

## Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission

# EARLY



# BIRD

June 9, 2005

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**Grand Forks, Eielson key to Air Force Future Total Force**

Air Force Print News  
Master Sgt. Mitch Gettle  
June 8, 2005

WASHINGTON -- If the Base Realignment and Closure recommendations released in May are approved, Grand Forks Air Force Base, N.D., and Eielson AFB, Alaska, will see some changes.

Both bases will play a strategic role in the Air Force's Future Total Force plan.

Grand Forks received the highest BRAC score for unmanned aerial vehicles of any Air Force installation within its region.

"Grand Forks provides a strategic presence in the north central United States and enjoys proximity to open airspace over sparsely populated areas," said Lt. Gen. Stephen G. Wood, deputy chief of staff for Air Force plans and programs.

"This makes it a highly effective location for our UAVs," General Wood said. "Establishing a cold weather UAV center is necessary to advance training opportunities and system development to ensure these vehicles can operate worldwide. Our strategic vision for Grand Forks is to become a home to a 'family of UAVs.'"

The proposed changes will form cooperation between active and Guard components.

"We would establish (an MQ-1) Predator Air National Guard unit at Fargo's Hector Field," General Wood said. "The initial configuration could be a split operation with the ground control and intelligence analysis functions located at a location selected by the North Dakota ANG and with the airframes and launch recovery element located at Grand Forks."

Changes at Eielson may also offer the Air Force an opportunity to take advantage of Future Total Force integration initiatives for emerging missions.

"Eielson provides immediate and easy access to a vast airspace and range complex -- a dwindling resource in other United States and overseas locations," General Wood said. "Access to this base is critical to the effective execution of future Cooperative Cope Thunder joint and coalition readiness exercises.

"Keeping Eielson open provides a strategic location to deploy to and operate from in any future contingency," he said.

"Realigning and retaining both these installations affords us the opportunity to take advantage of Future Total Force integration initiatives to capture highly skilled Airmen for emerging mission requirements," said Michael L. Dominguez, acting secretary of the Air Force.

**BRAC Communities Regained 90 Percent Of Lost Jobs, Official Says**

American Forces Press Service  
Gerry J. Gilmore  
June 8, 2005

DENVER, June 8, 2005 – Redevelopment efforts have created more than 115,000 new jobs nationwide in communities affected by the last four base realignment and closure actions, a senior Defense Department official said here this week.

Those employment gains account for "nearly 90 percent of the civilian jobs that were lost" as the result of BRAC rounds conducted in 1988, 1991, 1993, and 1995, said Patrick J. O'Brien,

director of DoD's Office of Economic Adjustment.

It takes hard work for communities to rebound from BRAC actions, O'Brien told attendees at the National Association of Installation Developers and Association of Defense Communities annual conference. O'Brien pointed out that OEA and other federal agencies, such as the Department of Labor, stand ready to assist redevelopment efforts of BRAC-affected communities.

O'Brien urged state and local community representatives with military bases identified for closure or realignment under the recently released 2005 BRAC list to "get to know the DoD team" of military and civilian officials who work BRAC issues.

But DoD can't do everything by itself, O'Brien pointed out, noting myriad other federal agencies and programs offer community planning and redevelopment assistance for BRAC-impacted communities.

"Take advantage of those programs; learn what they are," O'Brien advised.

He said the key to redevelopment success for communities affected by BRAC actions is early planning and consensus on what types of development will be undertaken on former military property. However, O'Brien also asked communities to pace themselves, because the BRAC process is long and arduous.

It's not necessary that communities "reinvent the wheel" when considering redevelopment options, O'Brien said, noting many BRAC success stories are available to analyze. O'Brien recommended that state and local community leaders obtain a copy of the OEA-produced booklet titled, "Responding to Change: Communities and BRAC." This booklet, he said, contains scores of examples of BRAC success stories, including points of contact.

The BRAC 2005 list of proposed base closings and realignments released by Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld in May requires review by

the BRAC commission, the Congress and the president, with a final approved listing expected sometime this fall.

Yet, whatever form the final list takes, O'Brien said, DoD stands by to assist affected communities.

Through nearly two decades of BRAC actions the Office of Economic Adjustment has an effective history "of being capable and responsible in assisting communities respond to these challenges," O'Brien said. And as BRAC 2005 nears, DoD will carry on that legacy of assistance to affected communities, he added.

"We want to understand what your needs are; we want to be responsive to those needs," he concluded.

### National News Articles

#### **Marine Recruit Depot Could Be Closed The San Diego boot camp wasn't on the Pentagon's list, but it will be considered, the panel chairman says.**

Los Angeles Times (Los Angeles, CA)  
Tony Perry  
June 9, 2005

SAN DIEGO — The Base Realignment and Closure Commission will consider whether to add the Marine Corps Recruit Depot here to the list of bases recommended for closure by the Pentagon, the commission's chairman said Wednesday.

Anthony Principi, the former Veterans Affairs secretary, said commissioners want to see whether money could be saved by closing the recruit depot, next to Lindbergh Field, and shifting training to Camp Pendleton.

"In the final analysis, what's best for the war fighters" is the top priority, Principi told a news conference. "Every dollar wasted in excess capacity is a dollar we can't spend on bullets and training."

Although it was not included in the Pentagon's closure list unveiled May 13, the recruit depot is

"clearly one of the bases that will be considered" for closure, Principi said.

While military boosters in San Diego were joyous to see that the recruit depot was not on the list, controversy flared anew when Marine Commandant Gen. Michael Hagee told the commission a few days later that the corps had recommended the training depot be closed but withdrew the option after studying the cost of moving its operations.

Principi said the Navy and Air Force, while larger than the Marine Corps, have only one recruit training facility each, while the Marine Corps still has two boot camps, at San Diego and Parris Island, S.C.

The San Diego boot camp trains 16,000 recruits a year and has 1,725 Marines and sailors and 900 civilians assigned to it.

Principi and other commissioners are touring military bases throughout the nation before a series of hearings to consider the closure and downsizing recommendations of the Pentagon. A hearing is tentatively set for July 14 in Los Angeles.

Adding a base to the Pentagon's list requires seven votes on the nine-member commission. In past closure rounds, only five votes were needed to add or strike a base from the list.

Among the issues to be discussed before submitting the list to President Bush by Sept. 8 is the transfer of personnel from Navy facilities at Point Mugu and Norco to the Naval Air Weapons Station China Lake. Principi said commissioners want to see whether the desert base can accommodate such a "transfer of brainpower."

Several members of Congress have expressed frustration that the Pentagon has not released information it used to develop its list. But Principi said sifting through the voluminous information to safeguard classified material has taken time.

"Hopefully this week and next week we'll have the data we'll need," he said.

### **COG To Study The Impact Of Pentagon's Base Plan**

Washington Post  
Spencer S. Hsu  
June 9, 2005

The Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments weighed in yesterday on a Pentagon plan to move more than 25,000 defense jobs from the core of the Washington area, voting to analyze the impact on the region's land use, roads, air and economy.

The panel's action was not without discord, however. While representatives from close-in suburbs such as Arlington warned of negative effects on traffic, tax revenue and urban planning, those from jurisdictions outside the Capital Beltway -- which would gain thousands of defense jobs under the proposal -- said no one should prejudge the study's findings.

