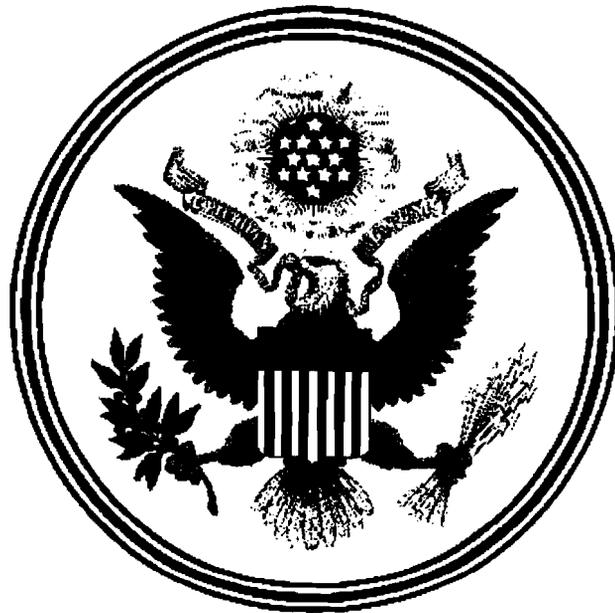


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**DEFENSE BASE CLOSURE AND
REALIGNMENT COMMISSION**



MEDIA BRIEFING BOOK

**REGIONAL HEARING
CHARLOTTE, NORTH CAROLINA**



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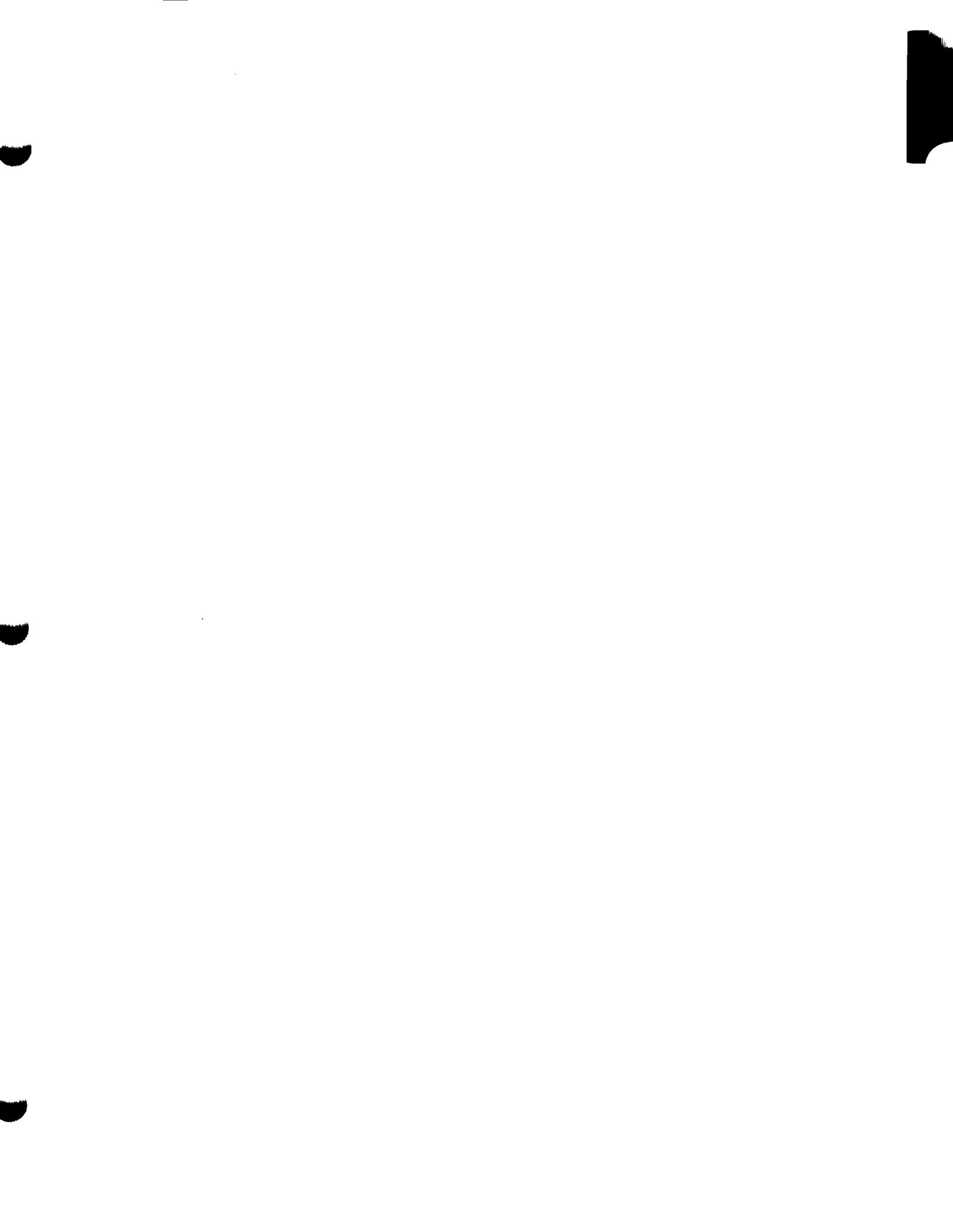
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Media Advisory – Charlotte, North Carolina Regional Hearing

TIME:

Doors Open to Public at 11:30AM

Hearing Coverage- Harris Conference Center

1PM-5:30PM / MEDIA PRE-SET 8:00AM, No later than 10:30AM

Media Availability – Ash Room, Harris Conference Center

The BRAC Commission's media availability will begin promptly 15 minutes after the end of the hearing.

Logistical information for media:

-Satellite truck parking available on along Circular Drive

-Press parking available off CPCC West Campus Drive

-620 ft. Cable run to press risers

-60 ft. Max camera throw

-TV quality sound and lighting (Supplemental lighting provided)

-Free Internet will be available: Please contact Patrick Dugan,
patrick.dugan@cpcc.edu, by 3:00PM Friday, June 24 to set up

Credentialing and Media Inquiries:

Contact: Robert McCreary, 703-901-7835, robert.mccreary@wso.whs.mil

Deputy Director of Communications

OR

Richard McDevitt, 704-330-6155, richard.mcdevitt@cpcc.edu

Please provide name and affiliation in request



2005 Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission
Suggested Talking Points for Defense Finance and Accounting Service Charleston

- 1. The Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission (BRAC) will base its final decision as to whether or not to recommend Defense Finance and Accounting Service Charleston (DFAS) for closure, almost entirely upon the military value of the installation.**
 - While the Commission will take the economic, environmental, and other effects that the suggestion to close the DFAS could have on the surrounding community, the Commission will base its final decision almost entirely upon military value.
 - DoD's strategic determination of military value is partially based upon factors such as jointness, ease of mobility, and efficiency. As the Commission ensures that DoD made its suggestions in accordance with the law, the Commission will take the military value of an installation into full account.

