



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
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10 June 2005
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The Honorable Anthony Principi
Chairman
2005 Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission
2521 S. Clark Street, Suite 600
Arlington, VA 22202

Dear Chairman Principi:

Thank you for your letter to the Secretary of the Navy of May 28, 2005 requesting the response for the record to questions regarding the Department of the Navy 2005 base closure and realignment recommendations. I am responding on his behalf. Our response to your questions is attached.

I trust this information assists in your deliberative process. Please let me know if I may be of further assistance as we go forward.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Anne L. Davis".

Anne Rathmell Davis
Special Assistant to the Secretary of the
Navy for Base Realignment and Closure

Attachment

Copy to:
President of the Senate
Speaker of the House
Senate Armed Services Committee
House Armed Services Committee
OSD BRAC Clearinghouse

Questions for the Record
Base Closure and Realignment Commission
Hearing on Navy Recommendations and Methodology

Witnesses:

The Honorable Gordon R. England, Secretary of the Navy;
Admiral Vern Clark, Chief of Naval Operations;
General Michael W. Hagee, Commandant, Marine Corps; and
Ms. Anne Rathmell Davis, Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Navy
Infrastructure Strategy and Analysis
May 17, 2005

1. Please list those installations that were analytically recommended for closure or realignment by the executive group, yet rejected by the Service Secretary or the Chief of Naval Operations. Please explain why these changes were made.

A recommendation to close Marine Corps Air Station (MCAS) Beaufort, SC was forwarded by the Infrastructure Evaluation Group but disapproved by the Secretary of the Navy. Despite the potential to generate savings, the Department of the Navy senior leadership decided to retain MCAS Beaufort for future tactical aviation basing flexibility, especially in light of concerns about the continued viability of tactical aviation basing at Naval Air Station (NAS) Oceana. All other recommendations approved by the Infrastructure Evaluation Group were forwarded to the Infrastructure Executive Council, of which the Secretary of the Navy, the Chief of Naval Operations, and the Commandant of the Marine Corps were members.

2. What alternatives were considered for NAS Oceana? Why were they unsuitable? Please discuss any airspace and noise restrictions that might limit Oceana's ability to accept the missions projected in this round.

Under the assumption that future growth in the vicinity of Virginia Beach could impact NAS Oceana's mission as the Navy's East Coast Master Jet Base (MJB), a complete review of East Coast air stations was initiated. The Navy Infrastructure Analysis Team (IAT) developed MJB screening factors based upon Military Value and infrastructure requirements for Navy Tactical Aviation (TACAIR), and obtained input from subject matter experts within Fleet Forces Command and Naval Facilities Engineering Command to verify a base's operational feasibility, facilities, environmental and encroachment issues, and future growth potential. The review focused first on Naval Air Stations that could either replace NAS Oceana or significantly reduce the scale of operation, followed by Marine Corps Air Stations, and finally any Department of Defense air stations that appeared to have the minimum requirements to support tactical aircraft. These included Shaw AFB, Seymour Johnson AFB, and Moody AFB.

All DON East Coast air stations were reviewed, to include training air stations. Viability of use of training air stations was dependent upon the analysis performed by the Education and Training (E&T) Joint Cross Service Group (JCSG) realigning or

relocating the current training assets. The two training air stations considered to be feasible were NAS Whiting Field and NAS Pensacola, contingent upon all training assets moving out. The review noted that, as the Marine Corps transitions to the Joint Strike Fighter, significant excess capacity could be available at MCAS Beaufort to support basing of other tactical aircraft. Review of the Air Force bases' ability to satisfy the MJB screening factors resulted in identification of Moody AFB as the most viable option to support TACAIR operations.

Based on the above review, four scenarios were developed for the closure of NAS Oceana during the scenario analysis process. Closure of NAS Oceana and relocation of the air assets to MCAS Beaufort was determined to be unsuitable because of the significant investment required to replicate the available infrastructure at NAS Oceana. Closure of NAS Oceana and relocation of the air assets to NAS Whiting Field or NAS Pensacola was determined to be unsuitable because of high costs, overcrowding in the operating areas in the Gulf of Mexico, and most importantly, training assets were remaining in place at current levels or greater. Closure of NAS Oceana and relocation of the air assets to Moody Air Force Base was determined to be unsuitable because of the high costs, as well as the high degree of uncertainty associated with Moody's ability to assume the role of a master jet base. Additional detail regarding analysis and deliberations on this matter is provided in the DON deliberative records.

