

## Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission

# EARLY



# BIRD

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## **Air Force-Army 'Joint Mission Capability Package' In The Works**

Inside the Air Force

Elizabeth Rees

June 8, 2005

The Air Force and Army are developing a prototype force package of F-16 fighter aircraft and Stryker ground vehicles that will train and deploy together, testing a new joint construct that demonstrates how U.S. military forces could prepare for combat and fight in the future.

The Joint Mission Capability Package is a "capabilities-based force package composed of fielded weapons systems with interoperable information network equipment," Col. Louis Durkac, who is leading the development of the "Joint MCP," told Inside the Air Force this week. Durkac is the Air National Guard assistant to the director of requirements at Air Combat Command headquarters, Langley Air Force Base, VA.

Durkac and his team at ACC, along with the Army's Stryker program management office, are drafting a concept of operations for the Joint MCP, and are heavily involved in planning for the prototype package.

The mission package now in development will pair a number of Air Force F-16C+ fighter squadrons with an Army Stryker Brigade Combat Team into a single joint force package that will train and deploy together. The F-16C+ is an upgraded version of the F-16C.

Individual units, still to be determined, will be assigned to a specific joint package so the given components' Air Expeditionary Force rotation lines up with the Army's Operation Iraqi Freedom rotation, Durkac said.

The F-16C+s and Strykers were selected for the prototype Joint MCP because they each already share interoperable communication and navigation equipment.

According to Durkac, the concept came to life as a result of several factors, including the

emergence of network-centric warfare as the key to future combat as well as the latest strategic guidance issued by the Office of the Secretary of Defense, which says joint interdependency is expected to be a linchpin for future combat operations.

"As all those things started to come together, we started saying, 'Well, the strategic guidance tells us to do this; we have the capability right now with these [F-16 and Stryker] systems; and this is the way it's being envisioned in the future with network-centric warfare,'" the colonel said. "So, why don't we provide a prototype for the future and use this, not only to increase mission effectiveness but as a prototype of the future force, and learn all those lessons and develop all those capabilities?"

The Air Force's F-16C+ is operated mostly by Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve pilots, and the 2005 base realignment and closure round, which makes big changes to the service's reserve installations, could interfere with some Joint MCP plans. Once the BRAC process is complete, however, some of the remaining F-16C+ squadrons are slated to be lined up with a Stryker team to create the first joint force capability package.

A so-called "wildcat prototype" of a Joint MCP - - in other words, an operationally significant number but still a relatively small test batch -- could deploy as soon as next summer, Durkac said.

ACC's Joint Strike Fighter office already is involved in the Joint MCP program as it aims to achieve interoperability with the Army's Future Combat System. "They're looking at all our lessons learned along the way to make sure that when they develop their interoperability, they build it right from the beginning," Durkac said.

In the future, the military would like to operate under a true joint fires umbrella, where any air asset could show up and effectively support any ground operation. But that combat reality might be a long way off, so Joint MCPs are being built as a stop-gap solution, Durkac said.

"We're looking at it from the other end of the spectrum, saying, 'Wouldn't it be a lot better if you knew who was going to show up and you trained with them all the time?'" he said.

"Obviously we'd like to get to the joint fires capability where . . . anybody can show up and it works seamlessly. Practically, we think that may be a long way off."

Durkac said the first meeting on the Joint MCP concept was held in April, although he has been working on the idea for more than a year.

Originally, there was little interest in the joint force package, according to the colonel. "Everybody had their own programs that they were working, and this was just something new," he said, noting the buy-in to the concept has increased dramatically since then.

### **GAO: USAF'S BRAC Savings From Personnel Cuts Could Be Limited**

Inside the Air Force  
Cynthia Di Pasquale  
June 8, 2005

The majority of savings the Air Force expects to garner by closing and realigning its bases is the result of reduced manpower, but since the proposed personnel cuts will not coincide with a drop in end-strength, money made available for other uses will be limited, congressional auditors say.

"The Air Force recommendations project the greatest savings of any of the services -- \$14.6 billion in 20-year net present value savings," concludes a July 1 Government Accountability Office report. This would be a net annual recurring savings of \$1.2 billion.

"However, our analysis indicates that these projected savings in each of their categories could have some limitations, primarily due to the lack of personnel and end-strength reductions associated with claimed savings," the report continues. GAO considers roughly 60 percent of the estimated savings are a result of "cost avoidance" by cutting personnel.

The Pentagon has recommended closing 10 Air Force installations and realigning another 62. The service's BRAC process involved consideration of 70 active and 84 reserve installations, according to the audit. The Air Force focused its analysis on the capacity and military value of bases with operational aircraft and space missions since joint-service groups concentrated on bases offering common mission areas.

In addition to questioning the Air Force's savings estimate, GAO advised the service's "recommendations may warrant additional attention by the BRAC commission because of uncertainty regarding future mission requirements for adversely affected reserve component personnel, and because of length payback periods associated with some recommendations having been merged with other recommendations that have shorter payback periods, thus making the former appear more acceptable."

As part of its audit, the agency looked at the impact BRAC recommendations would have on the Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve Command. The majority of proposals affect Guard and Reserve bases, with seven closures and 35 realignments.

While some Reserve and Guard units will be combined with active ones at nearby bases, others have been left without a mission. The Air Force has said it will use the personnel for emerging missions such as homeland security, unmanned aerial vehicles and intelligence, according to the report.

The audit also reviewed the decision to close Ellsworth Air Force Base, SD, and move its B-1 bombers to Dyess AFB, TX. The service considered closing the base in the 1995 BRAC round, but decided against it because it did not want its entire B-1 fleet in one location.

"In contrast, one of the Air Force principals which guided the BRAC 2005 process emphasized consolidating or co-locating legacy fleets such as the B-1 aircraft," the report notes. "Air Force officials stated that they no longer

had concerns about consolidating the B-1 fleet in one location because it does not have the same operational mission requirements it had 10 years ago."

GAO was required by law to provide an assessment of the Defense Department's process for deciding what bases to close or realign. It analyzed the process used by all military services in forming their recommendations as well as the Pentagon's total savings estimate.

The report found the BRAC process would bring cost savings, but questioned the reliability of the Pentagon's \$50 billion savings estimate over 20 years.

Nearly half of DOD's annual recurring savings would come from eliminating jobs, according to GAO. However, rather than reducing end-strength, these personnel would be reassigned to other areas, "which may enhance capabilities but also limit dollar savings available for other uses."

The underlying assumptions for other savings identified in the Pentagon recommendations have not been validated and may be difficult to track over time, the report stated.

The Base Closure and Realignment Commission began its review of the Pentagon's proposal in May and must submit a report to the president indicating which recommendations to keep or omit by September.

### *National News Articles*

#### *Local News Articles*

#### **Md. Eager To Embrace Jobs Under Base-Realignment Plan Mikulski Urges Panel to Keep Intelligence Agency in Bethesda**

Washington Post (Washington DC)  
Christian Davenport  
July 9, 2005

TOWSON, Md., July 8 -- U.S. Sen. Barbara A. Mikulski (D-Md.) argued Friday against a Defense Department plan to move an intelligence agency from Bethesda to Fort Belvoir, and other top Maryland leaders lobbied to keep an Air National Guard base near Baltimore.

But the main message the contingent of Maryland officials had for a federal commission looking to consolidate military bases across the country was much more upbeat: Maryland is ready and willing to handle the 6,600 jobs that would come to the state if the Pentagon's plan is adopted.

"Maryland stands at the ready with a proven track record," U.S. Rep. C.A. Dutch Ruppersberger (D) told the Base Closure Realignment Commission during the state's hour-long presentation.

Under the plan, released in May, Fort Meade in Anne Arundel County would grow by 5,300 positions -- the most of any Maryland facility. The National Naval Medical Center in Bethesda would grow by 1,900 workers, many of whom would come from the Walter Reed Army Medical Center, which the Pentagon has proposed closing. And the Aberdeen Proving Ground north of Baltimore would add about 2,100 jobs, many of which would come from Fort Monmouth, N.J.

The hearing, one of 19 such regional meetings across the country, came a day after Virginia officials decried the Pentagon's plan to move 23,000 military workers out of close-in Northern Virginia suburbs. But unlike their counterparts across the Potomac, Maryland officials, including Gov. Robert L. Ehrlich Jr. (R) and U.S. Sen. Paul S. Sarbanes (D), said Friday they were almost uniformly thrilled at how the state fared under the plan.

On Friday, the realignment commission, which is working to create a final base consolidation list for President Bush by Sept. 8, also heard testimony from New Jersey and Delaware officials on how the recommendations would

affect their states. Congress must sign off on the plan.

