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Received

July 7, 2005

General Lloyd W. Newton
2005 Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission
2521 S. Clark St., Ste. 600
Arlington, VA 22202

Dear General Newton:

The Department of Defense has recommended the realignment of the Army Research Laboratory (ARL) at NASA Glenn Research Center, Cleveland, OH, by relocating the Vehicle Technology Directorate (VTD) to Aberdeen Proving Ground (APG), MD. The justification for this recommendation is that it realigns and consolidates portions of the ARL to provide greater synergy across technical disciplines and functions. It does this by consolidating geographically separate units of the ARL. This recommendation is ill-advised both from a technical and an economic point of view.

First, the VTD has been collocated at NASA Glenn since 1970 with the charter to jointly work programs of mutual interest to NASA and the Army in Aeropropulsion and Power. ARL/VTD engineers and scientists work side-by-side with their NASA partners on technologies that are directly focused on aviation or leveraged toward ground vehicles. Army engineers utilize NASA Glenn facilities, take advantage of existing NASA infrastructure and technical support personnel, and benefit from close collaboration with their NASA counterparts. This interagency cooperation has resulted in the development of many important technologies that support army aviation. Consolidating the VTD with the rest of ARL by moving it away from its facilities and collaborators will not help promote its mission but will, in fact, hinder it. Second, the BRAC process includes facility reconstruction. Since the VTD utilizes exclusively NASA-owned wind tunnels, rotating component test rigs, engine test cells, etc., these capabilities would need to be reconstructed at APG for the VTD's mission to continue. The DoD erroneously estimated that the one-time cost of moving the Defense Research Service Led Laboratories (into which the VTD is lumped) at \$164.4M. The facilities reconstruction cost of the VTD Glenn site alone will be significantly higher than that figure, at least several hundred million dollars. Therefore, the cost benefit to the DoD has been vastly overestimated, and the duplication of facilities is wasteful of taxpayer dollars.

These reasons make it obvious that relocating the Army Research Laboratory Vehicle Technology Directorate from Cleveland, Ohio, falls outside the criteria of the BRAC process. I urge you to use your best efforts to ensure that the BRAC Commission takes the ARL VTD off the BRAC list and keeps it at NASA Glenn Research Center.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,



Maria Litt