihood of a crash.

BRAC Commission Early Bird

Use of these articles does not reflect official endorsement.
Reproduction for private use or gain is subject to original copyright restrictions.

The BRAC Commission has to be a little confused, because the city has now answered its worries about crashes by buying property that doesn't address them.

The City Council looks like it caved in to a bully, that it can be pressured by people who don't even understand the geography and that it gave a developer a sweetheart deal.

According to Taylor and Glass' reporting, most members of City Council opposed the purchase, even in the week before they voted to go ahead with it. Despite a history of disregard for Oceana, in recent years, the City Council has begun to pay much greater attention to the base's needs, something for which it hasn't received enough credit.

In this case, council members should have trusted their instincts. The Mamoudis purchase was unnecessary, and probably unnecessarily expensive. So notorious has the purchase already become that a new word has entered the city's vocabulary: "mamoudisized," to connote a deal in which the public gets snookered by paying too much for far too little.

Thankfully, they are showing more caution in the myriad other decisions they must make on Oceana, including what to do about redevelopment in the noise zones, and in the transition area.

Shortly after BRAC's ultimatum, we urged Virginia Beach to move quickly to resolve the issues surrounding Oceana. But now that the City Council has ruled out condemnation to protect the base, and Jacksonville has withdrawn from the competition, things have changed.

Deadlines are approaching, but speed need no longer be a major concern. The homeowners and businesses worried about condemnation should be at peace, while leaders go about the work of finding a way of living with, and protecting the Navy's mission.

As the Mamoudis mistake shows, the City Council needs to spend the time necessary to get the rest of this right.

Beale remains safe as BRAC deadline passes

Appeal-Democrat, Marysville- Yuba City, California

November 15, 2005

Wednesday was a momentous day for the Yuba-Sutter area and for the rest of the country, even if nobody seemed to notice. Quietly, anticlimactically, almost surreptitiously, the deadline passed for Congress to reject the recommendations of the Base Realignment and Closure Commission, which assures the area's future because it means Beale Air Force Base will continue to be a driving force for the area's economy and general well-being. It's a done deal, in other words, so we can all breathe easier - until there's another BRAC commission and another threat of closing, that is.

Congress had 45 legislative days to reject the commission's recommendations, which were presented to President Bush on Sept. 8 and approved by him on Sept. 15. But in spite of a few surprisingly ineffective sabotage attempts by some members of Congress, the plan now becomes law.

It was to be expected that members of Congress would pull out all the stops to scuttle the process. But the House in late October overwhelmingly rejected a bid to kill the plan, and the guns fell silent after that. For once, amazingly, the national interest triumphed over parochial self-interest, as a majority gritted its teeth and bowed to necessity.

The nation clearly has more bases than necessary, draining precious resources from higher priority needs. But it's also clear that in most cases these bases are an important element for the communities that host them. As BRAC beneficiaries, it's natural that we would cheer this turn of events. But we honestly believe the nation will be better off for the downsizing, in spite of the short-term pain. We feel for those

less fortunate communities - there but for the grace of BRAC goes Beale.

We can understand why Bush isn't crowing about this, though he can certainly count it as a victory of sorts. There's no reason to rub salt into open wounds. And with several inconclusive and bloody wars under way, and his poll numbers slumping, Bush might prefer to change the subject.

But this must nonetheless be counted among the times that this administration stuck to its guns and saw a policy decision through without wavering.

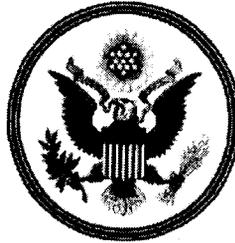
This area, spurred on by Yuba-Sutter Economic Development Corp. Executive Director Tim Johnson and the Yuba-Sutter Chamber of Commerce, undertook a massive effort to show the BRAC panel and the rest of the nation that Beale was an essential part of this community and a closure would devastate the area. While we did suffer a slight loss of military and civilian jobs as part of the process, this is nothing compared to the impact felt in areas where bases will be closed. The communities that will lose their bases will feel the loss for years to come.

We can be justly proud of our efforts - remember the Saturday morning assembly at the Yuba City High football field for a "Save Beale" aerial photo? - but we should not be resting on our laurels. There will be another base closing commission down the road, another threat to the region. As a community, we must ensure that the activism that helped convince the BRAC group and the Pentagon that Beale deserves to remain open continues to remain active planning and executing activities that engage the Beale community with our own, that demonstrate every day how important Beale is to our way of life.

Additional Notes

Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission

EARLY



BIRD

November 17, 2005

Department of Defense Releases

National News Articles

Local News Articles

**After Surviving Cuts, Base Looks at Future;
Consultant: Indian Head Must Diversify**

**Fort Monroe Will Close In 2011
Civilian employees begin to get answers concerning the end of the Army post in Hampton.**

'Our Marquis de Lafayette' Saluted

Additional Notes

Department of Defense Releases

National News Articles

Local News Articles

**After Surviving Cuts, Base Looks at Future;
Consultant: Indian Head Must Diversify**
The Washington Post
Ann E. Marimow, Washington Post Staff Writer
November 17, 2005

The Naval Surface Warfare Center at Indian Head survived the latest federal base-closing

process largely intact, but, according to a military consultant, it was weakened and needs to bounce back stronger than before.

Christopher J. Goode, a senior adviser for the Washington lobbying firm Hyjek & Fix, told Southern Maryland leaders this week that Indian Head has a "robust and strong future." But he said the base, Charles County's largest employer, must broaden its reach beyond the field of explosives research and testing before the inevitable next round of military facility cuts.

"It has to be seen as the undisputed center of excellence for energetics," Goode -- using the term adopted by the military for its explosives work -- told a crowd of more than 100 business, political and military leaders who gathered Monday at the Indian Head Pavilion. "It can't be seen as just that small base at the end of the highway."

Rep. Steny H. Hoyer (D-Md.) urged the coalition of local advocates, known as the Indian Head Defense Alliance, to help the military think creatively to attract new missions.

"The days of getting your assignment and sitting in your office and not reaching out are over," he said. "You're either growing or you're going."

Indian Head, which employs 3,600 military and civilian workers, had been considered vulnerable in this year's Base Realignment and Closure process, and it was slated for closure under one scenario.

But after a lobbying campaign that cost Charles \$395,000 and included a video, personal letters

BRAC Commission Early Bird

Use of these articles does not reflect official endorsement.
Reproduction for private use or gain is subject to original copyright restrictions.

and visits with decision makers, the Pentagon spared the base.

The BRAC report suggested moving the equivalent of 166 positions, or less than 5 percent of current employees, and essentially recognized Indian Head as the military's go-to center for the field of energetics.

After negotiations with the BRAC commission, Goode said the number of people scheduled to leave Indian Head was reduced to 91.

Even though the next BRAC process is unlikely to happen within the next five years, the Indian Head Defense Alliance already is trying to lure several Navy operations that are vacating leased offices in Northern Virginia in favor of government-owned properties.

John Bloom, president of the alliance, said the top concerns of the military leaders charged with making such decisions are affordable housing and the quality of public schools. He also asked the audience for help in shaping the base's future.

"It's as important now as it was before," Bloom said.

Indian Head, which sits on a peninsula along the Potomac River in western Charles, still faces competition from the Naval Weapons Station at China Lake in California. The momentum has been shifting to that larger base in the past decade.

Goode said there is no doubt that the Pentagon will look to Indian Head for its explosives technology.

"The question is, is energetics enough?" he said. "We think you need more."

**Fort Monroe Will Close In 2011
Civilian employees begin to get answers
concerning the end of the Army post in
Hampton.**

Newport News Daily Press
November 16, 2005

Jim Hodges

HAMPTON -- The Army's Training and Doctrine Command headquarters - the primary tenant at Fort Monroe - will move to Fort Eustis in 2011, with the Hampton post closing shortly thereafter. Other tenants will begin leaving as early as 2009.