Mikulski said that moving the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency, which performs mapping and analysis of satellite images for the military, from Bethesda to Fort Belvoir would create "the worst traffic jam our dedicated workforce has to endure." The base in southern Fairfax County would pick up about 18,000 jobs under the plan.

Instead, the agency's workers should be moved to Fort Meade, where the National Security Agency is, she said. The two spy agencies "are the technical eyes and ears of U.S. intelligence," she said. "They must work together to work well."

The Air Guard base at Martin State Airport is critical to national security and closing it could jeopardize the national capital region, said Maj. Gen. Bruce F. Tuxill, who oversees the Maryland National Guard. He said the 135th Airlift Wing stationed there is "ready to respond to homeland security emergencies" -- for example, by transporting such crucial supplies as medicine. The wing's cargo planes would be divided among bases in California and Rhode Island.

If workers at Walter Reed are transferred to the medical center in Bethesda, new construction on the center's campus could accommodate them, said Aris Melissaratos, the Maryland secretary of business and economic development, in an interview after the state's presentation.

He also said it makes sense to consolidate the two facilities because of the Navy hospital's proximity to the National Institutes of Health and the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences. "It would give us the integrated synergy that we don't have today," he said.

"Walter Reed has been there forever," he added. "It's an old facility. It needs upgrading. . . . It's got more sentimental value than technical value."

Fort Meade, which has seen an explosion of defense contractors outside its gates in recent years, easily could handle the additional workers on the base, said Clemon Wesley, president of the Fort Meade Alliance, a nonprofit advocacy group.

Joseph Rutter, the Anne Arundel County planning and zoning officer, noted that 4,000 new housing units near Fort Meade have been approved recently. Road improvements around the base also are planned, and state transportation officials are studying an extension of Metro to the base.

After Maryland finished its presentation, New Jersey officials fighting to keep Fort Monmouth open said it was dangerous during a war to move jobs that help develop the technology and equipment used in battle.

"Closing this facility would harm our national security, it would harm New Jersey and, most important, it would harm American troops on the battlefield," U.S. Sen. Frank Lautenberg (D-N.J.) said.

New Jersey officials also said that many of Fort Monmouth's workers would refuse to move to the Aberdeen Proving Ground and that the refusal would cause a "brain drain."

But Maryland officials scoffed at the notion, saying its workforce could soon fill the positions. "If they don't come, there are plenty of people to replace them," Sarbanes said.

## **Leaders Defend Military Bases At Hearing**

**N.J. officials protest closing Fort Monmouth; Md. group say state ready for new jobs**

Baltimore Sun (Baltimore, MD)

Phillip McGowan

July 9, 2005

Fighting the proposed relocation of thousands of high-tech military jobs to Maryland, officials from New Jersey said yesterday that the move would cost taxpayers billions of dollars,

endanger troops in Iraq and lead to a "brain drain" as workers refuse to transfer south.

The proposal, part of a package of shifts proposed by the Pentagon in its latest national base relocation, would mean a net gain of about 6,600 jobs for Maryland and was warmly embraced yesterday by Gov. Robert L. Ehrlich Jr. and others at a regional hearing of the Base Realignment and Closure Commission at Goucher College in Towson.

The plan drew fire from officials from New Jersey, however. They even presented a poll that predicted only 18 percent of the New Jersey employees offered jobs in Maryland would move, buttressing their argument that closing Fort Monmouth and moving its functions would disrupt the operations.

Ehrlich and other Maryland officials said the state's pool of educated workers - among the deepest in the nation - could readily fill the jobs.

Several bases and installations - including a Maryland National Guard unit slated to transfer to California and Rhode Island - were discussed during the four-hour meeting, at which top leaders from Maryland, New Jersey and Delaware made their cases to the commissioners. The pressure point, however, was the potential closure of Fort Monmouth.

About 200 workers from Fort Monmouth came to the event. They and delegations members wore pins that said, "Fort Monmouth Means Military Value."

In May, the Pentagon proposed as part of the base realignment and closure process to close the Army post and ship about 5,200 civilian jobs down Interstate 95 to the Aberdeen Proving Ground.

New Jersey's leaders said that with the country at war, the closure of Monmouth and the movement of thousands of scientists who help protect troop convoys from roadside bombs and helicopters from heat-seeking missiles could prove disastrous for troops.

"The brain drain is real, and it has real consequences for our national defense," said New Jersey Sen. Jon Corzine.

Maryland officials said they understood the emotions involved for states that may end up losing jobs. But they were quick to defend their standing and challenged the assertion that moving Fort Monmouth workers to APG would cost the military millions.

Maryland officials conceded the likely loss at APG of the Army Environmental Center and the Ordnance Center and School, a total of nearly 4,200 jobs. But they are expected to be replaced by personnel from Fort Monmouth, whose engineers and scientists design battlefield technology and echo-free testing chambers.

New Jersey's delegation, however, asserted that APG has virtually none of the facilities for this high-tech work. The years it would take to build them would add millions in unanticipated costs, those leaders said.

"Aberdeen will have to refurbish or build everything from scratch," said New Jersey Rep. Frank Pallone Jr. "Maryland makes the case to do that, but why should the Pentagon pay for all of that?"

Maryland officials, including the Republican Ehrlich and Democratic Sens. Paul S. Sarbanes and Barbara A. Mikulski, expressed support for the BRAC recommendations. They testified that the state is well-prepared for the growth, in terms of transportation, housing and schools.

"We think the military case for these recommendations is very strong," Sarbanes said. "Of course, that is the most important factor that the BRAC commission considers."

The Pentagon has proposed closing about 180 military installations nationwide, resulting in the elimination of nearly 30,000 jobs and savings of nearly \$50 billion over 20 years.

The commission can make changes to the Pentagon's list, but in previous years the

commission has only altered about 15 percent of the recommendations.

The commission must send its final list by Sept. 8 to President Bush, who has to accept or reject it without changes. If he accepts the list, it then goes to Congress.

Fort Meade is slated under the proposals to gain more than 5,300 jobs, more than any other installation in Maryland, as it emerges as a national center for defense and information technology. The Army post serves as the headquarters for the National Security Agency, and many of the new jobs would support its surveillance efforts.

Maryland officials would like to add the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency to the 5,400-acre Fort Meade campus. The agency has 3,000 jobs in Bethesda, but the Pentagon has recommended shifting the operation to Fort Belvoir in Northern Virginia.

Commission Chairman Anthony J. Principi asked whether too much consolidation of such sensitive groups would complicate security. But Mikulski disagreed, saying that Fort Meade has adequate force protection.

The other issue of contention with Maryland officials rested in the recommendation to shift eight C-130J cargo aircraft and more than 100 jobs to Air National Guard bases in California and Rhode Island.

Maj. Gen. Bruce F. Tuxill, adjutant general of the Maryland National Guard, said the move would strip the Washington-New York corridor of emergency airlift capability. Under the Pentagon proposal, the nearest airlift planes would be more than 200 miles away in Youngstown, Ohio.

### **Inouye, Local Officials Rally To Retain Shipyard**

Honolulu Advertiser (Honolulu, HI)  
Peter Boylan and Dennis Camire  
July 8, 2005

Sen. Dan Inouye met with thousands of Pearl Harbor Shipyard workers yesterday as local military, business and government officials began building their case to prove that the shipyard is vital to national security.

Officials hope to present the final product to members of the federal Base Realignment and Closure Commission at a hearing Thursday in Los Angeles, said Jim Tollefson, president of the Chamber of Commerce of Hawai'i.

The shipyard was included last week on a list of more than a dozen military facilities that the BRAC Commission wants to review as a possible step toward closing. That could jeopardize roughly 4,500 jobs at the shipyard.

"We're talking about close to 5,000 jobs and about a half-billion dollars in direct impact and when you factor in the multiplier effect, we're talking close to a billion dollars in economic impact," Tollefson said. "It's very important."

Word on whether an invitation will be extended to appear before the base closing commission when it meets next week in Los Angeles is pending. But local officials hope to make their case in advance of a hearing in Washington, D.C., on July 19, when the commission could make a preliminary decision on whether to add Pearl Harbor to the list of possible closings.

If the local shipyard is added to the list, Hawai'i would have a chance to defend itself before the BRAC Commission makes a final decision in August.

Maj. Gen. Robert G.F. Lee, the state adjutant general, and recently retired Adm. Thomas Fargo, who was chief of the U.S. Pacific Command, are among the military leaders working on the presentation.

