

## Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission

# EARLY



# BIRD

June 07, 2005

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BRAC Commission Early Bird

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Turn BRAC lemons into lemonade (ND)*Additional Notes*

N/A

*Department of Defense Releases*

N/A

*National News Articles***Saving the best from BRAC****Air Force ranking of bases played role in their closure fates**

Air Force Times

Bruce Rolfsen

June 06, 2005

No airman works at the second best base. Everyone works at the best base. "We don't have any bad bases really; just too many bases right now," Fred Pease Jr., deputy assistant Air Force secretary for basing and infrastructure analysis, told the Base Realignment and Closure commission during a recent meeting.

When the Air Force looked at which bases to close or downsize in preparing its BRAC proposal, its task force ranked all 157 of its U.S. installations, from the sprawling Eglin Air Force Base in Florida to facilities that were just a handful of hangars and offices next to a local airport.

The Air Force drew up eight mission areas and listed bases by how well they fit the requirements of the eight missions — fighter; bomber; airlift; tanker; space operations; special operations and rescue; unmanned aerial vehicles; and command and control, intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance. Bases were given a cumulative score for each area, with a maximum of 100 points possible.

A base's scores don't reflect its current missions or performance, only its potential in each of the categories, officials said.

When the numbers were crunched, the big winner was Seymour Johnson Air Force Base,

N.C., the East Coast home to F-15E Strike Eagles and a Reserve KC-135 Stratotanker wing.

Seymour Johnson scored at the top of the charts as a fighter, bomber or unmanned aerial vehicle base.

The best site for airlift operations, according to the ranking, was Eglin Air Force Base, Fla., which today hosts just about every mission except a full-time airlift operation.

Hill Air Force Base, Utah, home to two fighter wings and a repair depot, was judged as the installation with the most potential to handle tankers and command-and-control. Hill also was rated most suitable for intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance missions.

Taking the top in the other categories were Pope Air Force Base, N.C., for special operations and rescue; and Schriever Air Force Base, Colo., for space.

Don't expect Hill to become a tanker base or Eglin to drop its weapons development and fighter missions to host an airlift wing.

After the bases were ranked, the Air Force made its own reality check, said Maj. Gen. Gary Heckman, who as assistant deputy chief of staff for plans and programs oversaw the compilation of the lists.

The Air Force had to make sure base locations met the nation's joint and strategic needs, such as having bases spread across the country and positioned to handle air defense assignments.

It was jointness that deemed Moody Air Force Base, Ga., a valuable site for 48 A-10 Warthogs, but expendable as a student pilot training center.

The A-10s, in addition to training with Moody's rescue wing, will be a short flight away from the Army's proposed infantry and armor school at Fort Benning, Ga.

Also taken into account were the costs and practicality of moving units. The Air Force didn't want to move an F-16 wing just to replace

it with another fighter wing and lose money in the process.

The lists were used as starting points to sort out the bases that would be recommended for closure and downsizing.

The two active-duty bases on the closure list — Cannon Air Force Base, N.M., an F-16 Fighting Falcon center, and Ellsworth Air Force Base, S.D., home to B-1Bs Lancers — both were near or at the bottom of the list of active-duty bases in their respective categories.

Cannon, with a score of 55.22 out of 100 possible points, was the lowest ranked of the three active-duty F-16 bases. Hill Air Force Base, Utah, got 68.02 points and Shaw Air Force Base, S.C., 72.2 points.

Ellsworth scored 50.81 on the bomber list. Now, the Air Force wants to move Ellsworth's B-1Bs to Dyess Air Force Base, Texas, the service's other B-1B base, which scored 56.70. The bottom-ranking bomber installation was Minot Air Force Base, N.D., a B-52H Stratofortress and nuclear missile installation, with 45.72 points.

Although Minot scored low, that doesn't mean it must close. Minot's missile mission seems to have helped keep the base open. Shutting down any of the service's three missile bases and building new missile silos would prove too expensive.

Sometimes higher-ranking bases were put on the list of bases to lose units. Eielson Air Force Base, near Fairbanks, Alaska, scored 69.09 points on the fighter list, yet is losing its fighter mission. The lower-ranking Alaskan base, Elmendorf Air Force Base with 58.35 points, stays in the fighter business.

Air Force officials defended the Eielson decision, claiming the base's F-16 and A-10 jets were needed at bases in Nevada and Georgia to create more efficient and larger units.

Because Eielson has easy access to Alaskan training ranges, the base will remain open to

host exercises such as Cope Thunder and will keep its Guard KC-135 tanker wing.

Another example is the proposed consolidation of F-16s at the Indiana Air National Guard's Fort Wayne International Airport Air Guard Station. The Fort Wayne base scored 34.49. However, the Air Force wants to move planes there from two higher-ranked installations, the Illinois Air National Guard's Capital Airport Air Guard Station, which scored 38.18, and Hulman Regional Airport Air Guard Station, Ind., with 37.45 points.

The Air Force cited Fort Wayne's recruiting record as the reason to overrule the base rankings.

Illinois lawmakers countered that the service is ignoring its own ranking system. They are challenging the transfer of the jets to Fort Wayne.

To create the rankings, the Air Force churned through reams of statistics and assessed many factors, from the size of runways to basic allowance for housing payments to airmen.

Depending on the mission, the factors were given different levels of importance or not counted at all. For example, weather and distance from training ranges weren't considered in ranking bases for space missions, but accounted for 27 percent of the fighter score.

The results show that the criteria favored large active-duty installations with quick access to large training areas. No Guard or Reserve installations cracked the top 10 of the eight mission areas.

Most Guard and Reserve bases scored low on their ability to expand operations and support large-scale contingencies or deployments.

The overall condition of the Guard and Reserve buildings and runways lagged behind many active-duty installations.

One aspect the Air Force didn't consider was the success of a base's current units. The goal was

to measure each base's existing infrastructure and potential, not the job it is doing today.

The Air Force calculations were founded on the idea that airmen who do well at one base will perform just as well at another.

"The skill and esprit of a specific unit can be recreated elsewhere," acting Air Force Secretary Michael Dominguez told BRAC commissioners.

Whether the Air Force's logic flies remains to be seen. BRAC commissioners have until September to pass judgment on the proposed base changes. Then President Bush and Congress can approve or reject the commission's findings.

### **Politicians need to stop trying to save bases, and make base-closing plans**

Air Force Times  
Sanford Gottlieb  
June 06, 2005

It's axiomatic that military decisions should be made for military reasons. But where military base closings are concerned, politicians have other things in mind.

Jobs and income translate into votes, and for years members of Congress have fought to preserve bases and the economic benefits from them in their districts. Their pressure was so relentless that the base realignment and closure process was initiated in the late 1980s to eliminate politics from base closings.

It didn't quite succeed.

As the Defense Department moved to trim excess base capacity and consolidate installations, there was moaning in many quarters. No sooner did the Defense Department release its list of proposed closures May 13, than Sen. John Thune, R-S.D., was on a chartered flight to Rapid City to assure his constituents he would fight to keep open Ellsworth Air Force Base, South Dakota's second-largest employer.

Sen. Joseph Lieberman, D-Conn., called the proposed shutdown of the Groton submarine base "cruel and unusual punishment."

And so it begins. Of course, that kind of politicking was predictable. But there is a new element in the 2005 base-closings process — a strenuous and expensive effort by some state governments to keep all their bases open.

In California, before the Defense Department sent the list to the BRAC commission, Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger lined up the state's 55-member congressional delegation to co-sign his letters to President Bush, Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld and BRAC chairman Anthony Principi that sang the praises of California bases. On no other issue would such a broad coalition of Republicans and Democrats be possible in today's political climate. The explanation: \$42 billion a year in economic impact.

