

## Base Realignment and Closure Commission

# EARLY BIRD

May 18, 2005

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**BRAC to close 15 major installations, improve Army efficiency**

Army Statement  
Eric W Cramer  
May 13, 2005

WASHINGTON (Army News Service, May 13, 2005) – The Army will close 15 major installations over the next six years and close or realign hundreds of small installations, including Army Reserve and National Guard facilities, if DoD Base Realignment and Closure recommendations released today receive final approval.

Major Army installations slated for closure are: Fort Monroe, Va.; Fort McPherson, Ga.; Fort Gillem, Ga.; Fort Monmouth, N.J.; Newport Chemical Depot, Ind.; Kansas Army Ammunition Plant, Kan.; Selfridge Army Activity, Mich.; Mississippi Army Ammunition Plant; Hawthorne Army Depot, Nev.; Umatilla Chemical Depot, Ore.; Lone Star Army Ammunition Plant, Texas; Red River Army Depot, Texas; Deseret Chemical Depot, Utah; Riverbank Army Ammunition Plant, Calif.; and Charles E. Kelly Support Center, Pa.

In addition to closing these installations, the current plan would close 176 Army Reserve and 211 Army National Guard facilities. These will be replaced by 125 multi-component Armed Forces Reserve Centers.

The changes are part of a total BRAC package expected to save the Department of Defense about \$50 billion over the next two decades, officials said.

Gen. Richard Cody, vice chief of staff for the Army, said the changes to the reserve-component structure are designed to bring the Army Reserve and National Guard in line with the Army's new modular, unit-of-action structure.

Lt. Gen. H. Steven Blum, chief of the Army National Guard Bureau, said the changes in the Guard and Reserve centers will not only lead to better efficiency within the units, but will also lead to improved recruitment.

“We hope it will affect recruitment and retention in a positive way,” Blum said. “By divesting ourselves of some of the more remote facilities and moving to areas with better demographics, it should allow for positive change.”

The BRAC proposal also calls for a change in location for a number of large commands and Army functions. Among these is the relocation of the Armor Center, currently at Fort Knox, Ky., to Fort Benning, Ga., to become part of a new Maneuver Center there.

“What Knox gets in return,” Cody said, “is we’ll activate a modular brigade combat team there. Accessions Command will go there and the Cadet Command. Human Resources will move out of [leased] space and go to Fort Knox. We’re also moving an air defense artillery brigade from Fort Bliss, Texas, to Fort Sill (Okla.) to create a Fires Center.”

Training and Doctrine Command will move from Fort Monroe, Va., to Fort Eustis, Va., as Fort Monroe closes under the current BRAC proposal, Cody said.

Among many other changes, the BRAC proposal:

-- Relocates Army Materiel Command headquarters to Redstone Arsenal, Ala.

-- Relocates the 7th Special Forces Group from Fort Bragg, N.C., to Eglin Air Force Base, Fla.

-- Relocates Forces Command Headquarters and U.S. Army Reserve Command to Pope Air Force Base, N.C.

-- Stations Third Army headquarters with the Air Force component of U.S. Forces Central Command at Shaw Air Force Base, S.C.

-- Moves the Installation Management Agency headquarters to Fort Sam Houston, Texas.

-- Activates modular BCTs at Fort Bliss, Texas; Fort Bragg, N.C.; Fort Knox, Ky.; and Fort Riley, Kan.

-- Creates a new medical hospital and research facility, the Walter Reed National Military Medical Center in Bethesda, Md., and builds a new 165-bed hospital at Fort Belvoir, Va.

Whether these changes are approved depends on actions by the BRAC commission, said Michael Wynne, assistant undersecretary of defense for acquisition, technology and logistics.

The commission, made up of former legislators and military experts, will forward its recommendations to the president after reviewing the Department of Defense recommendations. It must take action by Sept. 8. The president will then have until Sept. 23 to accept or reject the recommendations in their entirety. If accepted, Congress then has 45 days to reject the recommendations before they become binding.

Specific changes must begin within two years of the recommendation's acceptance, and must be complete within six years, without interrupting ongoing operations, Wynn said.

### **BRAC 2005: Commission Chairman Describes Panel's Role**

American Forces Press Service

Jim Garamone

May 17, 2005

WASHINGTON – The Defense Department's base realignment and closure recommendations are now in the hands of the nine-member commission that will make the final decisions. The Base Realignment and Closure Commission takes its independent role very seriously, said the BRAC chairman, and he vowed an "open and transparent" process.

Anthony Principi, the commission chairman, said closure and realignment decisions are tough. "These decisions will impact the lives of a great many Americans," he said during an interview. "By going out and visiting bases, by talking to community leaders, we can be that independent check."

Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld turned the list of recommendations over to the commission May 13. He recommended closing 33 major bases and realigning 29 other major bases. DoD officials said that with 318 major bases, this BRAC round would close about 10 percent of the stateside bases in DoD.

Rumsfeld's recommendations are based on the military value of installations measured against a force-structure plan for the next 20 years.

"This is going to be the most difficult (BRAC) round because it is very complex," the former Department of Veterans Affairs secretary said. "There are changes being made at one installation that impact many other installations. It's kind of like a daisy chain. We need to be careful if we make a decision contrary to the secretary of defense recommendation that will have an impact on several other locations, (and we) need to look at that carefully."

Principi stressed he wants all deliberations to be "open and transparent" and does not want the process to become politicized. "I want to ensure that decisions are based upon the criteria set out in the law and the force-structure plan, and not because of some political consideration," he said.

The BRAC commission will judge the recommendations using the same criteria that DoD officials used, the most important being military value. But there are other criteria, Principi said, and those include economic and environmental impacts on communities.

The commission chairman said he thinks his panel needs to look at the changes recommended to the National Guard and Reserve infrastructure. "I think that will have a major, major impact on the reserves and the Guard, and we need to look at that carefully," he said.

He said he believes this BRAC round has much more emphasis on the reserve components than previous rounds. "Obviously, this is a concern," he said. "We're a nation at war, the Guard and reserves are playing a more prominent role than

ever before, certainly (more important than) when I was in uniform. And now we're going to be closing a significant number of bases, and people are going to have to travel greater distances to undertake their weekend drills."

He said this might be easy to travel if the affected person is a pilot. But the men and women who generate the missions -- the crew chiefs, loadmasters, refuelers and weapons specialists -- are "going to have a tough time" getting to their new assignments.

He admitted that many in the Guard and reserves travel good distances to serve. Still, "if you grew up in that community and we're saying you have to drive 300 or 400 miles or fly even longer distances, that's going to have an impact on retention."

Principi went through a similar process as Veterans Affairs secretary. He changed the VA infrastructure to meet changes in demographics and health-care delivery of the 21st century. He said he learned firsthand the upheaval that takes place when a military base that has served the nation half a century or longer is closed.

"I'm very sensitive to it," he said. "That's not to say it's more important than national security. National security always has to have the highest priority. But we always must be mindful of economic impact."

Principi said the commissioners understand the need to transform the military. "The ability to engage in joint readiness operations and warfighting and capability is a move in the right direction," he said.

He added that he agrees with Rumsfeld's work

### **BRAC 2005: Navy, Marine Officials Support Recommendations**

American Forces Press Service

Donna Miles

May 17, 2005

WASHINGTON – The secretary of the Navy said today he's "confident" that base closures

and realignments recommended for the sea service are "more than sufficient to fully support the future Navy and Marine Corps force structure."

Gordon R. England, who also serves as acting deputy secretary of defense, told members of the Base Realignment and Closure Commission that the world, the country and the Navy have changed. In response, he said, the Navy must adapt its infrastructure to better meet this new environment.

That involves transforming the military so it's ready to meet current and future threats and demands eliminating excess infrastructure and consolidating operations, England told the commission.

To support this effort, the Defense Department has recommended closing nine major Navy bases and 46 smaller installations and realigning eight major Navy bases.

The recommended changes were based on saving defense dollars so they can be invested where they're needed and developing bases to support military readiness for the future, Anne Davis, deputy assistant secretary of the Navy, told the committee members.

The Navy's share of the BRAC recommendations, once implemented, would save \$1.5 billion a year.

Adm. Vern Clark, chief of naval operations, and Gen. Michael Hagee, commandant of the Marine Corps, joined England in supporting the BRAC proposals.

