

JUL 19 2005

Received

Honorable Anthony J. Principi  
Chairman, Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission  
2521 S. Clark St., Ste. 600  
Arlington, VA 22202

Dear Mr. Principi:

I am writing to you to express my concerns with the integrity of the Base Closure and Realignment Process (BRAC). The confidence of the American public in the process, and that of the decisions on individual military installations, relies on the accuracy of the data used by the various services as well as the validity of the calculations and comparisons made using this data. I am concerned about the validity of the data used in the evaluation of Naval Air Station Brunswick, Portsmouth Naval Shipyard and the Defense Finance and Accounting Service center at Limestone, Maine.

Naval Air Station Brunswick (NASB) is the only active duty Department of Defense airfield remaining in the Northeast United States. Its strategic location adjacent to shipping routes and aircraft coming from Europe, the Mediterranean, and the Middle East, makes it a vital link in our homeland defense, surveillance, and security strategy.

It is clear that in calculating the savings of closing NASB, the Department of the Navy was intellectually dishonest in not acknowledging that the savings in maintenance positions by moving the P-3 Wing to Jacksonville will also be realized by replacement of the P-3 with the MMA and its maintenance contract. Also not stated was the infrastructure cost needed at Jacksonville to house both airframes and families.

One of Brunswick's major selling points is its strategic location. Patrol flights from Jacksonville will cost an additional \$50,000 per mission given its remote location. Other NASB advantages include its new runways and tower and the \$34 million hanger that is the only one in the Navy large enough to accommodate the next generation of surveillance aircraft and an abundance of unencumbered air space, to include approach and departure flight paths over adjacent open ocean, which are optimal for flight security as well as the safe conduct of operations involving live weapons.

"Portsmouth Naval Shipyard (PNS) consistently and superbly performs its mission while establishing a phenomenal record of cost, schedule, quality and safety performance." That assessment was offered on May 12, 2005 by Admiral V. E. Clark, Chief of Naval Operations.

While the Navy analysis concludes that excess capacity exists for nuclear ship maintenance, PNS is the most efficient shipyard in terms of cost and schedule and is, therefore, not the capacity that needs to be cut. Consider the following points:

a. PNS is saving \$75 million per Engineered Refueling Overhaul (ERO) and \$20 million per Depot Modernization Period (DMP) for the American taxpayer.

b. PNS returns operational time to the Combatant Commander by completing Engineered Refueling Overhauls (ERO) six (6) months sooner and Depot Modernization Periods (DMP) three (3) months sooner.

c. PNS has achieved their Net Operating Result goals for seven (7) consecutive years, returning \$31 million to the Navy and covering losses at other shipyards.

Your commission must answer the following question about the proposed consolidation of the DFAS center at Limestone. Will the quality of work and the cost of operation be greater or less under the proposed DOD consolidation?

According to DOD records, the square foot cost of operations at the facilities scheduled for expansion – Denver (\$9.15), Columbus (\$8.27) and Indianapolis (#11.11) – is considerably higher than the cost at Limestone (\$4.39). In addition, locality pay is lower for Limestone and other rural areas than in the cities scheduled for expansion.

As for quality, Limestone has grown and been given expanded responsibility because it was a low-cost, high-accuracy center. It has won government awards for its service and two years ago received a \$6 million expansion contract.

Please note that I have avoided basing my letter on regional economic value but rather have focused on the validity of the Department of Defense's data and the conclusions drawn from that data. Clearly the Navy's case for realignment of NASB and closure of PNS and the consolidation of DFAS activities has not been validated.

I challenge you and the Commission to make the right decision for America and not to accept the Navy recommendations on these two installations.

Sincerely,

Robert J. Inghly  
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