Acutely aware that, in previous BRAC rounds, California suffered just under half of all job losses, Sacramento has spent about half a million dollars to persuade the Defense Department to keep its bases off the hit list. Schwarzenegger named a council of retired military officers and civic leaders to lead the effort. Local base commanders and retired service members were urged to contact the Pentagon. A consultant from a Washington lobbying firm provided advice. Yet, an Air Force station, an Army ammunition plant and two naval facilities in California are slated for closure.

Massachusetts has been preparing for the current BRAC round for two years. The Bay State has spent \$1 million for advice from consulting firms in Washington and Chicago. The Chicago consultants include Ronald Fogelman, a retired Air Force general, and former Illinois senator Alan Dixon, who chaired the previous BRAC commission.

Two technology-oriented installations in Massachusetts, Hanscom Air Force Base and the Army Soldier Systems Center, account for 33,000 direct and indirect jobs and an economic impact of \$3.2 billion. Both have received

special treatment from Bay State politicians, intent on impressing the Pentagon. Republican Gov. Mitt Romney and Democratic Sen. Edward Kennedy teamed up to help raise \$429 million in public and private funds to expand the two bases, including housing for the scientists, engineers and contractors who work there. These bases escaped the ax, but Otis Air Guard Base didn't.

One must wonder about the value to the taxpayers of the advice offered by consultants.

The BRAC process is "open and transparent," according to commission member Phillip Coyle, from the moment the Defense Department lists the bases it wants closed. The commission will visit the bases scheduled for closure and hold regional hearings.

The commission must approve or amend the list by Sept. 8, then send it to President Bush, who must approve or reject it as a whole before submitting it to Congress. The legislators' only choice is to reject the list in its entirety. Not much room for successful special pleading.

When bases closed in past BRAC rounds were converted to industrial parks, civilian airports, schools, housing and nature preserves, 72 percent of lost civilian jobs were replaced.

The Defense Department offers technical and financial aid to state and local governments for base reuse. It's time for politicians to plan for life after base closings.

### **BRAC to pare F/A-22 numbers at Langley, Elmendorf**

Air Force Times  
Bruce Rolfsen  
June 06, 2005

The closing of Cannon Air Force, N.M., isn't the only change in store for the fighter community if the base realignment and closure recommendations become law.

Langley Air Force Base, Va., and Elmendorf Air Force Base, Alaska, will see reductions to the

numbers of F/A-22 Raptors assigned to the bases and a continued presence of F-15C Eagle fighters, said Maj. Gen. Gary Heckman, who oversaw development of the Air Force recommendations.

Also, the 33rd Fighter Wing's F-15C combat mission will be phased out as the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter school is stood up at Eglin Air Force Base, Fla., Heckman said.

The Air Force had been counting on assigning 72 Raptors to Langley and Elmendorf, enough jets for each base to have three squadrons of stealth fighters.

But with the Defense Department setting a cap on Raptors at about 180 airplanes and considering further cuts, the Air Force is using BRAC to adjust the numbers of F/A-22s going to the bases.

Now, Langley and Elmendorf will get 48 Raptors apiece, enough for two squadrons at each base, Heckman said. To maintain each base's total number of fighters at about 72 airplanes, each wing will retain one squadron of F-15Cs. Langley's 1st Fighter Wing will have 24 F-15Cs, and Elmendorf's 3rd Wing will have 18 Eagles.

Heckman said that in the long term, the numbers could change if the F/A-22 ceiling goes above 180 planes.

The Air Force's third F/A-22 location, Tyndall Air Force Base, Fla., will also have 48 Raptors for its pilot and maintenance school, according to the recommendations.

At Eglin, the 33rd Fighter Wing's Eagles will eventually be phased out to make room for Joint Strike Fighters, Heckman said.

With the development and fielding timeline for the Joint Strike Fighter in flux, there isn't a firm schedule to phase out the operational F-15C mission at Eglin. The first flight of an Air Force F-35 isn't expected until 2008.

Eglin's flight test efforts flown by the Air Armament Center and Air Force Warfare Center are expected to stay intact under BRAC.

Before the Defense Department's BRAC recommendations picked Eglin for introductory Joint Strike Fighter pilot and crew chief training, the Air Force had intended to set up its school at Luke Air Force Base, Ariz. The Navy and Marine Corps were setting up their cadres in Virginia, Southern California and Pensacola, Fla.

The Defense Department wanted to merge the services' F-35 training programs so that students would "train as we fight; jointly," the basing recommendation said.

Eglin was chosen because it offered quick access to ranges over land and water and to auxiliary fields to practice landings and takeoffs, Heckman said.

When the Defense Department's Education and Training Cross-Service Group ranked 15 Air Force, Marine and Navy bases as potential F-35 training sites, Eglin was ranked the highest.

While the cost of standing up the school at Eglin is pegged at \$199 million, the Defense Department expects to save \$226 million over 20 years.

### **BRAC's sting felt in communities Proposed closings leave housing, quality-of-life changes in limbo**

Army Times  
Karen Jowers  
June 06, 2005

The board of education meeting in Groton, Conn., on May 18 lasted a little longer than usual.

"About 95 percent of it" was about the Pentagon's proposals to close or scale down hundreds of military facilities across the country, including the submarine base in Groton, said retired Navy Capt. Frank "Mick" O'Beirne Jr.

"All of a sudden," O'Beirne said, board members are keen to know the schedule and other details of the base-closing process.

O'Beirne, a town councilman and former mayor, is also vice chairman of the Sub Base Realignment Coalition, which is revving up to battle the Pentagon over its recommendation to close Groton's New London Submarine Base as part of its broader base-closing plan, announced May 13.

Similar discussions are going on across the nation about the effect of the Pentagon's proposed plan on housing, schools, commissaries and exchanges and many other quality-of-life facilities, which will be affected not only by the stateside base-closing plan, but also by the planned return to the United States of more than 60,000 troops now based overseas, as well as the Army's efforts to restructure its force.

A few hours before the Groton school board meeting, at a conference in Nashville, Tenn., commissary officials vowed to keep stores on affected bases open until the very end.

"We will not leave those folks without a store," said Michael Dowling, director of the Defense Commissary Agency's Europe region. "We'll stay open until ... the installation commander says it's time to go."

Ten commissaries are located at bases recommended for closure, and a store is due to open this summer at Naval Air Station Willow Grove, Pa., another facility recommended for closure.

Bases in Europe have 59 commissaries, a number Dowling sees dropping into the mid-30s by 2015. Installation closures and troop movements in South Korea will reduce the number of commissaries there from 14 to six, but those that remain will be larger and more accessible to troops and families, Dowling said.

Family housing initiatives also will be affected by base closings.

Privatized family housing projects at Cannon Air Force Base, N.M., and Fort Monmouth, N.J., were near final approval but are now on hold, as the future of those bases, which are on the list to close, is suddenly unsure. Service officials are also scrutinizing other planned and existing projects in light of stateside base restructuring and overseas rebasing efforts.

A contract for privatized family housing at Submarine Base New London was awarded just six months ago. That project bundled together housing units at several smaller bases, some of which are also on the Pentagon's list: Naval Shipyard Portsmouth, Maine, due to close; Naval Air Station Brunswick, Maine; Naval Weapons Station Earle, N.J.; Naval Air Engineering Station, Lakehurst, N.J., recommended for downsizing; and Naval Station Newport, R.I., which would gain personnel.

In most cases, the local civilian housing market will have to absorb the increase when bases gain personnel.