Col. Jason T. Evans told a town-hall meeting of civilian employees Tuesday that about two-thirds of their positions would remain in Hampton Roads after Monroe was closed. He also held out the possibility of bonuses for those who remained on their jobs until that time. No amounts or conditions for the bonuses were given.

More than 2,000 civilians work at Monroe, and many of their jobs will follow TRADOC to Eustis. Others could wind up working for other branches of the service.

Monroe's closing was recommended by the Base Realignment and Closure commission, which included it with 21 other military sites marked for obsolescence. The post has been in the Army's inventory since 1823.

Evans was careful to stay within Defense Department guidelines when telling the employees why the post will cease to exist.

"BRAC is about teamwork," he said in a statement. "Our mission ahead may seem sad, but its purpose could not be nobler. Fort Monroe's sacrifice will ultimately benefit U.S. service members. ... We cannot lose sight of that fact."

The meeting - which was closed to the news media - was the first since the BRAC committee's recommendations became law Nov. 9. One attendee, who asked that his name not be used for fear of reprisal, said that Evans and his civilian deputy, Barry Buchanan, addressed some of the rumors that had been rampant at Fort Monroe since the post went on the list for closure in May.

On the day of the BRAC list announcement, May 13, then-garrison commander Col. Perry Allmendinger held a town-hall meeting to address some of the employees' concerns. Information has been scarce since then, with questions being called premature until the BRAC process wound its way through hearings and then presidential and congressional action.

Details concerning plans for the closure also have been scarce, though it's known that the process has been going on for about six months, with coordination with Fort Eustis for the TRADOC move being high on the list.

Much of Monroe will revert to the state, according to the deed granted to the Army when the post was built. What happens beyond that has been the subject of meetings involving the state, the city of Hampton and other groups.

Evans and Buchanan spoke for about 45 minutes Tuesday, and a fact sheet was distributed to the employees, whose questions were compiled over the past few weeks.

The fact sheet stressed that many of the activities the community associated with Monroe - the summer concerts and Music Under the Stars, for example - would continue for as long as there was demand and commercial sponsorship. The Casemate Museum will stay open "for as long as possible," the fact sheet read.

It reminded readers, though, that the artifacts and displays in the museum "belong to the U.S. Army."

Civilian employees have been allowed to accumulate up to 240 hours of leave time, with time beyond that lost.

That rule has been modified to allow employees to accumulate more time as an incentive to keeping them on the payroll.

In a separate statement, Evans said, "Every one of us will play a role in Fort Monroe's final chapter as an active Army installation."

Maybe not.

One worker said Tuesday several of his peers were actively seeking jobs elsewhere that offered a future beyond the end of the decade.

'Our Marquis de Lafayette' Saluted

The Washington Post

Ann E. Marimow, Washington Post Staff Writer
November 17, 2005

Unbeknownst to casual observers of the Pentagon's base-closing process, Southern Maryland had a secret weapon in its battle to keep three local bases open and flourishing.

At a meeting of advocates for the Naval Surface Warfare Center this week, Indian Head Defense Alliance President John Bloom thanked a long list of people who made it possible. He asked the audience to hold applause until the end.

But Rep. Steny H. Hoyer (D-Md.) arrived a little late and had other ideas. When Bloom read the name Jennifer Meyer, Hoyer began to clap with gusto.

"We were holding our applause until you got here, sir," Bloom joked.

Hoyer replied, "Jennifer Meyer deserved immediate applause."

So, who is Jennifer Meyer?

Turns out, Meyer spent the past three years as an aide to Sen. Barbara A. Mikulski (D-Md.), taking charge of Southern Maryland and base realignment and closure issues. When the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission was formed, Meyer was tapped as the Senate liaison. She ended up traveling the country with commission Chairman Anthony J. Principi.

"We had someone there on the right hand of the chairman," Hoyer said.

The effusive congressman went on to compare Meyer with the Marquis de Lafayette, who was

critical to George Washington's success in the Revolutionary War.

"She was our Marquis de Lafayette," he said.

Sequestered in the law library of the Charles County Attorney's Office the past couple weeks were the witnesses in the ongoing ethics investigation into former county administrator Eugene T. Lauer and Fiscal Services Director Richard Winkler.

The witnesses are appearing before the Ethics Commission as it tries to determine whether Lauer and Winkler -- both military veterans -- had a conflict of interest when they took part in discussions about enhancing retirement benefits for county employees with military experience.

The panel's proceedings are playing out behind closed doors in the county commissioners' hearing room, and it is not publicly known what each witness has said. But the broad outlines can be cobbled together from sightings in the hallway and interviews with sources.

When commissioners President Wayne Cooper (D) testified Nov. 9, it was the first time that Lauer had heard directly from the person who filed the complaint.

Joining Cooper last week was former commissioner W. Daniel Mayer (R), now a state delegate. The ethics panel watched a video of the meeting in which the county commissioners approved the military service credit. During that meeting, Mayer told the commissioners that he felt "very uncomfortable voting on it" because it would provide a benefit to a narrow group of employees.

The commissioners later rescinded their decision to adopt the credit, and the policy debate has not resurfaced.

Also testifying last week was human resources director Ann B. Pokora, who took part in the initial Pension Plan Committee meeting with Lauer and Winkler. According to minutes from that meeting, the two men recused themselves

from voting, and a source said they presumed Pokora was asked whether that was the case.

On Monday, Pokora returned to provide testimony to start Winkler's portion of the hearings. Also called to testify Monday was Commissioner Al Smith (R-Waldorf) and, at Lauer's request, former Charles County school superintendent John Bloom as well as financial adviser Sam Ketterman, who has worked with Lauer and the county on its bond rating.

Cooper's complaint suggested that an employee felt pressured by one of the two men to bring up the military service credit issue. Smith has said publicly that he was responsible for prompting Lauer and Winkler to explore the service credit.

Smith declined to discuss his testimony this week. But he said in an interview that he has "stood by those comments and will continue to because that's the truth."

Cooper, Lauer and Winkler also have declined to comment on the proceedings.

Playing the role of prosecutor in the hearings is lawyer Judson P. Garrett, a former general counsel to the Maryland General Assembly who helped draft the state ethics law. He is joined by Wilmer R. Ticer, who is advising the ethics panel during the hearings.

According to documents obtained by The Washington Post, the county has paid the two lawyers \$5,034 and \$3,090, respectively, for their work, which is scheduled to continue this month.

The Humane Society of Calvert County is helping find new homes for 25 to 30 dogs displaced by Hurricane Katrina.

At an adoption event Saturday -- dubbed Katrina Dog Day -- organizers will attempt to find a home for the holidays for the rescued pets. The event is scheduled from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Prince Frederick Volunteer Rescue Squad Company No. 4.

For more information about the adoption day and the dogs that need homes, visit www.calvertcountyhumansociety.org or call 301-904-5528.

The Calvert County Republican Central Committee elected Robin C. Marshall as its new chairman, succeeding Tom Kelley.

Don Statter was elected vice chairman.

Marshall owns an insurance agency. She is the sister of Calvert County Treasurer Novalea Tracy-Soper (R) and the daughter of former central committee chairman Roger Tracy and current committee member Linda Dianne Tracy.

"The mission of the Central Committee is to find the very best people in the county, persuade them to run for elective office and help them get elected," Marshall said in a statement released by the central committee. "We are facing a challenging election next year with competing visions for the future of this beautiful place where we live."

Opinions/ Editorials

Additional Notes

Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission

EARLY BIRD

November 18, 2005

Department of Defense Releases

National News Articles

Local News Articles

Consultant: Get ready for life after fort closes

DoD to begin closures, realignments

Electric Boat reports layoffs loom

Rendell brings grants to area

Depot unveils Bradley facility

Opinions/ Editorials

Families face fort closing

Additional Notes

Department of Defense Releases

National News Articles

Local News Articles

Consultant: Get ready for life after fort closes

Stakeholders discuss base closing and move to Md. at conference

The Hub

Sue Morgan, Staff Writer

November 17, 2005

WEST LONG BRANCH — Only about one-fifth of Fort Monmouth's more than 4,000 military contractors will probably follow the base's military and civilian workforce to Maryland once the local installation closes, according to a private sector consultant who studies such moves.