Clark told committee members he's never seen a previous BRAC process that focused so closely on joint operations. He said he is impressed by the concrete, objective analysis that went into formulating the recommendations.

Hagee said the proposed changes eliminate excess infrastructure but preserve critical ground and air training areas needed to support military readiness. The proposals also promote joint use of military training sites to maximize their effectiveness.

The decision-making behind the BRAC recommendations "has been a very difficult process for the department," England told the commission, particularly in light of the potential impact on communities that have shown strong support for their local bases.

The process involved "very, very difficult choices," Clark agreed. He specifically mentioned the recommendation to close Naval Submarine Base New London, in Connecticut, as the Navy reduces its attack submarine fleet.

Clark said the Navy has established strong relationships with many of the affected communities but had to face current circumstances and long-term requirements.

"We have too much structure," he told the commission. "In order for us to have the Navy that we need to have in the future, we have got to redirect resources to the recapitalization process."

BRAC decisions have to be long-term to accomplish their objectives, he said. "It's not about where I want to be next year. This question is, 'Where do I want to be in 20 years?'" he said.

The 2005 BRAC recommendations, he said, represent "the direction to get us where we think we need to be 20 years from now."

### **BRAC 2005: Recommendations 'Will Reshape Air Force'**

American Forces Press Service  
Gerry J. Gilmore  
May 17, 2005

WASHINGTON – Air Force recommendations provided to the 2005 Base Realignment and Closure Commission will reorganize that service, making it more capable to address threats to national security, the Air Force's top civilian told commission members here today. "We have presented to you a bold program that will reshape the Air Force, improving our ability to defend the nation and doing so with a smaller,

more efficient, effective and less-costly base infrastructure," Acting Air Force Secretary Michael L. Dominguez told commission Chairman Anthony J. Principi during a public hearing.

Dominguez, who was accompanied by Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. John P. Jumper and other senior officials, said the Air Force's BRAC recommendations would affect 115 of the 154 installations that were evaluated.

The Air Force has been reshaping itself into a leaner and more capable force since the end of the Cold War, Dominguez noted to committee members.

"And, we will become yet still smaller," Dominguez predicted, noting that technological advancements are providing more military punch while enabling the service to reduce its overall size.

For example, the Air Force deployed more than 1,000 B-17 Flying Fortress bombers "to drop 9,000 bombs to destroy one target" during World War II, Dominguez pointed out. Today, he noted, one modern B-2 Spirit bomber "can engage 80 targets with 80 bombs in all weather with greatly increased accuracy."

New aircraft slated to enter the Air Force inventory in the near future will be even more combat capable, Dominguez noted, and "will fly longer" between downtimes for scheduled maintenance.

The Air Force wants to consolidate, close or realign those installations that don't fit into the Air Expeditionary Force concept, Dominguez noted.

The AEF, he explained, "draws small, predefined pieces from different Air Force units and fashions those pieces into provisional, or expeditionary, squadrons and wings" that are deployed for overseas combat missions. The stateside bases would perform their normal operations while maintaining a high state of readiness to support wartime contingencies, he added.

The AEF concept also serves the needs of joint warfighters, Dominguez explained, noting its modularity "allows us to package our forces into combat units tailored specifically to the needs of the combatant commanders."

The Air Force's BRAC recommendations recognize the need to defend the American homeland from threats presented by terrorists or other potential enemies, Dominguez noted. Therefore his service's recommendations "preserve the air sovereignty alert mission," he said.

Dominguez said the Air Force values the partnership between its active, Guard and Reserve pilots and crewmembers, noting its BRAC recommendations will position the reserve components "for leading roles in a variety of emerging, in-demand, warfighting missions."

And, the fact the United States remains engaged in a global war against terrorism "makes this base realignment and closure an imperative," Dominguez said.

The Air Force recommends 10 base closures and 62 realignments, Jumper reported, noting the proposals "will 'right size' our force." As a result, he noted, Air Force fighter units will be reconfigured and upsized to 18 to 24 aircraft per squadron.

Air Force units will also be "placed in higher military-value settings" and located "closer to appropriate ranges for operational missions," Jumper noted.

The estimated net savings envisioned for the Air Force as a result of recommended base closure and realignment actions totals more than \$14 billion over 20 years, Jumper reported.

The Air Force arrived at its BRAC recommendations after making some "tough decisions," Jumper acknowledged to committee members.

However, "the important gains in war fighting effectiveness and the savings that we will be able to reinvest in combat capability outweigh those concerns," he said.

### National News Articles

#### **BRAC Questions Proposed Closure Of New London Facility**

Congress Daily

Megan Scully

May 18, 2005

Members of the Base Closure and Realignment Commission pressed Navy leaders Tuesday on their decision to shutter the New London Submarine base, the largest single base-closure recommendation on Defense Secretary Rumsfeld's list.

Commissioners quizzed officials on what alternatives they considered when weighing whether to close the Connecticut facility, a decision that would affect 8,500 military and civilian jobs. They also questioned how much closing the base would cost, and what it ultimately would save.

The decision comes as the Navy scales back its attack submarine force from about 100 subs several years ago to about 50 today. The diminishing fleet moved the Defense Department to suggest consolidating its sub bases, leaving the East Coast with Norfolk Naval Station, Va., and Kings Bay Naval Submarine Base, Ga.

"Where do we want to be in 20 years? What do I want this to look like?" Adm. Vernon Clark, chief of naval operations, asked the commission. "We believe this is the right choice."

Navy officials said they considered, among other options, moving the submarines stationed at Norfolk to Kings Bay and New London. However, such a move would result in few cost savings at Norfolk, an expansive installation that is home to 78 ships and 133 aircraft.

"If we moved all the subs out of Norfolk, what happens? We don't close the base, and we only marginally affect the public works on the base," Clark said. The Navy doesn't "save large resources until ... you close the fence line."

The Navy expects closing New London to cost \$679.9 million, which includes investing \$238 million to expand Kings Bay to accommodate roughly 3,200 personnel the service would relocate from Connecticut. Service officials, using "conservative" estimates, said they hope the closure eventually will save \$1.6 billion.

Commission Chairman Anthony Principi voiced concern that relocating personnel to Kings Bay might flood the local community and overwhelm schools, housing and roads. "The last time I was there, [there was] limited infrastructure on the base and in the county," Principi said. Navy officials countered that the base's commander worked with the commission and they concluded the base and community could handle the additional personnel.

"In all of our moves, we looked at both ends of this," said Navy Secretary Gordon England. Norfolk also would absorb some of the New London personnel.

Despite the advantages the Navy sees in closing the Connecticut facility, Clark conceded the decision to shut down New London was a difficult one, given the base's legacy as the birthplace of the military's submarine force.

"New London is a perfect example to raise when we talk about very, very difficult choices," he said. "We have a heritage in New London."

The Pentagon's recommendation, announced Friday, provoked an immediate backlash on Capitol Hill, where the Connecticut delegation decried the decision.

House Armed Services Chairman Hunter likewise said he opposes the decision because of the base's close proximity to Electric Boat's submarine manufacturing facility.

Connecticut Democratic Sens. Joseph Lieberman and Christopher Dodd, attended the hearing, as did Rep. Rob Simmons, R-Conn., whose district encompasses the base.

"We believe the answers that have been given on military value and the cost of closing and moving are not right," Lieberman told reporters as he left the hearing for a vote. The savings generated from closing New London have been "grossly overstated," he added.

Both senators said they were encouraged that several commissioners had asked the Navy questions about the New London recommendation.

### **Air Force might keep bases open after personnel moves**

Congress Daily  
Megan Scully  
May 18, 2005

Members of the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission aired concerns Tuesday that Pentagon recommendations to keep open drastically stripped-down Air Force bases could devastate local economies.

If the military does not technically shutter the facilities, the bases would be a "drain on host communities," blocking them from redeveloping the land for commercial purposes, BRAC Chairman Anthony Principi said during a public hearing Tuesday.

The military would have to spend Defense dollars "just to keep [the bases] warm," he added. Former Army Gen. James Hill likewise noted that it might be "better for these communities to close so [they] can begin to retool it, make something out of it."