In all, the Pentagon proposed to close or downsize more than 800 military installations nationwide to save \$49 billion over 20 years. The nine-member Base Realignment and Closure Commission announced this week that it will hold at least one public hearing in the Washington area, in addition to 16 others planned across the country in the next month, before it delivers a final version of the plan to President Bush by Sept. 8. The president and Congress then must approve or reject the list in its entirety.

The local schedule is still being determined, BRAC spokesman Robert J. McCreary said, but a spokesman for Rep. James P. Moran Jr. (D-Va.) said a Northern Virginia hearing is tentatively scheduled for July 7. A spokeswoman for Del. Eleanor Holmes Norton (D-D.C.) said Norton has been told by the commission's leaders that a hearing will be held in the District.

D.C. and Northern Virginia leaders are fighting the Pentagon's proposal. The District would lose

6,000 jobs, mostly from the closing of Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Northwest Washington and the relocation of its functions to a renamed Walter Reed National Military Medical Center in Bethesda and to Fort Belvoir in southeastern Fairfax County.

Arlington and Alexandria would lose almost 23,000 defense workers housed in leased office space. The office buildings do not meet new Pentagon requirements that structures be set back at least 82 feet from traffic to protect against truck bombs, and the leases also conflict with Pentagon guidelines to reduce the concentration of defense workers in the capital area.

Fort Belvoir would gain up to 18,400 jobs, Quantico Marine Corps Base in northeastern Prince William County would gain 3,000 jobs and Fort Meade in Anne Arundel County would gain 5,400 jobs.

At yesterday's COG meeting, Arlington County Board Chairman Jay Fisetta (D) was the leading critic of the Pentagon plan.

Fisetta said the Defense Department's guidelines on workplace security will set a damaging precedent for other government agencies. Such measures could erode local property tax bases by moving defense agencies from private buildings onto military bases and undo years of planning to concentrate growth around mass transit centers and discourage sprawl, he said.

"The bottom line is, in two-thirds of the [Pentagon] criteria, leased space by definition ranked at the bottom just because of the assumption that leased space is bad and owned space is good," Fisetta said. "To the degree we take off our parochial hats and think about regional planning and urban development issues, I think it's good we do that."

But other COG members said some of the changes could be positive.

Montgomery County Council member Nancy Floreen (D-At Large) said: "We've got a lot of open federal land. So does Prince George's

County. There may be differences of opinion about how the region should address the issue of owned versus leased space."

"Everyone has a different viewpoint on things," said Prince William Supervisor Maureen S. Caddigan (R-Dumfries), echoing colleague Hilda M. Barg (D-Woodbridge) in saying that the county is planning for new buildings with Quantico officials.

### **Vote to study base closings reveals regional differences**

The Associated Press  
Jacob Adelman  
June 8, 2005

Tensions simmered between the area's metropolitan core and its outlying suburbs in a vote Wednesday to commission a study of the effects of proposed military base closings.

The Pentagon wants to merge the Walter Reed Army Medical Center with the National Naval Medical Center in Bethesda, Md., and another hospital at Fort Belvoir in Northern Virginia. Bolling Air Force Base in Southwest Washington would also lose jobs under the proposal.

Members of the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments voted unanimously to study the potential effects of the closings on the environment, job market and transportation network. But the measure passed only after participants from outlying areas were assured of having a say in the study's conclusions.

"I will only support it if there is something in there that we will have a form of communication before the executive board is making decisions for the whole region," said Hilda Barg, a supervisor for Prince William County, Va.

The vote came as the Base Realignment and Closure Commission, whose members are appointed by the president, prepares to hold a series of regional hearings to consider which bases to recommend closing.

The commission will hold its hearing in Washington on July 9, said Del. Eleanor Holmes Norton, D-DC, who lobbied for the panel to meet in the nation's capital.

Jay Fisette, the Arlington County Board chairman who sponsored the resolution to commission the study, said the criteria that Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld used to select bases for closure were weighted against metropolitan Washington.

He urged the leaders from outlying areas, some of whom stand to gain from the movement of jobs onto bases within their jurisdictions, to consider the best interests of the region, and not just those of their own localities.

"It is incumbent upon us to think about the consequences and implications of these issues not just as 'We're getting more people or less people,'" he said.

### **BRAC states are both Red and Blue**

United Press International

Pamela Hess

June 8, 2005

Senators Susan Collins and Joseph Lieberman have issued a subpoena to the Defense Department to force it to turn over documents related to the base closure and realignment decisions announced last month.

The move by Collins, R-Maine, and Lieberman, Conn. is the latest tactic to delay or influence the base closing process now underway.

Last month, South Dakota Republican Sen. John Thune introduced a bill to postpone the base closings altogether. Thune called it a "grave error" to move ahead with base closings while significant numbers of troops are deployed overseas and while the Pentagon is in the midst of a quadrennial review of its missions, force structure and weapons.

What's behind these moves is an attempt to protect local economies that would be ravaged by base closures and significant realignments.

Collins, Thune and Lieberman represent three of the five states hardest hit by base closings. Those three states, together with 30 others and the District of Columbia would lose a combined 64,107 jobs if the Pentagon's requested cuts are approved.

In a move to thwart the closures, the lawmakers are now trying to find national security reasons to keep their bases open. The Pentagon has made it clear, as has the independent BRAC Commission, that economic reasons are not enough to reverse the recommendations.

The Pentagon wants to close 33 of 318 major military installations in the United States and realign 29 others. The Pentagon also recommended closing or realigning 775 smaller military locations for a total projected savings over 20 years of \$49 billion.

One popular -- and conspiratorial -- theory making the rounds is that the closing decisions were based at least in part on politics: the blue state/red state divide.

Red states, those who voted for Republican President George W. Bush in the 2004 election, overall did far better than blue states, those who voted for Democrat Sen. John Kerry.

Thirteen red states would see a net gain of 40,328 jobs if the Pentagon recommendations are accepted unchanged by the BRAC Commission. Only eight blue states would see increases of a total of 11,351 jobs, numbers derived from the Pentagon's state-by-state breakdown of closings on civilian and military jobs.

Four of the five states that would gain the most jobs are the red states of Georgia, Texas, Colorado, and Oklahoma. Maryland, however, a blue state with a Republican governor, would gain the most jobs of any state -- 9,293.

Three of the top five losers are blue states - Connecticut with 8,586, Maine and Washington, D.C.

Alaska and South Dakota, both red states, complete that list.

The two categories almost exactly offset each other: the top four red states gain 22,409 jobs, with Maryland gaining 9,293, a total of 31,702 jobs. The top three blue state losers shed 22,020 jobs, and the top two red states lose 8,416, a total of 30,436 losses.

The numbers look compelling, but the breakdown is coincidental, said Chris Hellman, an analyst with the Center for Arms Control and Non-proliferation who is closely tracking BRAC.

"Enough of the red states got zapped and enough of the blue states didn't to undermine the theory," Hellman told UPI.

When he looks at the geographic spread of the base closures, what he sees is a trend away from "northern tier" states, which had a Cold War orientation and purpose.

"Blue states tend to be located in the Northeast, and the (Cold War) focal point was eastward, looking at Europe across the Atlantic," he said.

The northern tier states are Maine, with Brunswick Naval Air Station and Portsmouth Navy yard; South Dakota with Ellsworth Air Force Base - built as a strategic bomber base to launch an attack against the Soviet Union - and red state Alaska, with all four of its bases slated for closure or realignment.

"The Alaska congressional delegation is as powerful as you'll find on Capitol Hill, and they got walloped," Hellman said.