In some cases, the base realignment and closure, or BRAC, announcements will force officials to change plans on the fly. Officials at Fort Benning, Ga., for example, had kept community leaders of nearby Columbus well informed about a previously planned addition of 3,400 soldiers of the 5th Brigade, 25th Division, to the post, said Mayo "Biff" Hadden, a senior vice president of the Columbus Chamber of Commerce.

Private developers had agreed to build more housing; school officials have been making plans to handle the additional students; community officials have been looking at education and job prospects for military spouses; and officials have been reviewing road and infrastructure issues.

But when the Pentagon released its BRAC plan, it included proposals to redirect the division to Fort Knox, Ky., and move the Army's armor center at Knox to Benning. That would give Benning about 1,400 fewer additional permanent soldiers than previously planned.

"It surprised Benning as much as it did us," Hadden said.

School officials are gearing up for changes as well. Districts near Fort Carson, Colo., Fort Drum, N.Y., and forts Hood and Bliss in Texas, which will gain students from bases closing overseas, have asked the Military Child Education Coalition to help train counselors, special education coordinators and Exceptional Family Member Program managers, said Mary Keller, executive director of the coalition.

The coalition's annual conference in late June will focus on education issues related to overseas restationing.

"We can prepare in the big general sense, but each child has to be prepared, too," Keller said.

Parents can take a big step now toward easing this transition by gathering all the child's records and documentation paperwork, from extra-curricular activities to special programs, she said.

### **BRAC could force some to drive farther to drill**

#### **If the distance is too far, reservists may switch units**

Marine Corps Times  
Laura Bailey  
June 06, 2005

While the majority of the Corps' facilities slipped by the Pentagon's recent base-closure recommendations, some Reserve centers did not escape efforts to trim excess base capacity.

The recommendations that almost 20 Reserve installations close or realign means that a number of reservists in coming years could have to travel to new locations for drill weekends, creating longer or shorter commutes for thousands.

Still, for several hundred reservists, the proposed realignments could mean having to affiliate with different units altogether.

The Defense Department's base closure and realignment list, released May 13, recommended that four Reserve aviation squadrons be transferred to different locations and that Reserve centers in California, Indiana, Iowa, Louisiana, Ohio, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, Washington, West Virginia and Wisconsin close and realign with other centers.

It also recommended that the Marine Corps Reserve Support Center in Kansas City, Mo., consolidate with Marine Forces Reserve in New Orleans and that two inspector-instructor centers, West Trenton, N.J., and Rome, Ga., move to Reserve facilities on active-duty bases.

The decision goes to the Base Closure and Realignment Commission. If approved, centers would have up to six years to make the changes.

While many of the proposed consolidations would send reservists to nearby stations, others would move units hundreds of miles away across state lines, leaving the question of how affected reservists would get to drill stations every month.

"The Marine Corps will do everything it can to make these moves as seamless as possible. With that being said, these are only recommendations at this point," said Reserve spokesman Capt. Christopher Logan.

Reservists who would have to travel an unreasonable amount to drill would have the option of seeking transfers to units within reasonable commuting distances, Logan said.

If there is no unit available in the area, reservists will be able to request an interservice transfer or a return to active duty. For reservists not satisfied with the latter option, Logan said there is a possibility some would be allowed to go to the Individual Ready Reserve.

Such commuting problems should affect only a minority of reservists, he said, adding that reservists should contact their command to discuss options.

"Military value did take into account a Reserve center's proximity to its drilling population," Logan said. "Our analysis determined that the number of reservists driving over 100 miles, if all candidate recommendations closing Reserve centers were executed, would total roughly 700, or less than 2 percent of the total Reserve population."

But a handful of units, such as several squadrons, would move hundreds of miles away under the recommendations. One squadron at Naval Air Station Atlanta, Marine Fighter Attack Squadron 142, would move 822 miles west to Fort Worth, Texas, affecting 131 reservists and 78 active-duty members.

Another squadron, Marine Light Attack Helicopter Squadron 775, at Johnstown, Pa., would transfer 288 miles across state lines to McGuire Air Force Base in New Jersey.

As the Corps waits for the potential realignments to be approved and initiated, Logan said the service expects some affected Marines whose units would move far away not to re-enlist as a result.

Logan said reservists who do not have an obligation left on their service contracts may opt to leave.

"Reservists are not obligated to continue their Reserve service if they find that traveling to a drill site will place an excessive burden on them," he said.

Severance or relocation benefits will not be offered to reservists who separate due to the closure of a Reserve center, he said. However, the majority of the proposed moves are close to newer Armed Forces Reserve facilities.

In some places, the moves could mean less time on the road for drilling reservists.

At Moundsville, W. Va., about 160 Marine reservists would move 70 miles east to Pittsburgh, but that would be a good change for most of the Marines, said Capt. Jeremy

Dempsey, a spokesman with Kilo Company, 3rd Battalion, 25th Marines, at Moundsville.

“In winter when the roads get bad, it will actually be better,” he said.

Dempsey said 80 percent of the reservists there already live in the greater Pittsburgh area. For the other 15 percent who commute to Moundsville from southern Ohio, the distances would remain about the same, he said.

A couple of centers will move to another location in the same town, such as the Marine Corps Reserve Center Baton Rouge, La., which will stay in Baton Rouge but move to the Armed Forces Reserve Center. For those reservists, the moves will mean going to a newer facility, Logan said.

Reservists who must travel more than 50 miles to get to new drill sites are entitled to reimbursement for berthing costs associated with reaching the drill site, he said.

### **BRAC will widen civilian-military division**

Marine Corps Times  
Barry R. Fetzer  
June 06, 2005

For months before the 2005 Base Closure and Realignment list was announced, purported lists of the most vulnerable bases — allegedly provided by some unnamed, well-placed government source — passed freely through cyberspace.

Most of these lists turned out to be plain wrong. But that’s not where the mistakes end.

Also wrong is the direction of the debate over base closings, both before the official announcement was made May 13 and since.

Clearly, there are tangible benefits to being a military community that go beyond the economic. Community volunteerism among members of the military, retirees and their families is substantially higher than the average.

Add to this the intangible benefits, like the good will of a community as it supports its troops.

But volunteerism and good will are small matters to most. By far, the vast majority of the fiercely debated and analyzed issues surrounding the 2005 BRAC announcement have been economic.

How many jobs does the military provide? What’s the annual economic impact of the base? What’s the civilian-military payroll? How many military retirees might be affected? What’s the value of military contracts awarded in the state? What is the state and local income-tax base?

Economic impact is important and must be considered because many communities will be adversely affected if the Pentagon’s 2005 base-closing wish list is approved.

But the debate has focused too much on jobs and too little on the growing civilian-military gap and the effect BRAC will have on it.

Through the BRAC process, the Pentagon is trimming inefficient bits and pieces of its military infrastructure and combining capabilities at big bases.

As a result, hundreds of small pockets of military presence in America — a presence that helps maintain the American “mosaic” — will be eliminated in favor of concentrating military force into large, multi-service citadels.

In 1999, a study by the Triangle Institute for Security Studies found a growing gap between military members and the civilians they are sworn to protect.

This study found both a cultural and a political gap. Military officers tend to view civilian society as being in a moral crisis, and civilians tend to view the military as a self-interested bureaucracy. A far greater percentage of military officers are Republican than the national civilian average.

Thomas E. Ricks, author of “Making the Corps,” wrote in 1997, “After following a platoon of Marine recruits through 11 weeks of boot-camp training on Parris [Island], I was stunned to see when they went home for leave how alienated they felt from their old lives. At various times, each of these new Marines seemed to experience a moment of private loathing for public America. They were repulsed by the physical unfitness of civilians, by the uncouth behavior they witnessed, and by what they saw as pervasive selfishness and consumerism.”