Top service officials responded that several of the scaled-down facilities, including Alaska's Eielson Air Force Base and North Dakota's Grand Forks Air Force Base, would remain up and running largely for tests and training exercises, despite the loss of thousands of military and civilian personnel. The 5,500-acre

North Dakota base, for instance, is ideal for unmanned aerial vehicle training flights because of a lack of competing commercial traffic.

Eielson, too, will host large-scale training exercises, officials said.

Hangars at these installations can accommodate guest squadrons, providing the service with a more robust exercise capability, said Air Force Chief of Staff John Jumper.

Air Force officials assured commissioners that in many cases where a base is not technically closed, the service will turn over land -- including some airfields -- to surrounding communities.

"We are bringing back the fence line to be able to cede real property," said acting Air Force Secretary Michael Dominguez.

In addition to serving as training sites, the bases provide the Air Force with a "hedging strategy" if missions or force structure change dramatically, Dominguez said.

Tuesday's BRAC hearing focused on Air Force facilities, and members analyzed Defense Secretary Rumsfeld's list of basing recommendations released Friday, which includes 10 Air Force bases slated for closure and another 62 targeted for realignment. With personnel and equipment moving from one base to another, the list affects 115 of the 154 Air Force installations. If the recommendations are implemented, the Air Force expects to save more than \$2.6 billion in personnel and infrastructure through 2011, and another \$1.2 billion each year after that.

The commission has less than four months to evaluate the secretary's recommendations and submit its list to the White House by Sept. 8.

Commissioners still are waiting for the Pentagon to send thousands of pages of documents detailing the decisions and the reasoning behind them. The commission expected to see the documents Friday, though the Pentagon held them back because of concerns about classified

information. Commissioners grilled Rumsfeld and other Pentagon leaders on the lack of information Monday and brought the matter up again during today's hearing. The commission will have the information by the end of the week, Pentagon officials said.

### **Life After BRAC**

Congress Daily  
Mark Wegner  
May 18, 2005

Tough luck if your hometown base made the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission list.

Lobbyists and consultants say the track record for getting a local facility off the list released last week is not good. During previous rounds, only about 15 percent of bases on the list avoided closure or downsizing.

Consultant Stephen Sorett suggests that communities quit fighting BRAC and turn their focus to converting their military facilities and civilian employees to other uses. "If you get on the list, we're told the chance of getting off the list is very, very low -- like about 5 percent," he said.

Sorett, a partner with the government contracting firm of McKenna Long & Aldridge, has already signed up a number of corporate clients he says are hoping to pick up some of the civilian talent displaced by BRAC. Rather than allow individuals to scatter in search of new jobs, Sorett promotes a business model he calls the "transitional benefit corporation," which aims to take an entire working group or department involved in defense industry work and match it with firms that need the expertise.

"Who's out there in the marketplace that these people could offer their services to?" Sorett asked.

"If you can pick up a group in one fell swoop as a viable business component, that's worth a lot."

Under his model, Sorett said most of his clients will be business interests, but he said he plans to reach out to all affected communities on the BRAC list within 60 days. "What a community should do ... is recognize that DoD is intent on moving people off the ledger as soon as possible," Sorett said.

But most communities affected by BRAC -- and their elected representatives -- are unlikely to give up on their bases so quickly.

Many that worried about losing a facility in the 2005 BRAC round hired consultants two years ago. The smart ones lobbied Pentagon officials, made physical improvements and offered economic incentives that made their communities more military-friendly.

One veteran BRAC lobbyist said the intensity of lobbying on base closures has increased with the 2005 round, because it has been a decade since the last round -- and because of aggressive marketing.

"I know many, many practices with individuals that have built very lucrative practices that have gone from community to community saying, 'You're vulnerable,'" the source said.

It takes five of nine votes on the BRAC panel to remove a base, and the lobbyist said promising a client that any amount of lobbying would get a base off the list is wrong.

"I take this very seriously. I cannot and would not ... hold out hope that we could remove them from the list. That is a very hard thing to do," the lobbyist said, adding the decision to proceed rests with the client. "I have to take my cues from the community. How strongly do you feel about it? ... We may think we have a good argument, but the chances are not very good."

The best shot at getting off the list is to challenge the criteria and data the Pentagon used to make that decision. And while lobbyists are now scrubbing BRAC data for errors, it is never too early for a community to look beyond the commission's deadline.

"Come Sept. 8, accept the decision and move quickly to reuse mode," the lobbyist said

Defense lobbyist James Noone said many clients opt to pursue a two-track approach that also includes a "back-up" plan, which he said community leaders usually keep very low profile. "For public perception and other reasons, they cannot be seen as doing anything but focus on keeping their base off the list," he said.

Once a community accepts base closure as a fact, Noone said one of the first steps is to assess the economic, business and political state of play. The Defense Department will establish a local redevelopment authority, while environmental cleanup and determining who gets the property are often top issues.

Life after BRAC is filled with uncertainties -- and new opportunities.

The shuttered South Weymouth Naval Air Station, which sits about 15 miles south of Boston, was a victim of the 1995 BRAC round and has cost the local economy about \$60 million a year.

Bill Ryan, a regional director for LNR Property Corp., estimates his company's proposed redevelopment plan for Weymouth might result in \$300 million to \$1 billion of annual economic activity by 2017.

His company is seeking local approval to build 2,800 residential units and commercial space for biotechnology firms, retailers and others. He said about 70 percent of the land would remain open space.

Real estate -- as in "location, location, location" -- is usually a closed base's most valuable asset. But a successful redevelopment depends on a careful balance of environmental, economic and population issues. "It's probably more about 'markets, markets, markets,'" Ryan said. "You're talking about an expensive piece of real estate in one of the most crowded markets."

While Ryan predicts the proposed Weymouth redevelopment will be a winner, he notes two previous "reuse" plans were scrapped. If the current plan is adopted, it will take 12 years to fully complete -- 22 years after the base became a BRAC casualty.

"Life is different," Ryan said of BRAC. "People have to understand that [reality] after the base is decommissioned."

### **Rumsfeld accuses commission of divulging classified information**

Associated Press

May 16, 2005

US Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld charged Monday that an independent commission may have divulged classified information in a report that criticized the Pentagon's plans for withdrawing US forces from overseas bases. Rumsfeld said the Overseas Basing Commission was "unhelpful" and said that a review of the report determined "that some of the information may have been classified."

"Some of the information, we already know, that was posted on their Web site, has given concern to some of the countries we've been negotiating with, because it revealed our negotiating position in a way that we hadn't previously discussed with the other countries, which is notably unhelpful," Rumsfeld said.

Pentagon officials who reviewed the report feel that "some of the conclusions in there, some of the factual information, is not completely correct," he said.

After the Pentagon complained, the commission removed the report from its website.

Rumsfeld made the comments in testimony to a separate nine member commission that is reviewing a list of base closures and reorganizations that the Pentagon is proposing in the United States.

The Overseas Bases Commission had urged the Pentagon to slow down its planned withdrawal

of 70,000 troops from Germany and South Korea, warning it could handicap a force that is stretched already by operations in Iraq and Afghanistan.

The commission questioned the wisdom of bringing troops home before budgets had been approved to accommodate them at US bases, and before acquiring ships and planes needed to move US-based to trouble spots around the world on short notice.

At Monday's hearing, Rumsfeld was asked whether he was putting "the cart before the horse."

"Oh no, indeed," Rumsfeld said. "This is something that a great deal of thought has been given to."

The secretary said the US forces would be shifted from overseas bases to the United States in a way that takes into account the impact on communities in allied countries while preserving the greatest flexibility for US forces.

"And the question as to when, the timing depends on the negotiations with those countries, the costs and how we phase it in," he said.

"But we are absolutely persuaded that the work that's been done on global posture has been well done and that we know how we're proceeding," he said.

The Washington Post, which first reported the dispute between the Pentagon and the Overseas Basing Commission, cited an official involved in the discussions as saying the Pentagon's main complaint apparently was that the report identified Bulgaria and Romania as countries US troops would rotate through for training.

It said Barry Pavel, the Defense Department's director of strategy on global posture, sent an email to commission president Al Cornella warning of a possible investigation into violation of security classification procedures.

In a May 6 email quoted by the Post, Pavel wrote: "Re: Report. I'll be frank, I found it professionally disappointing; riddled with errors of fact, misperceptions, and misunderstandings; and divulging classified information that will damage our foreign relations and national security."

