

Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission

EARLY



BIRD

September 22, 2005

Department of Defense Releases

N/A

National News Articles

[Legislators Try To Reject BRAC List](#)

[Lawmakers: Storms cast new light on BRAC](#)

Local News Articles

[Fort Meade Gets Ready for Record Growth \(Washington DC\)](#)

[Senators commit to finding new mission for Cannon AFB \(Clovis, NM\)](#)

[Vance closer to 99 more jobs, as BRAC wraps up \(Enid, OK\)](#)

[Kansas to Gain Thousands of Military, Civilian Jobs from Base Realignment \(Kansas City, MO\)](#)

Opinions/Editorials

[Lawsuits Could Land State On White House Blacklist \(Hartford, CT\)](#)

[To Oceana's plight, a chilly response \(Norfolk, VA\)](#)

[Life goes on after base closures \(Warrick, IN\)](#)

Additional Notes

N/A

Department of Defense Releases

N/A

National News Articles

Legislators Try To Reject BRAC List

New London Day
Robert A. Hamilton
September 22, 2005

Two congressmen have introduced resolutions to derail the Base Realignment and Closure, or BRAC, process, though the bills are unlikely to get the support of the Connecticut delegation now that the Naval Submarine Base in Groton is off the closure list.

U.S. Sen. Christopher J. Dodd, D-Conn., said the Pentagon made a "grave mistake" in targeting Groton for closure last May, and that he was thankful that the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission overturned the recommendation last month.

"The Congress should have the same good judgment and not stand in the way," Dodd said.

Congressional staffers said U.S. Sen. Joseph I. Lieberman, D-Conn., and U.S. Rep. Rob Simmons, R-2nd District, also were ready to oppose any attempt to derail the BRAC process, but were unavailable for comment.

The only reservation Connecticut lawmakers have about the list is that it still includes the Connecticut Air National Guard's fighter wing at Bradley International Airport in East Granby.

The state has gone to court to overturn that action, however, based on a law that makes Gov. M. Jodi Rell the commander in chief of that unit, which state officials contend gives her the final say on whether it can be closed down.

The resolutions, introduced this week by Rep. Harold Ford, D-Tenn., and Rep. Ray LaHood, R-Ill., mean Congress is likely to use most if not all of the 45-day period for action on the BRAC process. Under the law, members had until Sept. 25 to introduce any resolution to derail the process, or the base closing list became law.

Now that the resolutions have been introduced, the law requires the House and Senate to consider them in an expedited fashion, and decide by Nov. 6 whether to approve them.

John C. Markowicz, chairman of the Subbase Realignment Coalition, which headed the grass-roots effort to get the base off the closure list, said even if the resolutions move forward, however, it's too late for any reconsideration that would put Groton back on the list.

"In a practical sense, if Congress by Joint Resolution overturns the list, Subbase is off the list. If it doesn't, Subbase is off the list," Markowicz said. "It's just a question of waiting to see if anything else happens. So we wait patiently, but rather optimistically, for the clock to run out."

Lawmakers: Storms cast new light on BRAC

Air Force Times
Rick Maze
September 21, 2005

Two key lawmakers are asking the White House to reconsider base-closing plans because Hurricane Katrina has proven the need to retain Gulf Coast naval bases.

In a Sept. 9 letter to President Bush, Sen. Trent Lott, R-Miss., and Rep. Solomon Ortiz, R-Texas, said problems in the emergency response for hurricane relief show the need for dispersed forces.

Under Pentagon plans, endorsed by the independent base closing and realignment commission in recommendations now at the White House, Naval Station Pascagoula, Miss., and Naval Station Ingleside, Texas, would close and Navy helicopter squadrons at Naval Air Station Corpus Christi, Texas, would move to Norfolk, Va.

"The relocation of these assets to the East and West Coast would mean that our response to this crisis would have been even more hampered by the four-day steam from Norfolk to the Gulf of Mexico," the letter to Bush said.

"This national need for a homeland defense and security on the Gulf Coast is an issue that was highlighted by the BRAC commissioners during deliberations and the current events only magnify this national need," the letter says. "We request that you exercise your role under the BRAC process and ask the commission to reconsider these recommendations that affect the homeland defense of the Gulf Coast."

