



STATE OF FLORIDA
DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY AFFAIRS
"Dedicated to making Florida a better place to call home"

JEB BUSH
Governor

THADDEUS L. COHEN, AIA
Secretary

August 23, 2005

The Honorable Anthony J. Principi
Chairman
BRAC Commission
2521 South Clark Street, Suite 600
Arlington, VA 22202

Dear Chairman Principi:

History tells us that there are no coastal or inland locations in the eastern or southern United States immune to hurricane impacts. The northeastern coast of Florida has been the least vulnerable to hurricane hazards when compared to the rest of Florida since reliable hurricane records began in 1851. When considering location, hurricane history, and computer modeling of hurricane hazards, Oceana Naval Air Base in southeast Virginia is more prone to storm surge from landfalling hurricanes when compared to Cecil Field Naval Air Base. Storm surge is historically one of the most damaging hazards associated with landfalling hurricanes. The storm surge model used by the National Hurricane Center tells us that Oceana Naval Air Station in southeast Virginia is prone to isolation from storm surge flooding if a major hurricane impacted the region.

Northeast Florida has experienced two direct impacts from landfalling hurricanes during the past century - hurricanes David (1979, Category 1) and Dora (1964, Category 2). Southeast Virginia was impacted by hurricanes Isabel (2003), Hazel (1954), and the 1933 Chesapeake Bay hurricane. Considering the relatively small amount of historical hurricane data available, the calculated hurricane return periods from the National Hurricane Center, and the comparative vulnerability to storm surge, there is not a significantly greater risk posed by landfalling hurricanes at Cecil Field Naval Air Station than at Oceana Naval Air Station.

Florida's State Emergency Response Team has repeatedly demonstrated its commitment to assist the rapid restoration of critical infrastructure as soon as weather conditions improve in the hours following a hurricane landfall. A critical element of response and recovery operations during the 5 hurricane landfalls that Florida has experienced between August 2004 and July 2005 is the Florida National Guard.

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The Florida National Guard is based in St. Augustine, or just to the southeast of Cecil Field Naval Air Station. The close proximity of the Florida National Guard's assets and personnel to Cecil Field would significantly enhance the response and recovery operations in this region in the event of a landfalling hurricane or tropical storm.

I certify that the information contained in this submission to the BRAC Commission is accurate and complete to the best of my knowledge and belief as required by Section 2905 of the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Act of 1990.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ben Nelson".

W. Craig Fugate, Director
Ben Nelson, State Meteorologist
Florida Division of Emergency Management

WCF / bn

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