A lobbyist, William J. Cassidy, the former deputy assistant secretary of the Navy for Conversion and Redevelopment from 1994-2001, has been retained and is helping to coordinate the effort, Tollefson said. Cassidy, attended Wednesday's meeting of the Chamber of Commerce's Military Affairs Council. How

much he will be paid has not been determined, Tollefson said.

As the national debate over base closings escalates, Hawai'i has become a target for supporters of military installations marked for closing.

Proponents of the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard, who argued that closing Pearl Harbor could save \$760 million more than shuttering Portsmouth over 20 years, made their pitch to BRAC members Wednesday in Boston.

Lee said it is important to reinforce the shipyard's strategic military importance in light of the Pentagon's plan to make the Asia Pacific region the nation's top military priority.

"The Portsmouth Naval Shipyard, they do good work, but all they have to do is subs," said Lee. "Pearl Harbor is a multi-faceted shipyard that handles everything. It is the same vital strategic military installation today that it was in 1941."

Yesterday, Inouye made a quick visit to Navy commanders at Pearl Harbor then took time to address more than 2,000 shipyard workers, managers and union representatives.

He told the workers that he would do everything in his power to protect the shipyard and their jobs, adding it is important to continue the quality maintenance and repair work that takes place at Pearl Harbor, his spokesman, Mike Yuen said from Washington, D.C.

Inouye characterized the debate over the shipyard's future as the most critical juncture in the shipyard's history, Yuen said.

Ben Toyama, vice president of the International Federation of Professional and Technical Engineers, which represents the bulk of shipyard workers, said Inouye's visit reinforced the senator's stance that he'll do anything to keep Pearl Harbor open and viable, but fell short of detailing exactly how that would happen.

Toyama, who watched the Portsmouth proceedings on C-SPAN Wednesday, said he

hopes local leaders come up with something equally polished and passionate.

"There is a lot of unanswered questions, like how and when we do all this and how much community support do we have? We don't know that yet," said Toyama. "We are an industrial-based shipyard for Navy vessels. We may end up being a parking lot for Navy vessels and we may lose a lot of jobs."

Meantime, the Navy apparently is delaying until next year a decision on whether to place an additional aircraft carrier in the Pacific, according to a recent Government Accountability Office report.

Inouye, the top Democrat on the Senate Appropriations defense subcommittee, said while the Navy's delay is understandable given the ongoing base closing and realignment process under way, it threatens to put Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard at risk of closure.

"Without the Pearl Harbor shipyard, our nation would not be able to respond rapidly to crises in the Asia-Pacific region," Inouye said.

The Navy's 12 aircraft carriers now are equally distributed between the Atlantic and the Pacific with six on the East Coast, five on the West Coast and the non-nuclear USS Kitty Hawk in Yokosuka, Japan.

The report by the GAO, the investigative arm of Congress, analyzed the Pentagon's process for recommending military bases to close or realign this year.

As part of the process, the Navy considered moving another carrier and escort ships to Hawai'i and Guam to increase the U.S. military presence in the Asia-Pacific region.

But the Navy dropped the idea of including it in the base closing and realignment process after it found there would be no clear cost benefits. The Navy projected the cost of moving a carrier group to Hawai'i at \$2.6 billion to \$3.1 billion

and \$4 billion to \$6.6 billion for Guam, according to the GAO report.

Instead, Navy officials postponed any decision until early next year when the Quadrennial Defense Review — a comprehensive evaluation of military programs every four years — is expected to be completed and turned over to Congress.

Inouye said that experts have noted that the Asia-Pacific region requires increased U.S. attention, underscoring the significance of having both a carrier group in Hawai'i and the Pearl Harbor shipyard.

"In North Korea, we face a nation with a belligerent dictator who is developing nuclear weapons," he said. "In China, we face a potential superpower that is enlarging its military. Moreover, in a number of regions in Asia, terrorism is flourishing."

### **Sub Base Coalition Changing Its Focus Based On A New Analysis**

#### **Data: Navy would save money by moving subs from Virginia to Groton**

New London Day (New London, CT)

Robert A. Hamilton

July 8, 2005

New London — For almost two months the Subbase Realignment Coalition has been undercutting the Navy analysis that portrayed the Naval Submarine Base in Groton as having a low military value and as a candidate for closing.

But a new analysis showing the Navy could save money by increasing the number of submarines in Groton — and strong interest in the plan by two members of the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission — has the coalition scrambling to change its focus.

"Our emphasis will shift now," said coalition Chairman John C. Markowicz. Over the next couple of weeks the group will concentrate on data that will bolster the case for moving nine submarines from Norfolk, Va., to Groton.

The coalition faces a tight deadline. The commission staff wants as much material as possible by mid-July so it can analyze it in time to notify the Pentagon by July 18 or so about which bases might be added to the list. The commission expects to make its final base-closure decisions the third week of August, in time to meet its Sept. 8 deadline for a final report to President Bush.

But the local coalition is used to tight deadlines. Because the Pentagon withheld the data behind its base-closure recommendations for weeks following the May 13 release of its list, the coalition almost didn't finish its analysis in time for the commission's hearing in Boston this week.

Gabe Stern, who has supervised the data analysis for the coalition, said it took additional weeks to understand the Pentagon's COBRA analysis — the Cost of Base Realignment Action computer model that was used to justify its closure recommendations.

In the end, Stern didn't get the final results until less than 24 hours before the hearing kicked off on Wednesday, so the coalition could present the commission with only a brief outline of its findings.

"The next step is to follow up with some more details, to offer the staff a look at alternative COBRA run results, and a look at alternative configurations," Stern said.

Both men are optimistic the follow-up will yield a compelling case for keeping Groton open. Markowicz has long said the base probably has a one-in-10 chance of getting off the base closure list. But he revised that on Thursday.

"I have recalculated the odds, and I have concluded it's more like one in seven," Markowicz said with a smile. "I'm getting more optimistic."

Stern was even more hopeful.

“Now that we understand the process a little better and we know the commission is curious and asking the right questions, I think the odds are even better than that,” he said.

Both agreed that the battle is not over, however.

“We’re going to get pushback. We’re going to be challenged,” Markowicz said. “I would expect that. But we haven’t finished our analysis yet, either, and we might be able to make an even stronger case.”

From the start, the coalition knew the easiest way to overturn a Pentagon plan to close the Groton base would be to find a way to do it without forcing the commission to sacrifice another base. Adding a base to the list triggers a lengthy Department of Defense review and seven of the nine commissioners voting in favor of the change, whereas taking a base off requires only a majority vote.

Markowicz said when the visiting BRAC chairman asked during a visit to the Groton base on May 31 whether Groton could accommodate all of Norfolk’s submarines, “it piqued my curiosity.”

Because such a move would involve fewer than 300 civilian employees, it would not require a formal realignment vote by the commission, Markowicz said.

In addition, removing nine submarines from the sprawling Norfolk Naval Base would barely be noticed in the crush of surface ships that are homeported there, and would certainly not put Norfolk in danger of being closed, he said.

“I thought, ‘If the chairman of the BRAC is asking about that scenario, did the Navy ever look at it?’” Markowicz said, so he began to dig into the data released by the Navy about the same time.

Because the files could not be searched electronically, he had to pore over thousands of pages of meeting minutes and supporting documentation, but at last he found it: DON-

0004, a scenario that would have Norfolk’s submarines moved to Groton.

It was rejected because the Navy analysis showed it would require a \$141 million investment in Groton to accommodate 27 submarines — the 18 there now and the nine from Norfolk.

But as he read through the narrative he noted the Navy listed only one floating drydock at the base and two graving docks at Electric Boat available locally. The Navy plan said it would need to purchase a \$93 million drydock to accommodate the volume of repair work expected from the increased number of submarines.

Markowicz knew that EB has three graving docks: two of them in operation now, the third taken out of service last year for \$40 million in repairs but expected back in use by February. That would reduce the up-front cost for moving Norfolk’s submarine to Groton to just \$48 million.

In addition, “0004,” as he has come to call it, recommended that if the Navy planned to reduce the number of submarines in its fleet the plan should be reconsidered. The following March the Navy issued an internal assessment that predicted a 21 percent decrease in the number of submarines.

“But there is nothing in any of the minutes that shows they ever looked at 0004 again,” Markowicz said.

But with less than 24 hours before the commission’s regional hearing in Boston on Wednesday, the final numbers weren’t clear, so the issue was left out of the slide show a delegation of federal, state and local officials would present.

At 11:48 a.m. Tuesday, as he was preparing to leave for Boston, for a planned rehearsal of the presentation, Stern got the results of his computer analysis: the revised scenario would yield more than \$200 million in savings over 20 years, and the Navy would break even by 2013.