Nonetheless, Robert F. Giordano, the business consultant who has researched how Fort Monmouth's forthcoming closing will impact its military contractors, advised the private firms working with the base to begin preparing for the installation's transfer to the Aberdeen (Md.) Proving Ground (APG) within the next six to nine months.

Giordano, of RFG Inc., presented the military contractor's point of view on the fort's planned shutdown and its aftermath during a six-hour conference titled "Fort Monmouth: Today, Tomorrow, and in the Future" held Monday at Monmouth University.

The conference, attended by about 300 persons, mostly military contractors, was sponsored by the New Jersey Governor's Commission to Support and Enhance New Jersey's Military and Coast Guard Installations.

S. Thomas Gagliano and Frank C. Muzzi, both members of that commission and co-chairs of the Patriots Alliance, an advocacy group for fort contractors, hosted the event.

Others who addressed the attendees included acting Gov. Richard Codey, U.S. Reps. Frank Pallone (D-6) and Rush Holt (D-12), Eatontown Mayor Gerald J. Tarantolo, and retired Vice Adm. Paul G. Gaffney II, Monmouth University president, who has chaired the sponsoring commission.

In his presentation titled "The Bridge to Aberdeen," Giordano looked at the costs and overall impact contractors could incur if they choose to move their operations to the Maryland base or try to continue servicing Fort Monmouth from their New Jersey locations.

A portion of the contractor workforce operates in locations such as Iraq or Afghanistan and will not be affected by the move, which is to be completed by 2011 under the Pentagon's Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) process, Giordano said.

However, in his own informal survey of contracting firms, many of which are helmed by retired military personnel, Giordano said he found that only 20 percent of those firms would transfer their operations to Maryland.

In addition, many of the senior managers at the contracting firms would retire rather than move, a situation that would create a "brain drain," Giordano said.

Hiring experienced managers who can carry out the contractors' technical tasks will be more difficult due to retirements, he noted.

"The price of support will go up," Giordano said.

Smaller contracting firms might find it financially challenging to relocate and instead choose to stay in New Jersey with a satellite location in Maryland, he added.

In addition, the lack of information from the U.S. Army as to the timeline for moving Fort Monmouth is frustrating, Giordano said.

Many contractors will be split between the two bases as the move evolves over the next two to six years, he went on.

"Split operations will work in the short term, but if 'ground zero' is at APG, then most contractors need a main focus at APG," Giordano said.

Should another government agency, such as the Department of Homeland Security, come into the fort's location once current employees move out, contractors might be able to stay local and serve that agency's needs or those of the FBI or other public entities, Giordano said.

The transfer of Fort Monmouth operations according to the Pentagon timeline could be further delayed if personnel now working at APG's ordnance school, who are relocating to make way for the New Jersey base's employees, are held up in their own move to Fort Lee, Va., said Gaffney, the last speaker.

The rising costs of Operation Iraqi Freedom and the recovery from Hurricane Katrina could also tie up government funding for all of the realignments expected under the BRAC process, he added.

In a presentation titled "Effects on Communities," Tarantolo and other local officials discussed how the fort's closing will change the economies of Eatontown, Oceanport and Tinton Falls, the base's three host communities.

Officials of those towns along with representatives from the Monmouth County Board of Freeholders, the governor's office and the private sector have established the Fort Monmouth Reuse Committee (FMRC) as a preliminary step toward seeking new uses for the base's land and facilities.

The FMRC is charged with eventually creating a more permanent entity, the Fort Monmouth Redevelopment Authority (FMRA), to carry out

reuse plans and to seek new tenants from the private and public sectors to occupy the base's infrastructure.

Upon its formation, the FMRA will oversee the entire reuse scheme, coordinating efforts with government and commercial entities including contractors, such as those involved in the Patriots Alliance, Tarantolo explained.

In the meantime, the borough officials hope to work with the Patriots Alliance toward mutual goals such as replacing any lost jobs resulting from Fort Monmouth's shutdown, he pointed out.

"We respect what [the Patriots Alliance] is trying to do," Tarantolo said. "The redevelopment authority will encompass all aspects of Fort Monmouth's reuse, including what is being done by the Patriots Alliance."

Ultimately, the FMRA will look at a variety of uses for the 1,100-acre fort property, including open space, "clean industry," commercial enterprises and market-rate and affordable housing, Tarantolo said.

The formation of the redevelopment authority is pending approval of an application for "seed money" submitted earlier this year to the Defense Department's Office of Economic Adjustment.

The New Jersey Department of Community Affairs (DCA) has agreed to match any funds received from OEA by 10 percent, Tarantolo said.

Under the Pentagon's BRAC timeline, all of Fort Monmouth's military and civilian workers are to begin relocating to APG within two to six years.

DoD to begin closures, realignments

Belvoir Eagle

Donna Miles

American Forces Press Service

November 17, 2005

The Base Realignment and Closure Commission's recommendations for reshaping the Defense Department's infrastructure and force structure officially took effect at 12:01 a.m. Nov. 9 after Congress allowed them to pass into law at the mandated Nov. 8 deadline.

The nine-member BRAC panel delivered its final report to President Bush Sept. 8, and he, in turn, sent it to Congress for legislative review Sept. 15. Congress had 45 legislative days, until Nov. 9, to accept or reject the report in its entirety. However, it was not authorized to make any changes to the final report.

By statute, the Defense Department now has until Sept. 15, 2007 – two years from the date President Bush sent Congress the BRAC commission's final report – to begin closing and realigning the installations as called for in the report. The process must be completed by Sept. 15, 2011, DoD officials explained.

The 2005 BRAC recommendations represent the most aggressive BRAC ever proposed, affecting more than 800 installations, officials said.

The four previous BRAC rounds – in 1988, 1991, 1993 and 1995 – resulted in 97 major closures, 55 major realignments and 235 minor actions, according to DoD figures. Overall, closing and realigning these installations saved taxpayers around \$18 billion though fiscal 2001 and a further \$7 billion per year since, officials said.

BRAC 2005 is being called an important milestone in restructuring DoD's domestic base structure to improve efficiency and operational capabilities. It also supports plans to move thousands of U.S. forces currently serving overseas to within the United States as part of DoD's new global positioning strategy, officials said.

After months of study, installation visits and public hearings around the country, the nine-member BRAC panel approved 86 percent of DoD's original BRAC recommendations – 119 with no change and another 45 with amendments, the panel noted. The panel also

rejected 13 recommendations, significantly modified another 13, and made five additional closure or realignment recommendations on its own initiative.

Of DoD's 33 major closure recommendations, the panel approved 21, recommended seven bases be realigned rather than closed, and rejected five recommendations outright. In addition, the commission recommended closing rather than realigning another installation, for a total of 22 major closures.

Many of the transformational recommendations in the report, particularly those to establish joint operations, will present significant challenges as they are implemented, officials acknowledged.

Detailed business plans will be developed for every BRAC recommendation, laying out what actions are required to implement them, when they will occur, and what resources are needed to put them into effect, officials said. Affected services and agencies must submit these plans by Nov. 15 to the DoD Installation Capabilities Council, which will review them and forward them to the Infrastructure Steering Group for approval.

Meanwhile, DoD is poised to begin working with civilian employees and communities to be affected by the BRAC decisions. DoD has a long and successful history of helping its civilian workers impacted by base closings, officials noted. This includes programs that promote placement, training, retraining and transition to new positions.

Since 1989, DoD has reduced its civilian work force by 428,400 people, with less than 10 percent of those reductions through involuntary separations, officials said. DoD's Priority Placement Program, which officials call the centerpiece of DoD's civilian assistance and reemployment programs, gives defense employees placement priority at other DoD facilities.

A community conference, to be held in Baltimore Nov. 28 through Dec. 1, will focus on

many of the issues involved in BRAC 2005 and the programs available to address them.