I believe most military members would say they have felt the same at some point in their service. I know I did.

The gap between civilians and the military will grow wider as BRAC removes service members from hundreds of communities where their presence pools common experiences and attitudes about military and civilian life.

Jobs are important. But today, with our nation at war, parents join anti-recruiting efforts to sabotage the military’s ability to recruit necessary manpower even though the military’s mission is to stand ready, and if need be, die to protect the nation’s freedom.

The Pentagon anticipates \$49 billion in savings over two decades from the 2005 BRAC process.

The cost of a growing — and soon insurmountable — civilian-military gap will be far greater.

**Threat shaped BRAC round  
Post-Sept. 11 environment helped influence  
latest plan**

Marine Corps Times  
Gordon Trowbridge  
June 06, 2005

For the next seven months, the debate over the Defense Department’s ambitious plans to overhaul its basing structure will focus on measuring money: costs saved, money spent, jobs and income lost in communities that would lose bases.

But the Pentagon, defense analysts and the independent commission that will pass judgment on the proposal are likely to focus on another, less tangible measure: how well the plan helps the military transform into the force needed for the post-Sept. 11 world of terrorist threats, counterinsurgency and homeland security.

“It’s the \$64,000 question that only the end of the process will reveal to us,” retired Adm. Harold Gehman, one of nine members of the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission, said between hearings during the panel’s first week of work.

But comments and questions from the commissioners and outside analysts suggest a mixed bag of recommendations, some of which are clearly aimed at military transformation, others with little or no connection, and occasionally missed opportunities that could have furthered the ongoing overhaul of the Cold War-era military.

While many observers see the Army’s massive changes — accommodating the move of more than 40,000 soldiers based overseas back to stateside bases and a reorganization of the service’s combat units — as directly related to defense reform, there is less of a sense of revolutionary change in the other services.

And despite a long list of initiatives to foster more cooperation among the services, commissioners spent four days of hearings asking defense officials whether more could and should be done to encourage “jointness,” an oft-stated milestone of the Pentagon’s transformation goals.

**Changed environment**

Between now and September, the nine-member commission appointed by President Bush will review the Pentagon’s proposals, perhaps make changes, and forward its recommendations to Bush before final approval by Congress.

Members left little doubt that the changed defense environment will weigh heavily on their considerations.

“It definitely plays a significant role for us,” said Philip Coyle, a commission member and a former Pentagon technology expert.

During testimony by senior defense leaders, representatives from each service and several groups that looked at defensewide operations, Coyle continually asked for examples of how the Pentagon’s latest proposals differ from past base-closing rounds, which took place in a period of peace and shrinking defense budgets.

“Their answers were more about process than the content of the recommendations,” he said.

Only detailed examination of thousands of pages of Pentagon justifications and data, which the panel received after the May 16-19 hearings, will reveal how well the Pentagon did in tailoring these plans to support its transformation vision, Coyle said.

John Pike, a defense analyst for GlobalSecurity.org, said the level of reform varies widely from service to service.

“The Navy’s closures, as far as I can understand, would have happened regardless of anything we’ve dealt with in the last four years,” Pike said.

For example, proposed closings of submarine facilities in New England stem from decisions made long ago to shrink the submarine fleet.

However, the Army would make several changes that Pike said reveal a new mind-set. Consolidating artillery and air defense schools at Fort Sill, Okla., and the armor and infantry schools in a single location at Fort Benning, Ga., are more ambitious than anything the Navy or Air Force proposed.

The recommendations also include plans to accommodate an Army reorganization that will break its 33 active-duty combat brigades into 43 smaller, leaner, more deployable units.

“What struck me is that the other services talked about how much money they’re going to save,” Gehman said after the Army’s May 18 appearance before the commission. “[The Army] is doing other things.”

#### Supporting ‘jointness’

The plan makes progress in one of Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld’s major transformation goals — increasing cooperation among the services, said Christopher Hellman, an analyst with the Center for Arms Control and Non-Proliferation.

Hellman pointed to the Air Force’s decision to cede control of Pope Air Force Base, N.C., to the Army, which will combine it with neighboring Fort Bragg.

The Army and Air Force also would consolidate management of Fort Lewis and McChord Air Force Base near Seattle, and plan to locate the Army and Air Force components of U.S. Central Command together at Shaw Air Force Base, S.C.

Hellman said these are examples of “the difference with BRAC rounds in the past.”

In the four previous base-closing rounds from 1988 to 1995, he said, the individual services developed all the proposals, whereas the Pentagon process this time included joint cross-service groups that looked at topics such as headquarters placement and opportunities for joint basing.

Still, commissioners hinted that they see areas where the Pentagon did not go far enough with jointness. Coyle questioned defense officials on the lack of consolidation in research and technology; retired Air Force Brig. Gen. Sue Ellen Turner wondered why the Pentagon did not look at joint basic training; and retired Army Gen. James Hill asked why there was no recommendation to combine the services’ three war colleges.

In some cases, officials said, the walls of separation between services were just too high to overcome. Charles Abell, the Pentagon's second-ranking personnel official, said the services resisted proposals to combine the war colleges and undergraduate pilot training.

### **Defense official promises to speed military base closures**

The Associated Press State & Local Wire

Melissa Trujillo

June 06, 2005

A Pentagon official pledged Monday that military bases scheduled for closure will be shut down as quickly as possible so communities can start redeveloping them.

Deputy defense undersecretary for installations and environment Philip Grone said the Pentagon hoped to do better than the 5.5-year average for the last round of base closures in 1998.

"We remain committed to accelerating that time whenever possible," said Grone, who spoke at the annual conference of the National Association of Installation Developers. The group represents communities with bases that are active, have been closed or are in the process of closing.

Grone did not give a target time for the new round of closings but said the law allows up to six years.

The Pentagon announced in May it plans to close 33 major bases in 22 states and reduce the size of 29 others for an estimated savings of \$48 billion over 20 years. More than 29,000 military and civilian jobs at domestic installations would be lost.

Besides the base closures, Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld has proposed 775 "minor closures and realignments."

Colorado comes out ahead under the plan, with Fort Carson gaining nearly 5,000 soldiers and headquarters employees from the 4th Brigade Combat Team now at Fort Hood, Texas. They

would join some 3,700 troops in the 2nd Brigade Combat Team arriving this summer after duty in Iraq.

To successfully reuse closed bases, communities must organize early, understand their strengths and have a clear vision of what they hope the base will become, Grone said. He mentioned the former Lowry Air Force Base, on the border between Denver and Aurora, and former Fitzsimons Army Medical Center.

When the 15-year cleanup and redevelopment of the 1,900-acre Lowry is complete in 2009, it will include a mix of businesses and about 4,500 homes and apartments. Fitzsimons is under development as a major medical and biotech center.

"Both of these installations, closed during previous rounds of base realignment and closure, are now national models for reuse and economic revitalization," Grone said.

Many other areas with closed bases have fared well, Grone said. He said a study of 60 such areas by the Government Accountability Office found that 70 percent had unemployment rates equal to or lower than the national average.

"The record, on balance, is a positive one," Grone said.

Grone said the defense department was reviewing its policies and requirements for base closures and realignment. He expected that process to finish before the commission reviewing the Pentagon's base recommendations is finished.

Grone also discussed the release of the massive amount of data backing up the Pentagon's decisions. He said the department collected between 25 million to 30 million bits of information, although a portion has been classified, and has been working to put the information on the Internet as quickly as possible.

"I think we've come to a good place in terms of what we're able to make available and will continue to do so," Grone said.