The White House is reviewing the BRAC recommendations, and under the law can either accept them or ask the commission to reconsider.

Local News Articles

Fort Meade Gets Ready for Record Growth

The Washington Post (Washington DC)
Christian Davenport
September 22, 2005

From the outside, Fort George G. Meade seems an inviolable fortress, surrounded by armed guards standing sentry and tall fences with barbed wire. Few members of the general public ever get a glimpse inside its 5,400-acre campus,

the expansive Army post that is also home to the National Security Agency.

These days, its gates hide a new level of activity as officials work to make the post more secure after the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks and to accommodate what could be one of the biggest growth spurts in the post's history.

Thousands of workers could descend on the campus under a Pentagon plan to realign some military bases. The plan was endorsed last Thursday by President Bush and awaits congressional approval.

Meanwhile, a private company has begun a massive residential construction project designed to bring 3,100 new or renovated homes to the post over 10 years. And the NSA, which is looking to add 7,500 workers over five years, is experiencing one of its largest hiring sprees.

The activity is also spilling outside the fort. In addition to the existing office parks nearby that are home to defense contractors such as Lockheed Martin and Boeing, more than 1.5 million square feet of commercial space was approved recently by Anne Arundel County for construction. Another 3.9 million square feet of development is awaiting county approval.

Plans call for turning Route 175, the two-lane road that runs by the post, into a multi-lane divided highway. Maryland transportation officials have even talked about extending Metro from Greenbelt to Baltimore-Washington International Airport. The proposed new service, which would be designed to better link Baltimore and Washington, would have a stop at Fort Meade.

The bottom line, regional leaders and economists say, is that Fort Meade's expansion is helping to create not just one of the fastest-growing areas in the Baltimore-Washington corridor but also a national military hub.

"This is one of the most progressive areas, in terms of national security, in the nation," said Rep. C.A. Dutch Ruppersberger (D-Md.), whose

district includes the post. "And we have to stay ahead of the curve."

Overseeing the changes at the post are two new leaders: Col. Kenneth O. McCreedy, who became the installation commander in June, and Lt. Gen. Keith B. Alexander, who took over as the director at the NSA on Aug. 1. Alexander was previously the Army's deputy chief of staff. Before that, he served in a variety of high-level posts such as deputy director for the Joint Staff, intelligence director for the U.S. Central Command and commander of the Army's Intelligence and Security Command.

McCreedy also has an intelligence background. Before and after the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks, he was commanding a signal intelligence battalion in Kuwait, plucking messages from the sky. He also worked for a year as a fellow in the NSA directors' office in 1999.

In his new job, McCreedy said, much of his time will be spent on details more suited to a city manager. Under the Pentagon's Base Realignment and Closure Commission, Fort Meade stands to gain about 5,400 new workers - an increase that post officials said can be easily accommodated.

Meanwhile, McCreedy is working to implement a plan developed by his predecessor, Col. John W. Ives, to make the post more secure.

Though designs are not final, the idea is to move more sensitive operations to the center of the post, where they would be more protected. That could mean that the fort's golf course, which sits on prime real estate in the middle of the post, could be moved.

"We're beginning to think how we might bring more facilities that require greater security to the interior of the post, and push out those activities to the exterior that require less security," he said. "The golf course obviously isn't a high-priority target for terrorists. But NSA could be."

The plan, which looks 30 years into the future, would allow the base to handle an even greater influx than is now projected, said Clemon

Wesley, president of the Fort Meade Alliance, a nonprofit group that advocates for the post.

With a staff of about 30,000 at the installation now, "we think we could accommodate another 30,000," he said.

Work is underway on the post's ambitious housing development project. Already this year, Picerne, the private development company that the Army has hired to oversee the project, has built 419 homes. During the course of the project, the company is planning to build five new neighborhoods on the post, each with about 500 to 700 homes. The company has a 50-year agreement with the Army to manage and lease the properties.

Outside the post, more residential development is on the way. About 4,000 housing units are approved around the post and 1,100 are still being reviewed, according to the county.

Business parks hoping to lure defense contractors are also popping up.

On a recent rainy day, some of the region's top political leaders gathered to herald the expansion of Route 175 and the infusion of \$12.5 million from the federal government to get the project started.