There are no additional aviation missions projected for NAS Oceana in this round of BRAC.

3. How many SSNs are in the Navy's force structure projection? What is the balance between the two coasts?

There are 45 SSNs projected in the 20-year force structure plan. The balance between the two coasts is not projected in the plan and is under continuous operational review outside of the BRAC process. For purposes of BRAC analysis, one of the parameters used in the configuration analysis for surface/subsurface was the requirement to ensure at least 40% of current forces remained based on each coast. This approximates the current homeporting percentages and recognizes that force structure moves occur as necessary to support operational requirements.

4. The 2001 Quadrennial Defense records the decision by the Department of Defense that the, "The Secretary of the Navy will increase aircraft carrier battlegroup presence in the Western Pacific and will explore options for homeporting an additional three to four surface combatants, and guided cruise missile submarines (SSGNs), in that area." How is this requirement reflected in the 2005 Base Closure & Realignment Report?

The Department of the Navy examined several scenarios potentially relocating a Carrier Strike Group and Carrier Air Wing from East and West Coast ports to both Hawaii and Guam. The Department of the Navy leadership concluded there were a number of issues associated with such a move that required additional strategic analysis and discussions

during the 2005 Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR) currently in progress. Therefore, the determination was made not to forward such a realignment recommendation as part of the BRAC process. This decision is reflected in the DON report (Volume IV) at page A-5, as well as in briefings reflected in both Infrastructure Steering Group and Infrastructure Executive Council minutes. Additional detail regarding analysis and deliberations on this matter is provided in the DON deliberative records.

5. The BRAC report covers Navy base closure and realignment for the next six years. Are plans to move an aircraft carrier homeport included in the BRAC analysis? What would be the impact on the recommendations if an additional carrier was home-ported in the Western Pacific within the next six years?

As stated in previous response, DON did examine scenarios to realign a naval station to relocate a carrier to the Western Pacific but deferred that decision to the Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR). Had this analysis resulted in a recommendation, it would have been a realignment action only, rather than a closure, since the Department of the Navy determined that all existing carrier homeports are necessary for both strategic dispersal and future force posture adjustments.

6. What would be the impact on military value if the submarines home-ported at New London, CT, were home-ported in the Western Pacific? Was this scenario compared against Kings Bay, GA?

For the DON BRAC process analysis, the DON Military Value quantitative analysis was calculated based on the selection criteria and the applicability to the functions/installations in their current state. We did not recalculate military value based on scenario impacts. As previously stated we assumed a balance of force structure representative of the existing laydown and did not change the force balance between coasts within BRAC. The assessment of realigning force structure is an on-going evaluation within DON and part of the QDR process.

In reference to the question on a comparative scenario for Kings Bay, we did not analyze a scenario on relocating the existing assets/forces from Kings Bay due the high military value of Kings Bay.

7. COBRA analyses for the closure of Submarine Base San Diego and relocation of the submarine assets to Naval Station Pearl Harbor indicated an early return on investment. Given the military value produced by this scenario, why did the Infrastructure Evaluation Group decide to remove this closure scenario from further consideration? What would be the benefits of such a scenario?

The DON BRAC process analyzed the relocation of submarine assets at Submarine Base San Diego to either Naval Station San Diego or Naval Station Pearl Harbor. Moving those forces to Naval Station Pearl Harbor was determined to be the only viable scenario and would have resulted in a capacity reduction of 10.5 cruiser equivalents. However, the Infrastructure Evaluation Group did not approve the recommendation because

SUBASE San Diego is the only West Coast homeport for attack submarines and its closure would limit submarine basing options on the West Coast. Additionally, the loss of submarine logistic support in San Diego would reduce the ability for submarines to use the training areas off the San Diego coast without having to transit a great distance from a support base. The Infrastructure Evaluation Group also determined that loss of the strategic location at Ballast Point was undesirable.