### **Pentagon misses deadline for releasing base-closing data**

Govexec.com  
Megan Scully  
June 06, 2005

The Pentagon released much of its base-closure data this weekend, but officials still have not finished scouring classified material from all information used to make recommendations to shutter 33 major domestic bases and realign others.

Lawmakers representing states affected by the closures have criticized the Pentagon for what they consider a failure to provide adequate and timely information to analyze Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld's recommendations.

The Pentagon last week opened a classified reading room at the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission's offices in Crystal City, Va., and officials said they would complete the declassification of all data by Saturday, making it available for public review.

Department officials failed to meet that goal because it involves reviewing "hundreds and hundreds of thousands of pages" for any classified information, a Pentagon spokeswoman said Monday. Meeting the deadline became "impossible" because of the "stunning amount of information," the spokeswoman added.

BRAC Commission staffers are reviewing the information they received this weekend, a BRAC spokesman said.

The commission has until Sept. 8 to evaluate the base-closure recommendations, released May 13. Lawmakers have said they need access to all data to plead their case and sway commissioners to save their bases. Commissioners already have visited many bases earmarked for closure, including Connecticut's New London Submarine Base, the largest installation on the list.

Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Chairwoman Susan Collins of Maine and ranking member Joseph Lieberman, D-Conn., said in a statement that they are "beyond frustrated" with the delays and will subpoena the information if the department "does not make significant and rapid progress." Maine and Connecticut are the two states hardest hit by BRAC.

### **Base closure commission reschedules St. Louis hearing for June 20**

The Associated Press State & Local Wire  
June 06, 2005

The independent commission reviewing the Pentagon's base closure recommendations announced Monday it will hold its St. Louis regional hearing on June 20.

The hearing, one of 16 nationwide, originally was set to begin Tuesday but was delayed after dozens of senators said they needed more time to review new data justifying the closures.

Community leaders from Illinois and six other states will use the forum to persuade the Base Closure and Realignment Commission to remove certain installations from the list of recommended cuts.

Last week, the Defense Department began giving lawmakers access to more detailed material backing its recommendations to shut down about 180 military installations across the country. The cuts would save an estimated \$48 billion over 20 years.

Illinois would lose nearly 2,700 jobs, with Rock Island Arsenal, the Springfield Air National Guard base and the Great Lakes Naval Training Center taking the biggest hits. The Pentagon did not recommend closing any major Illinois bases.

Besides Illinois, officials from Missouri, Kentucky, Indiana, Iowa, Wisconsin, Michigan are slated to appear at the St. Louis hearing.

**Local News Articles****Governor talks about Cannon, group works to save jobs at missile range**

The Associated Press State & Local Wire (Santa Fe, NM)

June 07, 2005

Gov. Bill Richardson traveled to Washington to meet with acting Air Force Secretary Michael Dominguez about the Pentagon's proposal to close Cannon Air Force Base.

Cannon was on a list released by the Pentagon last month of bases it wants to close. The Pentagon also wants to move 178 jobs from White Sands Missile Range in southern New Mexico to a base in Maryland.

"It's clear the Pentagon shortchanged Cannon on issues such as the availability of airspace for the New Mexico Training Range Initiative, the base's value to the nation's military mission and the fact that there is no encroachment upon the base in Clovis," Richardson said.

The next step is for the Base Realignment and Closure Commission to review the recommendations and hold hearings, including a June 24 hearing in Clovis. It would take five of the nine commissioners to remove a base from the list.

Richardson plans to travel to Nevada and Utah in the coming days to meet with some of the commissioners.

James V. Hanson, a former congressman from Utah, is to meet with Richardson in Salt Lake City on Friday. Richardson is to meet with commissioner James H. Bilbray, a former congressman from Nevada, on Sunday.

"I promised the people of Clovis that I would work with the community to do everything possible to save Cannon," Richardson said.

The panel's recommendations are due to President Bush by Sept. 8. The president may accept or reject the entire list. If he accepts it, it

goes to Congress for a yes or no vote, again on the entire list.

Members of the White Sands Community Response Team plan to meet with BRAC commissioners when they are in Clovis later this month. The group is concerned about the jobs at the range's Army Research Laboratory.

Bill Conner, chairman of the team, said the loss of those positions could cost Las Cruces' economy as much as \$200 million. The relocation of the lab also would have a negative impact on contracts the lab has with New Mexico State University.

Ed Carr, executive director of the Otero County Economic Development Council, said he and other county representatives wanted to get involved because of the impact on Otero County.

"It's very important that we do what we can to protect White Sands Missile Range," he said.

The Las Cruces City Council on Monday approved a resolution in support of the response team's efforts to save the Army lab.

**State bases most likely lost cause; Miller says fight but get Plan B**

The Atlanta Journal-Constitution (Atlanta, GA)

Christopher Quinn

June 07, 2005

Denver --- When Zell Miller was governor in the 1990s, he helped gain Georgia's military bases a reprieve when they turned up on previous BRAC Commission closure lists.

But the four bases in Georgia on the current closure list are less likely to survive, Miller told a large audience of city and state officials gathered here Monday to prepare for the coming decisions of the Base Realignment and Closure Commission.

"It can happen. It may happen. But don't count on it," he said. "I doubt very many changes will be made to that list."

Georgia has four bases on the list: Fort McPherson, Fort Gillem and Naval Air Station Atlanta in metro Atlanta and the Navy Supply Corps School in Athens.

Gov. Sonny Perdue said Monday that while Georgia officials will continue to fight to keep the bases open, "Statistically it would be unlikely we would be successful in saving all four."

Members of the BRAC Commission will visit Fort McPherson on Wednesday and Fort Gillem on Friday. Also this week, contingents from the communities surrounding Naval Submarine Base Kings Bay and the Marine Corps Logistics Base in Albany will travel to Washington to meet with BRAC staff members to assure them they have the capacity to expand.

Both communities expect to gain military and civilian positions as a result of this round of closures and realignments.

Retired Army Gen. James Hill, who served at Fort McPherson during his career, will visit that post Wednesday. Former Nevada Rep. James Bilbray will visit Fort Gillem.

Georgia bases have appeared on previous BRAC lists, but the state never suffered a loss. Many have credited the work of Georgia politicians, including Miller and then-Sen. Sam Nunn, who was chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee.

Miller named a 38-member committee in 1993, shortly after the BRAC Commission surprised Georgia by putting four state bases on the closure list.

The committee members worked to educate local leaders about how to strengthen their bases' positions in the military system, and they began to look for military technology spinoffs that the civilian market could use to create jobs.

Miller also organized a base consortium to buy power at cheaper rates and lead the state to buy 37 homes in the flyover zone at Robins Air

Force Base near Macon. He said the BRAC Commission believed homes in flyover zones were a strike against a facility.

Today, the closings are the result of a new vision of 21st-century warfare, he said. The military is moving toward closer integration of services, training and technology and is fighting less apparent threats than standing armies.

Those bases that have strengthened their positions by attracting new uses or high-tech jobs are more likely to survive in the future, but those communities with bases on the current closure list should not count on being able to politick their way off the list.

"The fact that the list is part of a larger plan means the Pentagon has done a more thorough job [of determining what is needed] than in any previous round," said Miller, who is now a policy consultant with McKenna Long & Aldridge, a legal firm with offices in Atlanta and across the country.

He encouraged those in the audience to prepare for hearings the communities will have with the closing commission. Georgia's hearing is June 30.

Perdue said Georgia officials will attend other regional hearings to get a sense of what the commission is looking for so that the affected communities will be better prepared for the hearing in Atlanta.

"It's helpful to us that we're not first out of the box," he said.