- 2. The factors taken into consideration, and the process followed, by the Commission have been specifically determined by law.**
 - The Congress established the Commission as an independent entity to evaluate, in an open, transparent, thorough, and objective manner—as prescribed by law, the suggestions made by DoD to close or realign various installations across the country.
 - The Commission will be a source of accountability to the public for the decisions made by DoD to close or realign military installations, ensuring that DoD made its suggestions in accordance with the law.
 - While DoD determines the strategy for ensuring that our military is well-prepared to meet modern global threats, the sole task of the Commission is to ensure that DoD has made its suggestions according to statute and taken all pertinent factors into account in its evaluations. The Commission will make a full evaluation of the military value of DFAS Charleston before coming to its conclusions.

- 3. The Commission is very aware of the human impact had by the suggestion to close DFAS Charleston, should that suggestion be enacted.**
 - The Commission understands the effects had by the dramatic job cuts in Charleston, brought about by the 1995 round of BRAC, and though DoD's suggestions are for fewer cuts by far in the Charleston area, please be assured that the Commission will make a full evaluation of the impact that these cuts could have on the community.
 - The Commission encourages members of the community to contact the Commission with information that they feel may have been overlooked by DoD in DoD's evaluation and suggestions, through the official BRAC website: www.brac.gov.



**2005 Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission
Suggested Qs and As for Defense Finance and Accounting Service Charleston**

Q1. The South-East region of the United States, with a net gain of 5,761 jobs, did well through the Department of Defense's (DoD) recommendations. Although DoD recommended cuts of 543 jobs in South Carolina, the state would be left with a net gain of 709 jobs due to suggested additions to some installation,. Did this region fare well because its bases were in line with the current defense strategy of the United States?

A1. While DoD is responsible for creating the strategy to ensure that our military is well-prepared to meet modern global threats, the Congress established the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission (BRAC) to transparently, independently, and objectively evaluate the suggestions by DoD to close or realign various military installations across the country. The Commission will base its final decision regarding South Naval Facilities Engineering Command almost entirely upon the current military value of the installation.

Q2. Should DoD's suggestions be enacted, Charleston will loose nearly 1,100 jobs through the closure of South Naval Facilities Engineering Command and the Defense Finance and Accounting Service (DFAS) Charleston. Some are considering suggesting to the Commission, that as DoD seeks to consolidate the DFAS installations across the country into fewer installations, that one of the sites where the installations are consolidated be Charleston. Will the Commission take the full economic impact of the suggestion to close South Naval Facilities Engineering Command into account before coming to its final conclusion?

A2. While holding military value as the preeminent consideration, the commission is keenly aware of the human impact had by these suggestions to close or realign various military installations across the country, and will take the economic, environmental, and other effects on the local community into full account prior to making its conclusions regarding the installations.

Q3. Charleston has a history that includes a hard hit from a previous BRAC round. More than 36,000 military and civilian jobs and approximately \$1 billion in payroll were lost in the BRAC round ten years ago. Compared to this, the DoD's suggestion to close DFAS Charleston seems relatively light on the community. Will the Commission still take the military value of this installation into account before the Commission comes to its conclusion?

A3. The Commission will take all pertinent factors into account, as prescribed by law; the Commission will hold military value as the most important consideration. Through this round of BRAC, DoD is seeking to streamline our military and eliminate excess infrastructure that is ineffective in helping to achieve the goal of meeting modern global threats. The task of the Commission is to evaluate the suggestions made by DoD to close or realign various military installations to ensure that DoD's suggestions were made in keeping with the law and after all pertinent factors had been taken into account.

Q4. Some will possibly be suggesting to the Commission that as DoD consolidates DFAS installations across the country, one of the locations for the consolidation be Charleston, South Carolina. Will the Commission take this into consideration?

A4. DoD is responsible for creating the strategy to ensure that our military is well-prepared to meet modern global threats. The Commission was established by Congress to ensure that the suggestions made by DoD were made in accordance with the law and after taking all pertinent factors into account. The Commission will base its decision, as to whether or not to suggest DFAS Charleston for closure, almost entirely upon the military value of the installation.

Q5. After the dramatic loss of jobs in 1995, the DEFAS was brought to Charleston, accompanied by 368 jobs. In light of the fact that the DFAS was established in Charleston, in part, to ease the pain of the previous job cut, will the Commission take the effects that the closure would have on the local community into full account?

A5. The Commission is very aware of the human impact had by these suggestions, should the suggestions be enacted. Please be assured that the Commission will perform a full, open, and transparent evaluation, as prescribed by law, prior to making its decisions, and while it will take the economic, environmental, and other effects on the community into full account, will base its final decision almost entirely upon the military value of the installation.

Q6. Although the effect on Charleston of DoD's suggestions has been called "fairly minimal" by some, after the 1995 round of BRAC, the closure of DFAS Charleston would have the effect of a \$105 million, or 2% loss, of spending in the area. Will the Commission consider this before making its final conclusion?

A6. The process followed by the Commission has been specifically outlined by law. The Commission will perform an open, objective, independent, and thorough evaluation before coming to its conclusions, and while taking the economic effects on the local community into account, will base its decision almost entirely upon military value.

Q7. How can the general public make the Commission aware of factors that the public feels may have been overlooked by DoD in DoD's evaluation and suggestion to close DFAS Charleston?

A7. The Commission welcomes community input, as the input is a valuable part of the Commission's process of evaluation. Members of the community are encouraged to contact the Commission through the Commission's official website: www.brac.gov.