He also pointed out that Massachusetts - consistently Democratic and Kerry's home state - was a net winner, adding 491 jobs. Massachusetts has Hanscom AFB, a hub of intelligence activity that would get an additional 1,104 jobs.

The final indication Hellman sees that the decision to close the bases is based on national security considerations and Defense Secretary

Donald Rumsfeld's desire to transform the military into a more expeditionary and lighter force is the fact that so many Guard and Reserve bases are on the realignment lists.

"Guard and Reserve in the past were pretty much off the lists. Those facilities were always more politically sensitive," he said.

If any bases would be protected or targeted on a political basis it would be those. They are dear to members of Congress. The troops live in their state and are not transferred to new assignments the way active duty forces are, Hellman said. By his calculations, however, 75 percent of the 160 largest installations undergoing realignments are Guard and Reserve bases.

### Local News Articles

#### **Meade Proposes Metro Extension Master plan includes adding to rail line to accommodate new jobs**

Baltimore Sun (Baltimore, MD)

Phillip McGowan

June 9, 2005

In preparation for the explosive growth expected for the area around Fort Meade, officials announced details yesterday of a three-decade master plan that includes extending a Metro rail line from Greenbelt to the Army post and points north.

Col. John W. Ives, Meade's commander, signed off on the proposal as a formal step to manage growth in and around the 5,300-acre installation in western Anne Arundel County as it solidifies its place as a national center of information and defense technology.

As part of its base realignment and closure process, the Pentagon proposed last month to transfer at least 5,300 jobs to Fort Meade, Maryland's largest employer with about 40,000 jobs. The White House is to receive final recommendations in September.

Many of the realigned jobs would be related to the super-secret National Security Agency, which is on the post.

State officials estimated last week that such an influx would create at least 5,000 more jobs within seven years, mostly through defense contractors that serve the NSA.

But the officials believe that figure is just the tip of the iceberg. They estimate that many more thousands of jobs will be created in the coming decades in Anne Arundel and Howard counties by Fort Meade's presence, squeezing thousands of more people into the area, further straining roads and contributing to a regional housing crunch.

Ives said this master plan, more than three years in the making, will pave the way for more job growth and provide transportation solutions, such as a Metro line.

The colonel, who plans to retire this summer after three years of overseeing Fort Meade, gave details at a farewell luncheon in his honor with political and business interests, including Anne Arundel County Executive Janet S. Owens and Howard County Executive James N. Robey.

Owens and Robey provided input to the plan, and Ives acknowledged their roles in asking them to witness his signing of the document.

"This plan will accommodate tens of thousands of jobs and hundreds of millions of dollars in construction projects," Owens said.

As part of the plan, officials are considering using Meade's 400-acre golf course in the center of the base as a site for federal agencies that require the security that a military installation could provide. Such a move could bring 20,000 more jobs to Fort Meade, Ives said.

A new golf course would be built on the base's southeast corner, over a capped landfill that sits across a rail line from Odenton.

To respond to such a concentration of workers, Ives recommended extending the Washington Metro's Green Line north about 10 miles from Greenbelt to a station at the National Business Park, where most of the NSA contractors work.

Ives said such an expansion could eventually reach north to Baltimore.

Few other details about the proposed Metro extension were available, as most aspects of the master plan will remain confidential for national security reasons, a Fort Meade spokeswoman said.

Owens said she will be briefed next week on specifics of the plan, which also addresses the need for added protection to the base, water and energy conservation, and preservation of historical structures.

Lisa Farbstein, a spokeswoman for Metro, said the agency has been in "very informal discussions" with Fort Meade officials about their plans.

"But there's no plans in the foreseeable future to do it," she said.

Howard executive Robey said a Metro extension "is something we would all certainly like to see."

Ives did not say who would pay for these initiatives. Anne Arundel transportation officials have estimated that extending the Metro would cost about \$100 million per mile.

Ives also unveiled a proposal for a 16-acre site off Route 32 near Tipton Airport that Howard and Anne Arundel counties could develop for a bus maintenance facility.

The two counties have long been searching for a place for such a facility that would serve their bus systems.

Owens said that site could also serve as a transfer point for bus and MARC commuters. State officials are planning to expand the parking lot at the Odenton rail station to accommodate more riders.

Fort Meade officials will meet with state transportation officials next week to discuss their plan, Ives said.

Such proposals to expand a Metro line and create a bus maintenance facility must be approved by the state, transit officials said.

Anne Arundel transportation leaders have said that the county's population density doesn't justify extending the Metro line from Prince George's County, but Owens said that the growth in jobs, new office space to accommodate defense contractors and the thousands of houses going up from Crofton to Columbia would justify such a transportation upgrade.

John Erzen, a spokesman for Prince George's County, said yesterday that county officials had not heard any details about the plan but would welcome talking with Army officials about the Metro expansion.

"We think it would be a benefit to our citizens," he said.

### **Friday visit to evaluate Gillem for closure**

The Atlanta Journal-Constitution (Atlanta, GA)  
Add Seymour Jr.  
June 9, 2005

Fort Gillem supporters are bracing for a visit from one of the commissioners who will be evaluating whether the Forest Park base should close.

However, community leaders and elected officials won't be able to make their official pitch to the Base Realignment and Closure commissioner who is scheduled to meet base leaders Friday.

Their chance will come during a June 30 Atlanta regional hearing.

Friday's meeting will be between only one of eight BRAC commission members and high-ranking base personnel at Fort Gillem, though U.S. Rep. David Scott (D-Georgia) said he plans to be in town for the meeting.

"We have got to paint the military value of the bases, especially Fort Gillem," Scott said.

The meeting comes on the heels of a visit Wednesday to Fort McPherson in East Point by another BRAC commissioner, retired Army Gen. James T. Hill.

Fort Gillem and Fort McPherson are two of the four Georgia bases recommended for closure by the Defense Department. The others are Naval Air Station Atlanta in Cobb County and the Naval Supply Corps School in Athens.

Defense officials want to cut the number of domestic military bases and reconfigure others. Officials hope the reorganization will better align the nation's military with the rigors of today's military world.

Overall, the recommended national base realignment and closings would result in a savings of billions in taxpayer dollars, according to Defense Department officials. Closing Fort McPherson would save the Defense Department \$82.1 million annually --- \$895.2 million over the next 20 years. For Fort Gillem, that savings would amount to \$35.3 million each year, \$421.5 million over the next two decades.

Local officials will be trying to keep open both bases, which they say help add \$671 million to metro Atlanta's economy.

But with Fort McPherson considered more an administrative base and Fort Gillem an operational one, one option local officials will offer will be closing Fort McPherson and moving its operations to Fort Gillem, which would remain open.

"But they both are very critical," Scott said.

### **Marietta: Navy's presence often overlooked;**

**Station has been overshadowed by Dobbins**  
The Atlanta Journal-Constitution (Atlanta, GA)  
Brenden Sager  
June 9, 2005

The U.S. Navy is a proud institution.

But the personnel at Naval Air Station Atlanta, with its entrance hidden from public view by a freight train embankment on rundown Dixie Avenue, admit to a certain inferiority complex.

The reason is that their much larger military neighbor, Dobbins Air Reserve Base, with whom they share a 10,000-foot runway, remains Cobb County's military rock star --- receiving all the praise and notoriety, even when the Navy's Blue Angel squadron performs to cheering crowds at the annual Dobbins air show. Locals usually associate the event with the Air Force.

But, after all, it isn't a regatta.