Electric Boat reports layoffs loom

Norwich Bulletin
Ray Hackett
November 17, 2005

GROTON-- The purpose of Gov. M. Jodi Rell's commission to diversify the southeastern Connecticut economy was underscored at its inaugural meeting Wednesday with some bleak news from the participants.

Electric Boat President John Casey said the company will be forced to lay off workers in the first quarter of 2006 because of a shortage of repair work at the shipyard.

Casey did not provide details regarding the work force reduction, saying only an announcement will be made at the company's Dec. 6 annual legislative breakfast.

But he said the independent Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission's decision to keep open the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard in Maine had a "huge impact" on the company.

"It does underscore that you can't take anything for granted," said Douglas Fisher, chairman of the governor's commission.

Rell called for a commission to work with regional officials to diversify the economy after the state overturned a Pentagon recommendation to close the Groton Submarine Base in August.

Fisher, director of economic and business development at Northeast Utilities, was named to lead the commission earlier this week.

Rell did not attend Wednesday's meeting but sent representatives from her office and several state department commissioners.

More than 50 municipal, state, education and business leaders and representatives from regional groups attended the meeting at the Groton Town Hall Annex.

Fisher, in his opening remarks, said he wanted to assure people the purpose of the group was not to dictate an economic development strategy for the region.

He said the group will use the region's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy as the starting point with a goal of providing means to implement its priorities.

'Build on the process'

"The purpose is not to take over any process, but to build on the process that you already have down here," he said, acknowledging skepticism among some of the invited participants.

Groton Town Manager Mark Oefinger said he was pleased the region's existing economic development strategy would be the foundation for the group.

The strategy was developed by the Southeastern Connecticut Enterprise Region, and lists the economic development priorities as determined by a yearlong study in conjunction with the Southeastern Connecticut Council of Governments.

North Stonington First Selectman Nicholas Mullane, president of the enterprise region, said the group might benefit from a smaller commission, using the existing organizations in the region, such as the enterprise region, the council of governments and others more familiar with the economic needs of the region.

Within the next several weeks, Rell is expected to name a nine-member executive committee to oversee the commission's work, Fisher said. The committee will likely consist of representatives from those groups, he added.

The commission members agreed to meet in January to decide a course of action.

"I think the most important thing to take away from this is there is obviously some potential here," Oefinger said. "We now know we have the attention of the folks in Hartford."

Rendell brings grants to area

Beaver County Times and Allegheny Times
Susan Schmeichel, Times Correspondent
November 18, 2005

FINDLAY TWP. - A proposal for retaining a military commissary and post exchange in the Pittsburgh area received a boost Thursday with a state grant to the Regional Joint Readiness Center Task Force.

Gov. Ed Rendell presented the \$266,200 Base Retention and Conversion grant during a news conference Thursday in Findlay Township. In addition, grants were awarded to the Findlay Township Municipal Authority and the Redevelopment Authority of Allegheny County to aid in developing business parks to be served by the now-under-construction Findlay Connector.

The military task force plans to use \$25,000 to support its proposal of establishing a commissary and post exchange, possibly at the site of the current headquarters of the 99th Army Reserve Regional Readiness Command Center on University Boulevard in Moon Township. The command will eventually move to Fort Dix, N.J., but the reserve facility will remain.

"Half of that building is available, and there is adjacent land," said Keith Dorman, spokesman for the task force.

He said when the congressional Base Realignment and Closure Commission recently recommended closing the Army's Charles E. Kelly Support Center, which has facilities in Collier and Neville townships, it did not address the commissary that so many local retired military depend on.

The task force has petitioned the state adjutant general and the federal Defense Commissary Commission to relocate the commissary when the support center is closed, Dorman said.

In addition, some of the grant money will be used to prepare the former support center properties for redevelopment once it is closed,

Dorman said. The county will take the lead on the redevelopment, he added.

Approximately \$196,000 will be used to create the Regional Joint Readiness Center at the 911th Air Reserve Station in Moon as recommended by the BRAC Commission.

The Findlay Township Municipal Authority received a \$2 million grant and a \$4.9 million loan from PennWorks to expand water and sewer systems to the 4,500 acres that will be accessed by the Findlay Connector.

The former strip-mine land surrounding Pittsburgh International Airport will be developed into three industrial sites - Clinton Industrial Park, Route 30 Industrial Park and Imperial Land Industrial Park.

PennWorks provides grants and loans to improve infrastructure related to economic development.

"Too many times, we build roads to sites that never come to fruition," said Tom Gallant, president of the Findlay Township Supervisors. "We had to be responsible and not expect development companies to do it themselves."

Putting the infrastructure in while the roadway is being built is less expensive and will make the land easier to market to developers, Gallant said.

"The land is worthless if we don't have water and sewer to offer those developers," Allegheny County Chief Executive Dan Onorato said.

The Redevelopment Authority of Allegheny County also received \$5 million through the Tax Increment Financing Guarantee Program for the development of the Clinton Industrial Park.

Depot unveils Bradley facility

Texarkana Gazette

Aaron Brand

November 17, 2005

Red River Army Depot showed off a new overhaul facility Wednesday for the Bradley

Combat Systems as part of its partnership with defense contractor BAE Systems.

Work on three Bradley components will be performed at the facility: the 25mm enhanced gun system, turret drives and transmission. Overhaul, remanufacturing and upgrades will be done on those Bradley components at the facility, which was remodeled to perform the work.

BAE and RRAD officials spoke about Bradley work and the public-private partnership before unveiling the facility.

"First of all, I'd like to thank the BRAC (Base Realignment and Closure) Commission for recognizing they need to keep Red River open," said Andy Hove, director of Bradley Combat Systems for BAE Systems.

He said the depot's designation as a Center for Industrial and Technical Excellence has been "a real milestone, a real breakthrough for us to take the partnership to the next level."

Hove, noting that the U.S. Army has moved beyond the thinking that the Bradley should be shut down, said cutting the ribbon on the new facility is "just a beginning" for the partnership.

"We've always had a close relationship," he said referring to RRAD's work with BAE, which was previously known as United Defense.

He said BAE hopes the relationship moves forward, noting Red River works on three of the most critical components for the Bradley Combat System.

“The Red River Army Depot is an integral part of the reset and remanufacture process,” Hove said. “The partnership is the best way to enhance the capability and effectiveness of our soldiers by continuously improving the Bradley fleet.”

Col. Douglas Evans, RRAD commander, said more than 4,200 Bradleys have been produced at Red River since work first began on Bradleys there in 1986.

“I think the Red River slogan (Building it as if our lives depend on it—theirs do) says it all,” Evans said about RRAD’s commitment to working on Bradleys. He said the soldier is the customer.

“We need to make sure the soldiers get the best equipment and that we provide them with as much capability and survivability as possible,” he said.

He said RRAD spent about \$1 million to upgrade the facility to make a home for the Bradley work and BAE purchased tools for the new bays that line this overhauled section of a production bay.

“We dedicate this building to all the soldiers that are supporting freedoms throughout the world,” Evans said.

Mike Asada, deputy program manager for combat systems for U.S. Army Tank-automotive and Armaments Command, praised the team effort that brought this opportunity for a new Bradley facility.

“Without your dedicated efforts and your commitment, I don’t think this ever would’ve happened,” Asada said.

He said the work is ultimately about delivering Bradleys to the soldiers and lauded the LEAN manufacturing principles put into place at Red River.

RRAD worker Richard Pitts, speaking at the transmission disassembly station for local officials touring the facility, talked about the efficiency in the process.

“Each station kind of feeds to the next as they go down through it,” Pitts said, noting Bradley transmissions can be remanufactured at the rate of about three per day.

Joe Cleghorn, a RRAD systems mechanic who works on traverse drive assembly, said the new work bays allow RRAD workers to have all of the parts and hardware they need in one place.

“It speeds everything along,” he said.

Red River and BAE Systems started their partnership in August last year to work on the management, overhaul and upgrade of the Bradley Combat System fleet. BAE Systems is an international company with nearly 100,000 employees.