Miller said communities are unwise if they are not preparing for a redevelopment plan, a theme that has been a key point of the National Association of Installation Developers conference. Twenty-eight percent of bases closed in previous rounds have not been redeveloped.

"The communities most hit were the ones that did not have a redevelopment plan or were late in coming up with one," Miller said.

Perdue said his office has been working with local communities through the Georgia Military Affairs Coordinating Committee for months to look at ways to first save the bases while at the same time exploring long-term redevelopment plans.

"We think it's in our best interests," to get the redevelopment plans moving, Perdue said.

Forest Park already has applied for a \$110,000 grant to help pay for planning for the redevelopment of Fort Gillem, said Forest Park Mayor Chuck Hall, who is attending the conference.

Crandall Bray, former chairman of the Clayton County Commission and of the Atlanta Regional Commission, has been appointed as the head of the local redevelopment authority that will come up with the plan.

Bray said authority members plan to tour the base next week and assess its infrastructure. They hope to complete a preliminary plan by late fall.

Atlanta, which will manage Fort McPherson's redevelopment, sent three people to the conference: businessman Felker Ward, who will head Atlanta's redevelopment authority; Councilwoman Joyce Sheperd; and Peggy McCormick of the city's development office. The city will appoint more authority members in coming weeks.

Many bases have been successfully redeveloped when the military moved out. Denver has two prime examples: Lowry Air Force Base and Fitzsimons Army Medical Center. They are similar to metro Atlanta's bases in that they were in fast-growing suburban areas.

Lowry now has 3,000 houses and a new smart-growth town center; Fitzsimons is a hospital and high-tech bioscience center.

Ward was encouraged and said the redevelopment of Fort McPherson could present Atlanta with a great opportunity.

"I think what we are doing is going to have a significant impact on southwest Atlanta for many, many years to come," Ward said.

### **Base realignment commissioner visits Crane**

The Associated Press State & Local Wire  
(Loogootee, IN)  
June 06, 2005

One of nine commissioners appointed to oversee the Defense Department's base closure and realignment process praised the technologic proficiency at Crane Surface Naval Warfare Center.

Sam Skinner, who was chief of staff and transportation secretary under former President George H.W. Bush, said Monday that his four-hour tour of the base showed him, "there are legitimate issues that need to be seriously looked at."

The Base Realignment and Closure commission will hold a hearing this month in St. Louis to review federal recommendations to downsize the base.

Crane, about 30 miles southwest of Bloomington, now has about 4,000 government workers and contractors doing work such as modifying weapons for Navy SEALs testing laser-guided bombs. But the installation could lose 672 jobs as part of Pentagon's realignment of domestic military bases.

Following his tour, Skinner said Crane would receive a fair hearing.

"You may hate me afterward, you may love me afterward, either way I will know and the commission will know we made our best judgment," said Skinner, who assured business officials the commission had no preconceived notions about Crane.

U.S. Sen. Evan Bayh said Skinner's comments bode well for the base and will be promising news for those working to save jobs at Crane.

"Sam Skinner saw firsthand what all of us in Indiana have known for years," Bayh said. "Crane leads the way in producing and developing the high-tech equipment crucial to our nation's military."

### **BRAC commissioners visit Utah military sites**

The Associated Press State & Local Wire  
(Layton, UT)  
Jennifer Dobner  
June 06, 2005

Three members of the Base Realignment and Closure commission toured Hill Air Force Base and flew over the west desert's Utah Test and Training Range on a fact finding mission Monday before making final recommendations on proposed base closures in September.

The visit by commissioners Gen. Lloyd Newton, Phillip Coyle and former Utah congressman Jim Hansen replaced a regional public hearing that had been planned for the same day. The hearing was canceled in part because the Pentagon's recommendations represent minimal changes for Utah's military installations.

In all, Utah stands to lose about 400 civilian and military jobs. Of those, 145 will be net losses at Hill Air Force Base, the state's largest facility, which employs 24,000 people and provides an estimated \$4 billion for the state economy. A handful of jobs will be lost at Fort Douglas and at the Tooele Army Depot.

The Deseret Chemical Depot will also close if the Pentagon's recommendations hold, but that was always anticipated for the weapons-destruction facility.

Commissioners, who were accompanied on the tour by Rep. Rob Bishop, R-Utah, and Republican U.S. Sens. Orrin Hatch and Bob Bennett said the visit was productive.

"It really helps us to get an appreciation for what's going on that you can't get from a cold piece of a paper," Coyle said of the visit.

All three said they were impressed by the facilities they toured and by their discussions with staff and base commanders.

But they said it was too early to say how the BRAC process might end in September. Pentagon recommendations for this round of base closures are different from those Hansen said he witnessed during the 1990s.

"It was cleverly put together in that if you touch one base here, you touch three others at the same time," he said. "It will be a real challenge for us to work things out."

Whether that means Utah ultimately could lose more jobs, "I don't think we're in a position to know really at this point," Hansen said.

The Utah Legislature has appropriated \$5 million for economic development in the communities around Hill AFB in hopes of generating about 600 new jobs.

Bennett, Bishop and Hatch all said they believe Utah's bases have - and will continue to have - an important role in U.S. national security as it relates to the military and to homeland security.

And they said in the time it takes the Deseret Chemical Depot to complete its work and close - something projected for roughly 2012 - they would investigate and consider if there are alternative uses for the facility that could keep some of those 1,500 jobs in the state.

### **Fort Smith leaders fighting base closing**

The Associated Press State & Local Wire (Fort Smith, AR)  
June 06, 2005

City leaders have agreed to spend \$40,000 to hire a retired Air National Guard colonel and local advertising firm to help fight a Department of Defense recommendation that 670 jobs be cut from the 188th Fighter Wing.

The city of Fort Smith, the Fort Smith Regional Chamber of Commerce and the Fort Smith Regional Airport Commission will split the

costs. The agency, Advertising Plus of Fort Smith, and retired Col. Brock Strom are to lobby against recommendations that the base's F-16C Falcon fighters be retired or reassigned and that it lose 670 of its 1,000 jobs.

The agency will be paid \$5,000 a month for four months and Strom will receive \$10,000 a month for two months, officials said. The agency will put together briefing books, write testimony and act as a congressional liaison.

Strom, who just retired Wednesday as chief of operations at the Air National Guard headquarters in Washington, will help Fort Smith shape its message and to respond to the Base Realignment and Closure Commission and Department of Defense.

The city is preparing for a hearing before the commission on July 11 in San Antonio. Fort Smith City Administrator Bill Harding, Chamber of Commerce president Tom Mansky and airport manager Kent Penney will represent Fort Smith at the hearing.

### **Memo: Base closing documents classified after release of list**

Associated Press (New London, CT)  
June 07, 2005

State and local officials have been frustrated for weeks in trying to get the documents the Pentagon used in putting the Groton submarine base on its closing list.

It turns out a memo included in the few documents released over the weekend shows the Department of Defense ordered the supporting data classified 13 days after the closing list was made public.

The order to classify the data, made by Acting Deputy Secretary of Defense Gordon England, also came one week after Navy officials promised to release the documents to the Base Closure and Realignment Commission.

Senator Joe Lieberman is among those soundly criticizing the Defense Department's refusal to

release the data. He has threatened to subpoena the information if the Pentagon does not release it.

Those documents released this weekend also show the Navy started planning to close the Groton submarine base at least as early as last October, despite the objection of a Navy four-star admiral.

### **Area officials find flaws in BRAC data**

Clovis News Journal (Clovis, NM)  
June 07, 2005

The Department of Defense has released information about specific criteria used in the compilation of its Base Realignment and Closure lists.

Information, available for download on [www.brac.gov](http://www.brac.gov), includes a system used to calculate cost of base realignment or closure information in regards to COBRA.