Bryan Whitman, a Pentagon spokesman said the commission had agreed to a requirement that it submit their report in advance for a security review.

"Their failure to do so appears to have resulted in unauthorized disclosure of classified information," he said.

"The department has initiated appropriate procedures of security breaches of this nature," he said, declining to specify the actions taken.

### **USAF Leaders Meet With BRAC Commission For First Time**

Defense News  
Bruce Rolfsen  
May 17, 2005

The U.S. Air Force's top leaders met today for the first time with the Base Realignment and Closure Commission during a May 17 hearing on Capitol Hill, and plans for closing and downsizing dozens of bases was topmost in the minds of commission members.

The commissioners' questions centered on the decisions to close Cannon Air Force Base, N.M., and Ellsworth Air Force Base, S.D., and strip 20 percent of the Air Force's flying bases of their aircraft while keeping the bases open

Commission Chairman Anthony Principi questioned why bases such as Eielson Air Force Base, Alaska, would be kept open with a "shell of a staff."

Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. John Jumper and acting Secretary of the Air Force Michael L. Dominguez said that bases such as Eielson and the Air Guard base at Duluth, Minn., would be kept open as host bases for exercises such as

Cope Thunder and Noble Eagle rotations. Other Air Guard and Air Force Reserve bases without aircraft would keep their support staff, such as civil engineers, to be available for expeditionary force deployments and respond to domestic emergencies.

Jumper said he understands the pain of the closure decisions.

"My dad was a commander at Cannon Air Force Base. It strikes close and personally to me," Jumper said.

Dominguez defended the closure and aircraft plans. "We will become a smaller, yet more capable Air Force," the secretary promised the nine-member commission.

The commissioners indicated they'd need a more detailed explanation before they pass judgment on the Air Force and Department of Defense proposals.

### **BRAC Threatens One-Third of Air National Guard Flying Units**

U.S. Newswire  
May 17, 2005

WASHINGTON -- Hundreds of the Air Force's most experienced aircrews and support personnel might soon be pushed out of the military as the nation struggles with securing the homeland while fighting the global war on terrorism.

That's the consequence of the Defense Department's Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) recommendation, which grounds one-third of the Air National Guard's 88 flying units.

The proposal strips all of the aircraft from 28 Air Guard units-most of which have been significant contributors to operations in Iraq, Afghanistan and elsewhere-without providing identifiable replacement planes or missions.

"This may signal the end of these units and the military service of people in them," said retired Brig. Gen. Stephen M. Koper, president of

NGAUS, a 45,000-member association that represents Army and Air National Guard officers on Capitol Hill.

"The recommendations do call for some support personnel to remain," he said. "But without aircraft to support, many will follow the aircrews and just leave the military. Many have deep roots in their community. They simply can't commute, in some cases, hundreds of miles to drill.

"Some of the most valuable assets in the nation's defense arsenal would then be gone for ever," he said.

This was among the messages General Koper shared in testimony this afternoon before the Senate Appropriations Defense Subcommittee.

"What we are seeing is the elimination of the Air Force's most cost-efficient flying units in the name of saving money and greater efficiency," he said. "The savings will be meager and it will come at the cost of further erosion of the connection between American citizens and those who defend them."

A review of available BRAC support documents reveals that Pentagon recommendations were rooted largely in criteria that ranked large, complex bases over the Air Guard's smaller but operationally less expensive facilities.

For example, ending flying operations at the Birmingham (Ala.) International Airport Air Guard Station, the Fort Smith (Ark.) Air Guard Station and the Capital (Ill.) Air Guard Station will save a combined total of \$8.8 million over 20 years.

By comparison, closing Cannon Air Force Base, N.M., an active- component installation, will save more than \$2.7 billion over the same span, according to Defense Department estimates.

And little or no consideration was given to the potential loss of highly qualified personnel or their connection with the surrounding community.

"The adjutants general could have spoken eloquently to these issues but they had no opportunity for such input in the BRAC process," General Koper said.

The Pentagon also finalized its BRAC recommendations without the benefit of the 2005 Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR), which will identify threats, develop strategies and allocate resources to combat those threats.

In testimony yesterday before BRAC Commission that will examine the Pentagon recommendations, Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld implied that the 2005 QDR- the first such comprehensive defense review since 9/11- was just another study.

"We hope the BRAC Commission and Congress will recognize the basic flaws in these recommendations as backwards defense planning that could bring harm to some of this nation's greatest defense assets," General Koper said.

### **BRAC commissioners worry about retention in guard, reserves**

Congress Daily  
Megan Scully  
May 17, 2005

Members of the Base Realignment and Closure Commission questioned Pentagon leaders Monday about their recommendation to consolidate National Guard and Reserve bases around the country, stating that such a move might exacerbate the force's recruitment and retention problems.

The decision, made as part of the 2005 base closure and realignment round, could strain some troops' ability to report for weekend drill duties, commission members told Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld and Joint Chiefs of Staff Chairman Richard Myers during a hearing on Capitol Hill.

"I really think you're going to have a serious problem," said former Rep. James Bilbray, D- Nev., one of nine BRAC commissioners.

Commission chairman Anthony Principi expressed similar concerns, but not all of the commissioners opposed the recommendations for the Reserve component. Retired Army Gen. James Hill called it a "monumental step forward."

After more than two years of analysis, the Pentagon announced Friday it wants to shutter around 400 National Guard and Reserve installations, including 211 Army National Guard bases and 176 Army Reserve facilities. Plans call for the military to consolidate those into 125 new Armed Forces Centers scattered around the country.

The Pentagon also wants to move aircraft out of 22 Air National Guard units, leaving highly trained pilots and aircraft technicians with other missions. The aircraft would be moved to other Guard units.

During testimony, Pentagon officials said the decisions were made after consulting adjutant generals around the country, who largely backed the consolidation plan.

On Friday, National Guard Bureau Chief Lt. Gen. Steven Blum said he supported the recommendations, and believed it could help boost new recruits if the centers are located in recruitment-rich communities.

"We ought not think of population as static," Rumsfeld said Monday.

The goal, department officials said, is to lengthen troops' commutes to Guard and Reserve bases by no more than 50 miles.

Myers conceded, however, that the support of Blum and other high-ranking reserve-component officers "does not mean it's going to sit well with everyone."

The Reserve Officers Association has said it is concerned about the Pentagon's recommendations, and fears that the impact on travel time to drilling stations could be much more dramatic than expected.

"By closing so many facilities, reservists and Guardsmen may be required to travel hundreds of miles to drill every month," the association said in a statement. "Many of these servicemen and women ... may choose to leave the military. The result could be a loss of skills and experience the military desperately needs."

Officials at the National Guard Association of the United States still are analyzing the BRAC list and discussing the recommendations with adjutant generals around the country, according to a source. The decision regarding the Air National Guard is particularly tricky for the organization, with one state gaining from another's loss.

The closure of National Guard bases could add fuel to talk of lawsuits in Illinois and other states, based on a provision of federal law that requires a governor's permission to close a Guard facility.

The Pentagon "will try to satisfy folks who feel they have a legal case," but similar attempts at blocking closures in the past have not held up, said Michael Wynne, the department's undersecretary for acquisition, logistics and technology.

Meanwhile, commissioners said they are still awaiting 10 volumes of information from the Pentagon, which were not delivered as expected on Friday because of concerns over classified information. Pentagon officials will send those volumes to the commission by the end of the week, officials said.

The commission will review the Pentagon's decision throughout the summer, then submit its own list to the White House by Sept. 8.

### **Local News Articles**

**BRAC: Officials play defense  
Pentagon defends alignment decision for  
GFAFB; N.D. officials push for UAVs**  
Grand Forks Herald (Grand Forks, ND)

Stephen J. Lee  
May 18, 2005

North Dakota's congressional delegation said Tuesday they have requested a briefing from Air Force officials to learn more about the plan to put UAVs, unmanned aerial vehicles, at Grand Forks Air Force Base once the KC-135 tankers are transferred.

Meanwhile Tuesday, in formal hearings in Washington, Air Force brass defended their recommendation to move the tankers from the base, cutting the military personnel by 80 percent, while leaving the base itself open as part of the sweeping Base Realignment and Closure round announced Friday.