D

DEFENSE FINANCE AND ACCOUNTING SERVICE SOUTH CAROLINA

National News Articles

SEN. GRAHAM ISSUES STATEMENT ON BASE REALIGNMENT AND CLOSURE
PROCESS

Local News Articles

South Carolina's BRAC Victory

S.C.'s major military bases dodge ax, add jobs, missions

BRAC Briefly

State Stands to Gain Military Jobs

Charleston Suffers Mild Losses in New Base Closing Hit

1,161 AREA BASE JOBS TARGETED AH: Charleston only region in state on Pentagon
hit list

Panel to inspect N. Charleston facilities slated to close

Opinion/Editorial Articles

State Escapes Most Base Cuts

'Bruised' not battered by BRAC OPINION

National News Articles

SEN. GRAHAM ISSUES STATEMENT ON BASE REALIGNMENT AND CLOSURE PROCESS

US States News

May 13, 2005

WASHINGTON

The office of Sen. Lindsey Graham, R-S.C., issued the following statement:

Sen. Lindsey Graham (R-South Carolina) today made the following statement on the BRAC realignment and closure process. Among South Carolina military installations:

Fort Jackson Gain Net 615 Positions Added 435 Military / 180 Civilian

Marine Air Corps Station Beaufort Gain Net 12 Positions Added 12 Civilian

McEntire Air National Guard Station Gain Net 426 Positions Added 418 Military / 8 Civilian

Naval Weapons Stations Charleston Realigned Net 250 Positions Lost Lost: 170 Military / 149
Civilian Gained: 45 Military / 24 Civilian

Shaw Air Force Base Gain 817 Positions Added Lost: 74 Military / 1 Civilian Gained: 816
Military / 76 Civilian

Defense Financing and Accounting Service, Charleston Closed Net 368 Positions Lost 368
Civilian

South Naval Facilities Engineering Command Closed 543 Positions Lost Lost: 6 Military / 492 Civilian / 45 Mission Contractor

"Overall, South Carolina flourished during this round of BRAC because we have supportive communities and the missions being performed at installations in our state are indispensable to the War on Terror. As this round of BRAC proves, our state represents growth potential for the Department of Defense.

"While it was unfortunate that we did lose some positions, our footprint actually increased. I'm pleased with the outcome of the first step in the BRAC process. I believe this successful outcome is the direct result of collaboration between local, state, and federal officials.

"I always thought we had a great story to tell and a lot to offer. Today's round of BRAC shows the Department of Defense believes the same. We must not rest though as this is only one step in a long process. Until this is finished, we must not let our guard down."

#####

Notes on Today's BRAC Announcement and South Carolina:

* Charleston, which has 368 positions slated for closure at the Defense Finance Accounting Services (DFAS), joined a long list of states seeing these facilities on the DOD list. Altogether, states show 3,473 positions slated for elimination in DFAS under BRAC. Among the states losing: California with 471 positions, Florida 209, Kentucky 45, Maine 241, Maryland 53, Missouri 906, New York 290, and Ohio 1,258. Indiana appears to be the only state to buck the trend gaining 100 positions.

* Fort Jackson in Columbia will now be the location where all Army drill sergeants will be trained.

* Fort Jackson will also be the location where all chaplains in the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, and Air Force will be trained.

* Shaw Air Force Base in Sumter will become a joint facility with the addition of an Army 3-star General and staff who will be headquartered there.

* McEntire Air National Guard Station in Eastover will gain 9 of some of the most advanced F-16 fighters.

Local News Articles

South Carolina's BRAC victory

The State

Joe Wilson

May 19, 2005

When the Department of Defense released its long-awaited Base Realignment and Closure list last week, sighs of relief could be heard throughout **South Carolina**, and the 2nd District in particular. I am thrilled that the Defense Department clearly reinforced its confidence in Fort

Jackson, Parris Island, the Marine Corps Air Station Beaufort and the Beaufort Naval Hospital.

Although the Defense Department's decision to support and grow our bases is only the latest step in an ongoing process, I believe we have plenty of reasons to celebrate this hard-fought and crucial victory achieved by the teamwork of federal, state, county, municipal and Chamber of Commerce officials.

If the remainder of the **BRAC** process continues as expected, Fort Jackson will play an even larger role in providing the Army with well-trained, disciplined and skilled soldiers who are prepared to win the war on terror. Fort Jackson will soon be home to the only drill sergeant school in the Army and the Joint Center of Excellence for Religious Training and Education for the Department of Defense, which will serve as the leading institutions for the military.

The consolidation of schools from across the nation will bring hundreds of students and their families to the Midlands. Additionally, the base will soon operate the Army Reserve Southeast Regional Readiness Command in a new Armed Forces Reserve Center.

The **BRAC** Committee also recognized and furthered the tremendous military and economic value of the Marine Corps Air Station Beaufort. As the home to one of the nation's largest aircraft groups, Air Station Beaufort is playing a vital role in the war on terror. Air Station Beaufort will relocate depot maintenance workload and capacity from other sites throughout the nation to establish the Fleet Readiness Center East Site Beaufort at Air Station Beaufort.

Parris Island will continue its almost century-old tradition of being the premier birthplace of America's Marines for recruits east of the Mississippi River. The Beaufort Naval Hospital will also continue to serve as the primary medical facility of the Beaufort military community, helping to keep our military families healthy.

Military value was a primary component of the Defense Department's evaluation. The professionalism and dedication of our base leadership and quality of our instructors ensure that the servicemen and -women trained in **South Carolina** are prepared to serve our country. The recommendation to expand our institutions is a strong tribute to this legacy of excellence and the unquestioned military value of **South Carolina's** military installations.

The tireless efforts of people throughout our communities were also critical to this success. For years, South Carolinians have warmly welcomed the military presence to our state. Federal, state and local community leaders have worked with our bases to mitigate encroachment issues, and to bring additional missions to **South Carolina**. Fortunately, the Defense Department's proposed **BRAC** list validates our efforts.

However, the **BRAC** process is not yet over. The **BRAC** Commission must now investigate the department's proposal to determine whether these recommendations have merit. Commissioners can amend the list by Sept. 8 and then send the revised list to President Bush. He has the option of approving or disapproving the list. If it is disapproved, a new list must be resubmitted by Oct. 20. The president must submit the list to Congress by Nov. 7. Congress has 45 days to pass a motion of disapproval, or the list becomes law.

As the **BRAC** process continues, I'll vigilantly promote and protect bases throughout the 2nd District. Our state has a rich and accomplished military heritage, and I'm confident that **South Carolina** will remain an ideal home for the U.S. military.

Rep. Wilson represents **South Carolina's** 2nd District in the U.S. House.

S.C.'s major military bases dodge ax, add jobs, missions

Associated Press State and Local Wire

SUSANNE SCHAFER

May 13, 2005

COLUMBIA, S.C.

South Carolina will gain important new military jobs, missions and responsibilities in the Pentagon's latest move to reorganize the nation's armed forces, even as the Charleston area suffered the loss of about 1,100 federal slots.

Friday's moves were part of Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld's proposed base realignments and closures, which goes to the independent **BRAC** panel for months of study and analysis. The defense chief says his plan would save \$48.8 billion over 20 years and make the military more mobile and better suited for the global effort against terrorism.

Overall, **South Carolina's** major bases escaped closure and commanders learned there would be a net gain of 709 jobs. Across the state, politicians and military backers expressed relief and said months of lobbying had paid off.