Ruppersberger said that while it may be difficult to get excited about a road project, this one augurs the growth to come. The area around Fort Meade and NSA is becoming a focal point for the Defense Department, he said, and a focal point for intelligence.

As the NSA and Fort Meade grow, so too will the surrounding area, officials said. More workers mean more cars, and more cars require wider roads -- which is why, officials said, the road is important.

"Right now, Route 175 is a 60-year-old country lane that is serving as a major artery for Fort Meade and NSA," said Rep. Benjamin L. Cardin (D-Md.). "It's not up to the job, and it's time that we modernize it and bring it into the 21st century."

Senators commit to finding new mission for Cannon AFB

Clovis News Journal (Clovis, NM)
September 22, 2005

Clovis Mayor David Lansford and Portales Mayor Orlando Ortega met Wednesday with New Mexico's two U.S. senators to talk about ongoing efforts to find a new mission for Cannon Air Force Base.

The Base Realignment and Closure Commission last month handed the eastern New Mexico base a reprieve of sorts. Instead of recommending to close it, commissioners directed the Pentagon to send Cannon's F-16 fighter squadrons elsewhere and to look for another use for the base.

Cannon would be closed if a new mission can't be found by Dec. 31, 2009.

Sens. Pete Domenici, R-N.M., and Jeff Bingaman, D-N.M., told the mayors about their efforts to draft legislation that would direct the Pentagon to follow the commission's recommendation and find an appropriate mission for the base.

"I assured the mayors that we are continuing to do everything within our powers to ensure that Cannon receives a new mission," Domenici said. "I appreciate the commitment of the mayors to support our efforts."

The BRAC Commission's recommendation on Cannon was one of hundreds made as it reviewed the Pentagon's plan to streamline the nation's military bases. President Bush signed off the recommendations earlier this month, but congressional approval is still needed.

"Basically it was to hear from them about what their (senators) goals are, and thank them for (their) efforts," said Clovis Mayor David Lansford.

However, he said, Cannon is not closer to a specific mission.

“At this point, patience is the key for everyone concerned about Cannon’s future. Right now, we have to celebrate the success of where we’re at now.”

Lansford said he will be in Washington until tomorrow. He said he went to the capital to discuss the Ute Water project and “took the opportunity to visit about Cannon.”

Vance closer to 99 more jobs, as BRAC wraps up

Enid News & Eagle (Enid, OK)
Robert Barron
September 22, 2005

There are only 41 days left until the Base Realignment and Closure Commission recommendations are final.

Mike Cooper told Vance Development Authority members Wednesday little can be done now to change the process. A joint resolution has been introduced in Congress to cancel BRAC recommendations, but Cooper said it will not pass.

"That's been done every time, and it's never passed," he said.

The BRAC Commission approved 85 percent of the Defense Department's recommendations, and the military will save an estimated \$35 billion over the next five years.

That is less than the \$50 billion originally announced by the Pentagon.

Under the plan, Vance Air Force Base will pick up at least 99 new jobs -- 93 military and six civilian -- along with 13 T-6 and 12 T-38 aircraft.

Vance will pick up part of the undergraduate pilot training mission being moved from Moody Air Force Base in Valdosta, Ga., along with some of Moody's Specialized Undergraduate Pilot Training and Introduction to Fighter Fundamentals training for pilots and weapons systems officers.

Vance also will become home of an \$8.7 million Armed Forces Reserve Center. The commission voted to close 53 National Guard Armory buildings in Oklahoma and create seven such reserve centers, construction of which is to begin in 2009.

"Oklahoma will remain the only state with no bases closed in any of the five rounds. That is a credit to Sen. (James) Inhofe and to our congressional delegation," Cooper said.

He also said community efforts and getting state government involved in the process helped. Cooper also discussed the donation of 132 acres of land by the city to Vance. Mayor Ernie Currier took a packet from the city to 71st Flying Training Wing Commander Col. Bryan Benson recently, but there is a legal problem with mineral rights. Once that is corrected, Cooper said, a special Metropolitan Area Planning Commission meeting will be held to expedite getting the donation completed.

The city attempted to donate the land several years ago, but Defense Department did not accept it because officials wanted to avoid the appearance of "BRAC-proofing" Vance, Cooper said.