Anthony Principi, the former Veterans Affairs secretary who is chairman of the nine-member independent panel reviewing the BRAC plans, told Air Force officials it seemed illogical to keep the base open when most of its people and equipment were being removed.

"I would think it's a drain on the host community," Principi said, according to an Associated Press report. It's the second consecutive day Principi has questioned the BRAC realignment plan for Grand Forks.

John Marshall, the Grand Forks attorney and businessman who has headed the community's base-saving effort for years, said he and others were surprised by Principi's quick focus on Grand Forks, and was not sure if that was good or bad news.

Of the 400 major military bases stateside, 33 are slated for closing and 29 others - of which Grand Forks is one - are on the list for realignment. Many realignments, as in the case of Grand Forks, amount to a downsizing. The idea is to save nearly \$50 billion in the next 20 years, according to the Pentagon.

Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld urged the BRAC panel Monday to not make any changes in the list released Friday, because even one move could unravel a complex plan to reshape America's military. However, many defense

analysts say this BRAC panel, made up of former military types and lawmakers, is more independent and experienced than former BRAC panels, and more likely to challenge Pentagon decisions.

'Hedging strategy'

BRAC Commissioner Harold W. Gehman Jr., a retired Navy admiral, also appeared skeptical of the Grand Forks BRAC listing. "You couldn't quite swallow that pill," he said.

However, Acting Air Force Secretary Michael Dominguez explained that the realignment decision in Grand Forks' case is a "hedging strategy."

"We are looking at decisions here that will last for many years," Dominguez said. "You can't find a better UAV location because of the lack of competing commercial traffic."

Air Force Chief of Staff John Jumper said Grand Forks also is a good fit for UAV missions because it is close to the Air National Guard base in Fargo.

Dominguez and Jumper said they considered four major factors in their decision to close 10 Air Force bases and realign 62 bases: war-fighting capability, future defense strategy, excess capacity and opportunities for joint capability.

"We have looked to the future for our mission and our infrastructure requirements, and these recommendations provide for an Air Force that is and will be capable of responding to any challenge, in any theater, at any time," the two said in a joint statement.

Realigning a base by creating excess space in it can be part of the overall plan to provide "surge" capacity within the military, an ability to move units and equipment more flexibly from place to place as situations demand, a Pentagon official told the BRAC panel Monday.

Unmanned opportunity

Sen. Kent Conrad, D-N.D., was at the BRAC hearing Tuesday. He earlier told the Herald that Jumper assured him that Grand Forks would get a UAV mission, and that such aircraft loom large in the Air Force's future.

Carrying video cameras, remote sensors or precision weapons, UAVs can fly fast, high and for a long time without a pilot on board, then return to base after a mission, driven by pilots at computers thousands of miles away. Two UAV models mentioned as possibilities for Grand Forks are the Global Hawk and the Predator.

Just a week ago, a Predator was credited with delivering the missile that killed a top terrorist in Iraq.

For months, Conrad, Sen. Byron Dorgan, D-N.D., and Rep. Earl Pomeroy, D.-N.D., have touted Grand Forks as a top spot for UAVs because of UND's aerospace research-driven plant and the proximity to the Canadian border. A separate plan to develop UAVs to patrol the border out of the U.S. Border Patrol's regional office in Grand Forks has been pushed by the congressional delegation. Funding for the plan was included in the homeland security bill passed in December.

The North Dakota congressional trio say they still are fighting to keep the tankers. "But the fact that the Pentagon's BRAC recommendation cited Grand Forks as a possible site for 'emerging' UAV missions is a great sign, and we need to learn more about those possibilities," the delegation said in a joint statement. "We hope that such a briefing will give us a better idea of what might be in store for the bases in Grand Forks and possibly Fargo, too, down the road."

Marshall said that about \$150,000 to \$160,000 remains of the \$750,000 the city of Grand Forks appropriated to the base retention effort in 2003, to be spent over three years. The money is spent on travel and on consultants, who include former Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. Ron Fogleman.

### **Arkansas delegation meets with BRAC chairman**

Arkansas News Bureau  
Alison Vekshin  
May 18, 2005

WASHINGTON -- The chairman of the commission that is reviewing proposed base closings listened but made no promises Tuesday to Arkansas lawmakers who asked him to reject deep changes proposed for the Air National Guard's 188th Fighter Wing in Fort Smith.

"I committed to them that I would look into their concerns and make an informed decision," Anthony Principi, the commission chairman, said after emerging from the meeting.

Sens. Mark Pryor and Blanche Lincoln, both Ark., and Reps. John Boozman, R-Rogers, Mike Ross, D-Prescott, and Vic Snyder, D-Little Rock, attended the 15-minute session held in Pryor's office.

The Fort Smith wing was targeted for reorganization by the Pentagon in recommendations announced on Friday. Principi heads the independent Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) Commission that began reviewing hundreds of recommendations this week.

At the meeting, the Arkansas lawmakers also promoted the Red River and Lone Star Army depots, which were recommended for closure.

"When members of Congress want to meet with me to talk about an issue, I'm more than willing to do that," said Principi, who served as secretary of veterans affairs in President Bush's first term.

"I learn in that process and hopefully it will lead to a better decision," he said.

Under the Pentagon proposal, the 188th Fighter Wing would lose 15 of its F-16s, with eight to be retired and seven to be transferred to an Air National Guard unit in Fresno, Calif.

The base would lose 78 of its about 280 full-time positions and its firefighting operations would be moved to Tulsa.

Most of the unit's 1,000 employees would remain, but their mission is unknown and Arkansas lawmakers are trying to divine the Pentagon's intentions.

Pryor said he and Boozman informed Principi about the benefits of the base, including its air space and its proximity to Fort Chaffee. Pryor said he handed Principi a packet of information on the fighter wing.

"What we were trying to do was to reiterate the excellent record the 188th has had for the last 50 years and make a case that that facility needs to go forward in the future," Boozman said.

"If the F-16s were going to be phased out over a period of time, we asked for advice as to how to proceed on getting a new mission," Boozman said. "He said that right now things were very tentative."

Pryor said Principi did not make any commitments.

"He kept going back to military value," Pryor said. "That's what the BRAC commission would focus on."

Military value is the main criteria the Pentagon considered in selecting bases for closure and realignment. It includes looking at cost, manpower, and the current and future mission capability. They also considered the availability of land, facilities and airspace.

Michael Dominguez, acting Air Force secretary, told the BRAC commission Tuesday that any Guard or Reserve spaces the commission deems surplus, "we're going to try and fill with emerging missions."

Those missions will be determined through consultation with Congress, governors and adjutant generals, he said.

The BRAC commission will review Rumsfeld's recommendations and submit its conclusions to President Bush no later than Sept. 8.

In all, the Air Force recommended 10 base closures and 62 realignments at a cost savings of \$2.5 billion by 2011.

### **A Guide For Monroe: Former Calif. Base, Local Post Have Similarities Could a San Francisco site be a blueprint for mixing historic and economic needs at Fort Monroe?**

Newport News Daily Press  
Bob Evans  
May 17, 2005

HAMPTON -- A 19th-century Army post with fantastic views of the bay, hundreds of buildings in various states of repair and National Historic Landmark status was put on the Pentagon's base closing list. In 1989.

Yet another went on the list Friday.

The earlier date involved The Presidio, an Army post near the Golden Gate Bridge and San Francisco Bay. It was established by Spain in 1776, officially became a U.S. Army post in 1850 and was one of the oldest active bases in the country when it closed in 1996.

Fort Monroe hit the Pentagon's closing list Friday. The fort, composed of hand-cut stones with a moat, once defended the Chesapeake Bay from intruders. It opened in 1823 and now has 3,500 military and civilian jobs that would be moved elsewhere, unless local politicians are able to persuade the Base Realignment and Closure Commission otherwise. Local historians say it's the third-oldest Army post in operation.

The Presidio was empty in 1996. Today, 2,400 people live there, and 2,000 people work at 150 businesses on the site, managed by The Presidio Trust, a nonprofit creation of Congress. It began work in 1998 and also handles hundreds of acres of scenic parkland and bayside overlooks.

It generates \$40 million a year in revenue to ensure preservation of the more than 469 buildings and 300 other features designated "historic."

The trust's work at The Presidio might provide a model -- or at least a guide -- for how Hampton can balance the interests of history and economics at Fort Monroe.

