

Executive Correspondence
DCN 7368



ARMY ALLIANCE, INC.

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The Honorable Anthony J. Principi, Chairman
Base Realignment and Closure Commission
2521 South Clark Street, Suite 600
Arlington, Virginia 22202

Dear Chairman Principi:

The Army Alliance, Inc., supports the DoD Recommendation to relocate the Army Test and Evaluation Command from Arlington, VA to Aberdeen Proving Ground, MD. This was an item of great interest to us for several years before the BRAC process began.

The collocation of ATEC elements, at APG, makes sense from both command and expertise points of view. The advantage of close physical proximity to experts and facilities has already resulted in part of AEC being located at APG. Bringing the rest of it offers similar benefits plus a cost saving by avoiding lease costs.

There are several points in the Memorandum of Meeting from 28 July, on BRAC Recommendation #136, referring to informal surveys concerning the numbers of personnel who move and/or would have to be replaced.

-The decision to begin the BRAC process anticipated personnel changes as a result of relocation of organizations. The fact of changes should be considered an old issue. Predictions of the numbers who will or won't move are notoriously inaccurate. Experience, especially Maryland's experience from previous BRACs, shows that more move than initially indicate they will. With strong initiative to reach out and provide information, which Harford County has already begun, we have demonstrated that the numbers of employees transferring with the position can be raised significantly.

-When new positions must be filled, the APG area provides a large base of experienced testers. The Washington, D.C. area may provide a large number of potential applicants, but there is no local testing facility to provide realistic experience and background for them. Consequently the applicants are much more likely to be experienced mainly in staff jobs in headquarters -

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and not be seasoned veterans of the test range. We are aware that typical position vacancies advertised by AEC North always receive more than a dozen fully qualified applicants, while those advertised by AEC South usually get only a few, if any qualified applicants.

-The Secretary of Defense has given guidance to relocate headquarters elements away from the Washington D.C., and especially those in unsecure leased space, for good reasons. APG offers the security sought, but remains in easy access to the D.C. area. The suggestion that immediate geographical location is essential to maintain contact and facilitate meetings in the Pentagon overlooks all those meetings for which others must travel anyway, such as from the Operational test Command at Ft Hood, TX; or people from DTC, ATC, or AEC who are already at Aberdeen Proving Ground. Viewed another way, collocating all of ATEC headquarters at APG will reinforce its contact with subordinate troops who do the work, as well as provide a cheaper, more secure environment.

Our Army Alliance Board of Directors includes former Commanders of the Developmental Test Command and the Aberdeen Test Center, and two former ATC Technical Directors. They unanimously and strongly support this proposed move, and they believe it should also be a consolidation. In that regard they propose two specific recommendations.

-The commission should direct assignment of TEMA to ATEC. This truly would consolidate all Army testing under the aegis of one command, and would provide the ATEC commander the presence in the Pentagon that he desires. The commander would use his discretion to determine how to split his time between a Pentagon office and his Aberdeen headquarters.

-The ATEC and DTC headquarters should combine into a single test management headquarters at Aberdeen, with separate directorates for developmental and operational testing. This single action would provide a tremendous increase in operating efficiency, as well as a significant overall downsizing of personnel spaces.

The costs of relocation of ATEC to APG are recoverable in a short period of time. The result of ATEC's joining its subordinate activities at APG makes financial and operational sense. For these reasons the Army Alliance urges you to support DoD recommendation #136.

Sincerely,


Wyatt H. Colclasure II
President