Since the BRAC process is over, the land can be donated, and the city is eager to do that, he said. Some studies have been done about building new base housing on the land so existing houses do not have to be torn down during construction, which would displace military families. Cooper said VDA now has a new set of priorities.

"It's good to see our plans over the last 15 years be successful. We're seeing the fruits of that," Cooper said.

VDA must coordinate how the state can help continue making sure Vance continues to grow, he said.

"This is better than figuring out what to do with a closure," he said.

Kansas to Gain Thousands of Military, Civilian Jobs from Base Realignment, Governor Sebelius says state economy, military bases to grow

Kansas City InfoZine (Kansas City, MO)
September 21, 2005

Topeka, Kan.- Kansas will gain more than 13,000 military and civilian jobs as a result of the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) process, Governor Kathleen Sebelius said today. Late last week, President Bush endorsed the BRAC Commission's recommendation and sent them to Congress for approval.

The President's list keeps all four of the major military installations in Kansas open and will add personnel at each of the bases.

"Kansas has a proud military tradition, one we've worked hard to honor. Our actions to support military families have not gone unnoticed. Kansas bases will grow, and our economy will prosper as a result," Governor Sebelius said.

The BRAC Commission's recommendations which the President endorses would have the following effects:

- All four Kansas installations would remain open and operational.
- Fort Riley would receive approximately 9,700 additional military personnel due to the repositioning of military forces which are currently overseas. The commission approved the Army's overall repositioning plan for overseas forces, which included Fort Riley. This would bring to nearly 12,000 the additional personnel at Fort Riley. This would result in approximately a \$390 million annual impact to the regional economy, bringing the total to \$1.255 billion. In addition, over \$1 billion would be invested in base construction over the next few years.
- The 22nd Air Refueling Wing (ARW) at McConnell Air Force Base would receive an additional 17 KC-135R air refueling tankers to supplement the 31 tanker aircraft currently operated by the 22nd ARW and the 932nd Air Reserve Refueling Group at the base. This would bring the 22nd's inventory of aircraft to 48 KC-135R model tankers. Approximately 500 additional personnel would be added at McConnell, which would result in a \$36 million annual increase over the current level of \$430 million.
- The 190th Air Refueling Wing at Forbes Field would receive 12 KC-135R air refueling tankers and retire their 10 older model tankers. Approximately 247 additional personnel will be assigned to Forbes, which would result in a \$10 million annual increase for a total of \$86M in economic impact to the area.
- The 184th Air Refueling Wing at McConnell would convert to new missions that expand upon the military intelligence and information technology missions which the 184th currently performs.
- Fort Leavenworth, home of the US Army's Command and General Staff College, would retain its current missions, and be designated as the Midwest Joint Regional Correctional Facility. Approximately 200 additional personnel would be stationed at Fort Leavenworth increasing the local annual economic impact by \$15 million, to a total of \$400 million.
- The President approved a Department of Defense (DOD) recommendation to close the Kansas Army Ammunition Plant near Parsons. The plant is a government owned, contractor operated facility, employing eight civilian government employees and approximately 275 contractor positions.

Federal, state and community officials are working together to seek an expedited turnover of the property to a local redevelopment authority. Efforts are also underway to make certain the Army covers the estimated \$32 million of environmental clean up.

In 2004, Governor Sebelius formed the Governor's Strategic Military Planning Commission (GSMPC), chaired by Lieutenant Governor John Moore, to work with the Kansas Congressional Delegation, the Pentagon, and the potentially affected communities to prepare for the 2005 base realignment and closure process.

Lieutenant Governor Moore, reacting to the President's approval of the BRAC Commission's recommendation, said, "We are encouraged by the recommendations of the BRAC Commission which significantly benefit the State of Kansas and validate the military value of the installations and the military units our State. We will work closely with the Parsons community and our congressional delegation to mitigate any economic impact of the Kansas Ammunition Plant action. We have time to examine how the community economic base can be transitioned and strengthened in the future."

In recognition that the BRAC review process has been hard fought and executed with the total support of State and local government as well as the Kansas delegation, Governor Sebelius said, "I appreciate the Lieutenant Governor's leadership throughout this process, as well as the significant efforts of commission members and our congressional delegation to bring us to this point. We have worked successfully to first influence and now support the recommendations that benefited the State of Kansas. The support of the Congressional delegation, and the support and hard work of our commissioners and community leaders was critical to the successful completion of this process."