Politicians and government officials from Washington to Hampton don't want to talk about what might happen if the post closes, though they say they're confident that they can wring some positives out of the situation. For now, they're focused on saving the base, they say.

If the worst comes, "then we'll take a look at those alternatives," says Tom Gordy, chief of staff for Rep. Thelma Drake, R-Norfolk. Monroe sits in Drake's sprawling district.

Still, Gordy's seen the job that The Presidio Trust has done working with the old post in San Francisco, and he's impressed: "What a beautiful place that is."

Ron Sonenshine, spokesman for The Presidio Trust, says the organization is proud of its success so far.

"I think we're all really optimistic," he says. "We're not popping champagne corks, though."

Some fairly unusual circumstances have helped The Presidio get to this point, he says. "I don't know if it would work in many other communities."

Tim Ford of the National Association of Installation Developers -- a trade association for businesses that help turn old bases into viable, tax-generating real estate -- agrees.

"It's in San Francisco, right next to the Golden Gate Bridge," he says. "So some of the economics might not be available in other places."

Because of the location, "they were able to do some very select development," he says.

One example is the nearly finished filmmaking campus of George Lucas of "Star Wars" fame, a \$350 million effort that pays the trust \$6 million a year in rent, Sonenshine says. But many of the others are schools, small businesses and offices.

The Presidio also had a minimal environmental problem compared with most military bases -- and no significant level of buried ordnance.

Fort Monroe, on the other hand, is plagued with 1,300 underground sites where weapons are thought to be buried.

Creation of The Presidio Trust itself wasn't easy, either, Sonenshine says. Republicans intent on keeping the place from sucking up tax dollars indefinitely have to work with Democrats who emphasize the requirement to preserve the site's historic and natural beauty. In addition to proximity to the famous bridge, there's a 400-acre forest and park planted in the 1880s that's protected.

Not everyone is happy about what's happened. Local residents frequently complain about the overcommercialization of the park. One local neighborhood association opposes further commercial use, no matter how tasteful or well-hidden.

It took several years of congressional wrangling to create the trust and annual dogfights to secure the \$20 million to \$28 million a year that it receives from Congress to complete the task, Sonenshine says. By law, the subsidies stop in 2013.

It doesn't hurt that California's congressional delegation is large and influential and that presidential candidates desire the state's huge share of the Electoral College.

While the trust could manage without federal tax subsidies today, Sonenshine says, "there would be things that would not get done." There are still hundreds of buildings in need of repair.

"Historic buildings are very expensive to renovate," he says. "We really can't keep them empty. They'll fall down if they're not used."

The whole project would fall apart if the trust were subject to local real estate and business taxes, he says.

The starting point for The Presidio Trust was turning housing into cash flow, Sonenshine says, so it was lucky that there was base housing that people wanted to live in.

Fort Monroe has that. About 100 residences recently got a \$25 million face-lift, making them worth \$300,000 to \$2.5 million apiece if put in the civilian housing market, says Dan Hassett, regional vice president for Virtexco Inc., the company that did the work.

The base also finished an \$11 million upgrade to create a state-of-the-art fitness center in 2003. It boasts a marina and miles of beautiful beach and sits on one of the prettiest sites in Hampton Roads, real estate and political leaders say.

But it also costs about \$14 million just to maintain the historic structures so they're not lost, federal authorities say, and hundreds of buildings need repair or demolition.

All that sounds familiar to Sonenshine, who says that if Hampton wants to emulate The Presidio, it better start working with Congress.

"That's who we have to answer to," he says.

The Presidio, San Francisco

## HISTORY

Established by Spanish colonists in 1776 ("presidio" means "walled fort" in Spanish)

Was a U.S. Army base, 1850 to 1996

Became a National Historic Landmark district, 1962

## PROPERTY

1,491 acres; 500 of them wooded

768 structures, 469 of which are historic

280 native plant species, including 16 listed as "rare" or "endangered"

Contains a 300-acre historic planted forest dating to the 1880s

Showcases architectural styles from every major military construction period since 1848, along with Mission Revival style

28.5 miles of hiking, biking and nature trails

Has a golf course, bowling alley, campground, picnic sites, tennis courts, ball fields, and indoor swimming and gymnastics sites

Overlooks the Golden Gate Bridge and San Francisco Bay

## AFTER THE ARMY

Managed by The Presidio Trust, a nonprofit organization created by Congress in 1996 to manage the site in conjunction with the National Park Service (the Park Service handles only beachfront land)

Now home to 2,400 people in 1,000 households

150 businesses are on the site -- a mix of private, for-profit and nonprofit, including several private schools, shops, offices and a physical therapy clinic -- employing 2,000 people.

Source: The Presidio Trust

Fort Monroe, Hampton

## HISTORY

Established as a fort by English settlers in the early 1600s

The hand-cut stone fort was built from 1819 to 1834 and is the last remaining stone fort with a moat.

Location of Hygeia Hotel, the first Virginia-based tourist attraction, 1820

In the early days of the Civil War, Gen. Benjamin Butler, by declaring runaway slaves there "war contraband" -- began the emancipation process. The fort was also used as staging area for important Union Army campaigns in the war and as a prison for Jefferson Davis, president of the Confederacy, after his capture.

Became headquarters of Army Training and Doctrine Command in 1973

Named a National Historic Landmark in 1961

#### PROPERTY

570 acres, including several miles of beachfront

314 buildings, most with historic status

183 residences -- 111 for officers, 72 for enlisted personnel

Marina, fitness center, gazebo, bandshell, campus of TRADOC

Recently renovated \$11 million fitness center

#### ECONOMIC EFFECT

3,564 military, civilian Department of Defense and defense contractor employees

\$45 million a year

#### **BRAC head invited to check out fort's mission**

Congressmen: Pentagon number-crunchers don't understand fort's mission  
Independent (Holmdel, NJ)  
Sue M. Morgan

EATONTOWN — Two area congressmen are inviting the head of a federal commission created to determine the fate of military bases throughout the nation to look closer at Fort

Monmouth's service to soldiers in the field, before choosing to shut it down.

Three days after the U.S. Department of Defense announced that Fort Monmouth is one of 33 military installations nationwide recommended for shutting, U.S. Representatives Rush Holt (D-6th District) and Frank Pallone Jr. (D-12th District) are appealing to Anthony J. Principi, chairman of the Pentagon's Base Closing and Realignment Commission (BRAC), to visit the threatened base and experience its mission firsthand.

The Defense Department has made a "terrible error in recommending the closure" of Fort Monmouth, described as a "critical military installation" during wartime, Holt and Pallone wrote in the letter distributed following Monday morning's meeting of the Save Our Fort Committee, an advocacy group co-chaired by both congressmen.

Because the nine BRAC commissioners, none of whom are from New Jersey, are now entrusted by the Defense Department to choose which if any of the 33 targeted bases are removed from the Pentagon's list of recommendations, public officials must now grab their attention, Holt explained.

Unlike the "specific, limited criteria" used by the Pentagon in recommending that Fort Monmouth be shut down and its operations relocated mainly to the Aberdeen Proving Ground (APG) in Aberdeen, Maryland, the BRAC commission looks at each targeted installation in the context of "national security [and] homeland security," he said.

Contingents of BRAC commissioners are required to visit all of the bases suggested for closing this summer, prior to Sept. 8 when the commissioners' final listing of recommended base closings and realignments is submitted to President George W. Bush, Pallone noted.

"We will spend the next three months fighting this battle," he said.

In their correspondence to Principi, a California resident, both congressmen offered to show him the U.S. Army's Command, Control, Communications, Computers, Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (C4ISR) systems created by Fort Monmouth scientists and engineers.

"Several of the most technologically advanced systems currently being used today in Operation Iraqi Freedom, Enduring Freedom and Homeland Defense were developed at Fort Monmouth, and are playing a direct and major role in helping our troops in the global war on terror," Holt and Pallone wrote.

"We would be honored to show these to you personally at Fort Monmouth," the congressmen added.

Soldiers in both Iraq and Afghanistan are "relying on Fort Monmouth for ground-breaking and timely innovations to keep them safe and effective," Holt and Pallone wrote.

If Fort Monmouth is closed, the safety and effectiveness of those soldiers and the nation would be compromised, they added.