Shirley Payne is a civilian administrator at NAS Atlanta who helps run the nonmilitary operations. She's worked with most of the base's commanders since the 1980s and said each has struggled to get the community to appreciate the Navy's local presence.

"We would just like the community to know that the Navy is here," Payne said. "We're really separate from Dobbins, and understanding that has been an issue for the public with every commanding officer I've worked with."

Payne said the base has initiated a number of local charity drives. It also hosted a popular footrace, the NAS Atlanta Runway Races, once known as "the flattest course in North Georgia."

In 1987, the base was recognized by the Navy as the best air station in the nation.

But appreciating the Navy in Cobb will not be an issue much longer if Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld gets his way. The base is on the Defense Department's Base Realignment and Closure list.

The commission will finalize its list by September and turn it over to President Bush, who then passes it on to Congress for final approval. Congress must accept or reject the list as a whole; it can't change the list.

Military and Cobb civic officials still have a chance to appeal the BRAC decision before the

end of the year. Communities affected by closings sent delegates to a conference in Colorado this week to discuss base redevelopments in that state, which was hit hard by the closings of Lowry Air Force Base and Fitzsimons Army Medical Center in the 1990s.

Officials have kept mum on exactly how the NAS Atlanta base might be used if it's closed, but it lies in an industrial area and its neighbors include Georgia Tech research facilities and Lockheed Martin manufacturing.

The 166-acre air station has more than 20 Naval and Marine Reserve units. Active and reserve members of two Marine units are now serving in Iraq. Another NAS Atlanta Marine unit recently returned from an 18-month deployment to Afghanistan.

The base has airplane hangars, living and guest quarters, administrative offices and a few amenities, including a gas station, convenience store, child care center and bowling alley.

Payne said if the base closes, many of the 3,000 local reservists who train at NAS Atlanta and live nearby will face a hardship, having to fulfill their requirements in Florida, Louisiana or Virginia.

But the hardest-hit workers will be the more than 160 full-time civilian employees.

"We have civilians in every type of function," Payne said. "We've got people who work on aircraft, carry guns and [work] on the flightline."

Moving compounds employment difficulties for military civilians, because expertise and experience at previous jobs may be of no use to the available jobs at the next installation.

"Every time you move you have to start over," Payne said. "You do what you have to do to get your foot in the door for the next job. You don't know if they're going to have the same type of position."

## **EB Says It Can Survive Groton Base Shutdown**

Providence Journal-Bulletin (Providence, RI)  
John E. Mulligan  
June 9, 2005

ALEXANDRIA, Va. -- The prospective shutdown of Naval Submarine Base New London in Groton, Conn., does not threaten Electric Boat's sub-building and design operations, the shipyard's president said yesterday.

"We can make it work" if the Pentagon plan to close the base proceeds, said John P. Casey, president of the submarine unit of General Dynamics. "We can build the ships and deliver them to Norfolk (Va.) or King's Bay (Ga.)," the bases where the Navy envisions sending the subs now homeported in Connecticut.

"But it certainly wouldn't be my preference," said Casey, who joined with other prominent members of the submarine community in arguing that closure of the historic base would cost hundreds of EB jobs, plus a significant loss of "synergy" between the Navy and the industry.

Last month, the base -- named long ago for the larger city of New London, but physically located in Groton -- was the biggest among about three dozen that the Pentagon slated for shutdown or contraction in a nationwide austerity exercise known as "BRAC," for Base Realignment and Closure.

The Groton-based submarine builder has had an association for about a century with the Navy base upstream on the Thames River. Together, they are a force in the Southeastern New England economy, employing close to 20,000.

But the sub base's closure would be a direct and complete blow. About 8,600 uniform and civilian jobs would be lost. The Pentagon has estimated that indirect losses to companies that serve or supply the base and its sailors could approach twice that number.

The impact on EB, on the other hand, would be significant but far smaller, according to Casey

and other leaders of the sub world who are gathered in Northern Virginia for the annual meeting of the Naval Submarine League. Certain other losses would be oblique and difficult to quantify, deriving from the proximity of the two facilities.

The principal cost of the base closing to EB could be the loss of roughly 500 civilian jobs created at the base during the last decade or so, Casey said. Those include positions in sub maintenance and repair once performed mainly by sailors, plus work at a dry dock on the base.

Less direct is the threat to a synergy between the two that "is pretty doggone unique," said John K. Welch, a former submariner and top executive at EB. For example, Welch said, the Navy and the builder both benefit from the ease with which the future crews of attack subs can live on base and work with EB personnel while the subs are under construction.

Casey and Rear Adm. Joseph A. Welch, the Navy's director of submarine warfare, and other leaders touched on the prospective sub base shutdown during question-and-answer sessions that were dominated by a far broader threat to EB and its Virginia partner in the submarine business.

That challenge is the Pentagon budget pressures that have stalled the Navy's efforts to speed production of the Virginia class of attack submarines, two of which have been completed by EB and Northrup-Grumman Newport News, with two more under construction.

The budget crunch, combined with uncertainty about how big a fleet the Navy wants, has led to repeated postponements of the plan to begin building two of the new attack subs per year. EB and Newport News currently share a subsistence diet of a single sub per year.

Casey and others noted that EB's work at the sub base became available as the Navy and the shipyard struggled during the 1990s to sustain EB's work force after the abrupt curtailment of the Seawolf sub program -- the hardest blow EB has sustained in decades.

While the sub-base jobs are still important to EB, they are no longer the crucial bridge that they were a decade ago, helping to sustain the work force until the new Virginia class got under way.

Naval analyst and author Norman Polmar said that under certain scenarios in years to come -- such as more protracted delays in accelerating the production of Virginia-class subs -- the loss of the jobs at the sub base might come to represent danger to a shipyard living on the margin of economic health.

At the same time, however, there is some chance that another planned base closing -- of the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard in Maine -- could one day lead to new work for EB, Polmar said. "That would be the best case for EB," he said.

EB employs about 8,000 at its headquarters in Groton and about 2,100 at the Quonset Point facility in North Kingstown, where it makes submarine hull sections. It employs several hundred more in submarine work in Virginia, Washington state and elsewhere.

The release of the base-closure list triggered an intense review by an independent commission set up for the purpose. The panel visited sub base New London and other New England facilities on the list last week.

A public hearing on the region's base closings is scheduled for next month, one of a series around the country that will lead late in the summer to the panel's own formal list of recommended closings. Reviews by the president and Congress will ensue; the cuts and closings could begin around the first of next year.

**Information lacking, but Eielson hearing planned;  
BRAC: Task forces aiming to prevent realignment had hoped for Air Force minutes.**

Anchorage Daily News (Anchorage, AK)  
Tataboline Brant  
June 8, 2005

Two groups working to save Eielson Air Force Base from dramatic cutbacks are pushing ahead with plans for a June 15 public hearing despite a lack of information from the military on why the base is being targeted.

The Base Realignment and Closure Commission has postponed at least one regional hearing, in St. Louis, because the community there did not get information from the Defense Department in enough time to make its case.

Alaska is now first in line for a regional hearing. At least three of the nine commissioners are scheduled to attend the meeting in Fairbanks next week, according to a written statement Tuesday from Sen. Ted Stevens.

One of the commissioners named Tuesday, Philip Coyle, has been critical in the past of the president's missile defense system, which has funneled millions of dollars into Alaska in recent years. Coyle's main concern seemed to be that the system was untested, not that it was based in Alaska, press accounts show.