Underscoring the importance of the contribution Kansas military installations provide the nation and the state, Governor Sebelius said, "Our state and our communities are so much stronger thanks to our service men and women. Whether

on active duty, in the reserves, or serving in the Kansas National Guard, we are proud of all Kansas soldiers and airmen. Their daily sacrifices enable all of us to enjoy the freedoms we have in this great country."

Congress, which has never rejected the findings of previous BRAC Commissions, has 45 days to review the Commission's recommended actions after they receive them from the President. If Congress takes no action, the Commission's findings become final. Congress must accept or reject in total the Commission's determinations. Rejection of the recommendations is only possible if both the House and the Senate adopt a Joint Congressional Resolution in opposition to the Commission's findings.

Opinions/ Editorials

Lawsuits Could Land State On White House Blacklist

Hartford Courant (Hartford, CT)

Michele Jacklin

September 21, 2005

Connecticut is getting to be a royal pain in the federal government's you know what.

From challenging No Child Left Behind to invasive beetles, lawsuit-happy Connecticut has been forcing Bush administration lawyers to burn the midnight oil. Attorney General Richard Blumenthal has never been shy about racing into court, especially when TV cameras are rolling. But lately he's been joined in Connecticut's lawsuit-athon by Gov. M. Jodi Rell and the American Civil Liberties Union.

Credit Connecticut for having the guts to challenge the Bush administration's worst abuses, whether underfunding the sweeping education law or silencing librarians under the oppressive Patriot Act.

Still, one hopes that there isn't a clerk at the Justice Department putting a black mark next to Rell's name each time a legal paper is served. The Bush administration can be vindictive. Every once in a while, even the wealthiest state

in the country needs a helping hand from big brother in Washington.

Case in point: Earlier this month, Rell called on the Republican-led Congress to boost the availability of low-income heating aid by at least \$1 billion this year. More than 50,000 Connecticut families rely on the Energy Assistance Program to pay their heating bills, which are projected to rise this winter by as much as 70 percent.

"I believe that increasing the appropriation to at least \$3 billion from its present \$2 billion, of which Connecticut received only \$36 million, is fully justified by the dramatic increases we have seen in the costs of energy this year," Rell wrote in her Sept. 8 letter to congressional leaders.

With the Bush administration poised to spend more than \$200 billion on Gulf Coast recovery efforts, another billion is a mere drop in the gas tank. Rell's request is particularly worthy of consideration given that the recent price spikes are attributable, in large measure, to oil and natural gas disruptions caused by Hurricane Katrina.

Yet, it will be interesting to see whether the Bush administration helps the Blue state-laden Northeast as quickly as it came to the rescue of the Red state-dominated Southeast. Here's betting that the feds don't rush in, at least so long as rambunctious Connecticut keeps poking them in the eye.

Just last week, Connecticut and three other Blue states sued the administration over a beetle that has stowed away on overseas freighters and damaged trees in New York City, Chicago and on Long Island. (Note that no Connecticut locality is listed, but Blumenthal no doubt is anticipating the scourge's arrival.) The states are asking for a court order that would require the U.S. Agriculture Department to come up with an effective and safe strategy to stop the pests before they move from cities to forests.

That legal maneuver followed the Aug. 29 filing of a lawsuit designed to prevent the closing of the Air National Guard unit at Bradley

International Airport. The suit was thrown out by the 2nd Circuit Court but the judges left the door open for a refiling once Congress gives final approval to the Base Realignment and Closure Commission's plan in November.

Rell and Blumenthal affirmed their intent to bolt through that door based on their belief that the governor has sole authority over the air wing. "The Department of Defense has no right to move those planes without the express consent of the commander in chief of the Connecticut National Guard -- the governor," she said. "I have not given that consent, nor will I."

With regard to jurisdiction over Guard units, Connecticut was among a handful of states to challenge the administration. But on two other legal fronts, Connecticut is first among equals.

Although 47 states have bridled at various requirements of No Child Left Behind, Connecticut is the only one to have thrown down the legal gauntlet. Blumenthal filed suit Aug. 22 in federal district court in Hartford, contending that the state will be financially penalized by the law.