Joined by Mayors Gerald Tarantolo, Ann Y. McNamara and Maria Gatta, who lead the fort's three host communities, Eatontown, Tinton Falls and Oceanport respectively, Holt and Pallone contended that the Pentagon had ignored the fort's "military value" and its ability to "cross-service" other branches of the military besides the U.S. Army.

Frank Muzzi, a fort contractor who also co-chairs the Patriot's Alliance, another advocacy group, also joined in to back up the congressmen as they moved ahead with their battle to save the base from closure.

Regardless of party affiliation, public officials from the federal, state, county and municipal levels must endeavor to demonstrate Fort Monmouth's research and development capabilities to Principi and other BRAC commissioners, Pallone said.

"Numbers crunchers" inside the Pentagon who have determined that the Defense Department can save \$143 million per year over six years by moving Fort Monmouth's operations to APG at a cost of \$822 million do not understand the local base's mission, he continued.

"The nature of what is done here is a little more esoteric and not as well known at the Pentagon," Pallone said, noting that the U.S. Army has recommended that Fort Monmouth remain open.

The Defense Department has "overestimated the savings to be garnered by moving the facility," Holt and Pallone wrote to Principi.

The Defense Department has argued that the cost of living, health insurance and utilities will be significantly less in Aberdeen, located about an hour outside of Baltimore, than they would be in Monmouth County, Muzzi noted.

Yet it is unlikely that the cost of living would be that much lower in Aberdeen, which is located near Washington, D.C., Pallone pointed out.

"That's not exactly a low-cost area," he said.

By predicting that 75 to 80 percent of the more than 5,000 civilians now employed at Fort Monmouth would relocate to Maryland, the Pentagon has already shown "that they don't understand the nature of their workforce," Holt said.

Public officials and other Fort Monmouth supporters need to impress upon Principi and the BRAC commissioners that the majority of the civilian workforce will refuse to relocate and uproot their families, he continued.

As a result, new civilian scientists and engineers possessing the knowledge now available at Fort Monmouth would have to be recruited for APG, Holt said.

By the time those workers were up to speed on the advanced technologies, soldiers in the field could be put at risk, he continued.

“[Fort Monmouth] has been the center of electronics, telecommunications, signals, the kind of thing that has provided a level of support and a level of expertise that would be very hard to duplicate elsewhere,” Holt said.

The Pentagon has also “failed to calculate the jointness Fort Monmouth has achieved with nearby military facilities at Fort Dix, Lakehurst, McGuire and Earle,” both congressmen wrote to Principi.

The first three military installations, located contiguously in Burlington and Ocean counties, have been recommended for realignment into a central operation to serve all branches of the service, Pallone pointed out.

However, the Pentagon has ignored Fort Monmouth’s attempts at “cross-servicing” all branches of the military, he added.

“[The Pentagon] is looking at Fort Dix and Lakehurst and saying they want cross-servicing there,” Pallone said. “We’re doing cross-servicing here.”

Although economic impact on the host communities is lower on the list of criteria used by the Pentagon to evaluate bases for closure or restructuring, all three mayors emphasized that they will rally residents to save the installation.

“Fort Monmouth is a beloved institution in Tinton Falls,” said McNamara, who noted that “every single [resident] feels it would be a loss to see the fort close.”

The results of a study, funded by the state Department of Community Affairs, on the impact of a possible fort closing on the three host communities as well as upon neighboring Little Silver and Shrewsbury are expected to be released by the end of the month, Tarantolo said.

About 25 percent of Fort Monmouth is physically located in Oceanport, a scenario that has residents there showing “tremendous support” to keep the base open, Gatta said.

“Everyone is looking to help. Everyone is doing their part,” she said.

No date is set yet for Principi, who is vice president of Pfizer Inc., to visit Fort Monmouth, which if closed, would take about two to six years to dismantle, both congressmen said.

## **Local Leaders Begin Brac Battle**

KSAT (San Antonio, TX)

May 17, 2005

SAN ANTONIO -- Calling it the first inning of a baseball game, local leaders traveled to Washington, D.C. on Tuesday to pitch San Antonio's military bases that are proposed to be closed or realigned.

The San Antonio Military Missions Task Force plans to discuss and analyze the recommendations and attend the first round of base closure hearings.

"We're going to find out why the areas that were put on the closure list are on the closure list," said San Antonio City Councilman Carroll Schubert, a member of the task force.

"Hopefully, we'll be able to sit down and meet with some of those BRAC commissioners, along with some of the BRAC staffers," said Bexar County Commissioner Lyle Larson, also a task force member.

Among the recommendations proposed by the Pentagon include ending military missions at Brooks City-Base and realigning Wilford Hall Medical Center.

Members said the goal of the trip is to meet with congressional leaders and come up with a clear strategy for defending Brooks and Wilford Hall.

"What we want to do now is make sure we're dealing with good information," Schubert said.

## **Navy: Sub Base's Military Value Low**

### **But Lawmakers, Markowicz Say Pentagon Plan Can't Be Justified**

The Day (New London, CT)

Ted Mann

MAY 18, 2005

Washington — U.S Navy officials offered their explanation Tuesday for the recommendation to close the Naval Submarine Base in Groton: It is not as valuable to the military as its counterparts in the Southeast.

With two other submarine bases on this coast — at Norfolk, Va., and Kings Bay, Ga. — and what Secretary of the Navy Gordon England called an excess of infrastructure, the Groton base would be worth more to the military if it were shut down, they said.

The second full day of hearings before the Base Realignment and Closure Commission offered the defenders of the sub base — including U.S. Sens. Christopher J. Dodd and Joseph Lieberman and U.S. Rep. Rob Simmons, R-2nd District — their first chance to hear the Navy's explanation for its recommendation to close the base, which stunned politicians and civic boosters alike when it was announced last week.

They didn't like what they heard.

England and his deputy, Anne Rathmell Davis, said the Groton base had come in far behind its competitors in a ranking of military value, and that its vessels, sailors and school should be absorbed into the larger bases in the Southeast.

But Simmons and John C. Markowicz, the retired naval officer who heads up the Subbase Realignment Coalition, ticked off a list of what they called inconsistencies and missing answers in the military's justification of its plan.

Those ranged from lowballing the cost of cleaning up decades' worth of pollution at the base, which would drastically affect how much the Navy will save by closing the base, Markowicz said, to the fact that the military may have to spend more than \$200 million to accommodate the submarines and staff that

would travel to the Kings Bay base under the Navy plan.

The Connecticut congressional delegation and Markowicz saved their sharpest skepticism for the assertion that Groton's base is less valuable for military purposes, a position Markowicz called inexplicable and which left Simmons thumping out a rudimentary map on a hallway wall to demonstrate to a throng of reporters how much closer subs based in Connecticut would be to any possible military threat in Asia.

Lieberman, who sits on the Senate Armed Services Committee, said he was encouraged by what he saw as the commission's interest in the base, and said the Connecticut delegation was planning to lobby vigorously to dispute the Navy's assertions that it would save some \$1.58 billion by closing the facility in Groton and redistributing its assets to Norfolk and Kings Bay.

“Obviously, we believe the answers that were given, both on military value and on the cost of closing and moving, are not right,” Lieberman said.

When they see more detailed analysis of the recommendations later this week, the senator said, “we intend very aggressively to go over the data and cross-examine the people” who made the closure decision.

The proposed job loss of 8,586 military employees, not to mention the emotional hit to Groton, which would lose its self-anointed status as “submarine capital of the world,” clearly weighed on naval officials, too.

“New London is a perfect example to raise when talking about very, very difficult choices,” said Adm. Vern Clark, the chief of naval operations.

Clark was once stationed in the city for two years, he told the commission, adding that the military and its host communities “establish personal relationships. This is difficult.”

But the submarine force has shrunk, he noted, from about 100 vessels years ago to a little more than half that today.

With three major bases on the East Coast, as well as facilities on the Pacific at Pearl Harbor and Puget Sound, Wash., the sub force must contract, he said.

“We've got too much structure,” Clark said.

But that sounded like a contradiction in terms to members of Connecticut's delegation, who noted that the \$679 million the Navy expects to spend closing the Groton base includes some \$238 million for additions to the Kings Bay facility, including the construction of new piers.

“If there's excess structure,” Simmons said, “why are we investing in new structure?”