Wednesday morning at 8:30, as he was walking into the convention center where the hearing would take place, Markowicz ran into another analyst who had agreed to run the new scenario. That analyst, who asked that his name not be used, confirmed the numbers.

“I asked him if he was confident with the results, and he said yes, and I said, ‘Should we bring it up?’ and he said, ‘Somebody has to,’” Markowicz said. But with less than 90 minutes before showtime, Markowicz had no time to revise his testimony.

“This would have added a distinctive new wrinkle to the whole presentation,” Markowicz said. “I had no time to change the whole thing.

So he included a few words in at the end of his presentation that new data warranted a second look at a DON-0004.

“Our hope, going into this, was someone would ask the question, so I could say, ‘We have given that a lot of thought,’” Markowicz said.

Commissioner Samuel Skinner proceeded to ask a question about whether the move would be economically sound. Several members of the delegation later used a baseball analogy to characterize the question: it was slow, waist high and right over the plate.

Several members of the delegation also said if the fight to get the base off the closure list is successful, Skinner's question could represent the turning point.

Markowicz and Stern know that Norfolk's backers, including U.S. Sen. John Warner, R-Va., powerful chairman of the Armed Services Committee, are unlikely to let those submarines leave without a fight.

Markowicz said the coalition has some new avenues to investigate. For instance, the Navy estimate of the cost to move Norfolk submarines to Groton is based on the combined 27 submarines now homeported at the two sites.

But the service is in the process of re-aligning its forces from its Cold War focus on the Atlantic to a 21st-century focus on the Pacific, which could mean fewer submarines for Groton to accommodate.

There are rumors that the three Seawolf-class submarines homeported in Groton now could soon move to Bangor, Wash., and that some older Los Angeles-class submarines might be moved to San Diego or Guam.

That, combined with the decommissioning of older Los Angeles boats, could lead to a force of 20 or so submarines in the Atlantic by 2011, which Groton could accommodate with very little, possibly no new construction.

“The more submarines we move to the Pacific, the faster the savings go up,” Markowicz said.

Both men said they don't think the calculations were done with an intent to shut down Groton so much as they were simple mistakes.

“I think what we're seeing is an honest, rigorous debate within the Navy about how to spend limited and declining dollars as they go forward,” Markowicz said.

For instance, when someone from the Navy called Electric Boat to find out how many certified graving docks it had last fall, the answer was, technically, two — even though the third was out of commission only temporarily. It took someone familiar with the local situation to understand the answer was factual, but not correct.

“It all comes down to a person sitting down at a desk with a piece of paper having to decide how to ask a question,” Stern said. “It's all very process driven, and sometimes you get these absurd results.”

Stern said he will be crunching more of the Navy's own budget numbers to see whether he can strengthen the case for keeping Groton open by undercutting the Navy case for shutting it down.

For instance, the Navy did not look at non-Defense Department costs associated with shutting down Groton, but EB President John Casey testified Wednesday that having the base just three miles up the river means repair work for his shipyard. If that work dries up, it means about \$50 million more a year in overhead that will be folded into the cost of new construction submarines.

Some of the calculations are going to be very complex, Stern said, but he's convinced the numbers are on Groton's side.

"We're pretty confident that we have a good understanding of how it all works now," Stern said. "In particular, we want to make sure we get at the real cost to the government for closing Groton. You do that, and you cut the knees right off of this thing, because it never pays them back."

### **Maryland delegation builds case with BRAC Commission**

Baltimore Business Journal (Baltimore, MD)  
Heather Harlan  
June 8, 2005

Ten of the state's top government and military leaders told the Department of Defense's Base Realignment and Closure Commission Friday that Maryland is prepared to handle thousands of jobs that could be created by the group's recommendations.

"We are prepared to receive your recommendations," Gov. Robert Ehrlich told the commission, gathered at Goucher College in Towson on Friday morning. "We are prepared to increase our nation's military presence in the state of Maryland."

On May 13, the Department of Defense released recommendations for closing some of the nation's bases and shifting military personnel -- all in an effort to reduce costs and decentralize operations in a post 9-11 world. The Base Realignment and Closure Commission is heading up the effort to weigh those recommendations and seek public input before

sending off their opinions to President Bush. A final decision is expected this fall.

Under the recommendations, Maryland stands to gain close to 7,000 jobs -- mostly at Aberdeen Proving Ground in Harford County and Fort Meade in Anne Arundel County.

But at the same time, the state could also lose about 4,000 existing jobs at Aberdeen Proving Ground, 100 jobs at the Air National Guard base in Middle River and an unknown number at the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency in Bethesda.

U.S. Sen. Barbara Mikulski, a Democrat, argued that both the Air National Guard unit and the agency should be kept in Maryland. She suggested that the commission should shift the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency to the National Security Agency grounds in Anne Arundel County.

When asked later if having a larger intelligence presence in one area would compromise homeland security, she said, "I think we will be safer at Fort Meade and I think the country will be safer having them together."

Maj. Gen. Bruce F. Tuxhill, adjutant general for the state of Maryland, also pleaded with the commission to keep the Air National Guard base and the roughly 100 jobs in Baltimore County.

If the commission shifted those employees, the closest airlifting operation -- in case of emergency -- would be located in Ohio, he said. C-130J aircrafts are often used to transport officials or residents during emergencies such as terrorist threats or fires.

Aris Melissaratos, Maryland's secretary of Business and Economic Development, assured the commission that the state has a highly skilled workforce that could fill many of the positions -- should some military and civilian employees decide not to be transferred.

New Jersey officials, who were also presenting their case on Friday, were prepared to tell the commission that as many as 80 percent of the

employees from Fort Monmouth would not make the move to Maryland -- as recommended.

"Whether the number is 20 percent or 40 percent, it doesn't matter," Melissaratos said. "We have the workforce here."

Other Maryland representatives who testified included U.S. Sen. Paul Sarbanes, U.S. Rep. C.A. Dutch Ruppersberger (D-Baltimore City, Anne Arundel, Baltimore and Harford counties) and Harford County Economic Development Director J. Thomas Sadowski.

### **Coalition offers new arguments for sub base future**

The Associated Press State & Local Wire (New London, CT)  
June 8, 2005

The regional coalition formed to fight against closing the Navy submarine base in Groton is refocusing its efforts to argue the base should actually be expanded.

For the past two months the Submarine Base Realignment Coalition has been challenging the Navy's conclusion that the sub base has a low military value and should be shut down.

The group will now argue that the Navy could actually save money by moving nine submarines from Norfolk, Va., to Groton, said coalition chairman John C. Markowicz.

Documents released by the Navy show the Pentagon looked into that scenario and concluded it would require spending \$141 million to accommodate 27 submarines in Groton - the 18 there now and the nine from Norfolk.

But Markowicz said that analysis was flawed. Documents show the Navy thought it would need to build another dock at the base to berth the additional submarines.

In their documents, they listed only one floating dry-dock at the base and two graving docks at the nearby Electric Boat shipyard.

But EB actually has three graving docks: two of them in operation now, the third taken out of service last year for \$40 million in repairs but expected back in use by February.

The use of that dock would reduce the cost for moving Norfolk's submarines to Groton to just \$48 million, Markowicz said.

Moving the subs would yield more than \$200 million in savings over 20 years, and the Navy would break even by 2013, the coalition argues.

The staff of the Base Realignment and Closure Commission week has asked for as much material as possible by mid-July so it can analyze it, before making a final recommendation on which bases to close.

The commission expects to make its final base-closure decisions the third week of August, in time to meet its Sept. 8 deadline for a final report to President Bush.

On Wednesday, Connecticut officials told members of the BRAC at a public hearing in Boston that the Pentagon predetermined which military bases it wanted to close, then crafted a process that ensured the submarine base in Groton would make the list.

Markowicz has long said he believes there is a one-in-10 chance of getting the Groton base off the base closure list. But he revised that after the hearing Thursday.

"I have recalculated the odds, and I have concluded it's more like one in seven," Markowicz said. "I'm getting more optimistic."

### **Delaware's politicians blast plan to dismantle Air Guard base**

The Associated Press State & Local Wire (Towson, MD)  
Foster Klug  
June 8, 2005

Delaware's congressional delegation blasted the Defense Department on Friday for seriously

miscalculating the military and economic value of the state's only National Air Guard base, imploring an independent commission to reverse a recommendation to partially dismantle the facility.

The Pentagon recommended in May that all eight C-130 transport planes at the New Castle County base be moved to North Carolina and Georgia, eliminating, the politicians said, 582 jobs - instead of the 250 that the Pentagon has claimed.

