



DEPUTY SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
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WASHINGTON, DC 20301-1010

May 27, 2005

The Honorable John Warner, Chairman
Committee on Armed Services
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510-6060

Mr. Chairman
Dear Chairman Warner:

As a follow up to our phone conversation yesterday and your correspondence of May 26, this letter outlines the manner in which DoD is meeting the requirements of the law governing the transparency of the BRAC process.

A list of the Department's closure and realignment recommendations was delivered to the Commission and Congress on May 13, three days in advance of the statutory May 16 deadline. Additionally, a summary of the selection process that resulted in the recommendations, including a justification for each recommendation, was included in Volume 1 of the Department's BRAC report. This information was due to the Commission and to the Congress within seven days. It was delivered to the Commission and to the Congress and posted on the Department's BRAC website on May 13.

In addition to the Department's initial legal submission, to further support the Commission's and the public's understanding of the Department's recommendations, the Department has already provided significant information including:

- the classified force structure plan (Volume 2);
- reports by the Military Departments and the Joint Cross Service Groups (Volumes 3 through 12);
- 222 recommendation binders containing the Department's analysis of each recommendation against all eight selection criteria;
- Cost of Base Realignment Action Model with static data;
- installation imagery of bases to be visited; and
- testimony to the Commission by senior DoD officials.

The Department is also preparing to submit, early next week, the minutes reflecting its deliberative record and the extensive volume of data underpinning its recommendations. The statute does not establish a time by which the Department must make this information available to the Commission and Congress, but we will make it available by close of business on May 31.

As with prior rounds of BRAC, because this supplementary information includes classified material that requires appropriate handling, the Department is establishing handling procedures for this supplementary information.



Unlike prior BRAC rounds, however, the extent of this supplementary information is unprecedented in terms of volume, level of detail, and electronic access. The volume alone is vastly larger than that collected in prior BRAC rounds. Accordingly, the Department has established handling procedures appropriate to the size and sensitivity of the database.

During prior BRAC rounds, the Commission and the congressional defense committees established reading rooms in which files of this supporting data were maintained. Some of this supplementary data in previous BRAC rounds was classified, and that is true with this BRAC round, too.

During our discussions with committee staffs in the period leading up to the completion of the Department's recommendations, committee staffs expressed a desire to include as much of the supplementary data in electronic form as feasible, which we are doing. Because the data are only in digital form, unlike prior BRAC rounds, the fully aggregated database is temporarily classified SECRET while we proceed with the process of disaggregating and declassifying substantial portions of it.

We intend to declassify as much of it as possible and to make it available to the public. We believe the full volume of data available to the Congress, the BRAC Commission, and the public will be substantially greater than was made available in prior BRAC rounds.

The plan for making available the supplemental BRAC information is as follows:

- The BRAC Commission, members of Congress, and their respective staffs with SECRET clearances will have access to the entire digital database accessible on computers in a secure reading room in Crystal City near the BRAC Commission offices by Tuesday evening, May 31. Consistent with prior BRAC rounds, we are also working with Congressional staff to establish a similar secure reading room on Capitol Hill.
 - The public, through the BRAC Commission, will have access to all unclassified information by Saturday, June 4.
 - DoD will expedite interim SECRET clearances as required for Commission and Congressional staff.
 - As with previous BRAC rounds, the Department, Commission, and Congress will have appropriate handling procedures for any information that remains classified.
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