The explanation of the cost came after a question from BRAC Chairman Anthony J. Principi, who said the commission will have to take into account not only the effect of base closures on communities — clearly the focus for Connecticut, which would lose more jobs under the proposed closures than any other state in the nation — but also the effect of job gains from closures and realignments elsewhere.

“One of the factors we have to consider is the ability of receiving institutions, both on the base and in the surrounding community, to support” new residents and installations, Principi said.

Such questions were cause for optimism, said Dodd and Lieberman, as they departed the hearing for a vote in the Senate.

But there was plenty of discouraging information, too, perhaps nothing more than the presentation by Davis, the Navy's deputy secretary, who said that the sub base had come in 12th out of 16 bases in a ranking of overall military value.

Officials determined that “both Kings Bay and Norfolk had a significantly higher military value than New London did,” Davis said.

That prompted a question from retired Air Force Gen. Lloyd W. “Fig” Newton, a Connecticut executive added to the commission at the last minute, in a move thought to be a coup for the state.

“Was it that drastic a difference?” Newton asked. “Were we close?”

In response, Davis said the “real breaking point” was a base's ability to serve multiple roles and connect with different branches and functions of the armed forces, a quality for which the BRAC process has its own word: “jointness.”

“Never before has a BRAC had this kind of focus on jointness,” Clark told the commission earlier in the afternoon. “It was a key attribute from the very beginning.”

Cost was always a factor, too, as in the Navy's rejection of the idea of shifting Norfolk's submarines to New London, which Clark said was decided against because the presence of above-surface vessels at the Virginia base would keep it from being closed, and thus prevent significant savings for the military.

But Markowicz, Simmons and the others said some attributes of the base seemed to have been barely considered, such as the so-called synergy provided by the base's close proximity to both Electric Boat, the submarine manufacturer that sits just down river from the base, and the submarine school, which went largely unmentioned in the hearing.

Simmons dismissed the focus on mixed uses, noting that it would likely be impossible for a base like Groton's to mirror the multi-functionality of a base like that in Norfolk.

“If you have a large base with lots of real estate around it, you can accommodate multi-uses, but the logic of that is that in 30 or 40 years we'll have one military base in America,” he said. “You can't have extraordinary multi-uses on a piece of property that's 700 acres. But you can have the best damn sub-surface uses in the country or the world on a piece of property that size. So the question is, is it a fair analysis to

apply that logic? We're going to look into that logic."

The congressman has also signed on as a co-sponsor of an amendment that would put off the entire BRAC process for two years, said his chief of staff, Todd Mitchell. The amendment is to be offered today, at a mark-up session on a defense authorization bill in the House Armed Services Committee.

Meanwhile, the lawmakers, who said on Friday that they would demand a justification from Navy officials of the closure recommendation, had their answer: They, if not the commission, think the future is elsewhere.

"It's not where do I want to be next year," Clark said at one point, explaining how the officials reached their decision. "The question is, where do I want to be in 20 years? What do I want this to look like? And to get there, you've got to start.

"And this, we believe, is the right place."

### **Navy defends recommendation to close Groton submarine base**

Associated Press State and Regional  
Lolita C. Baldor  
May 18, 2005

Navy leaders defended their recommendation to close the submarine base in Groton, Conn., under pointed questioning Tuesday from members of the commission appointed to review proposed military base closings.

The attention given to the Groton base by members of the Base Realignment and Closure Commission sparked some hope among Connecticut Congress members, who are preparing to fight to get the facility off the closure list.

During a hearing Tuesday, commission members peppered Navy Secretary Gordon England and Chief of Naval Operations Vern Clark with questions about the costs of closing the submarine base, cleaning up the pollution

and moving personnel and ships to existing shipyards in Kings Bay, Ga., and Norfolk, Va.

"One of the factors we have to consider is the ability of the receiving installation, both on the military base of Kings Bay as well as in the community, to support the increased personnel, mission, dependents that'll be moving into that area," said commission chairman Anthony Principi. "I haven't been to Kings Bay in quite some time, but the last time I was there it certainly appeared to me that they had limited infrastructure on Kings Bay."

England said it would cost \$238 million to make improvements to piers and housing and health care facilities in Kings Bay.

Clark added that the decision on the Groton facility, which is named Naval Submarine Base New London, was difficult, even on a personal level.

"We have a heritage in New London," said Clark, who was stationed there for two years. But, he added, "we've got too much structure. In order for us to have the Navy that we need to have in the future, we have got to redirect resources."

Navy officials said that as the submarine fleet decreases - from more than 100 to a new target of about 41 submarines - they decided to retain just two facilities on each coast. And then they looked at where there was room for growth.

Timely cost savings were also a key factor. The Navy said it would save about \$200 million a year over the next 20 years by closing the Groton base. The cost of shutting down the base and shifting personnel and equipment to Georgia and Virginia, the Navy said, would cost \$679 million.

"We're looking for a payoff as fast as we can get it," said Clark, adding that moving ships out of Norfolk would save little money.

Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Navy Anne Rathmell, who headed the Navy's base closure effort, said the Virginia and Georgia bases

scored higher in military value and had a greater capacity for expansion. She also said the Norfolk and Kings Bay bases have several functions, including the presence of surface ships, while Groton is solely a submarine base.

Sen. Christopher Dodd, D-Conn., said it was telling that every member of the Base Realignment and Closure Commission had questions and concerns about the proposed closure of the Groton base.

Dodd and Sen. Joe Lieberman, D-Conn., sat through much of the Navy's briefing, and left saying they did not think officials made their case.

"They grossly overstated the savings," Lieberman said.

Dodd questioned the Navy's estimate that environmental cleanup at the base would cost \$29 million.

"If you think it's going to cost \$29 million for cleanup, you're living in Disneyland," Dodd said.

The Pentagon delivered its biggest blow to Connecticut, recommending the shutdown of four military facilities, including the Groton base. The decision would slash nearly 8,600 jobs - more than in any other state. Most would come from the base in Groton, which also affects residents in Rhode Island.

The three other Connecticut facilities slated for closure are the Sgt. Libby U.S. Army Reserve Center in New Haven, Turner U.S. Army Reserve Center in Fairfield and U.S. Army Reserve Center Maintenance Support Facility in Middletown.

Nationwide, the Navy proposed closing nine major bases and 46 minor bases, and realigning or shrinking eight bases. Overall the Pentagon seeks to save \$48.8 billion over 20 years by shutting down bases deemed inefficient and promoting cooperation among the four armed service branches.

### *Opinions/ Editorials*

#### **Good news and bad news on BRAC**

Desert Dispatch (Barstow, CA)

John D. Bennett

May 17, 2005

The first round of recommendations from the Base Realignment and Closure committee spared the Barstow area any major blows, but we did not emerge unscathed. The recommendation of realignment for the Marine Corps Logistics Base means the potential loss of more than 400 jobs.

This number is far from the worst that could have happened, but does represent 24 percent of the MCLB workforce of 1,720. Barstow's economic base is approximately 12,000 jobs, as Patricia Morris, assistant to the Barstow city manager, pointed out in an article by Kelly Donovan on Saturday. She added that the loss of the MCLB jobs could also result in a loss of nearly 400 additional jobs at companies that do business with the base or its workers.

Fort Irwin was spared inclusion on the list, but it was also not included on the list of bases slated for expansion.

As it turns out, my hometown of Ridgecrest is one of the communities that may benefit from realignment. The China Lake Naval Air Weapons Station near Ridgecrest is slated to gain nearly 2,500 jobs if the current recommendations are followed.

Their success can be tied directly to the efforts of the China Lake Defense Alliance, who have been lobbying for the base since 1992. They were able to convince Pentagon officials of the military importance of China Lake.

The Base Realignment and Closure Commission has until Sept. 8 to review recommendations on the list and make any changes they wish before forwarding the list to President Bush for approval or veto on Nov. 7. Congress then has 45 days to accept or reject the recommendations without making any changes.

DCN: 9805

The commission itself has the sole power to make changes to the list, the President and Congress can only accept or reject the entire list.

Anyone wishing to make comments on the BRAC recommendations can write to the commission at: Chairman Anthony Principi  
Base Realignment and Closure Commission,  
2521 S. Clark St., Arlington, VA 22202.

The commission will only be considering the military value of the bases in their decision-making, not the possible economic impact to affected communities.

**Additional Notes**