Committee of Fifty member Randy Harris said a team of individuals, including Hanson Scott, director of the office for military base planning and support, and Keystone International, gathered Monday at the Clovis Community College, to begin analysis.

"We have dozens of volumes with 1,000 pages each. It's a massive amount of data," a yet optimistic Harris said.

Analyzing the in-depth data, Harris said, is a tremendous responsibility, lengthy and complex. He did, however, point out two points of interest for the group.

Two deviations in the scoring system used to rate bases were found by the group, Harris said.

The Department of Defense did not factor in number of runways into their scoring system. Cannon Air Force Base, equipped with two runways, scored the same number as bases with only one. Harris deemed this a major Department of Defense oversight. In addition, the scoring system placed little value on

encroachment, bestowing Cannon a score roughly 2 percent higher than bases with significant encroachment issues.

Harris said Cannon's military value would skyrocket if encroachment issues were considered properly.

Cannon was one of two Air Force bases recommended for closure last month when the Pentagon released its Base Realignment and Closure list.

At least three members of the BRAC Commission are scheduled to visit Cannon June 23 and conduct a regional hearing in which state and local officials can present their case for keeping Cannon on June 24.

Harris also expressed frustration over the delayed release of the data.

"It will take a while to analyze the data. The BRAC Commission," Harris said, "is equally frustrated about lateness of the arrival of data."

Also on Monday, Gov. Bill Richardson met with the acting secretary and three other Air Force officials in Washington to discuss New Mexico's efforts to keep Cannon, according to a spokesman for the governor.

"I was impressed with the fact that the data we presented to the Air Force will be forwarded to the BRAC Commission," Richardson said after the meeting. "They made no commitments, but said they would consider our arguments. "I believe they were sincere."

Richardson said he believes the Pentagon shortchanged Cannon on issues such as the availability of airspace for the New Mexico Training Range Initiative, the base's value to the nation's military mission and the fact that there is no encroachment upon the base in Clovis.

Richardson will travel later this week to Nevada and Utah to meet with two members of the Base Realignment and Closure Commission. Richardson is also scheduled to meet with Commissioner James V. Hanson, a former

congressman from Utah, on Friday in Salt Lake City, and James H. Bilbray, a former congressman from Nevada, on Sunday in Las Vegas.

**Panelist promises fairness for Crane State, local officials hope to keep 700 jobs Pentagon recommends transferring from base.**

The Indianapolis Star (Indianapolis, IN)  
Mary Beth Schneider  
June 7, 2005

CRANE, Ind. -- Base-closing commission member Sam Skinner admits he didn't know much about Crane Division, Naval Surface Warfare Center, but what he learned during a four-hour tour there Monday could save up to 700 jobs.

"It's kind of a secret," Skinner said of Crane. "I can assure you that when I go back to the commission I'll tell them about a lot of the great things being done here."

Skinner is one of nine members of the Base Realignment and Closure Commission, which will decide whether to sustain or alter the Department of Defense recommendation to preserve most of Crane's mission but transfer about 700 of the 5,000 jobs at the Southern Indiana facility to other states.

While the Defense Department decision was a big win for Indiana, as other states lost bases and jobs, state and local officials still think Crane was shortchanged. The Defense Department, they argue, didn't follow its own goal of consolidation and moved jobs away from Crane -- a joint Navy and Army facility -- rather than to it.

In a news conference after his visit, Skinner assured business and government leaders that he understood Crane's value and capabilities.

"There's some legitimate issues that have to be seriously looked at," Skinner said, refusing to get into details.

But he praised Crane as "probably the most technologically proficient base I've visited."

The skilled workers employed at Crane -- engineers and technicians -- stand out as a key asset, he said, adding he had learned that only about 10 of the 700 employees whose jobs are being transferred would be willing to move. And training new workers in the other communities would be time-consuming and expensive.

Skinner, a former transportation secretary and chief of staff to President George H.W. Bush, and other commission members are visiting military sites affected by the recommended closings. He and two other members will hold a hearing -- scheduled for today in St. Louis but postponed until June 20 to give communities and bases time to absorb Defense Department data released Monday -- to let Midwestern sites further argue their cases.

Monday, Skinner promised fairness.

"There's not going to be any whitewash. There's no preconceived notions," he said. "You may hate me afterwards. You may love me afterwards. Either way, I will know, and the commission will know, that we made our best judgment."

While state government and the Southern Indiana Business Alliance, which are leading the fight, are trying first to keep all the 700 jobs in Indiana, they haven't given up hope that the commission could decide to shift additional jobs to Crane.

One consideration that Skinner said is key, at least for him, is the ongoing war.

"If I think the mission in Iraq or Afghanistan or elsewhere in the world is going to be severely impacted by some of these recommendations in the short run, I will stand tall to turn that recommendation down. They will have to roll over me to do that."

A second consideration, he said, is the impact on the community. And Monday, everyone from Lt. Gov. Becky Skillman and state representatives

to local businessmen and mayors wanted to make sure Skinner knew that Crane is vital to the state and local economy.

Crane, Skillman said, is the state's 12th-largest employer and the second-largest in Southern Indiana. Its 5,000 workers, she said, come from 30 counties.

Those numbers could help Crane. Skinner said that if the decision is close on whether to move jobs, "I guess it will go to the community."

### **Wyden Says Proposed 142nd Air Wing Changes Make Oregon Vulnerable To Attack**

White City News (White City, OR)

June 06, 2005

Portland, Oregon - After a recent briefing from officials with the 142nd Air National Guard Fighter Wing and the Oregon Military Department, U.S. Senator Ron Wyden (D-Ore.) said that proposed changes to the unit pose a threat to the safety and security of Oregon and the Northwest region. Wyden had previously expressed strong concerns about Defense Department recommendations to the Federal Base Realignment and Closing (BRAC) Commission that would drop 13 alert fighter jets out of the Portland Air Base, leaving the 142nd with only two jets at PDX.

Today, colonels of the 142nd and the Oregon Military Department told Wyden if the recommendations are implemented, fighters would not be available if one large-scale or multiple and simultaneous attacks occurred in the Northwest. They noted that the Pentagon's recommendations would drop the region's alert force to pre-9/11 levels. Wyden received today's briefing in advance of a scheduled June 17 hearing in Portland of the BRAC Commission, at which the recommendations will be reviewed. Wyden said today he will testify in opposition to the proposed realignments.

"This is a world of multiple threats, and it's clear today that the Pentagon's recommendations will

place Oregon and the nation at far greater risk," said Wyden. "When the BRAC Commission comes to Portland they'll be told in no uncertain terms that military cost-cutting is not an adequate reason to leave our region vulnerable to attack."

"After a thorough analysis of this proposal, we are very perplexed that this is the outcome that has been recommended for Portland Air Base. This proposal does not pass the logic test when it comes to the homeland defense of the Northwest, and we intend to make those points to the BRAC Commission and believe that they will recognize the failures in this proposal," said Colonel Mike Caldwell, deputy director of the Oregon Military Department.

On May 13, 2005, the U.S Department of Defense proposed changes to the Air Guard Station at Portland International Airport including the realignment of the 142nd Fighter Wing's F-15 aircraft to stations in Atlantic City, N.J. and New Orleans, La.; the Pentagon list says the wing's expeditionary combat support elements and two combat communications squadrons will remain at Portland. Proposed changes to the 939th Air

Refueling Wing include realignment of aircraft and maintenance personnel to Tinker Air Force Base in Oklahoma and Forbes Field Air Guard Station in Kansas, with one aircraft sent to backup inventory.