"**South Carolina** flourished during this round of **BRAC** because we have supportive communities and the missions being performed at installations in our state are indispensable to the war on terror," Sen. Lindsey Graham, R-S.C., said in a statement.

Politicians predicted the vote of confidence showed by the Pentagon would boost the state's economy, increasing chances for new businesses and people to flow into the state.

In some of the most interesting shifts:

- The Army would transfer 817 jobs from a shutdown Fort McPherson in Atlanta to Shaw Air Force Base near Sumter, combining the Third Army and Ninth Air Force headquarters. The two groups are in charge of military operations in the region known as Southwest Asia, ranging from the Persian Gulf through Afghanistan and from eastern Africa to the new republics on the edge of the former Soviet Union.
- Fort Jackson, the Army's largest training base, will add 615 positions by consolidating three drill sergeant schools and several religious training sites for multiple service branches. An Army reserve command also will be transferred to the Columbia installation from Alabama.
- McEntire Air National Guard Station near Eastover will add nine F-16s from Mountain Home, Idaho, bolstering the installation's 18 F-16CJ jets at a time when many thought the unit was the most threatened in the region.

"This makes **South Carolina** a much more significant military state," said retired Air Force Maj.

Gen. Thomas Olsen, executive director of the Sumter Base Defense Committee.

He said combining Army and Air Force commands at Shaw reflects Rumsfeld's emphasis on "jointness," the term for the military services working together to enhance their operations and effectiveness around the world.

The addition of more F-16s to McEntire is also a boost for **South Carolina's** Air and Army National Guard forces, which have fought alongside their active duty partners in the nation's most recent conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan, Olsen said.

"**South Carolina** is a historically supportive state for the military," he said. "They don't just offer their real estate, they offer their lives. This is being recognized" by the Pentagon.

Rep. Joe Wilson, R-S.C., called the shifts "a precursor of even better days" for the state. "I see this as an economic boon," he said.

While about 1,100 jobs would be lost in the Charleston area, overall additions to Midlands installations such as Jackson, Shaw and McEntire would provide a "ripple effect" in the state's economy. Construction, contractors, real estate agents and others will benefit with the influx of military personnel, Wilson said.

Two Marine facilities in the Beaufort area also were spared as well as the Charleston Air Force Base.

In total, **South Carolina** will receive about 1,870 military and civilian jobs. Those will be offset, however, by losses at three Charleston facilities totaling 1,161 jobs.

The Defense Finance and Accounting Service, which provides about 370 jobs, will close. It was activated in February 1995 and brought to the old Charleston Naval Base after that facility was ordered closed in 1993.

The office provides payroll and accounting services for the Department of Defense, said Mary Graham, vice president of public policy for the Charleston Metro Chamber of Commerce.

Also on the list for closing was the Naval Facilities Engineering Command's Southern Division, which is scheduled to be relocated from Charleston, uprooting about 550 civilian jobs. The command operates in a leased facility in North Charleston and handles construction management for the Navy on projects in 22 states.

"That was the one we had anticipated losing," Graham said.

The command handled projects such as reconstruction in Pensacola, Fla., after last year's hurricanes, she said.

Another 250 jobs will be transferred from the Charleston Naval Weapons Station. "We don't know just now what they are or where they are going," Graham said.

"We're going to be a net gainer," said state Comptroller Richard Eckstrom, who co-chaired the state's efforts to save the bases. "We're at half time, and we're leading."

However, Eckstrom cautioned the state not to celebrate just yet. "Over the next three and a half

months, every state on that list is going to be working overtime to get off that list and get us on."

The Base Realignment and Closure Commission has until September to study the list and make changes.

BRAC BRIEFLY

The Augusta Chronicle

May 14, 2005

South Carolina's bases get 709 new positions

COLUMBIA - Overall, South Carolina's major bases escaped closure, and commanders learned there would be a net gain of 709 jobs. Across the state, politicians and military backers expressed relief and said months of lobbying had paid off.

"South Carolina flourished during this round of BRAC because we have supportive communities and the missions being performed at installations in our state are indispensable to the war on terror," said Sen. Lindsey Graham, R-S.C..

Politicians predicted the vote of confidence showed by the Pentagon would boost the state's economy.

Fort Benning will gain nearly 10,000 personnel

COLUMBUS, GA. - Mayor Bob Poydasheff can't stop grinning. Fort Benning, his community's lifeblood, is set to grow by 9,221 troops and 618 civilian workers under the base realignment plan.

The post's net gain of nearly 10,000 personnel was the third largest of any base in the country.

Fort Benning, the west Georgia city's largest employer, already is home to 28,659 military personnel and a civilian work force of 6,712, carrying a massive annual payroll of \$1.1 billion.

New submarines, sailors will come to Kings Bay

ST. MARYS, GA. - Kings Bay Naval Submarine Base was one of the big winners Friday.

Kings Bay will get a squadron of Los Angeles-class fast attack submarines from the base at New London, Conn. In total, more than 3,200 sailors and more than 100 civilian employees will be moving to Kings Bay.

Navy analysts have said Kings Bay, currently home port for seven Trident submarines, has the dock space for the additional boats, but some additional barracks space will have to be constructed to house sailors undergoing training at the submarine school.

Charleston breathes easy despite lost jobs

CHARLESTON, S.C. - A dozen years ago, the news was bleak for this city that has survived hurricanes, earthquake and war. The government targeted the Charleston Naval Base and Charleston Naval Shipyard for closure, and tens of thousands of military jobs were lost.

On Friday, the Pentagon announced again it would take jobs, but the news was greeted generally with relief.

The 1,161 total was only a fraction of the hit the region took in the 1993 round of base closures and realignments.

State stands to gain military jobs

The Greenville News

Dan Hoover

May 14, 2005

Pentagon wants to move Army headquarters from Alabama to Shaw
Battered a decade ago, South Carolina dodged a bullet Friday in the second round of post-Cold War military base closings.

At stake were the livelihoods of thousands of families. Bad news could have sent shock waves throughout the state's economy.

"It's a good day," said Lt. Col. Pete Brooks, spokesman for Adjutant General Stan Spears.

The state could see a net gain of 709 military jobs and an Army headquarters.

Gov. Mark Sanford told The Greenville News the Pentagon "looked at its military assets in South Carolina and decided they were of national significance to the overall fabric of our defense."

While politicians jockeyed in the limelight of good news and described South Carolina's role in America's defense, people like Patricia Hunt, a civilian secretary for the 20th Fighter Wing at Shaw Air Force Base, merely breathed a sigh of relief. Her paycheck will continue.