Opinions/ Editorials

Families face fort closing

Asbury Park Press
Susan Rerecich-Ciaffi
November 17, 2005

I have read many letters and editorials in the past few months about the closing of Fort Monmouth. People have written about how the closing will affect local businesses. Others have written to give suggestions on how the closed base should be developed for future use.

Very little has been written about the human side of this story. Thousands of families will be affected by the closing. My family is one of them. My husband is an electrical engineer at the fort. We have a 4-year-old and an infant.

This is the second time the Base Realignment and Closure process has affected us. During the 1995 BRAC, my husband was working at the base in Bayonne. It was closed and we moved here in 1999. Now we have to move again.

We consider ourselves lucky because we do not have many ties here. Most of our family is in New York. But many other people have lived here their entire lives and will have to move.

When will we be relocated? Every day the story changes. Now it sounds like four to six years. So for years, we'll know we have to move, but won't know when. We are all in limbo. When we lived in Bayonne, my husband saw couples divorce because one person didn't want to relocate. Teenagers in high school had to move and attend new high schools. There was so much upheaval.

It's important to think about redevelopment and local businesses being affected by the upcoming closure. I just ask that you think about the thousands of us, too.

Additional Notes

Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission

EARLY



BIRD

November 22, 2005

Local News Articles

Department of Defense Releases

National News Articles

Local News Articles

Either Way On Oceana, Beach Loses, Study Says

Fight to Transform Willow Grove into an Air National Guard-Operated Base Shifts to Nation's Capitol;

Move Comes as Navy Issues 'Notice of Availability' for Willow Grove Acreage

Naval station jobs left adrift

Base's end stirs new dreams

Residents say the naval facility will be missed but Ingleside's future is still bright

Opinions/ Editorials

Save Oceana, from Suffolk

Additional Notes

Department of Defense Releases

National News Articles

Fight to Transform Willow Grove into an Air National Guard-Operated Base Shifts to Nation's Capitol;

Move Comes as Navy Issues 'Notice of Availability' for Willow Grove Acreage

PR Newswire US

November 22, 2005

HARRISBURG, Pa., Nov. 21 /PRNewswire/ -- Representatives of Governor Edward G. Rendell and the Pennsylvania National Guard today urged federal lawmakers in Washington D.C. to support a continued, significant, military presence at Willow Grove through the guard's proposed future-use plan.

The key to Willow Grove's future as a military installation is maintaining the airfield. The plan creates a robust military presence with more than 3,700 personnel, including the addition of more than 1,000 Army National Guard soldiers from the 56th Stryker Brigade.

"Our plan shows that keeping this airfield open will save taxpayers millions of dollars, while assuring our homeland security and extending Pennsylvania's dramatic, record-setting economic expansion," said Governor Edward G. Rendell.

"If the Navy sells Willow Grove's airfield, we will lose a vital national defense asset, which is essential to both public safety, homeland security and emergency preparedness in southeastern Pennsylvania."

Willow Grove's 8,000-foot runway is the longest in the region, outside of Philadelphia International Airport, and it has served effectively as a staging area during past emergencies.

The Governor -- who was represented Monday in Washington by Gen. James Skiff, deputy adjutant general of the Pennsylvania National Guard; Col. Paul Comtois, vice-wing commander of the 111th Fighter Wing of the Pennsylvania Air National Guard; Dennis Guise, chief counsel for the Pennsylvania Department of Military and Veterans Affairs; and Jeffrey Marrazzo, special assistant to the Governor -- has been fighting to save Willow Grove and other military bases since the Base Realignment and Closure Commission targeted them for closure or realignment last May.

The Governor has also been working with Pennsylvania's Congressional delegation, including Sens. Arlen Specter and Rick Santorum, and Reps. Allyson Schwartz, Michael G. Fitzpatrick, and Curt Weldon. The Governor asked the delegation for their continued support for Willow Grove as a military airfield.

On Nov. 15, the Navy issued a "Notice of Availability" for 910 acres of land and 170 buildings they now operate at Willow Grove and set a 30-day deadline for interested federal agencies and Department of Defense components to respond. Governor Rendell said the Navy's move is not consistent with the new BRAC law ordering the continued support for military operations, including flight operations at Willow Grove. It is also inconsistent with the recent decision by the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania declaring "null and void" ordering the proposed deactivation of the 111th Fighter Wing.

Last week, the Governor wrote to Navy Secretary Donald Winter urging him to take no action that is inconsistent with maintaining flight operations at Willow Grove.

"It's crystal clear that the Air National Guard enclave at Willow Grove should include

working runways, towers and all other flight facilities," the Governor said.

In addition to the fact that the BRAC law and court decision require the airfield to stay open, many of the pending BRAC Navy and Marine moves from Willow Grove carry a price tag that is prohibitive. For instance, more than \$15 million would have to be spent to move the Defense Department's ASR-11 RADAR towers.

Besides the continued use of the facility's airfield, Governor Rendell urged lawmakers to support Pennsylvania's proposal to move the new 56th Stryker Brigade Combat Team to Willow Grove.

"The Stryker Brigade brings more than \$1.5 billion to Pennsylvania's economy and the Guard's future-use plan for Willow Grove will station its headquarters and more than 1,000 personnel at the base," the Governor said.

Moving the Stryker HQ to Willow Grove brings with it improved military cooperation, federal and state cost savings of up to \$6 million and will allow private business expansion at Philadelphia's NE Airport.

The precedent for moving the Stryker Brigade and transferring land to the Pennsylvania National Guard is in Lebanon County. Following the 1995 BRAC order, the active Army Garrison and all of the land at Fort Indiantown Gap was transferred to the Army National Guard. The economic benefit following that move exceeded \$430 million this year alone.

Going forward, Pennsylvania's future-use plan will offer other federal agencies, including FEMA and EPA, the use of Willow Grove's installation, consistent with the federal government's move toward agency consolidation.

"Willow Grove has demonstrated its unique ability to mobilize quickly during natural disasters, like Hurricane Katrina, and man-made catastrophes, like Sept. 11," Governor Rendell said. "But, if the airfield, its heart, is ripped out,

if the Navy is allowed to pack up and shutter the airstrip, it will only serve as a monument to government imprudence."

The Rendell Administration is committed to creating a first-rate public education system, protecting our most vulnerable citizens and continuing economic investment to support our communities and businesses. To find out more about Governor Rendell's initiatives and to sign up for his weekly newsletter, visit his Web site at: <http://www.governor.state.pa.us/>.

Naval station jobs left adrift

The Virginian-Pilot
Louis Hansen
November 21, 2005

NORFOLK — As the federal base-closing commission labored this year to downsize or shut down unneeded military bases, Virginia leaders lamented the loss of Fort Monroe and scrambled to save Oceana Naval Air Station.

Virtually unnoticed in the scrum over big bases, the military cuts stung a small corner of Norfolk Naval Station.

About 320 federal employees at the Defense Finance and Accounting Service discovered that this round of base closures, announced in May, means they might be moving to Indiana, Ohio, Maine or New York. Or they might just lose their jobs.

Scores of long time federal employees have been plunged into uncertainty about their careers, futures and family plans.

"We were in denial," said John A. Williams Jr., who has worked as a military accountant for 38 years. "We didn't actually think it was going to happen."

In the rush of Defense Base Realignment and Closure Commission decisions affecting military-rich Virginia, looking after the smaller commands got lost. While Virginia's representatives mobilized to save Oceana, congressional delegations from New York and

Maine fought for – and preserved – their clerical posts.

Not so for the Norfolk office of the Defense Finance and Accounting Service.

Got a bill for a small repair to a ship? Transfer money from one Navy line item to another? Issues with a military charge card? Defense Finance and Accounting Service handles it. The Norfolk office serves the Atlantic Fleet and other major commands. A Navy captain commands the department.

Although local accounting service employees believe they provide valuable, face-to-face service for their military clients, some employees survived an earlier round of base closings with doubt and suspicion. In the early 1990s, the accounting service closed offices and consolidated nationwide.