"We'd be an Air Guard base without airplanes," said Brigadier General Hugh Broomall, the head of the New Castle base. "We'd have no mission."

The Delaware officials said the Pentagon's recommendation was based on legal flaws and out-of-date data. Gov. Ruth Ann Minner, who wasn't consulted before the recommendations were made, said the state would consider a lawsuit if the Base Closure and Realignment Commission endorsed the DOD recommendation.

The commission, which was appointed by President Bush, is currently reviewing the Pentagon's recommendations and listening to arguments from the affected states. Commissioners will then forward a report to the president, who will make a decision on those recommendations in the fall.

The head of the commission, Anthony Principi, said it was created to evaluate the DOD proposals as part of a "clear-eyed reality check" needed to consolidate bases and direct the savings to help soldiers fighting abroad. The Pentagon has estimated that moving the planes from New Castle would save \$120 million over 20 years.

But Delaware's politicians argued that New Castle's C-130s serve 60 million people in a region stretching from Rhode Island to the Carolinas. Without the airplanes in Delaware, they said, the area wouldn't be able to quickly move troops and equipment during an emergency similar to the recent London attacks or the 2001 attack at the Pentagon.

Sen. Joe Biden called it "mind boggling" for the government to consider moving the C-130s. "We're going to have no tactical airlift ... in a region responsible for 60 million people?" he asked the commissioners during a hearing at Goucher College in Towson. "It makes no sense."

Rep. Mike Castle said the Pentagon also failed to consider a recent \$17.2 million renovation of the base's runway, which was finished last year. "Its evaluation is flawed and entirely out of date," Castle said.

Castle, a former lawyer and Delaware governor, cautioned a crowd of base supporters who'd made the trip to watch the hearings that only about 10 percent of the Pentagon's recommendations are overturned.

"This is a good case, but I've presented good cases that I've lost," Castle said. "We still have a long way to go."

Minner said that the state would also be stung economically by the loss of the base, which generates \$28 million in annual federal funds. She said the guard also issued \$13.5 million in annual outside contracts.

Sen. Thomas Carper questioned the legality of moving the C-130s from Delaware without first consulting the governor. "Doing so makes no sense," he said.

"I do not consent to the realignment of Delaware's Air National Guard," Minner told the commission. It is "too critical to fighting the war on terror and protecting the region."

### **Put Monmouth in 'mega base,' but don't close it, say NJ officials**

The Associated Press State & Local Wire  
(Towson, MD)  
Donna De La Cruz  
June 8, 2005

Fort Monmouth should remain open and merge into a Pentagon-recommended "mega base" of

three other Garden State military installations, New Jersey officials on Friday told a seemingly receptive federal panel that is considering whether to recommend shuttering the Army post.

"It's certainly what the secretary of defense is trying to accomplish in this transformation to build more jointness into our warfighting capability, readiness and training, research and development," Anthony Principi, chairman of the nine-member Base Realignment and Closure Commission, said after a two-hour hearing.

The Pentagon in May said Fort Monmouth should close and more than 2,000 of its jobs move to the Aberdeen Proving Ground in Maryland. The Pentagon also recommended merging the Lakehurst Naval Air Station with nearby Fort Dix and McGuire Air Force Base, creating the nation's only "mega base" of Army, Air Force and Navy installations, since they work together on various projects.

In a presentation to BRAC commissioners, federal lawmakers, retired military officials and local leaders from New Jersey said Fort Monmouth, an Army research and development installation that already works with the other bases, should be included in the merger.

"It would just formalize what already is a reality," said Rep. Rush Holt, D-Pennington, whose district includes Fort Monmouth.

The idea of Fort Monmouth joining the mega base was just one of several key points to which the commissioners seemed receptive after the BRAC regional hearing held at Goucher College. Another shared worry was that of a so-called "brain drain," which refers to the approximately 80 percent of Fort Monmouth's workers who said they would not relocate to Aberdeen, according to a poll commissioned by a private group working to keep Fort Monmouth open.

All four of the commissioners at the hearing expressed serious reservations about losing such experience in comments they made after the

presentations from New Jersey, Maryland and Delaware officials.

"We know that when you take an organization and you want to move the mission, it takes some time, some resources, to rebuild," said commissioner Lloyd Newton, a retired Air Force general. "Whether they (the Pentagon) took all the studies and analyses that they needed to do to make sure they could do this without compromising our men and women, that's something we continue to look at."

Paul Gaffney, chairman of the Governor's Commission to Support and Enhance New Jersey's Military and Coast Guard Installations, said it would take 10 years before Aberdeen's workforce would be at the same skill level of today's Fort Monmouth employees.

Commissioner Philip Coyle, a former assistant defense secretary in the Clinton administration, praised the New Jersey group for including in its presentation how many employees did move from one military installation to another in past BRAC rounds. The number of people who did make the move was always relatively small, around 16 to 20 percent.

The New Jersey group also said the Pentagon's estimated one-time cost of \$822 million to close Fort Monmouth and move jobs to Aberdeen would cost two or three times as much because the Maryland post does not have the facilities to house Fort Monmouth's equipment.

Principi said after the hearing that the BRAC commissioners and their staff need to analyze carefully all the financial data.

"This is not just about saving money, it's about national security, so dollars can be saved and used for modernization to ensure troops have enough equipment," Principi said.

Rep. Frank Pallone, D-Long Branch, said he was heartened that the commissioners "seem to be thinking the same way we are."

The New Jersey group also asked the commissioners not to retire 16 planes from the

108th Air Refueling Wing at McGuire Air Force Base, another Pentagon recommendation.

The Pentagon targeted Fort Monmouth in the 1988 and 1993 base closings rounds for major reductions in its work force, but the post was kept open.

A majority of the nine BRAC commissioners can vote to take an installation off the closure list it will send to President Bush in September. Bush can only accept or deny the entire package submitted by the commission. If Bush accepts the recommendations, the list becomes final within 45 legislative days, unless Congress passes a joint resolution to block the entire package.

If the president rejects the recommendations, the commission has until Oct. 20 to submit a revised list. In November, Bush would have to approve or disapprove the revised recommendations.

### **Official: Ellsworth's future could hinge on Grand Forks base**

The Associated Press State & Local Wire (Rapid City, SD)  
June 8, 2005

The future of Ellsworth Air Force Base could hinge on whether a North Dakota base is added to the Pentagon's recommended closure list, according to the leader of a task force working to save Ellsworth.

In recommendations issued May 13, the Pentagon called for closing Ellsworth and moving its B-1B bombers to Dyess AFB in Texas. Grand Forks AFB was recommended for realignment.

But questions from the Base Realignment and Closure Commission to Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld suggest commissioners could add Grand Forks to the closure list, said Pat McElgunn, director of the Ellsworth Task Force.

"I don't enjoy the fact that we have to take a look at it as us versus them," McElgunn said.

The Pentagon's final recommendations call for removing KC-135 air refueling tankers from Grand Forks and preparing the base for the Predator "unmanned aerial vehicle."

However in a letter last Friday to Rumsfeld, BRAC Chairman Anthony Principi questioned that decision.

Principi wrote: "What considerations drove the recommendation to realign rather than close Grand Forks AFB, ND?" Principi also asked how many UAVs would be based at Grand Forks and when they might arrive.

McElgunn said an earlier Air Force "force structure" plan did not slate UAVs for Grand Forks. He also said that in 2001 the Air Force considered Ellsworth a top choice for the Global Hawk UAV. It went to a base in California instead.

The BRAC Commission is set to meet July 19 in Washington to decide whether to provisionally add bases to the Pentagon's closure list. If seven of the nine commissioners vote to add a base, the BRAC Commission will conduct site visits and hold public hearings on those proposals.

If Grand Forks is on that list, McElgunn said, "I think that Ellsworth could sit very well."

McElgunn said Grand Forks was on the closure list until early May.

Sen. Byron Dorgan, D-N.D., told the Rapid City Journal in June he knew in advance that Grand Forks was on the closure list. Dorgan said he and other North Dakota officials met with Pentagon planners in the weeks leading up to release of the closure list. He said he wasn't sure why the Pentagon changed its mind.

McElgunn said the Ellsworth Task Force didn't know why Grand Forks was removed from the closure list either. "That's still being researched," he said.

### **Leaders fight plan to close nearby military installations;**

**D.C. officials among those speaking before panel; thousands of jobs at stake**

Baltimore Sun (Baltimore, MD)

Melissa Harris

June 8, 2005

WASHINGTON - Appearing before stern-faced members of the panel that will decide the fate of thousands of American jobs this year, Washington leaders asked them yesterday to reject plans to close military installations in the nation's capital - most notably the flagship Walter Reed Army Medical Center - and transfer some of those jobs to facilities in Maryland suburbs.