"There was a lot of apprehension, plenty of rumors and everybody seemed to think they know what's going on and they don't," Hunt said of the agonizing weeks leading up to the Friday morning announcement.

"Now I feel great" that Shaw not only was spared but will acquire added missions, planes and personnel, she said.

Hunt, 54, was perhaps more worried than others because base closure was a road she had been down before.

In 1995, she was working at Griffiss Air Force Base outside her Rome, N.Y., hometown when the first Base Realignment and Closure Commission ordered it shut down. Her husband, retired from the military, lost his contractor's job, too.

Next stop, Shaw. Then the butterflies returned, with ample justification.

Shaw expanded

Shaw, previously feared vulnerable, will gain 3rd Army Headquarters as a result of the recommended closure of Fort McPherson in Alabama. Shaw, which is 9th Air Force headquarters, will gain 817 jobs, 742 of them military and 75 civilian.

U.S. Rep. John M. Spratt Jr., senior Democrat on the House Budget Committee, said Shaw and other bases have "cleared the first and by far the most important hurdle in this base closure round."

"Military value counts the most in this process. The Air Force has decided not only that Shaw is an asset but one that it wants to build upon," Spratt said.

He said the Pentagon's decision "puts us in good standing before the Base Realignment and Closure Commission" but cautioned that the final decision still rests with the independent panel.

Charleston again will take it on the chin, although nowhere near the scope of the 1993 Base Realignment and Closure Commission's shutdown of its historic and economically huge naval base and shipyard.

This time, Charleston is slated to lose the Defense Finance and Accounting Service and its 368 civilian jobs and the South Naval Facilities Engineering Command with six military and 492 civilian positions.

Also, the Naval Weapons Station will lose 170 military and 149 civilian jobs through realignment.

Earlier losses

A decade ago, Charleston lost more than 36,000 military and civilian jobs, along with their \$1 billion annual payroll.

At the time, South Carolina had in Republican Strom Thurmond and Democrat Ernest F. Hollings two of the Senate's most senior members. Their combined efforts couldn't save the Charleston facilities and jobs.

Charleston Air Force Base, a major point of re-supply and airlift for U.S. troops in Iraq and Afghanistan, will remain intact.

State and local officials had feared for Fort Jackson, near Columbia, one of the Army's major basic training installations, and the shutdown or possible merger of Shaw and the McEntire Air National Guard Base at Eastover.

All three will gain military and civilian positions, as will the Marine Corps Air Station at Beaufort. Fort Jackson will now train all Army drill sergeants and be a training center for chaplains of all services.

For U.S. Rep. Jim Clyburn, it was a mixed bag, gains at McEntire, losses at Charleston.

His 6th District, sprawling from the Midlands to the Pee Dee to the Lowcountry, contains only McEntire, but many of the civilian workers and contractors at Fort Jackson, Shaw AFB and Charleston naval facilities live in the district.

"I was hoping for it to be as good as it is, but to be realistic, I had no idea," he said. "The big thing for me was (keeping) McEntire," but the addition of nine advanced F-16s, augmenting the 18 already there, there was a big surprise, he said.

Sweeping scope

Defense officials said they would recommend the closing of 33 major bases and hundreds of smaller installations around the country. The Pentagon said 29,005 military and civilian jobs would be eliminated, 8,600 in Connecticut alone, the hardest-hit state.

Several historic posts were marked for closure, including Walter Reed Army Medical Center, Fort Monroe across from Norfolk, Va.; Fort Monmouth in New Jersey, and the Navy's first submarine base at Groton, Conn.

U.S. Sen. Jim DeMint of Greenville said it is encouraging that South Carolina was recommended for an increase in missions and personnel because "we have supportive communities and the missions being performed in our state are indispensable to the war on terror."

Sen. Lindsey Graham, a Seneca Republican and Armed Services Committee member, said the state fared well "because we have supportive communities and the missions being performed at installations in our state are indispensable to the war on terror. As this round of BRAC proves, our state represents growth potential for the Department of Defense.

"While it was unfortunate that we did lose some positions, our footprint actually increased," he said.

Hard to change

It would take the votes of seven of the nine BRAC members to add or subtract from the Pentagon's recommended list.

The commission will begin its review Monday and must send its recommendations to President Bush by Sept. 8. If Bush agrees, he must send the report to Congress by Sept. 23. If he doesn't, it must go back to the commission, which is required to issue a revised report by Oct. 20.

Bush then has until Nov. 7 to submit the revised report to Congress whose members have 45 legislative days to issue a joint resolution of disapproval. Lacking that, the report will take effect.

Spratt said that in the past, BRAC has adopted 90 percent of the Pentagon's recommendations and, under new regulations, has even less leeway for change.

'Dan Hoover covers politics and public policy issues. He can be reached at 298-4883.

South Carolina dodges major base closings

Net gain/(loss)

Installation	Recommendation	Military	Civilian	Total
Defense Finance & Accounting				
Service, Charleston	Close	0	(368)	(368)
South Naval Facilities				
Engineering Command	Close	(6)	(492)	(543)
Fort Jackson	Gain	435	180	615
Marine Corps Air				
Station, Beaufort	Gain	0	12	12
McEntire Air Guard Station	Gain	418	8	426
Shaw Air Force Base	Gain	742	75	817
Naval Weapons				
Station, Charleston	Realign	(125)	(125)	(250)
State total		1,464	(710)	709

Charleston suffers mild losses in new base closing hit

Associated Press State and Local Wire

Bruce Smith

CHARLESTON, S.C.

A dozen years ago, the news was bleak for this city that has survived hurricanes, earthquake and war. The government targeted the Charleston Naval Base and Charleston Naval Shipyard for closure and tens of thousands of military jobs were lost.

On Friday, the Pentagon announced again it would take jobs, but the news was greeted generally with relief.

The 1,161 total was only a fraction of the hit the region took in the 1993 round of base closures and realignments, and statewide **South Carolina** posted a net jobs gain.

"You hate to see any name on a list, but what is there is small," said retired Navy Vice Admiral Albert Baciocco, Jr., a member of Gov. Mark Sanford's Military Base Task Force and who also helped Charleston with its base **defense** efforts. "I was pleased and relieved because what was on the list is understandable."

The **Defense** Department wants to close two Charleston-area facilities: the **Defense Finance** and Accounting Service, which handles military payroll, and the Naval Facilities Engineering Command's Southern Division.

The **finance** center is one of 13 the military is targeting for closure across the nation as it consolidates those operations in three locations.

Capt. Bob Raines, commander of the engineering command's southern division, said the jobs from the command would be moved to Jacksonville, Fla., Great Lakes, Ill., and Norfolk, Va. The agency handles construction management for Navy projects.