This month, the ACLU took up the cause of Connecticut librarians who challenged the Patriot Act's gag order provisions, and won. But federal prosecutors have appealed the decision by U.S. District Judge Janet Hall to lift the gag order on librarians who received an FBI demand for records about patrons.

The case could prove pivotal in the congressional debate over whether to reauthorize the Patriot Act.

Connecticut's motto has long been, "He Who Transplanted Still Sustains." An apt replacement might be: "When Put Upon, Sue." And hope that it doesn't come back to bite the state in the you know what.

To Oceana's plight, a chilly response

Virginian-Pilot (Norfolk, VA)

September 21, 2005

There was one certainty in a Virginian-Pilot survey of the men and women who would serve in Richmond: Virginia Beach's effort to keep the jets flying at Oceana Naval Air Station will face plenty of uncertainty at the Capitol.

Despite vigorous arm-twisting, in General Assembly districts across Hampton Roads there remains a troubling lack of commitment for doing what it will take to keep Oceana's 200 F-18s from moving to Cecil Field.

It's troubling not because the politicians are wrong to wonder whether Oceana's planes can be preserved, but because if Virginia Beach can't even count on their neighbors for the will necessary to save the base, they're unlikely to find support elsewhere.

The Defense Base Realignment and Closure Commission told Virginia Beach that it must condemn and buy all the property in the worst crash zones, and spend at least \$ 15 million each year doing so. If the city doesn't, BRAC said, the base's jets are headed to Jacksonville, Fla.

Since Virginia Beach can condemn property around the base only if the General Assembly grants it permission, lukewarm support from campaigning legislators should set off some warning bells. The politicians surveyed by The Pilot's reporters were nothing if not lukewarm: Del. William K. Barlow, a Democrat from western Hampton Roads' 64th District, called for additional study; his Republican opponent, Troy H. Lapetina, sounded distinctly cautionary on condemnation. Del. Chris Jones, from Suffolk, offered support for the effort to save Oceana, though stopped short of anything definitive.

Virginia Beach Del. Harry R. "Bob" Purkey, a Republican, supports spending state money, though he is less sure about condemnation. Republican Del. Leo C. Wardrup Jr. wants to know more about the Beach's commitment to the Navy and the Navy's commitment to Oceana before he decides what he'll do.

In the race for the open 84th District seat, Democrat Supriya Christopher gave the closest thing to an unqualified commitment. The wife of

a F/A-18 Hornet pilot, she advocates state money, as well as condemnation if there is no other option. Her opponent, Republican Sal Iaquinto, says he needs more information before he supports condemnation.

In the 87th District, Del. Paula Miller said she too would support spending state money, and giving the city the power to condemn houses in the crash zones. Her opponents, Republican Michael Ball and Independent John Coggeshall, don't. Del. Kenneth Alexander, who calls the 89th District home, wants a commitment from the Navy to stay at Oceana before spending state money; his opponent, Republican Joshua G. Behr, wants to study the issue. Neither man supports condemnation.

See a pattern? Faced with the loss of so many jobs, and such a crucial social and economic engine, you might expect to find political leaders scrambling to show unstinting support for keeping Oceana's jets here.

But you don't.

Political candidates used to tell voters what they wanted to hear to mask what they really meant. Now that information endures, candidates are hesitant to take a stand on thorny and unpopular issues, or on issues where they don't believe they can deliver.

From the temperate reaction of local politicians, it appears that keeping the F-18s at Oceana appears to fall into both categories.

Life goes on after base closures

Warrick Publishing (Warrick, IN)
Christopher Hellman
September 21, 2005

While Congress has not yet given final approval to the recommendations made by the Pentagon and the Base Closing Commission, many communities are beginning to ask, "What happens when our military base goes?"

For such communities, a closing can be a terrifying prospect, primarily because of the potential economic impact.

Yet most political leaders recognize the necessity of divesting unneeded bases both as a cost saving measure and to help the military evolve to meet emerging threats. Understandably, however, the broader strategic need to close bases is of little comfort to citizens whose livelihoods rely on their existence.

The current closures - usually shortened to BRAC for Base Realignment and Closure - are the fifth such round that began in 1988. Earlier rounds have closed nearly one hundred major bases and reorganized hundreds more.

Additional Notes