The hearing on Capitol Hill opened two days of lobbying from officials hoping to stave off the possibility of everything from millions of square feet of vacant office space in Northern Virginia to the loss of a New Jersey county's largest employer and high-tech hub.

The stakes are high for the nation's capital. According to a Pentagon analysis of the impact of the Base Realignment and Closure Commission changes on cities, Washington would lose 14,459 jobs, more than any other metropolitan area in the country, while the Baltimore area would gain 7,277, second only to the Columbus, Ga., area.

Yesterday's hearing focused on cuts in Washington, Pennsylvania and Virginia.

Five busloads of veterans, employees and community members wearing matching yellow "SaveWillowgrove.com" T-shirts drove three hours from the Willow Grove Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base outside of Philadelphia. People from Tobyhanna Army Depot, just southeast of Scranton, Pa., wore "Keep the Best!" T-shirts. And Pittsburgh-area supporters wore yellow T-shirts reading: "Pittsburgh: Land and More."

Almost all of the comments from Washington officials focused on Walter Reed - a nearly century-old hospital that has a legacy as the rehabilitation center for the wounded, including

many Iraq war amputees, and the care center for sitting presidents and dignitaries.

The commission is weighing whether Walter Reed's specialty inpatient services should be relocated from Northwest Washington to a new \$1 billion building across the Maryland line at the National Naval Medical Center in Bethesda, which offers 300 additional beds and more research space. Walter Reed's more general inpatient care and outpatient services would transfer to another proposed hospital at Fort Belvoir, Va.

During the hearing, commission member Philip Coyle, the Pentagon's top weapons tester under President Bill Clinton, argued against breaking Walter Reed up, saying it's a "premier joint medical platform" serving soldiers from branches other than the Army.

Washington Mayor Anthony A. Williams characterized both Bethesda and Fort Belvoir as "inadequate," in a written statement submitted to the commission. He mentioned traffic congestion and parking difficulties at both locations, and noted that no onsite inspections or planning has been conducted to assess the true costs.

Rep. Eleanor Holmes Norton, a Democrat from Washington, D.C., said that the hospital is a critical part of the capital's terrorism response in the event of mass casualties.

"Walter Reed is now located within 5 1/2 miles of the White House and 6 1/2 miles of the Capitol," she said. "Were it in Bethesda, that is a 50 percent greater distance and that is significant if you remember the way gridlock crippled the capital after Sept. 11."

Aris Melissaratos, Maryland's secretary of business and economic development, said in a telephone interview after the hearing that Washington leaders aren't looking toward the future. He said that rather than focus on the value of Walter Reed's more than 100 acres of prime real estate in Northwest Washington, they are lobbying against a move of a few miles.

"Those jobs are just going across the border," said Melissaratos, who also leads Gov. Robert L. Ehrlich Jr.'s two-year-old council to protect the state's military jobs. "Employees will continue to live where they're living and just commute to Bethesda. It's a moot point."

But both Williams and Norton argued that the Pentagon has "woefully" underestimated the cost of environmental cleanup at Walter Reed.

### **VA. Leaders Make Their Pitch to BRAC Panel**

Daily Press (Newport News, VA)

David Lerman

June 8, 2005

With thousands of jobs on the line, officials launch a public defense to save local military facilities.

Virginia's top elected officials urged an independent commission Thursday to save Fort Monroe from closure, saying the cost of cleaning up the historic Hampton base could top \$1 billion.

A bipartisan panel of congressmen, senators and mayors, led by Gov. Mark R. Warner, also sought to preserve more than 2,000 jobs at Fort Eustis and safeguard Oceana Naval Air Station from the closure list.

The two-hour hearing before the Base Realignment and Closure Commission, which drew hundreds of residents to a packed hotel ballroom, marked the first and likely only chance state lawmakers will have to make a public case on behalf of Virginia's bases.

The Pentagon wants to close Fort Monroe -- by far the most endangered Virginia base -- to save an estimated \$686 million over 20 years.

But state officials faulted the Pentagon on Thursday for ignoring the high costs of environmental cleanup, including the need to dig up unexploded ordnance. Those costs, they said, could range from \$200 million to more than \$1

billion -- an expense that would wipe out any projected savings.

"The bottom line is that the possible closure of Fort Monroe will lead to arguably one of the most convoluted, complicated, costly and controversial closings in our nation's history," said Sen. George Allen, R-Va.

A similar strategy saved the fort in 1993, when it was last targeted for closure.

The Pentagon, in its written recommendations, acknowledged that Fort Monroe has unexploded munitions that could require extensive cleanup. But defense officials have long maintained those expenses should not be included in the cost analysis of closure because the Pentagon has a legal obligation to clean up the property even if the base stays open.

Lawmakers argued it makes little sense to discount those costs, since they won't have to be paid in the near future as long as the base stays open. If the point of closing bases is to save money, they said, shutting down Fort Monroe is counter-productive.

"If you close it, you clean it, and the whole point of this thing is saving money," said U.S. Rep. Robert C. Scott, D-Newport News.

Commissioners asked no questions at the hearing and gave little hint of their intentions. The nine-member panel, appointed by President Bush with input from Congress, has until Sept. 8 to recommend any changes to the Pentagon's closure list.

"We have to weigh the environmental impact we heard on Fort Monroe today," commission chairman Anthony Principi told reporters later. "We have to make sure the return on investment is a wise one as well."

Hampton Mayor Ross Kearney told the commission the fort's 500-acre site has a complicated legal history that makes ownership of the property difficult to determine and could subject the government to years of litigation.

He said officials recently discovered records indicating the presence of a cemetery for slaves and an Indian burial ground on the property.

Closing Monroe would cost Hampton 3,564 military and civilian jobs and pack a powerful emotional punch. Named for President James Monroe, the fort opened in 1823 to guard the waters of Hampton Roads. It now serves as headquarters for the Army's Training and Doctrine Command.

That command would be moved to nearby Fort Eustis if Fort Monroe is closed, under the Pentagon's plan. But Eustis, an Army transportation center, would nonetheless lose more than 2,000 jobs that would be diverted to a number of other bases.

The fort's Aviation Logistics School would move to Fort Rucker, Ala. A transportation center and school would move to Fort Lee near Petersburg. And the Army's Surface Deployment and Distribution Command would be consolidated at Scott Air Force Base in Illinois.

Newport News Mayor Joe Frank sought to punch holes in the rationale for all three plans, which he described as costly and illogical. The Surface Deployment and Distribution Command, he said, was just consolidated at Eustis from California and New Jersey in 1995, at substantial expense, and many civilian employees would be unwilling to move to Illinois.

Relocating the transportation school to Fort Lee is impractical, he said, because at least a third of the training requires access to a river and a rail line that Fort Lee doesn't have. And moving the aviation logistics school, which provides helicopter repair training, to Fort Rucker provides little real military value but would cost nearly \$500 million, he said.

Lawmakers also sought to cut short the commission's interest in adding Oceana Naval Air Station to the closure list. The commission last week asked the Pentagon for additional information to justify keeping the base open,

citing encroachment from surrounding development that can have an impact on safety and training.

Warner said encroachment issues are under control and that Virginia Beach has committed \$200 million to improve transportation around the base, which is the city's largest employer.

"If there are questions about Oceana, we hope you will raise them with us," the governor told the four commissioners who attended Thursday's hearing.

The commission is scheduled to decide on July 19 whether Oceana or any other bases should be added to the Pentagon's closure list.

Lawmakers also sought to dispel a concern raised by chairman Principi that Norfolk Naval Station is too "congested" to accept 11 more submarines that would be transferred from the closure of Submarine Base New London in Connecticut.

Norfolk at one time had more than 20 submarines, compared to about a dozen today, said Rep. Thelma Drake, R-Norfolk. "Clearly, there is no danger of Naval Station Norfolk becoming congested," she said.

### **State Argues Against Closing Air Wing; Top Officials Tell Base-Closing Panel Pentagon Is Wrong**

Pittsburgh Post-Gazette (Pittsburgh, PA)

Maeve Reston

June 8, 2005

Several hundred yellow-shirted Pennsylvanians converged in Washington yesterday to show support as state officials told an independent commission that the Pentagon was dead wrong this spring when it recommended closing the Pittsburgh-area 911th Airlift Wing, an Air Reserve unit in Moon, and the Willow Grove Naval Air Station, which is north of Philadelphia.