Meanwhile, the Charleston Naval Weapons Station will lose about 250 jobs. Some, from the Space Warfare Center, will be moved to facilities in Virginia and Rhode Island.

The weapons station also is expected to become more efficient as it is one of a dozen bases nationwide where the **Defense** Department wants to combine management functions of separate bases.

In this case, the Charleston Air Force Base will handle utilities, security, streets and other management functions for the weapons station.

"We've been working on our military operations jointly for the past 20 years," said station commander Capt. Gary Edwards. "Now we're starting to have our military have joint bases."

The idea, he said, is to "combine services, reduce redundancy and save the taxpayer money." Edwards did not know specifically from which units the 250 jobs would be lost.

Retired Air Force Brig. Gen. Thomas Mikolajcik, who served on Sanford's committee as well as helping with local base **defense** efforts, said the list reflects what **South Carolina** has been doing for the nation.

"What we have done in the war on terror has been recognized in this **BRAC** list," he said. "Charleston was slightly bruised in the process, but the future is brighter than what we have seen in the past."

"I wouldn't even call it a setback. I'd call it an adjustment," Baciocco added. "Recognize that it's not 1,100 people who are out of a job" because many of the jobs are simply moving to other locations, he said.

Sanford said the cuts represent a fraction of the military presence in Charleston. "We're not talking about a big swing, even in the area which is impacted," he said.

Mikolajcik noted that the growing area has added about 20,000 jobs in the past four years.

Sanford spokesman Will Folks said, however, the state will try to convince the Base Realignment and Closure Commission that the **defense** accounting operations should be consolidated in Charleston rather than elsewhere.

In 1993, before the base and shipyard closed, the military provided about 48,000 jobs in the Charleston area with a \$4.2 billion economic impact. Going into Friday's base closing

announcement, about 27,000 civilians and military employees worked at local **defense** facilities.

U.S. Rep. Henry Brown, R-S.C., said the latest losses aren't any easier if you are one of the people who eventually may lose a job.

"This is only a small part, compared to what happened in the 1990s," he said.

Brown supports the consolidation of military bases to save money but said he would be looking closely to make sure the jobs being moved from Charleston are being moved for that end. Moving people just to move them, he said, saves nothing.

There's about an 85 percent chance that once a facility gets on the closure list, it stays there, but U.S. Rep. Jim Clyburn, D-S.C., said he still will try to get the Charleston facilities removed.

"There's a 15 percent chance, and that's better than zero," he said. "And really, after the process was over last time, Charleston was hit big time."

After the loss of the Navy base, new government missions were brought in, he said. One of those was the **Defense Finance** and Accounting Service, which provides about 370 jobs and began operations in February 1995.

"We're not going to give up or just throw in the towel. What we're going to try to do is make lemonade out of the lemons we have been given," he said.

The Charleston Air Force Base was spared Friday, but Mikolajcik said he was not surprised by that.

"It's the crown jewel of Air Mobility Command and it's the most efficient airlift base in the world," he said. "Charleston Air Force Base is the busiest Military Airlift Command base in the nation."

The base's C-17s have played a key role in ferrying troops and supplies to southwest Asia in support of operations in Iraq.

1,161 AREA BASE JOBS TARGETED AH: Charleston only region in state on Pentagon hit list

The Post and Courier

JOHN P. MCDERMOTT

May 14, 2005

The Pentagon on Friday proposed shedding nearly 1,200 **Defense** Department jobs in the Charleston region, in part by closing two area operations, under a nationwide restructuring that would heighten the military's presence elsewhere in the state.

In all, the state would gain about 1,870 uniformed and civilian positions -- mostly at Fort Jackson, McEntire Air National Guard Station and Shaw Air Force Base -- under the recommendations released Friday.

But the statewide increase will be offset by 1,161 cuts in the Charleston area, which was the only region in **South Carolina** to take a hit under the so-called Base Realignment and Closure process.

"It looks like Charleston has the brunt of the losses again," said North Charleston Mayor Keith Summey.

In all, the Pentagon's proposed changes, the most sweeping to its network of military bases in modern history, would close 33 major facilities in 22 states and reconfigure hundreds of others to achieve savings and promote cooperation among the armed services.

More than two years in the making, Friday's recommendations by **Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld** represented his attempt to balance a whirl of competing forces. They include the changing threats facing the nation, massive federal deficits, wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, the economies of local communities and political pressures.

Nationally, the closures would include Maine's Portsmouth naval shipyard, Ellsworth Air Force Base in South Dakota, the New London submarine base in Connecticut, Fort Monmouth in New Jersey and Fort Monroe, Va.

The Army would move the 7th Special Forces Group from Fort Bragg, N.C., to the Air Force's Eglin, Fla., base, so both services' elite troops could train together more easily. An airfield next to Eglin is the headquarters of Air Force Special Operations Command.

Part of the shifts appeared to reflect a Pentagon effort to move military resources from costlier locations in the Northeast and upper Midwest to the South and West. Another trend -- a shrinking Navy and a decline in shipbuilding -- was reflected in the closure of Naval installations such as the Connecticut submarine base, the Portsmouth shipyard and Naval stations in Texas and Mississippi.

Connecticut faces the biggest loss of jobs, with 8,586, followed by Maine, with 6,938.

The crown jewel of the Army hospital system, the venerable Walter Reed hospital in Washington, would move staff and services to the National Naval Medical Center in Bethesda, Md., to create a new, expanded facility carrying the Walter Reed name.

Summey and other local officials said their next step will be to decide whether to challenge any of the recommendations in hopes of preserving some of those jobs.

Specifically, the Pentagon proposed closing the Naval Facilities Engineering Command's Southern Division in North Charleston and transferring its 543 positions, most of them held by civilian workers, to Florida, Illinois and Virginia.

Also on the chopping block is the **Defense Accounting and Finance Service**, which employs 368 civilian workers on the former Navy base. The federal payroll center was opened in February 1995, in part to ease the sting of a 1993 round of base closings that eliminated 22,000 shipyard and military jobs in the Charleston region.

Employment at the Charleston Naval Weapons Station is expected to decline by 250 jobs as part of a complicated "realignment" of that installation, the Pentagon said Friday. Under the plan, Charleston Air Force Base would manage utilities, maintenance and other infrastructure needs at the Weapons Station, a move that would reduce 264 jobs. "It allows us to combine services and

save taxpayers money," said Capt. Gary Edwards, commanding officer of the Weapons Station.