The other two commissioners slated to attend are James Hansen, a former member of Congress, and BRAC commission chairman Anthony Principi. Attendance by a fourth commissioner is also possible but not yet confirmed, Stevens said.

Fairbanks businessman Jim Dodson, who chairs the statewide and Fairbanks-area task forces to save Eielson, said he does not intend to ask the commissioners for a postponement of the June 15 hearing, despite still missing some key information.

A limited amount of information about base cuts was released last month. But Dodson said the task forces had hoped to have by now the Air Force's deliberative minutes on why Eielson was chosen to lose 2,821 military and 319 civilian jobs, practically shuttering the Fairbanks-area base.

The Air Force released some information this week, Dodson said, but it was "nothing but a bunch of graphs."

The task forces are working with Stevens and Sen. Lisa Murkowski, both of whom oppose the Eielson cuts, to try to get more information.

"We're going to go ahead with the idea that maybe we'll get it but there's a good chance we won't," he said Tuesday afternoon.

Fairbanks-area residents and business owners, who stand to take a huge economic hit if Eielson is downsized, have rallied together to save the base. The task force is hoping hundreds will show up for the June 15 hearing.

If the information from the Air Force is not made available in time for the presentation next week, Dodson said, the task force will certainly point that out to the commissioners.

### **Pittsburgh group organizes volunteers, checks Defense Dept. info**

The Associated Press (Pittsburg, PA)  
June 8, 2005

Organizers trying to prevent the closing of military bases in western Pennsylvania said Wednesday they have begun organizing volunteers and reviewing Department of Defense information.

The Pittsburgh-Base Realignment and Closure Task Force, known as Pit-BRAC, was formed after the Pentagon recommended May 13 that 13 bases in Pennsylvania be closed. Three of those bases are in western Pennsylvania, including the Pittsburgh International Airport Air Reserve Station in Coraopolis.

The group is being headed by Allegheny County Chief Executive Dan Onorato and Allegheny Conference on Community Development CEO F. Michael Langley. The group said hundreds of people have volunteered to help the task force.

Langley said the volunteers are being organized into teams that are examining the information

used to make the closing recommendations, determining the economic impact of the closures, and raising public awareness.

Federal officials will visit the western Pennsylvania bases slated to be closed on June 21. On July 9 in Baltimore, the task force will make its case about why the facilities should not be closed.

### **Task force begins tour of bases facing closure**

The Associated Press (Austion, TX)  
June 8, 2005

A task force to help Texas communities fight the potential loss of their military bases launched a statewide tour on Wednesday.

Gov. Rick Perry appointed the Texas BRAC Response Strike Force, which was to start its tour with a two-day visit at Naval Station Ingleside near Corpus Christi. The state has also hired retired Air Force Col. Bob Rasmussen to help with the effort.

Other stops on the tour include visits to the Red River Army Depot and Lone Star Ammunition Plant in Texarkana on June 14-15 and Sheppard Air Force Base at Wichita Falls on June 16. The Pentagon has recommended closing or realigning those facilities.

The task force also plans visits later in the month to Brooks City Air Force Base in San Antonio and Ellington Field in Houston.

Secretary of State Roger Williams, who will lead the task force, said the mission is to help the local communities present their case at the July 11 hearing of the Base Realignment and Closure Commission meeting in San Antonio.

"This can be an emotional issue, but we're not going to give the commission our emotions, we're going to give them our facts," Williams said. "We have a short time and the opportunity to change some minds."

Williams' office said Rasmussen, who worked logistics in the military and has experience with the BRAC process, can help local officials fine-tune their presentations. Rasmussen also helped guide the transition of the former Kelly Air Force Base near San Antonio to KellyUSA, an industrial site on the grounds of the old military installation.

"He knows a lot about BRAC and rebuilding if you do lose a base," Williams spokesman Bill Kenyon said.

Rasmussen was contracted at a rate of \$7,500 a month for three months, with up to \$14,000 in bonuses depending on the impact of his work, Kenyon said.

Although the contract normally would be put out for a bid, Perry's office granted a waiver to hire Rasmussen right away with the July 11 hearing looming, Kenyon said.

### **Pryor: DOD not releasing all criteria for proposed Ark. cutbacks**

The Associated Press (AR)  
June 8, 2005

The U.S. Department of Defense hasn't released all its reasons for recommending personnel cuts at the 188th Fighter Wing in Fort Smith, Ark., and the Red River Army Depot in Texarkana, Texas, near the Arkansas border, U.S. Sen. Mark Pryor said Wednesday.

The Democrat from Arkansas said he spent time in Fort Smith last week trying to find the best ways to help the community fight a Base Realignment and Closure Commission recommendation that 670 jobs be cut from the 188th Fighter Wing.

"We've been pressing very hard on this," Pryor said in a teleconference Wednesday. "As we understand it, as of this morning, the Department of Defense still hasn't provided all the information. They have been releasing some in a piecemeal fashion."

The senator said the paperwork that outlines why the Department of Defense wants to cut planes and jobs from the bases is crucial so that representatives from Fort Smith can argue against the cuts at a meeting before the commission July 11 in San Antonio.

"We still don't have all the criteria we would like to have to help Fort Smith and Texarkana win their fight," Pryor said.

### **Base closure commissioner to accompany analysts to Charleston**

The Associated Press (Charleston, WV)  
John Raby  
June 8, 2005

A base closure commissioner will accompany analysts to the 130th Airlift Wing in Charleston on Monday, U.S. Sen. Robert C. Byrd announced Wednesday.

Base closure officials initially said they wouldn't visit the West Virginia National Guard facility as part of their tour of bases across the country. Last week, they changed their minds and said they would send analysts to Charleston.

On Wednesday, Byrd said Harold W. Gehman Jr. of Virginia, a retired Navy admiral and former NATO supreme allied commander, will visit the 130th.

The Base Realignment and Closure Commission, commonly known as BRAC, has proposed stripping the 130th of its eight C-130s and transferring them to Pope Air Force Base in North Carolina as part of a national plan to close 33 major bases and downsize 29 others.

Byrd and U.S. Sen. Jay Rockefeller, D-W.Va., met with a group of Kanawha County residents and officials Wednesday.

"... We plan to make sure that the BRAC commission knows the value of the 130th to our state and our nation," Byrd said.

Rep. Shelley Moore Capito, R-W.Va., said Gehman's visit "will give (us) a set of eyes and ears from an actual decisionmaker on the ground. It's very good news."

West Virginia's hearing before the commission will be on June 28 in Charlotte, N.C.

The BRAC plan aims to save \$48.8 billion over 20 years by eliminating redundant and inefficient facilities and promoting cooperation among the Army, Navy, Air Force and Marine Corps.

The nine-member commission can change the list before it is submitted to the White House and Congress this fall.

It's not been determined how many jobs would be lost at the 130th, which employs 320 full-time military and civilian staffers. Another 700 National Guards members are assigned to the unit.

The base provides an estimated \$71 million to the local economy annually in goods, services and salaries.

### **Air Force documents indicate cold an advantage in base recommendations**

The Associated Press (Bismark, ND)  
June 8, 2005

Documents from the Air Force indicate cold weather is an advantage for the Grand Forks Air Force Base when it comes to planning its future.

The Pentagon is recommending the base lose its air fueling tankers and most of its personnel, but that the base have a new mission involving unmanned aerial vehicles, known as UAVs.