A bipartisan group of state and congressional officials made the case to members of the Base

Realignment and Closure Commission, or BRAC, that the two bases are a critical part of the nation's homeland security operations.

The Pennsylvania hearing was just one of a number of regional hearings this week in which BRAC members are weighing the Defense Department's May recommendations to close or realign 62 of 318 major U.S. bases and to scale back or close 775 smaller bases.

BRAC must make final recommendations to President Bush regarding the proposed changes by Sept. 8. He then has until Sept. 23 to accept or reject them in their entirety. If he approves, Congress has 45 legislative days to veto the package or else they become binding.

Thirteen bases in Pennsylvania are on the closure list, and the Pentagon has requested realignment of six others -- for a potential loss of some 1,800 jobs in the state. But Pennsylvania's senators and congressmen, along with Gov. Ed Rendell, yesterday focused on the 911th and Willow Grove -- the two sites where the economic impact would be greatest and they believe that their case is strongest.

The officials highlighted the opportunities for the 911th base to expand on an adjacent 53 acres and double its capacity of C-130 aircraft stationed there. They also emphasized the capability of Pittsburgh's medical community to respond to terrorism-related incidents.

Officials including Rep. Tim Murphy, R-Upper St. Clair, also made the case that Pittsburgh-area Army Reserve units at bases slated for closure or realignment could be consolidated in Pittsburgh, which they argued is an important recruiting area.

The Pennsylvanians also argued that Willow Grove is strategically located between New York and Washington, and that Navy, Marine, Army Reserve, Air Force Reserve and Pennsylvania Air National Guard units already work jointly there -- an aspect that few other U.S. bases share and a model of the cooperation that the Pentagon has said will be key to modernization of the U.S. military.

For some state officials, the terrorist attacks in London yesterday served as a reminder of the broad and rapid response necessary if another attack occurred in the United States, and they linked yesterday's terrorism with what they view as the strengths of the Pennsylvania bases.

"It's a little hard for me to understand, given the nature and quality of these operations [at Willow Grove and the 911th], how we could be even considering closing them down when we're at war," said Sen. Arlen Specter, R-Pa. "We saw ... what happened in London in the past few hours."

Sen. Rick Santorum, R-Pa., who made the delegation's opening statement promoting the 911th and Willow Grove, along with Rendell and Specter, said closing these northeastern U.S. sites would be a huge mistake because it undercuts the nation's ability to respond to attacks. "We are losing the presence of the military in a very strategic and important place in our country, and we cannot afford to do that," he said.

All the Pennsylvania officials emphasized that the short, but potentially safe, distance of both Willow Grove and Pittsburgh from Washington and New York could be helpful in responding to a bio-terrorism attack, for example.

In a bid to show the bases' importance to their community, about 70 people wearing black-and-gold T-shirts with the message "Pittsburgh Land & More" traveled to Washington by bus yesterday. Among them was Arlene Petrosky of Robinson, a member of the Honorary Commanders Association, which is a group set up by the Pittsburgh Airport Area Chamber of Commerce and the military to foster communication between the air wing and local business community.

Petrosky later said the Pittsburgh-area participants returned home last evening with a sense of optimism. She said she and others who had attended the BRAC session thought state officials had done a good job rebutting the Defense Department's initial assertions.

"There was so much information that was either incorrect or lacking that we were able to present today to try to make the case for our bases," she said. "It's going to affect our economy; it's affecting our recruitment. ... Pittsburgh has so much to offer as far as expansion and being able to handle things for homeland security."

Foes of the Willow Grove closure, which would cost more than 1,200 jobs, also were at yesterday's hearing. One protester said they had filled five chartered buses.

Ralph Galow, an 80-year-old Navy veteran wearing one of the light yellow T-shirts urging commissioners to "Save Willow Grove," said supporters planned to keep pressure on BRAC as well as their state representatives. Galow, who lives in Willow Grove, said he thought the bases' fate could be particularly important to Santorum as he faces a tough re-election fight next year against likely opponent state Treasurer Robert P. Casey Jr.

Keith Dorman, spokesman for the Military Affairs Council of Western Pennsylvania, said he was pleased with the state's presentation yesterday, though he had hoped that the BRAC members would ask more questions, sometimes an indicator of their inclination. "But I think [commissioners] were engaged in the process, they were alert and focused," he said. "And I think we did what we had to do."

In yesterday's closing argument, Specter said Pennsylvania had suffered enough in prior military-closure rounds -- which occurred in 1988, 1991, 1993 and 1995. In those earlier instances, the state lost 3,000 military jobs and more than 13,000 civilian jobs, Santorum said.

Specter reminded BRAC members of his fight against the Defense Department's decision in the early 1990s to shut the Philadelphia Naval Shipyard. He filed suit then against the Navy in federal court, arguing that the service had not used proper criteria in concluding that the shipyard should be closed, and that it had concealed information from Congress, thus mandating further review.

After winning appeals court approval, Specter personally argued his case before the U.S. Supreme Court in March 1994. But since base closures must be acted upon in their entirety, winning would have stalled some 300 other closures in that BRAC round. The Supreme Court unanimously rejected Specter's plea.

In this round, he has said state officials are once again making no concessions. "Pennsylvania has been very hard hit," Specter said. "I think we've done more than our fair share."

### **Team testifies for Willow Grove; Bipartisan state delegation tells panel that closing the base would be a mistake.**

Morning Call (Allentown, PA)

Jeff Miller

June 8, 2005

Pennsylvania's political leaders told the Base Realignment and Closure Commission on Thursday that the Pentagon made critical mistakes in proposing to close Willow Grove Naval Air Station and Pittsburgh International Airport Air Reserve Station.

They argued the military failed to recognize Willow Grove's military value as a joint reserve base where units of the various service branches train together. The Pentagon also erred in finding the Pittsburgh area base lacked room to expand when it could actually grow to house seven more C-130 transport planes, they said.

"It's a little hard for me to understand, with the nature and quality of these facilities, how we could even be talking about closing them down during a war," said U.S. Sen. Arlen Specter, R-Pa.

The commissioners, however, sat impassively through more than two hours of testimony and left without commenting on either base.

The hearing on Capitol Hill may have been the state's only formal opportunity to convince the independent commission that the bases deserve a reprieve because they play a vital role in

America's national defense and homeland security.

It was not clear whether Pennsylvania's representatives would be called back to testify if the commission decides to hold more hearings this summer before concluding its deliberations.

But Gov. Ed Rendell, who led off the testimony, said afterward that state officials would continue to press their case in private meetings with individual commissioners and commission staff members.

The nine-member commission, led by former Veterans Affairs Secretary Anthony J. Principi, has until Sept. 8 to present its recommendations to President Bush.

Besides Rendell and Specter, the commission heard from U.S. Sen. Rick Santorum, R-Pa., U.S. House members of both parties, state Adjutant Gen. Jessica Wright and community leaders.

"This was as good a bipartisan effort by elected officials as I've ever seen," said Rendell, a Democrat. "We have a shot, and we have good arguments."

The hearing also drew several hundred supporters, including 150 wearing yellow "Save Willow Grove" T-shirts. Tom Brady, 64, added a red, white and blue Uncle Sam top hat to show his patriotism.

"People don't understand the assets we have at Willow Grove," said Brady, who lives near the base in Horsham Township, Montgomery County, and served 37 years in the military.

Willow Grove is home to the 913th Airlift Wing, which trains Air Force reservists to perform aerial resupply, and to the 111th Fighter Wing of the Pennsylvania Air National Guard, which flies A-10 tank-killers.

Closing Willow Grove would eliminate about 1,200 jobs, and the Pentagon projects a savings of \$710 million over 20 years.

The primary argument for saving Willow Grove is that it's one of only three joint reserve bases in the country. As such, proponents said, it should be a model for the future instead of a candidate for mothballs.

"It's not just a naval base, and it hasn't been one for 10 years," said Ed Edenbach of the Horsham Chamber of Commerce.

But William Lynch, a former Pennsylvania adjutant general, testified that being a joint base actually hurt Willow Grove in the Pentagon's eyes because neither the Navy nor the Air Force put a high value on retaining it.

"The Air Force studied its side of the field, and the Navy made its assumption to move based on the Air Force," said Lynch, a retired Air Force major general. "I'm a little embarrassed to say that my Air Force got it all wrong."

U.S. Rep. Curt Weldon, R-7th District, a member of the House Armed Services Committee, said the joint training done at Willow Grove is in line with the combat mission in Iraq, which he toured over Memorial Day.

"I believe the military has made a fundamental mistake" in targeting Willow Grove, Weldon said, "one we will pay a grave price for."

