



CITIZENS CONCERNED ABOUT JET NOISE Inc
1060 Laskin Road, Suite 12B, Virginia Beach, VA 23451-6365

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April 21, 2005

The Honorable General Lloyd Warren Newton, USAF (Ret.)
Secretary of Defense
1000 Defense Pentagon
Washington, D.C. 20301-1000

Re: 2005 BRAC

Dear General Newton,

Citizens Concerned About Jet Noise (CCAJN) is a Hampton Roads, Virginia citizen action group formed more than seven years ago for the purpose of seeking reasonable and responsible solutions to the severe adverse environmental impacts stemming from aircraft operations at NAS Oceana and NALF Fentress. CCAJN has constructively and steadfastly engaged the Navy, as well as local elected officials, to achieve specific improvements for residents living in the high noise zones.

CCAJN respectfully requests the Defense Base Realignment and Closure Commission give serious consideration to realigning NAS Oceana during the base realignment and closure (BRAC) process. Specifically, CCAJN calls upon you to credibly examine the significant advantages of home-basing F/A-18 fighter aircraft at one or more aviation-capable military facilities on the East Coast and realigning Oceana for other military operations.

CCAJN advances this proposal as an immediate consequence of a number of recent events which have undermined the basis upon which a decision was made to site most of the F/A-18 E/F Super Hornets at Oceana, events we believe that place the long-term future viability of NAS Oceana as a master jet base in jeopardy. These events include:

Encroachment: A continuing deterioration in the long standing pattern by the Virginia Beach Council of allowing residential encroachment on NAS Oceana – despite concerns raised by the Navy. During current local Joint Land Use Study (JLUS) deliberations, the Council has continued to refuse to fully respect DOD concerns and its community planning guidelines regarding new residential construction in the 65+ dB high noise zones surrounding military airfields – among a range of other issues.

The Council's actions clearly demonstrate that it will continue to permit future encroachment against Navy objections as councils have repeatedly done for decades. Nobody should be misled by this City Council (or likely any Council in the future), which has been and is still manipulated by real estate and developer special interests. It is clear it will lapse into past habits should the pressure of closure or realignment be removed - despite any weak pledges that it may give at the moment. A realignment of Oceana to be used for alternative military operations would render the encroachment issue moot.

Responsible Dissentis the True Sound of Freedom

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Jet Noise: It was recently reported in the Virginian-Pilot that the Super Hornet aircraft, which have already begun to arrive at NAS Oceana, are 5-27 dB louder than the F-14 Tomcats that they will replace. Virginia Beach is the largest city in the state of Virginia, population-wise, and growing rapidly; NAS Oceana sits smack in the middle of this population center. Even with the planned reduction in the number of annual flight operations at Oceana, Super Hornet single event noise levels will affect thousands of residents and will make fighter aircraft training and operations even more highly intrusive, unhealthy, and disruptive. Additionally, it has been reported that the Joint Strike Fighter, currently programmed to replace the Super Hornet within the next decade or so is reputed to be even louder than the Super Hornet.

Realignment would provide relief both for the Navy, practicing in a less restrictive environment, and of course for the thousands upon thousands of adversely affected residents in Virginia Beach and Chesapeake.

Jet Noise Lawsuit: The Navy now finds itself a defendant in a costly federal lawsuit brought by individual homeowners. Whatever the outcome of that case, there will very likely be a second round of lawsuits after more of the Super Hornets have arrived – and then again, a likely third round when the Joint Strike Fighter arrives.

Realignment could and likely would reduce potential exposure and damages stemming from the existing lawsuit and obviate exposure from potential future lawsuits.

The OLF: Regrettably, the new OLF proposed for Washington County, North Carolina, has run into very tough sledding in the courts and in communities throughout North Carolina. CCAJN believes, along with the Navy, that the new OLF is an absolute minimum requirement to justify the introduction of Super Hornet operations in Hampton Roads.

Indeed, the construction and operation of an OLF – which would remove much of the environmental impact from this area – was an essential element of CCAJN's support for the 8-2 split of Super Hornet squadrons between Oceana and MCAS Cherry Point.

Unfortunately, the prospect for the new outlying field has dimmed recently and there has been no visible support for the field from Hampton Roads local political bodies.

For these reasons, and others, which CCAJN would be pleased to present during the 2005 BRAC process, CCAJN requests that you seriously consider a realignment scenario for NAS Oceana as an integral part of your deliberation.

With Best Regards, I am,

Kimberly Johnson
Kimberly Johnson
CCAJO Chairwoman

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