Acting Air Force Secretary Michael Dominguez and Gen. John Jumper, the Air Force chief of staff, outlined their proposals in a memo and background paper submitted to the federal Base Closing and Realignment Commission.

"Establishing a cold weather UAV center is necessary to advance training and system

development to ensure these vehicles can be operated worldwide, all weather," the document said.

Having plans in writing from top Air Force brass carries more weight, said Sen. Byron Dorgan, D-N.D., who called the memo "very positive."

The Air Force officials also said the "vast amounts of airspace over limited populations" make Grand Forks suited for the UAV mission, and cited the University of North Dakota aerospace program as another advantage.

Major Gen. Michael Haugen, the state Guard commander, said the Fargo-based 119th Fighter Wing needs a flying mission to help train the pilots for the UAVs. He said Air Force officials indicated the Fargo unit's flying mission was deleted in error.

Without a flying mission, "we are limited in recruiting of pilots, of experience levels for pilots and a career path for pilots," Haugen told the city's base retention committee this week.

### **Officials to plan strategies for BRAC process**

Birmingham News (Birmingham, AL)  
Tom Gordon  
June 8, 2005

State and military officials will meet today with Alabama congressional staffers to discuss the state's presentation to the panel that will review a Pentagon proposal to move some Alabama military operations elsewhere and bring others here.

Virginia Davis, a spokeswoman for U.S. Sen. Richard Shelby, said the closed session will take place at the Dirksen Senate Office Building on Capitol Hill. Davis said the participants will discuss how Alabama can best make use of the hour it will have on June 30 at a meeting of the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) Commission in Atlanta.

"I believe this is an important opportunity to get all the players together to discuss our strategy," Shelby said.

The commission will review the Pentagon's proposed closing of 33 military installations and the realignment of 29 more. For Alabama, the proposals contain pluses and minuses.

If the recommendations become reality, for example, the state would see a net gain of 2,664 jobs, according to estimates. Those would include net gains of 1,800 at Fort Rucker near Dothan, 1,655 at Redstone Arsenal near Huntsville and 1,034 at the Anniston Army Depot.

On the flip side, the Pentagon's recommendations call for the transfer of the Operations and Sustainment Systems Group at Maxwell Air Force Base's Gunter Annex in Montgomery to Hanscomb AFB, Mass. Officials have said the move, if finally approved, would cost Montgomery more than 1,200 jobs with an annual payroll of at least \$60 million.

The Pentagon also has recommended that the eight KC135 tankers operated by the 117th Air Refueling Wing be relocated from their base at Birmingham International Airport to three other Air Guard stations. Officials said another byproduct of the change would be the loss of about 15 state firefighters paid by the 117th, who help provide fire protection at the airport.

Col. P.D. Brown, the 117th commander who will be at today's meeting, said the Pentagon recommendations will mean the loss of about 187 fulltime 117th members who work in Birmingham and the departure of 326 members who come to the Birmingham headquarters for training and drills.

Others expected at today's meeting include Maj. Gen. Mark Bowen, Alabama National Guard adjutant general, and Jim Walker, Alabama's director of homeland security and Gov. Bob Riley's liaison to the BRAC commission.

The commission is to present its recommendations to the president in September.

If the president approves, he will forward them to Congress. If Congress approves the recommendations, work to carry them out must begin within two years.

Historically, about 15 percent of the Pentagon's proposals have been rejected in the base realignment and closure process.

### **Gathering facts for BRAC counterattack Texas official visits Ingleside today, Thursday** Corpus Christi Caller-Times (Corpus Christi, TX)

Fanny S. Chirinos  
June 8, 2005

Area community leaders said they will emphasize the value of the area's military presence to Texas Secretary of State Roger Williams, head of the state's BRAC Response Strike Force, when he visits Ingleside today and Thursday.

Judy Hawley, a member of the South Texas Military Facilities Task Force, said leaders plan to show Williams the assets of Naval Station Ingleside including the base's potential for expansion, the training facilities, its double-decked pier and deepwater port.

"That, along with the local perspective, will further help the strike force in the getting the base off the list," Hawley said.

The Defense Department recommended Naval Station Ingleside for closure May 13 when it released the Base Realignment and Closure list. The Pentagon also recommended realigning Naval Air Station Corpus Christi and the Corpus Christi Army Depot. The area faces a potential loss of 3,335 jobs, according to the Pentagon.

Gov. Rick Perry created the strike force in response to the recommendations, which would close a total of four Texas military bases and realign six others.

Williams plans to tour the Ingleside base today and meet with community leaders for a strategic session Thursday morning in Portland. He also

will take an aerial tour of NAS Corpus Christi and NAS Kingsville.

He will offer the community assistance with analysts and coordinate grassroots efforts to prepare for the July 7 BRAC commissioner visit to Corpus Christi and a July 8 visit to Ingleside. He also will assist the area in the July 11 BRAC Commission hearing in San Antonio.

"This can be an emotional issue, but we're not going to give the commission our emotions, we're going to give them our facts," Williams said. "And we believe that's a strategy that can work. We have a short time and the opportunity to change some minds."

Ingleside Mayor Gene Stewart said his primary focus is pointing out the small amount of money that will be saved by closing the base.

"Even if some money is saved, moving the ships and personnel to either coast would still be costly for the Navy," Stewart said. "We won't be able to nail down specific numbers, but can make the point in generalities."

Josephine Miller, executive director of the San Patricio County Economic Development Corporation, said the Defense Department might be overlooking the Ingleside base's greatest asset.

"It's the only Navy base located next to deep water that is built on real land, not filled land," Miller said. "It's a deepwater port on the Gulf. If they let that go, they'll never get it back."

The strategic location also offers more protection from hurricanes than any other coastal port on the gulf and is surrounded by oil refineries, Miller added.

"We're trying to put forth our best arguments as to why base jobs should be saved," said Terry Carter, president and CEO of the Corpus Christi Chamber of Commerce. "It's a team effort. It's about keeping our installations open and viable."

Also this month, Williams plans to visit the Red River Army Depot and Lone Star Ammunition

facility near Texarkana, Sheppard Air Force Base in Wichita Falls, Brooks City Air Force Base in San Antonio and Ellington Field in Houston.

### **So Much Data, So Few Answers; Base Closing Discs Called Impenetrable**

Hartford Courant (Hartford, CT)

David Lightman

June 8, 2005

Trying to learn more about why the Pentagon wants to close the Naval Submarine Base at Groton, say the critics, is like trying to ...

... take inventory at Wal-Mart.

... play a character in a Washington spy novel.

... play the Pentagon's version of "Where's Groton?" because the explanation is buried somewhere on 26 discs with 700 megabytes each.

... learn a foreign language.

Members of Congress and their staffs have voiced all those complaints this week as they've tried to plod through the Defense Department data. On Tuesday, the frustrated leaders of the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee gave up and issued a subpoena.

The Pentagon has until noon Monday to produce all data relevant to its base closing and realignment decisions throughout the country, and deliver it, not in a tucked-away reading room in a nondescript Virginia office building, but to the third floor of a Senate office building where committee Chairwoman Susan M. Collins, R-Maine, has her office.

The senators are also hoping that their action sends a message that they want most of the material declassified and made easier to understand.

"The Pentagon has badly mishandled this matter to the detriment of the process, and I regret it,"

said Sen. Joe Lieberman, D-Conn., the panel's top Democrat.