U.S. Rep. Allyson Schwartz, a Democrat whose 13th District includes the base, said closing Willow Grove would also cost the military valuable experience, given that 75 percent of the 111th Fighter Wing, which would be disbanded, has been deployed in combat since the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11.

It would cost \$2 million and take two years to replace each of the unit's 32 combat-ready pilots.

Several speakers argued that Willow Grove is a homeland security asset, with its radar capabilities and its proximity to New York, Washington, Philadelphia and Baltimore.

Santorum took the Pentagon to task for closing Northeast bases in favor of installations in the South and West. "This is not smart," he said,

because it takes away a prime recruiting tool in states such as Pennsylvania when the military is having a difficult time filling quotas.

Closing the Willow Grove and Pittsburgh area bases would also undermine the Pennsylvania National Guard, Santorum said, because few Guard members want to travel longer distances to train with their units.

The Pittsburgh area base, near Coraopolis in Allegheny County, is home to the Air Force's 911th Tactical Airlift Group. Closing it would eliminate more than 300 jobs.

The commissioners also heard presentations on two bases slated to gain jobs -- Tobyhanna Army Depot in Monroe County and Letterkenny Army Depot in Franklin County. State officials said the presentations could help preserve the gains against an effort in Texas to save the Red River Army Depot, which is on the Pentagon's closure list.

Pennsylvania has lost more than 16,000 jobs in the previous four commission rounds, more than any state but California.

### **Virginia States Ability To Take Groton's Subs**

Hartford Courant (Hartford, CT)  
Jesse Hamilton  
June 8, 2005

The base-closure struggle intensified into an us-vs.-them bureaucratic showdown this week: Groton's submarine base vs. the massive naval operation in Norfolk, Va., which under the Pentagon's closure recommendations is to get many of Groton's subs.

The Base Realignment and Closure Commission, which heard Connecticut's arguments for saving Groton on Wednesday, held a similar hearing Thursday in Arlington, where it heard the counterargument.

Virginia Gov. Mark Warner took time out from arguing against his state's list of closures and reorganizations to answer doubts about

Norfolk's ability to take on additional subs -- a concern raised Wednesday in Boston when commission Chairman Anthony Principi mentioned Norfolk's "congestion."

In his prepared remarks, Warner said Cold War fleet reductions have left the waterfront at Naval Station Norfolk with plenty of room. He said the piers there could fit all of Groton's attack subs, even if none were shifted to the other Atlantic base in Kings Bay, Ga.

"Space is not an issue," Warner told the commissioners, adding that he's not actually recommending Norfolk take all the Connecticut subs. Secretary of Defense Donald R. Rumsfeld has recommended Norfolk get two-thirds of them.

Getting into specifics, Warner said: "The movement of submarines and other maintenance activities can be easily accommodated within the military facilities and the port. The infrastructure inside and outside the fences of these installations is more than adequate to absorb 6,000-plus new workers, the related ships and other equipment and expanded missions."

The day before in Boston, sub-base defenders had made a detailed case to the commission that the scenario of moving subs from Norfolk to Groton had been dismissed based on a faulty assumption. John Markowicz, chairman of the Subbase Realignment Coalition in Connecticut, told commissioners that Norfolk was off the hook only because the Navy miscounted the number of dry-docks on the Thames River. Groton didn't get credit for one that was under repair, so the military analysts putting together the BRAC list believed adding subs to Groton, which now has 18, would outstrip its capacity.

Markowicz's history lesson came in answer to one of the commissioners, Samuel K. Skinner, asking whether moving subs from Norfolk to Groton might make sense.

Both bases claim excess capacity, although Groton advocates said it could take the extra subs with little changes to the base. Norfolk, they said, requires construction money for pier

work and facility upgrades. Norfolk would have to berth more subs per pier than Groton.

Virginia was eager to make its own points Thursday. Congresswoman Thelma Drake, R-Va., who represents the district that includes the Virginia base, told the commission the base once had 20 subs. Now it has a dozen. "Clearly, there is no danger of the Naval Station Norfolk being congested," she said.

Jack Hornbeck, president of the area's Hampton Roads Chamber of Commerce, said, "There is plenty of room," adding, "We'd love to have them here."

He argued that sending Norfolk's subs to Groton would keep two bases open. Sending Groton's to Norfolk would require only one base, though admittedly hurting Connecticut's economy.

He said, "While that's very, very tough, I have to ask, 'What makes the most sense?'"

One outsider, Eric Wertheim, editor of *Combat Fleets of the World*, said, "I have heard very few military experts give a good argument about keeping Groton around. ... It's unfortunate, because it has such a tremendous history."

He said it's a matter of efficiency. "It's not a base that does everything." Though spreading the sub force out may be safer, he said, efficiency seems to be the higher interest for today's Department of Defense.

After Boston's hearing, Sen. Chris Dodd, said, "I'm more confident today than I was yesterday." But he added, "Our work is not finished here. Obviously, we've got a continuing dialogue with the commissioners and their staff."

Connecticut Gov. M. Jodi Rell said of the commissioners: "They understood."

But her counterpart in Virginia, Warner, who grew up in Connecticut in the Rockville section of Vernon, has a different perspective. He closed his part of the Thursday presentation promising

his state would "aggressively welcome" its military additions from the BRAC process.

### *Opinions/ Editorials*

#### **New Reason To Keep Ellington's F-16s** **Task force says London attacks show the need for combat aircraft to protect the area** Houston Chronicle (Houston, TX)

Dale Lezon  
July 8, 2005

The terrorist attacks in London showed the importance of keeping fighter jets at Ellington Field to protect the area's petrochemical plants — and its people, local and federal leaders said Thursday.

"Homeland security starts at home, and Houston can't afford to be left unprotected," said U.S. Rep. Tom DeLay, R-Sugar Land.

The Pentagon recommended in May that all F-16 jets of the Air National Guard's 147th Fighter Wing, based at Ellington, be retired as part of a plan to consolidate military assets and cut costs.

But DeLay, Houston Mayor Bill White, Harris County Commissioner Sylvia Garcia and other members of the Ellington Field Task Force say the combat aircraft are needed to protect residents, as well as the Johnson Space Center, the Port of Houston and the vast petrochemical complex along the Houston Ship Channel.

They met at Ellington on Thursday with James Hansen, a member of the Base Realignment and Closure Commission, in an effort to convince him that the fighters are needed here. The meeting had been scheduled before the terrorist attacks on the London transit system Thursday morning.

In addition to this area's critical role in the nation's oil supply, the FBI has identified nine other facilities, including the Texas Medical Center, as possible terrorist targets.

The task force will make its case again at a commission hearing Monday in San Antonio.

The commission, which will make its final recommendations to President Bush on Sept. 8, has held several other hearings as communities across the nation try to save military bases and other facilities that the Defense Department recommended cutting.

Bush must accept or reject the entire proposal by Sept. 23. If he accepts it, Congress will have 45 legislative days to reject the entire list or the recommendations will become binding.

If Bush rejects the plan, the nine-member commission has until Oct. 20 to submit new recommendations. Bush must approve or reject the revised plan by Nov. 7. The commission will disband April 15.

Hansen said after Thursday's meeting that he could not yet make a recommendation about keeping the jets. He acknowledged, however, that attacks on this area's petrochemical plants could disrupt the nation.

"This would have an effect on all 50 states and worldwide if this (area) is not protected," he said.

Garcia said the fighters from the 147th have a critical local role.

"It's about protecting our assets — the port, the oil refineries — but more importantly, it's about protecting our people," she said. "The people come first."

Under BRAC recommendations, if the F-16s are lost, other combat aircraft would be stationed at Ellington regularly to help provide security for the area.

Citing security concerns, Col. Lanny McNeely, 147th Fighter Wing commander, has said he cannot discuss which aircraft might be used or which bases they might come from.

But task force chairman John Cook said permanently stationing combat aircraft with the 147th would provide immediate protection for the area.

Also, local pilots who regularly fly with the 147th over the Houston region would have a more thorough knowledge of possible terrorist targets than pilots from other bases would, said William Parr, a task force member and former 147th commander.

Keeping the jets also would enhance Ellington Field's role as a joint military reserve center under a plan spearheaded by Sen. Kay Bailey Hutchison, R-Texas.

That plan, approved by the Defense Department, would move reserve units now headquartered on Old Spanish Trail near the University of Texas M.D. Anderson Cancer Center to 30 acres of city-owned land at Ellington.

M.D. Anderson would buy the vacated reserve property to expand its 125-acre research park. M.D. Anderson officials have said their facilities are crowded.

#### *Additional Notes*