On May 13, the Department of Defense released the first batch of proposed base closings and realignments that meant a net loss of 729 civilian jobs at Norfolk Naval Station.

More details were released a few days later. That's when accounting service employees finally learned their fate.

It was "a shock," said Frank Rock, a financial specialist who has worked there for 10 years.

The base-closing commission decided to again shrink the number of accounting offices across the country, this time from 26 to five. The move is expected to initially save the Defense Department \$100 million annually, and \$1 billion over the next two decades.

But to Rock, a vice president with the local chapter of the American Federation of Government Employees, the commission decision means the loss of good local jobs.

The average salary is \$38,500, about 20 percent higher than the regional average, according to figures compiled by the union. And many of the employees are well-settled – the average worker is 49 and has been in government service for 18

years, Rock said.

Despite the impending loss of jobs, Rock said, “all the attention went to Oceana.”

While Virginia leaders focused on large bases and leased property, congressional delegations from New York and Maine lobbied to save their Defense Finance and Accounting Service offices.

Both states faced BRAC closings in the 1990s – Griffiss Air Force Base in central New York and Loring Air Force Base in northeast Maine – and the accounting service sites were key employers on the former military facilities. Their accounting service offices, about the same size as Norfolk’s, were also earmarked to close in this round.

Rep. Michael Michaud, a Democrat from Maine, said the state delegation stayed focused and persistent. He added that his personal relationship with commission Chairman Anthony J. Principi also helped. Michaud serves on the House Veterans’ Affairs Committee, and Principi formerly served as secretary of veterans affairs.

Principi agreed to send a commission member to visit the Limestone, Maine, accounting office, although similar-size facilities were skipped, Michaud said.

For Maine, the base closing and realignment process worked, Michaud said. State officials convinced the commission that the accounting services could attract, train and keep skilled clerical workers in rural Aroostook County.

“These jobs were premier jobs,” Michaud said.

Rep. Thelma Drake, R- 2nd District, said the state’s leadership rallied its resources to saving Oceana this summer. Drake’s district includes Fort Monroe, Norfolk Naval Station and Oceana.

Drake opposed the BRAC process but said it worked in the case of paring back the Norfolk

Defense Finance and Accounting Service office. The consolidation may be painful for the employees, but it will save taxpayers money, she said.

“This is something that can be combined,” she said. “That’s exactly what BRAC is supposed to do.”

Drake said the region would have garnered little sympathy or support in a political battle over the accounting service because South Hampton Roads expects to gain 800 jobs in other military commands.

“It’s very tough to make that argument,” she said.

The small towns in New York and Maine each stand to gain between 300 and 500 jobs.

Rock said most workers at Norfolk’s accounting service are looking for other jobs, and some have already left.

Employees at Defense Finance and Accounting Service do not know where they will go, he said. Rock estimates that only 10 percent will follow their jobs out of the area, based on the experience of earlier accounting service consolidations.

Glenn Flood, a Defense Department spokesman, said each department or command decides how to implement the commission’s directive. No decisions have been announced, he said.

“They’re still working on the plan,” he said.

Workers displaced by base closings and realignments will be given support and opportunities to find other, local federal employment, Flood said. Employees at the Norfolk office will have two to six years to find other jobs or relocate.

Defense Finance and Accounting Service spokespersons in Northern Virginia and Indianapolis declined to comment.

Williams, 56, who has worked locally as a federal clerk for more than three decades, owns a home in Newport News and serves as a guardian for his younger sister, who is disabled.

"I'm not willing to move," Williams said.

He faces the prospect of shopping himself to other employers who recognize he could retire in a few years. For many others, he said, "I don't think it really has sunk in."

Neil Smith, 54, figures he must move or look for another job. He and his wife, Susan, both work at the accounting service, and each have almost 20 years logged as federal workers.

Besides rural Maine and New York, the remaining Defense Finance and Accounting Service offices will be in Cleveland; Columbus, Ohio; or Indianapolis. Smith hates those choices: "Limestone is worse than Alaska."

Smith said he may be forced into early retirement.

"It's unfair," he said. "There's a helluva lot of people who are going to be hung out to dry."

Either Way On Oceana, Beach Loses, Study Says

Marisa Taylor and Jon W. Glass
Norfolk Virginian-Pilot
November 22, 2005

VIRGINIA BEACH — Whether the fighter jets at Oceana Naval Air Station stay or go, the city would lose jobs, tax revenue and residents, according to an economic study released Monday.

Officials said the mixed results show there are no easy answers as the city weighs how to respond to the demands of a federal base-closure commission for keeping the jets.

If the city fails to comply with the commission's demands and the jets leave, Virginia Beach would lose more than 12,300 military and civilian jobs and would regain only a fraction of

those jobs over the next 20 years, the study concluded.

But if the city complies and the jets stay, Virginia Beach would have to impose development restrictions that would stunt the city's population and economic growth, it said.

The consultant's study offers ammunition to those who say the jets are too valuable to lose and to those who worry that keeping them would chill the Beach's economy.

"It's not a slam dunk one way or the other," said Arthur L. Collins, executive director of the Hampton Roads Planning District Commission, which assisted in the study. "If this was an easy call, we wouldn't be going through this."

The City Council will mull the study's conclusions as it decides whether to satisfy the Defense Base Realignment and Closure Commission's demands. The panel called on the city to roll back existing development around Oceana and halt further encroachment or risk losing Oceana's jets.

The analysis by RKG Associates Inc. of Durham, N.H., said Virginia Beach would lose about 5 percent of all the jobs in the city if the jets leave. After 20 years, the city still would be recovering from that loss.

But even if the city complies with the demands, the city over 20 years would lose about 3,700 jobs due to development restrictions around Oceana.

At the same time, if the jets stay, the city would lose about 10,000 residents by 2025 because of development restrictions and the assumed purchase of some homes by the city.

Other comparisons between the two scenarios include:

- If the jets leave, the city would lose about \$700 million, about 5 percent of today's economy, in economic activity by 2011. Thereafter, the economy would begin to recover slowly.

Under that scenario, the city would lose about \$305 million in net tax revenue over 20 years.

- If the jets stay, the loss in net tax revenue and expected acquisition costs of property in high-risk areas around Oceana would be at least \$272 million over 20 years.

The city also would lose about \$49 million, about 0.3 percent of today's economy, in economic activity by 2011. By 2025, the loss would amount to \$196 million – a 1.2 percent drop.

Neither scenario is expected to be a fatal blow. Even if the jets leave, the city "ultimately will recover" from the job losses, said Craig R. Seymour, vice president of RKG.

"It'll cause a slowdown in spending and a reduction in economic activity," he said. "But because it's spread out over four years and the local economy is strong, the chances of recession are mitigated."

One surprise of the study, Seymour said, is that the Navy spends less than expected locally to keep Oceana operating.

If the base loses its jets, Navy spending on goods and services for Oceana would plummet by about \$404 million per year, but only about \$600,000 of that annual amount is spent in Virginia Beach. The state's loss would be \$50 million.

The state's costs over 20 years would be higher if the jets stay – about \$85 million, compared with about \$24 million if the base is realigned. RKG also predicted that losing the jets would not have a "major impact" on the housing market.

"The study does show that Oceana isn't the economic engine that everybody said it was," Councilman Richard A. Maddox said.

Other council members, however, downplayed the study's conclusions and faulted its assumptions.

"The study isn't the silver bullet people were looking for," Councilwoman Rosemary A. Wilson said. "It was done in a hurry and already some of the criteria has changed."

The study, for example, assumed that the city and state would buy homes and businesses in Accident Potential Zone 1 from willing sellers, as they became available.

But council members said they are now looking at buying only vacant land, rather than occupied property.

Voluntary purchases "could have a detrimental impact on the neighborhoods," Vice Mayor Louis R. Jones said. "I don't think the council wants to do that."

A potential alternative is banning new homes and incompatible businesses in the APZ-1. City officials, however, said they may have to compensate some land owners for such restrictions.

Several council members questioned the study's conclusions about the loss of economic development opportunities.