The Pentagon would not say Tuesday whether it would comply with the subpoena. "The Department remains committed to ensuring that the [Base Realignment and Closure] Commission, the Congress and the public has access to information necessary to understand the Department's recommendations and for the Commission to complete their important work," said deputy defense spokesman Bryan G. Whitman.

The department, he added, has already released "the extensive volume of data underpinning its recommendations."

Lieberman, Collins and others consider the information crucial as they frame their arguments to keep installations in their states open.

The Base Realignment and Closure Commission plans hearings on New England recommendations next month.

So far, the lawmakers have found the process harder than trying to find a needle in a haystack -- at least in the latter case, the searchers know what a needle looks like.

The Pentagon has released data on 26 discs, each with 700 megabytes of data, detailing why it recommended closing 33 major bases and realigning others.

To view the data, members of Congress and their staffs have to travel to the commission's reading room in a seventh-floor room in an office building in Crystal City, Va., a maze of tall office buildings and underground shopping malls across the Potomac River from the nation's capital.

The building, a half-hour cab ride from the Capitol when there's light traffic, is the kind of anonymous place that people envision when they think of cloak-and-dagger Washington. There is no sign on the 12-story stone structure,

just the letters "NC2" on a pillar and "2521," the street address, above the revolving door.

The only suggestion that there's intrigue at NC2 -- no one seems to know what that stands for -- is the frequent sight of people in military uniforms, as well as middle-aged men and women with determined looks, walking briskly into the building.

Day after day, from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., Connecticut congressional staff members have made the trek to NC2 to look over the data, and they are not impressed.

In fact, they're more confused when they leave than when they entered.

"There's no index," Collins said. "You have to open each document and read it to see if there's something that applies to you."

"The data dump to date is more about quantity than quality," said Todd Mitchell, chief of staff to Rep. Rob Simmons, R-2nd District. "So far, we have been able to uncover a process that overlooked significant costs and downplayed substantial capabilities at Subase."

For example, said Mitchell, who has not been in the room, New London "received no military value points for hosting the Navy's only submarine school." A base's "military value" was weighed heavily by the Department of Defense in deciding whether to keep it open.

Lieberman was hoping that the subpoenaed data could give clues as to why that happened. "We'd like to know why," he said.

So would John Markowicz, chairman of the Subase Realignment Coalition that leads the base's defense.

So far, he has learned that the data contain long records of meeting minutes that reveal much about the process that put Groton on the closure list.

But missing are the facts that the Navy collected about the submarine base upon which those discussions were based, he said.

“We have smoke,” he said. “No gun.”

Chris Hellman, an expert on base closings, said he thought that Markowicz and the Connecticut delegation were on the right track.

“What they want is to find a glaring error in the numbers the department based its information on,” he said.

“The best thing you want is to find a typo where someone moved a decimal point somewhere they should not have,” said Hellman, a military policy analyst at Washington's Center for Arms Control and Non-Proliferation.

There are generally two types of data available in the reading room, where dozens of computers in cubicles await the congressional staff members and those with secret government clearances.

One is the raw data, which Robert Gillcash, now a senior adviser to the Washington law firm of McKenna, Long & Aldridge and a former top aide to Sen. Christopher J. Dodd, D-Conn., who helped the senator in previous base closing rounds, compared to taking inventory at a Wal-Mart.

There's usually one list after another, he said, of everything the Pentagon considered before making its recommendation to close the base.

The problem for Connecticut, said members and analysts, is connecting all these numbers to figure out how they fit into a broader picture.

“It's almost a foreign language,” Dodd said.

“What is the military calculus that would cause you to say it's in the country's long-term interest to spend hundreds of millions of dollars to close one base and hundreds of millions to build another,” Dodd said.

What, he wanted to know, was the thinking behind building up Kings Bay in Georgia and the sub base in Virginia?

Getting such information, though, is going to be tough, and even if it is received, it will be difficult to use to make an argument that the base should stay open, said the experts.

But at the least, Collins said, she and others should be able to make the case with the same data the Pentagon used.

“It's simply not fair,” she said, “for those affected by these recommendations to not have access to the information.”

### **Charleston, S.C., Leaders Aim to Keep Military Facilities, Add Submarine School**

Charleston Post and Courier (Charleston, SC)  
John P. McDermott  
June 8, 2005

Raising the stakes in their bid to offset proposed Pentagon cutbacks, some of the region's top elected officials urged the military base-closing commission to consider moving one of the nation's leading submarine schools to Charleston.

Retired Army Gen. James T. Hill, an appointee to the Base Realignment and Closure Commission, was told the Charleston Naval Weapons Station is an ideal spot for the training center, which the Defense Department is proposing to move to Kings Bay, Ga., from Groton, Conn.

Hill was in Charleston Tuesday to hear community leaders as they made their pitch to save two North Charleston military installations that the Pentagon wants to shutter.

The Weapons Station, a vast 17,000-acre property along the Cooper River, already houses a \$ 104-million school for the Navy where some 3,500 sailors a year receive training in how to

operate nuclear-powered subs, Charleston Mayor Joe Riley said.

That could make the base a more "cost-effective" and logical location than Kings Bay if the Groton closing is approved, Riley said.

"We have the land, and the synergy of having this submarine school and the Nuclear Power Training Unit at the same place is terrific," he said.

The Naval Submarine School in Groton is located on the Navy's first submarine base. Average daily attendance at the school is between 1,400 and 1,800 students, with a staff of more than 550 military and civilian personnel. Annually, nearly 60,000 students complete course work at the school.

Riley, North Charleston Mayor Keith Summey and U.S. Rep. Henry Brown were among the officials who met with Hill for nearly two hours Tuesday. Their goal was to try to salvage more than 1,100 endangered military jobs in the region and, at the same time, court some of the defense jobs being uprooted elsewhere.

Hill's job as a member of the independent commission is to review the list of closings, expansions and restructurings the Defense Department released last month. The nine-member panel must turn in its final recommendations to President Bush by September.

Any changes will require at least six of the nine votes. Based on past history, 15 percent to 20 percent of the list "is always changed," Hill said.

"They're not going to listen to rhetoric," Summey said. "They're not going to listen to, 'Poor me, we lost the Navy base.' What they are going to listen to is facts and information." Hill's trip included tours of the Defense Finance and Accounting Service and the Naval Facilities Engineering Command's Southern Division.

The 900 mostly civilian jobs at those two North Charleston units would be either eliminated or transferred out of state if the base-closing

commission adopts the Pentagon's recommendations.

Hill also visited the Weapons Station, which was not on his original schedule. That facility is poised to eliminate 264 jobs under a proposal to shift oversight of its utilities, maintenance and other infrastructure to Charleston Air Force Base.

Local leaders said the meeting with Hill was their first opportunity to challenge the savings the Defense Department has estimated it can wring from shutting down the finance center and the engineering command, otherwise known as NavFac.

"We felt we planted the seeds of doubt in their minds as to the validity of the data and of some of the calculations," said retired Brig. Gen. Tom Mikolajcik, a base-closing consultant for the Charleston Metro Chamber of Commerce and a former Charleston Air Force Base commander.

Mikolajcik said the chamber will present more statistical evidence to bolster its case June 28 in Charlotte, where the base-closing panel will hear from military communities in the Carolinas and West Virginia.

The chamber also will ask the commission to consider moving certain other defense jobs to the region, including some that could enhance the high-tech Space and Naval Warfare Systems Center Charleston, or SPAWAR.