Remaining personnel of the 939th, including expeditionary combat support, would be realigned to Vandenberg Air Force Base in California. The 304th Rescue Squadron at Portland would be realigned to McChord Air Force Base in Washington.

Even before the Pentagon's recommendations were issued, Wyden and U.S. Senator Gordon Smith (R-Ore.) lobbied BRAC Chairman Anthony Principi in a May 6 letter to maintain the current vital roles of Oregon's military facilities. In addition to Wyden's testimony at the June 17 hearing, BRAC officials are scheduled to hear from other public officials,

members of the Oregon Guard and state homeland security officials.

### **Pentagon wants to shut base down earlier Documents imply closure by 2008**

Concord Monitor (Concord, NH)

June 06, 2005

BOSTON - The Pentagon wants to close the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard by 2008, four years ahead of the schedule officials there had been planning for, according to documents recently sent to the Base Realignment and Closure Commission.

The documents, posted this week on the commission's Web site, show that Portsmouth, located in Kittery, Maine, was one of four shipyards Pentagon strategists considered closing, along with Puget Sound in Bremerton, Wash.; Norfolk in Virginia, and Pearl Harbor in Hawaii.

They decided that Portsmouth and Pearl Harbor were too small to handle the work they'd get if the larger Washington and Virginia bases were to close, and they decided Pearl Harbor should stay open because of its strategic location in the Pacific.

Under federal guidelines, the military has six years to close the bases, but they can be shutdown sooner.

Previously, according to yesterday's Boston Globe, it was thought that Portsmouth, the nation's primary center for overhauling nuclear attack submarines, would close in 2012.

But the environmental cleanup of the site means it could still be years before the base is cleared by the military for redevelopment. According to a report the Pentagon released to Congress in April, it would cost \$35.3 million and take until 2016 to clean up at least four potentially contaminated sites at the shipyard.

Paul O'Connor, the shipyard's union leader, told the Globe that the workload forecast at the facility extends to 2020, but the military could transfer that work to another shipyard.

"I don't want to speculate when the lock will be put on the door," O'Connor said.

"We believe we have the data to get our shipyard off the (closure) list."

### **Opinions/ Editorials**

#### **Just How Whimsical Was Decision To Close Base?**

New London Day (New London, CT)  
Terrence K. Keller Jr., Gales Ferry  
June 07, 2005

The Pentagon has been dragging its feet once again in an attempt to avoid providing the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission (BRAC) and the public with complete information regarding how the Submarine Base in New London was selected for closure.

The Pentagon has warned now that the amount of information that the panel wants is so voluminous that it will crash the Pentagon's computers to pull it all out" ("Pentagon data puts pressure on BRAC, June 4).

If that is the case, it really makes me wonder just how whimsical the decision to close our base was, given the Pentagon could not possibly, thoroughly, analyze that much information if simply retrieving it would cripple its systems.

#### **Pentagon's stonewalling unforgivable**

Norwich Bulletin (Norwich, CT)  
June 07, 2005

How much less are we supposed to take? The Department of Defense's omissions in the Base Realignment And Closure process are shameful and now border on negligence.

We've got to know how the Pentagon reached its intention to shut down the Naval Submarine Base at Groton and relocate all of that base's operations to the Norfolk Naval Station in

Virginia and the Kings Bay Submarine Base in Georgia.

In 29 days, the Subbase Realignment Coalition must make its case before the BRAC Commission for keeping the Groton sub base open. But in the 25 days since it announced that Groton was targeted for closure, the Pentagon still has not told us why.

And on top of putting the coalition -- and the region -- at a huge disadvantage, the Pentagon has violated federal law that said all data had to be released by May 23.

This is beyond frustrating. Consider:

In past BRACs, only the Pentagon's 20-year force structure plan was kept secret, and that's understandable. The latest BRAC shrouds as classified all the substantive reasons for base closings.

In the unclassified documents released over the weekend, it was revealed that Groton was considered for closure as early as November 2004.

One month before the BRAC list was released May 13, the savings of closing Groton were adjusted upward, while costs of closure were adjusted downward: Savings went from \$15 million to \$44 million. Costs went from \$41 million to \$28 million.

On May 17, when BRAC Commission member Lloyd Newton asked Ann Davis, assistant secretary of the Navy, when the classified data would be released she said, "tomorrow."

In a May 27 Department of Defense memo, Secretary of the Navy Gordon England wrote, "... I am temporarily classifying all of the subject data bases and information contained therein ... at the Secret Formerly Restricted Data level."

Some classified data relating to BRAC was released to Congress last week. But those 24 computer discs are difficult to sort through because there is no search function and some files won't open.

And if the files are opened and understood, that information cannot be passed to the coalition because it is classified, and coalition members lack secret clearances.

The coalition is trying mightily to make the case that Groton should not be closed, that the decision was based on faulty information or reasoning.

So far, the coalition has received "interesting data," in the words of coalition Chairman John Markowicz.

But however "interesting" that data is, it does not spell out why the Pentagon ranked Norfolk and Kings Bay significantly higher than Groton in military value.

As long as it remains unknown why a decision was made, that decision cannot be refuted.

The Pentagon -- so far -- has cut 25 days off the coalition's time to study substantive data. That's inexcusable.

The Subbase Realignment Coalition must have that information. Now.

### **Turn BRAC lemons into lemonade**

The Forum (ND)  
June 07, 2005

The news from the Department of Defense regarding North Dakota's air bases suggests a two-track recovery strategy makes the most sense. There is real potential for the state to make lemonade from lemons.

Last week DOD said the state's two bases on the Base Realignment and Closure Commission list are in line for new missions. The base at Grand Forks and the Air National Guard base at Fargo will be home to a new generation of unmanned aerial vehicles, or UAVs. It's good news. Military analysts say it's one of the military's most important emerging missions since the Cold War.

But what of the traditional flying missions at both bases? If the DOD realignment survives the BRAC process, it's likely the air tankers and Grand Forks and the fighter jets at Fargo will be history. It could mean fewer personnel will be stationed at both bases to service and "fly" the UAVs.

And that very real possibility mandates two complementary strategies for the affected communities.

First, North Dakota should embrace enthusiastically the UAV defense technology. If military analysts are right and the Defense Department is being honest, North Dakota will be one of the major centers for UAV deployments, service support and missions. The military's evolution toward greater use of UAVs in battlefield conditions and for reconnaissance suggests an expanding role for the unmanned aircraft. That scenario can only be good for bases that are among the first to get UAVs in large numbers.

Second, local and congressional advocates for the bases might want to rethink a strategy centered on preserving the old or attracting new conventional flying missions. The nation's air defense posture clearly has changed. Military planners, led by Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, believe the nation can be defended by fewer conventional aircraft. The recommendations sent by DOD to BRAC reveal a move toward a defense posture that is far different from the nation's Cold War policies. The new way does not have a place for the old tankers at Grand Forks and oldest-in-the-fleet fighters at Fargo.

Flowing from a realistic two-track local strategy should be serious plans to use the facilities at the bases for civilian purposes. The runways and buildings are world class. The potential for something like a northern air freight terminal is enormous. It's not out of the realm of possibility that commercial airline companies might see the buildings, runways and other amenities - at Grand Forks especially - as a good fit for aircraft maintenance and pilot training.

Finally, Secretary Rumsfeld has been quite clear about helping communities recover from any economic damage because of base realignment. He should be pressed about exactly what he means.

We stress, as we have in the space twice before, base closure and realignment is about doing what's right to defend the nation. Economic considerations in affected communities should not be minimized, but they must not be the priority. If North Dakota positions itself smartly, the state will remain a key player in the nation's defense without taking a big economic hit.

**Additional Notes**

N/A