One of the highest-profile tenants at the Weapons Station, the Space and Naval Warfare Systems Command, better known as SPAWAR, also would move several units to bases in Rhode Island and Virginia, for a loss of 28 jobs. But another tenant, the Naval Consolidated Brig, would gain more responsibilities with the closure of smaller brigs in Jacksonville and Pensacola, Fla.

Some of the workers whose jobs will be affected will be offered transfers, but specifics on that score were not available Friday.

The precise timing of the suggested closings, expansions and restructurings also has not been established, though some of the changes may be under way by next year.

While the potential loss of 1,200 local jobs is significant and will disrupt families, it won't be nearly as devastating as the **defense** cuts of 1993, when the Pentagon decided to shutter the Charleston Naval Base and Shipyard. That unexpected closing sent shockwaves through the region's economy, affecting everything from real estate values to retail sales.

Retired Air Force Brig. Gen. Tom Mikolajcik, a top adviser to state and local officials on base-closing matters, said the Lowcountry came away "slightly bruised" but not broken.

"I wouldn't call it a setback. I'd call it an adjustment," Mikolajcik said, noting that the growing area has added about 20,000 jobs in the past four years.

"You hate to see any name on a list, but what is there is small," said retired Navy Vice Admiral Albert Baciocco, Jr., a member of Gov. Mark Sanford's Military Base Task Force, which helped Charleston with its base-**defense** efforts. "I was pleased and relieved because what was on the list is understandable."

Over the past decade, Charleston's **defense** industry has steadily regained much of the ground it lost to the shipyard closing. The military now accounts for more than 27,000 active-duty and civilian jobs and pumps \$4.4 billion a year into the regional economy, according to the Charleston Metro Chamber of Commerce's Center for Business Research and Charleston Southern University economist Al Parish.

If the Pentagon's latest recommendations are approved and implemented, Parish said, the loss to the local economy would be around \$105 million, or about 2 percent of the total impact of military spending in the area.

"It's fairly minimal," he said. "The other thing is that our job growth is about two-and-a-half times the national average. We'll pull up the slack of these lost jobs pretty quickly."

But the human cost is more difficult to quantify, Parish added. Of the proposed job cuts, about 1,000 would affect civilian workers, many of whom might have settled in the region but now face the prospect of selling their homes or changing careers.

"For people who are losing their jobs or being forced to move, that's the only job they care about," he said. "As far as they're concerned, it's a major upheaval."

Now that the Pentagon has released its anxiously awaited report, the focus shifts to the Base Realignment and Closure Commission, which will review the Pentagon's recommendations.

As part of that work, the independent nine-member panel will embark on a series of politically charged hearings and site visits this summer and consider changes to the Pentagon's proposal.

Sen. Jim DeMint said Friday that talks are under way to hold one of those hearings in Charleston. The base commission is expected to submit its list of base closures to President Bush in September.

Once a base lands on the hit list, history shows it has just a 15 percent chance of survival. Mikolajcik estimated that the odds of overturning a recommendation this time around could be as small as 5 percent, largely because the Pentagon based its decisions mostly on hard data as opposed to politics, as had been the case in the past.

Even so, he and other officials said they plan to crunch the numbers in the Pentagon report and challenge any of the job cuts in Charleston if the benefits to the military don't outweigh the costs. "But we will not get into an argument we don't think we can win," Mikolajcik said.

Charleston Mayor Joe Riley and others said they think the region has a good shot at prying the Naval Facilities Engineering Command off the Pentagon list.

"It is a bureaucratic decision," Riley said. "It makes no economic or organizational sense."

The mayor said the Navy risks losing "a huge amount of intellectual capital" by uprooting the Eagle Drive unit, which has been based in North Charleston since the 1960s. "These are highly qualified and experienced people, and many of them will not move. Their roots are here and their families are here. Their churches and synagogues and Little Leagues are here.

"We are going to fight that very hard. I think a really strong case can be made."

Another part of that lobbying effort will be to ensure no other local installations are added to the list.

"Over the next three and a half months, every state on that list is going to be working overtime to get off that list and get us on," said state Comptroller Richard Eckstrom, who co-chaired the state's efforts to save the bases.

Also, U.S. Rep. Henry Brown, who represents the region, said there's no reason the 21 accounting and payroll centers the Pentagon wants to close, including the North Charleston location, can't be consolidated in the Lowcountry.

"Charleston is as good a place as anyplace else in the world," Brown said.

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It's a theme Rumsfeld has sounded throughout his tenure at the Pentagon, and he alluded to it in a cover letter to the report to Anthony J. Principi, chairman of the base-closing commission.

"Increasing combat effectiveness and transforming U.S. forces are critical if our country is to be able to meet tomorrow's national **defense** challenges," he wrote. He recommended that a similar base-use review be done every five to 10 years. His was the first since 1995.

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GAINERS AND LOSERS

Charleston would lose 1,161 jobs, including 985 civilian positions, under the massive Pentagon restructuring announced Friday. **South Carolina**, on the other hand, would gain 709 **defense** jobs. Here's a look at the military brass's recommendations for the state:

LOSERS

Installation Pentagon recommendation Jobs at risk
Naval Facilities Engineering
Command Southern Division Closed 543
Defense Finance and Accounting Service Closed 368
Naval Weapons Station Realigned 250

GAINERS

Installation Jobs to be gained
Shaw Air Force Base 817
Fort Jackson 615
McEntire Air Guard Station 426
Beaufort Marine Corps Air Station 12

Source: Pentagon

WHAT'S NEXT?

A look at the next steps in the base-closure process.

-- Monday: **Defense** Secretary Donald Rumsfeld and Gen. Richard Myers, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, testify before the nine-member base-closing commission.

-- May through August: The commission will hold public hearings, conduct site visits and collect data on each facility on the Pentagon's list to determine whether the **Defense** Department proposal was justified. The commission can vote to remove facilities or add them to the list, but it takes seven of the nine members to do so.

-- Sept. 8: The commission must forward its report of recommendations to the president.

-- Sept. 23: The president must accept or reject the recommendations in their entirety. If they are accepted, Congress has 45 legislative days or until the end of its 2005 session to reject the recommendations in their entirety, or they become final. If they are disapproved, the commission has until Oct. 20, to submit a revised report to the president. The president has until Nov. 20 to approve a revised report and send it to Congress.

-- The Pentagon then has six years to close, relocate or downsize bases on the final list.

"The economic effects, we can overcome. The loss of family and friends who will be leaving the area will be harder."

North Charleston Mayor Keith Summey

"Their roots are here and their families are here. Their churches and synagogues and Little Leagues are here. We are going to fight that very hard."

Charleston Mayor Joe Riley, on closing the engineering command

"If you look at the whole, it is about 700 jobs net increase in **South Carolina**. I think it is an

amazing accomplishment given the fact that the bulk of what was going on was downsizing."