Summey said a strong argument can be made for keeping NavFac in the region instead of moving it and its workers to Virginia, Florida and Illinois, as the Defense Department is recommending. The division, based on Eagle Drive, oversees more than \$ 1 billion a year in military construction in 26 states.

"We feel NavFac plays a major role and can play that role better from this location," Summey said.

Officials told Hill the community's offer last year to provide the command with a new

divisional headquarters building still stands. "That was brought up," Summey said.

Brown said the Defense Accounting and Finance Service on the former Navy base also is worth fighting for because the Pentagon wants to consolidate 21 of the federal payroll centers in three cities.

"If there is a consolidation, we feel like it could better serve the nation by consolidating here in Charleston, where the cost of living is not nearly as expensive as some of those other areas," Brown said.

Hill said one of the main purposes of his visit was to gather updated information about the targeted installations and to collect "new bits of data" that the Pentagon did not or was not allowed to consider in its base-closing analysis. "We'll factor that into our recommendations to the president," he said.

Also, Hill said he planned to talk with employees whose lives will be affected by the proposed closings and transfers. "There's a human side to this," he said.

While the Charleston region stands to lose about 1,100 defense jobs, South Carolina's total military payroll would to expand by more than 700 jobs if the Pentagon's recommendations are approved.

**Collins demands all data on bases; Under her committee's subpoena, the Pentagon has until noon Monday to release closure documents.**

Portland Press Herald (Portland, ME)  
Bart Jansen  
June 8, 2005

Maine Sen. Susan Collins signed a subpoena Tuesday to force the Defense Department to release all documents related to base-closing recommendations, setting up a confrontation with the Pentagon over how much it must share with Congress and the public. Collins, the Republican chairman of the Homeland Security Committee, set a deadline of noon Monday for

defense officials to turn over the documents. She held out hope, however, that the Pentagon would comply with the demand rather than fight the subpoena.

"This process is supposed to be a transparent one, it's supposed to be an open process, and it's been very frustrating that the department has been so slow in releasing vital information," Collins said.

Pentagon officials contend they have released more than ever before about base closings, with the latest release of additional material over the weekend.

But Collins argued that much information remains unavailable and much that has been released remains classified, meaning that communities can't use it to fight recommendations, such as closing Portsmouth Naval Shipyard in Kittery.

Bryan G. Whitman, deputy spokesman for the Defense Department, outlined all the information that has been released to date and said the Pentagon remains committed to ensuring that the commission, the Congress and the public have access to information necessary to understand the recommendations.

And Gordon England, the acting deputy secretary of defense, previously told Congress that the Pentagon beat a May 16 deadline for recommending closures and was releasing more documents than ever before.

Collins was joined in signing the subpoena by the committee's top Democrat, Sen. Joseph Lieberman of Connecticut, which stands to lose the most military jobs in the country. Maine would lose 7,000 jobs, the second most in the country, if Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld's recommendations are approved.

"My own feeling is that the Pentagon has badly mishandled this matter, to the detriment of the process," Lieberman said.

Under the recommendations, the shipyard would lose 4,510 military and civilian jobs, Brunswick

Naval Air Station would lose 2,420 jobs through the transfer of active-duty military personnel, and the Defense Finance and Accounting Service in Limestone would lose 361 jobs.

A nine-member Base Realignment and Closure Commission is studying the recommendations and will propose a final list to President Bush and Congress by Sept. 8. The president or Congress can accept or reject the entire list, but cannot change it.

Lawmakers contend the need for information is urgent. Four commission members toured the Kittery and Brunswick bases last week. A July 6 hearing is scheduled in Boston for Mainers to oppose the recommendations. The commission postponed hearings in St. Louis and Salt Lake City because of the lack of documents.

Meanwhile, Sen. Olympia Snowe, R-Maine, threatened to ask a federal court to halt the base-closure round if the Pentagon doesn't release the documents. She wrote Rumsfeld and England a letter Monday, calling it a "final plea" for information before going to court.

"I will take whatever steps necessary to ensure its release," Snowe said.

The subpoena from Collins and her committee increases the potential for a confrontation between the legislative and executive branches over what information governing base closures must be released.

Previous attempts by Congress to obtain documents from the White House, on the subject of energy policy, met with resistance that went all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court.

Lawmakers have difficulty describing precise documents they want to see because there is no index. For classified records, staffers must visit an office in Northern Virginia and pull up individual documents to read, rather than search numerous records at once looking for references to a single base.

Other documents aren't available at all. One type of document the lawmakers seek is the "data

call," which describes precisely how a decision to move troops from one base to another will save or cost money. Data calls were routinely available in the last round of base closures in 1995, but not so far this year.

"We want to have a full picture of the deliberative process so that we can make sure that it was in fact fair and that the cost analysis is accurate," Collins said. "There is a lot of information that the information about cost savings is not accurate."

Part of the congressional complaint focuses on the completeness of the information. In the 1995 base-closure process, Lieberman said, there were detailed minutes from meetings where decisions were made. But this year the minutes contain little more than the people who attended and the decisions made - without the reasoning.

"The 2005 notes offer very little insight," Lieberman said. "They . . . don't really give an understanding about how decisions were made."

Lawmakers are focusing on the language in the law that authorized the base closings, which calls for release of "all" data.

"All means all," Collins said.

### *Opinions/ Editorials*

#### **Our Say:Fort Meade growth nets opportunities, problems for area**

The Maryland Gazette (Ft. Meade, MD)  
June 8, 2005

Growth can be a tremendous boost for an area - if it's well-handled. It can also be painful if local and state officials fail to plan for it, and big pieces of the infrastructure jigsaw puzzle - such as roads, schools, police and fire protection, and other public services - are not in place when new families and new businesses arrive. If you don't believe us, there are several areas of the county where you can ask residents about this.

The county and the state have just gotten a loud growth warning from top officials at Fort

George G. Meade, whose 40,000 workers already make it the state's single largest employer.

Right now some 5,400 jobs are slated to come to Fort Meade if the latest recommendations in the federal Base Realignment and Closure process are approved. But top officials at the post are saying that may be just the start. As many as 15,000 new jobs could be relocating there in the next decade as the armed forces consolidate in the Washington area and as the National Security Agency, based at Fort Meade, expands.

That's just a ballpark figure. But we're talking about a major additional load on the county's infrastructure, even if you assume that all those jobs don't materialize, that those that do arrive are phased in gradually, and that many new families actually move to other nearby jurisdictions, such as Howard County.

None of this came out of the blue for county officials - it's not for nothing that County Executive Janet Owens has been calling the area around Fort Meade and Baltimore-Washington International Airport "the Gold Coast." It's not a surprise for the developers who are already hard at work on plans for condominiums and housing.

If anyone is out of the loop, it may be the county school system, which until now has rejected plans to build a high school in fast-growing west county. Area residents want that school so badly that some have even been willing to consider letting a contractor put a rubble landfill in a rural section of Odenton, in exchange for that school and other community facilities.

Reportedly the state has been talking with the county about plans to expand Route 175, which runs past the NSA's entrance, bolster local schools, and make other improvements. State officials are just as aware as Ms. Owens that Fort Meade and the NSA are major assets for the Maryland economy, and that smooth handling of the expected influx of employees and their families is crucial.

Those employees are going to be well-educated and well-paid. The whole situation is ideal for

economic development - if infrastructure problems don't turn the growth into a shambles.

No one can say government officials haven't been warned. It's time for them to make sure their plans are in order. And one good way of doing that is to talk to - and listen to - the people who are already in the area.

### *Additional Notes*