The study estimated that Virginia Beach would lose more than \$89 million in net tax revenue over 20 years if it imposes growth restrictions.

City Councilman Jim Reeve said the study will help to determine how much money should be spent to keep Oceana.

"I want to keep Oceana as a master jet base, but I feel a responsibility to spend only an appropriate amount of money to buy out people's property rights," Reeve said.

The issue, he said, is whether the city "wants to buy our way slowly out of a problem or create new opportunities for growth."

**Base's end stirs new dreams
Residents say the naval facility will be missed
but Ingleside's future is still bright**
Houston Chronicle

John W. Gonzalez
November 21, 2005

INGLESIDE - From the marina where he docks his boat, sailmaker Daryl Miglia can see giant offshore structures being built at a mammoth facility up the shore.

In the other direction, around a bend along the northern side of Corpus Christi Bay, is Naval Station Ingleside, where a fleet of minesweepers roosts. The Navy ships are out of sight. Soon they will be a faded memory.

Because of the Base Realignment and Closure process, base operations are relocating to other ports, leaving Miglia and other residents to wonder about the fate of this strategic waterfront. Though he retired here from Colorado about a year ago, Miglia already has strong feelings about what could and should become of the base and environs.

"A community college or even a four-year college on that site would be great," he said. But that's just the start.

"I'd like to see something more tourist-oriented to bring people in. It would really help the economy, instead of typical industrial stuff. Bring in cruise ships, maybe some waterfront development, shops, that kind of thing," he said.

Miglia said the base closure is a "pretty big deal, but the way things are growing ... I'm not sure the actual effect is going to be as bad as people think."

His optimism isn't unusual here. While lamenting the Navy's departure over the next few years and the loss of the sense of security that the base gave them, area leaders hail Ingleside's economic vitality and are confident Navy-related losses will be followed by a well-thought-out recovery.

However, with many aspects of the base's decommissioning still unsettled, concerns persist about the 1,000-acre base's future, and differences have emerged on redevelopment strategies.

Some, like Miglia, imagine cruise ships pulling up to the docks, bringing a steady stream of visitors to this low-profile community of 10,000 people. Others envision a continuing military presence as a Coast Guard station or an overseas deployment point. Many believe the base's campus-like setting will see new life as a training center or business park. All those notions assume the land will revert to local control.

When the community turned the site over to the Navy 20 years ago with hopes of luring a major home port that never came, the property deed specified the land would revert to the previous owner, the Port of Corpus Christi, if the base closed.

The port has asserted its claim to the land, but the big question is how much compensation the Department of Defense will seek for up to \$250 million in waterfront improvements and buildings constructed since the base opened in 1988.

Economic impact

Despite vigorous efforts to keep the Navy here, the BRAC commission chose to close Ingleside and shift base operations and assets to East and West coast ports. President Bush has signed off on the recommendations, and local officials said "for sale" signs are going up on homes of Navy-related residents.

A bill filed by U.S. Rep. Solomon Ortiz, D-Corpus Christi, would require the Navy to relinquish the land and improvements without compensation, but local leaders acknowledge they may have to produce large sums of money to seal the deal.

The port has the backing of Ingleside's City Council and San Patricio County's Commissioners Court to lead the redevelopment.

Nueces County, which includes Corpus Christi, is clamoring for a place at the negotiating table, reminding everyone that it helped woo the Navy

by approving a \$25 million bond issue in 1985 and is losing several hundred jobs tied to the base.

"Everybody is on the same page," Nueces County Judge Terry Shamsie said. "Everyone is interested in a positive result for South Texas. Everyone wants to see a growing economy and not a setback."

Shamsie said his concerns "go far beyond a piece of land," citing worries about the base closure's impact on Nueces County jobs, businesses, health care and schools.

Shamsie has floated the idea of his county serving as the conduit for federal funds for redevelopment studies, but the city of Corpus Christi joined other jurisdictions in backing the port as the lead redevelopment entity.

The port has taken steps to enforce the deed's reversionary clause, and port commission member Judy Hawley said the entity wants to recoup the land "to be positioned to turn it back into an economic generator right away. The issue is going to be how much does the reversion cost." She, too, hopes base improvements come at little or no cost. "We lost 7,000 jobs. And then to put an additional burden of \$250 million on the community to buy the facilities is very onerous."

The cost isn't likely to be that high, she admitted, because the Navy will remove some assets. Several appraisals will be conducted to value what remains, she said, and then it would be up to area governments to settle on plans and form a "local redevelopment authority" to manage the site.

'Different activities'

Hawley has her own vision about the best uses for the base.

"Certainly there needs to be a maritime use of the waterfront," she said. But there's far more to the site than piers, she noted.

"I think we're going to end up seeing diverse uses of the property, with a number of different activities or economic generators," Hawley said.

Still, to minimize problems, "we have to move through this process quickly, and we're going to really need congressional help to do that," Hawley said.

The region is sad to lose the base, she added, "but what would even be worse is if we got hung up on a long, drawn-out process, or the Navy put such a price tag that recovery would be absolutely impossible."

Officials in Ingleside presume the Navy will be here at least two more years, and they're confident the city has enough momentum to withstand the trauma of base closure.

After all, it's already home to two major offshore fabricators, which assemble oil rigs and other heavy structures. Other port-side facilities will soon be constructed.

Still, "everybody's playing what-if games" about new uses for the base, said Ingleside City Manager Mike Rhea.

"The port is obviously interested in the channel-side improvements — the docks, the wharves, the piers, warehousing — as part of their overall operation," he said.

A wide range of uses is possible for the base's classroom buildings, labs, offices and recreational and dining facilities, Rhea said. Corporate offices and a technical school campus have been discussed, he said, but no commitments can be made until the Navy relinquishes the site.

Some residents aren't waiting for formal closure to move on, Rhea said.

"We're already starting to see houses hitting the market. As people start getting transferred, we'll see more of that," he said. Yet, as those homes become available, he expects renters and others to snap them up.

"There will be a negative impact, don't get me wrong," he said. "But we're not all lining up to jump off the Harbor Bridge."

Opinions/ Editorials

Save Oceana, from Suffolk

The Virginian-Pilot
November 22, 2005

Far too many bad ideas have come out of the current threat to move Oceana Naval Air Station's jets.

Turn the base's 6,000 acres into a golf community, an amusement park, an international airport, a cupcake farm.

Move the jets to a base in Florida, a man-made platform in the Atlantic, the Eastern Shore, the top of Town Center.

The 12,000 jobs could be replaced by computer modeling, environmental reclamation, ecotourism, Dairy Queen.

But perhaps the worst idea of all emerged last week, when Concerned Citizens Against Jet Noise floated the idea to move Oceana's auxiliary field to southern Suffolk.

There are so many reasons why this is a bad idea, but let's start with the fact that it would probably be unwise to relocate a 30,000-acre Navy facility to one of the fastest growing cities in the nation.

Add the horrors it would visit on the Great Dismal Swamp National Wildlife Refuge, an irreplaceable natural treasure. And the fact that Navy jets would be forced to fly over densely populated parts of Chesapeake and Virginia Beach (hello, Kempsville!) to get there. Not to mention the people who already live in southern Suffolk, or the others the city decided — also last week, as it happens — should be able to move there.

CCAJN has suffered from an occasional overreach on issues Oceanic, but this time is different. Apparently not only does it not

understand the problem, but it also apparently doesn't understand local geography, or can't read a map.

The Defense Base Realignment and Closure Commission's concern when it gave Virginia Beach the ultimatum on Oceana was safety: of pilots, of folks in the flight path. It's hard to

see how either might be served by having pilots fly across many more rooftops.

We appreciate that CCAJN was trying to offer an alternative that would let the jets stay at Oceana, but fly noisy training missions elsewhere. This time, though, CCAJN's good intentions produced a bomb — dropped right on its foot.

Additional Notes

Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission

EARLY BIRD

November 23, 2005

Department of Defense Releases

National News Articles

Local News Articles

Mission team to visit Cannon

Feds to help county with BRAC jobs

Texas military bases to get \$171.2 million for construction

Portsmouth overhaul of sub to save Navy \$59 million

Opinions/ Editorials

Additional Notes

Department of Defense Releases

National News Articles

Local News Articles

Mission team to visit Cannon

Portales News-Tribune

Staff and Wire Reports

November 23, 2005

An eight-member Air Force team will visit Cannon Air Force Base next week to begin evaluating possible new missions for the base, officials said on Tuesday.

The Base Closure and Realignment Commission rejected the Pentagon's proposal in August to close the base, opting instead to keep it open temporarily. Cannon's three F-16 squadrons will be moved, and the base would close if a new mission can't be found by Dec. 31, 2009.

The New Mexico congressional delegation then wrote to the Pentagon asking officials to visit the base. The team is scheduled to visit Cannon on Tuesday and stay until Dec. 2. Team members also will meet with Clovis and Portales community leaders.

Local Cannon advocate Randy Harris said he will attend the site visit.

"This is what we've asked for for so long," Harris said. "That a team come and evaluate Cannon. Anyone who comes to Cannon Air Force Base will leave as a proponent of the base because it sells itself."

Sen. Pete Domenici, R-N.M., said the visit is a sure sign the Pentagon is taking seriously the congressional delegation's push for a new mission.

"There is no question that the base's physical and air space assets, along with strong community support, can be put to use by the Defense Department," he said. "I believe this evaluation team will learn that firsthand next week."

BRAC Commission Early Bird

Use of these articles does not reflect official endorsement.
Reproduction for private use or gain is subject to original copyright restrictions.

Last week, Congress agreed to language that ensures construction projects continue at Cannon as the Pentagon seeks a new mission.

Without the language that addressed Cannon's status, funding would not have been obligated for bases and programs closed or realigned during this year's BRAC process.

Feds to help county with BRAC jobs

Potomac News

Keith Walker

November 23, 2005

There will be some help for the county when the Base Realignment And Closure recommendations take effect at Quantico Marine Corps base.

In all, 5,122 jobs will be moved to Quantico with the BRAC expansion, Cyrena Eitler said Tuesday at a Prince William Board of County Supervisors' meeting.

There are 3,013 military jobs that will spin off an additional 2,109 indirect, or contractor and civilian jobs.

Eitler, of the Department of Defense office of economic adjustment, said the county can expect federal assistance when the jobs come to the Marine base and additional burdens will be placed on police and fire departments, transportation, housing, and social and community service.

"We are here to help the Prince William County community and other communities that will be affected by the growth at Quantico to provide technical and financial assistance," Eitler told supervisors.

The assistance would include help in gaining financial resources such as federal and state grants, aid with growth management planning and identifying strategies to deal with the adjustment.

"We bring together 22 federal agencies that are there to assist our defense-impacted communities," Eitler said. "We are able to capably engage other federal agencies and bring them to the table to assist with your efforts."

John D. Jenkins, D-Neabsco, asked Eitler how her office could benefit Prince William County in regard to the expansion at Fort Belvoir, which expects about 21,000 new jobs when the recommendations go into effect over the next two to six years.

"Who's going to address that for Prince William County?" Jenkins asked.

Eitler urged supervisors to form an organization of the parties that will be affected by the expansion, including representatives from local governments, utility companies, education providers and the private sector.

Representatives from surrounding counties could be included on such a committee or task force, Eitler said.

"You organize yourselves to speak with one voice to the federal government and the military departments as they implement the BRAC actions," she said.

Chairman Sean T. Connaughton, R-at large, directed the county staff to draft a resolution so the board could begin forming the committee.

Supervisor Maureen S. Caddigan, R-Dumfries, reminded Eitler that traffic around the base would be exacerbated when the National Museum of the Marine Corps and Heritage Center opens next year.

"It is an impact on us. So if you could remember that, whatever kind of help we could get would be appreciated," Caddigan said.

Supervisor Hilda M. Barg, D-Woodbridge, said U.S. 1 would be nothing but jammed, with the county being "hit from both ends" with the expansion of the two bases.

Barg said she would be suggesting that the High Occupancy Vehicle lanes be extended past Quantico to keep people from abandoning Interstate 95 for U.S.1 during traffic jams.

Barg pointed out that I-95 was a evacuation route for the Washington metro area.

"I think that that is something that would qualify for BRAC money," Barg said.

Texas military bases to get \$171.2 million for construction

Star Telegram
Associated Press
November 22, 2005

WASHINGTON - A \$33 million student dormitory at Sheppard Air Force Base topped the list of military construction projects Congress has funded for Texas bases.

In all, Texas got \$171.2 million for base construction projects in a spending bill Congress approved late last week before lawmakers' two-week Thanksgiving recess.

Funding for the 300-room dormitory comes after the Wichita Falls installation saw the loss of some medical students in this year's round of base closing and realignment decisions.

Congress also provided in the spending bill \$21.6 million for a vehicle maintenance shop at Fort Hood and \$6.8 million for a physical fitness center at the Central Texas Army post. The center was one of three facilities that Rep. Chet Edwards, D-Waco, said was funded for Fort Hood even though funding had not been requested in President Bush's budget.

Congress did fund Bush's request for \$11 million for a military working dog medical facility at Lackland Air Force Base.

And although it was not included in President Bush's budget request, Ellington Field near Houston will get \$15 million to finish

construction of a training facility for 2,300 military reservists moving there. Ellington lost some jets and the 14th Air National Guard in base closure decisions this year.

Other funding includes:

_ \$5 million for a vehicle bridge at Fort Bliss

_ \$7 million to renovate barracks wings and battalion command area at Fort Sam Houston in San Antonio.

_ \$10 million for a T-10 jet engine test cell at Naval Air Station Kingsville.

_ \$7.9 million for an aircraft maintenance complex at Laughlin Air Force Base near Del Rio.

_ \$5.7 million for phase two of an Army Reserve Center in Grand Prairie.

Portsmouth overhaul of sub to save Navy \$59 million

Associated Press

Boston Globe

November 22, 2005

KITTERY, Maine --A decision to repair a nuclear submarine at the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard instead of at privately owned Electric Boat in Groton, Conn., will save the U.S. Navy \$59 million, a Navy spokesman said.

"The issue was cost savings," Lt. John Gay told Foster's Daily Democrat on Monday.

The maintenance of the USS Philadelphia will cost \$85.8 million now, Gay said.

He said the Navy's decision to switch the contract was "very recent." He said he did not know whether the decision by the Base Realignment and Closure Commission to keep the naval shipyard open led to the change.

The base had been recommended for closure by the U.S. Department of Defense, despite Navy findings that it was the most cost-efficient boatyard in the nation. It was spared by the BRAC commission in August after intensive lobbying by shipyard workers from Maine and New Hampshire, as well as the congressional delegations and governors of both states.

Paul O'Connor, president of the shipyard's metal trades union, said the contract switch and resultant savings were proof that all along, the Defense Department had tried to use the base-closing process to privatize submarine repair work at taxpayer expense.

"It's like we were saying all along," O'Connor said. "Our work would have gone to the private sector, to what is by now the least efficient shipyard."

Last week, Electric Boat said it would be forced to lay off 150 workers who had been scheduled to maintain the Philadelphia.

U.S. Rep. Rob Simmons, R-Conn., criticized the Navy's decision, saying it had an insufficient shipbuilding schedule and a shortsighted maintenance plan.

"It makes no sense for Portsmouth to hire new government workers," he said, "and for EB to be forced to consider letting go already-trained private workers."

However, the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard issued a statement Tuesday saying it would

not need to hire additional workers to service the Philadelphia.

The work, which is scheduled to start in February, is intended to extend the Los Angeles class submarine's life until its scheduled decommissioning in 2010. The Navy expects the overhaul to be done by the end of next year, Gay said.

The Philadelphia returned to its home base in Groton last week after a five-month deployment during which it collided with a Turkish cargo ship. The submarine suffered modest damage, but the planned maintenance was scheduled before the accident. ■

Opinions/ Editorials

Additional Notes