Gov. Mark Sanford, Republican

"We all need to step back and reflect on the fact that the process is far from over. We are breathing a little bit easier today but we are not celebrating a successful completion of this."

State Comptroller Richard Eckstrom, who co-chaired the state's efforts to save the bases.

"Charleston's military complex is a model for the Department of **Defense** transformation and military value. ... We have made the successful transition from a Cold War-oriented military to a military focused on the current war on terror."

Rep. Henry Brown, Republican

"If you look at it from a statewide standpoint, **South Carolina** fared well. If you look at it regionally ... the Lowcountry didn't do so fine."

Rep. Jim Clyburn, Democrat

"I always thought we had a great story to tell and a lot to offer. Today's round of **BRAC** shows the Department of **Defense** believes the same."

Sen. Lindsey Graham, Republican

Staff reporters David Slade and Tony Bartelme and the Associated Press contributed to this report.

Panel to inspect N. Charleston facilities slated to close

The Post and Courier
May 30, 2005

The independent nine-member panel that's double-checking the Pentagon's military base-closing recommendations plans to visit the two local **defense** installations that made the hit list.

The 2005 Base Realignment and Closure Commission is scheduled to be in North Charleston June 7 to see and be briefed on the operations at the **Defense Finance & Accounting Service** on the former Charleston Naval Base and the Naval Facilities Engineering Command Southern Division on Eagle Drive. The two units combined employ nearly 1,200 workers, almost all of them civilian employees.

State and local officials have vowed to challenge the Pentagon's recommendations, which were released earlier this month.

The chairman of the **BRAC** Commission, Anthony Principi, said the review of the **Defense** Department list will be fair and comprehensive.

"The ... commission is not going to serve as a rubber stamp," Principi said. "We will look at the ... recommendations carefully and closely to see if they complied with, or substantially deviated from, the selection criteria and force structure against which all bases are to be measured."

The commission has scheduled 64 site visits, which started last week and will end July 13.

Its plans to tour any facility that stands to lose at least 300 civilian jobs or 400 military and civilian positions.

"This is an opportunity for the commissioners and analysts to obtain the information they need, spokesman Robert McCreary said.

The **BRAC** Commission must submit its list of base closings to President Bush by September.

COP ENDORSEMENT

Bernard Kerik, the commissioner of the New York City Police Department at the time of the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, had kind words for Charleston law enforcement.

A keynote speaker at the **South Carolina** International Trade Conference last week, Kerik singled out Charleston Police Chief Ruben Greenberg for praise.

Kerik said Greenberg, chief of the city's police force since 1982, is known nationally as a stellar force in police work.

"He's someone I think would have been great in the Guiliani administration," Kerik said, referring to former New York Mayor Rudy Guiliani. "He ignores politics, kicks ass and just wants to get the job done."

HOSPITALITY ROW

A posh downtown hotel is suing a former employee, along with the neighboring restaurant that recently hired him, saying the worker's defection could compromise business trade secrets.

The Market Pavilion Hotel hired Dennis Carey last August to serve as assistant manager for hotel, restaurant and bar operations, according to the civil lawsuit filed last week in Charleston County. The family-owned hotel at 225 East Bay St. also is home to Grill 225, a fine-dining steakhouse.

After months of "thorough and very expensive" training, the suit said, Carey quit the hotel job in April to become assistant manager of the upscale Tristan restaurant at 55 Market St., which is near the Market Pavilion in the City Market area.

Tristan reopened this month under new ownership, after closing last July.

The suit alleges that Carey violated his employment agreement, which said he couldn't work at a similar business within a mile of the hotel for a year after leaving the company. It also alleges that Carey has "hired away" other Market Pavilion employees to work at Tristan, and has contacted others trying to entice them to work there.

The suit said the co-defendants worked together to hurt the Market Pavilion's business by tapping into trade secrets, such as employee information and customer lists.

Carey and Tristan declined to comment on the suit as it involves a personnel issue.

Without being specific, Market Pavilion is seeking actual and punitive damages and is asking the court to temporarily or permanently bar Carey from working at Tristan.

Opinion/Editorial Articles

State escapes most base cuts

The Greenville News

May 14, 2005

South Carolina's value to the military was recognized by the Pentagon. Unfortunately, Charleston got nicked.

EDITORIALS

As elected and community leaders all over the country applaud or decry the Pentagon's proposed base closings, it's important to remember this: The Base Realignment and Closure Commission process was designed to as much as earthly possible take politics out of some painful military decisions.

That said, South Carolina emerged on the plus-side of the Department of Defense's recommendations for saving about \$50 billion over two decades by closing 33 major bases and realigning 29 more. This state has taken devastating hits in the past including the loss of the Charleston Naval Base and Charleston Naval Shipyard in 1995 and the Myrtle Beach Air Force Base in 1991.

Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld's recommendations now go to the BRAC Commission, which must send its "findings and conclusions" to President Bush by Sept. 8. The president approves or rejects the list. If he concurs with it, Congress has 45 days to sign off or reject the proposed changes for military bases.

The BRAC process was developed almost two decades ago because congressional politics made it almost impossible for the military to make the infrastructure adjustments needed in a changing world. The U.S. military exists to defend this nation, period. But an undeniable reality is that states that are home to large military bases depend on them as they would any other industry. Losing a military base causes real pain.

However, the military must use its funds as prudently as possible, and this means eliminating excess capacity and shifting resources where they can be best utilized. Gov. Mark Sanford, the team he worked with, this state's congressional delegation and individual military communities did a good job of articulating the importance of the bases in this state. If the Pentagon's list remains unchanged, South Carolina will have a net gain of 710 military positions. The Charleston area will lose about 1,200 jobs, while military positions will be added at Fort Jackson, McEntire Air National Guard Station and Shaw Air Force Base. Barring an objective finding of a major miscalculation, the Pentagon's recommendations should become final.

'Bruised' not battered by BRAC OPINION

The Post and Courier

May 14, 2005

Twelve years ago, devastating news of a Pentagon proposal to close the Charleston Naval Base and Shipyard sent shock waves through our community. Friday's news of more proposed closings from the Pentagon, though not without significant cause for local concern, was much better by comparison, thanks in large part to those who have worked so hard to minimize those losses.

As Retired Air Force Brig. Gen. Tom Mik-olajcik, a key figure in both the local and state efforts to minimize base closures and job losses, put it Tuesday: "Charleston was just slightly bruised in the process, but the future is much brighter than what we've seen in the past."

The Base Realignment and Closure Commission won't make its final recommendations to President George Bush until September, when he and Congress are expected to approve the panel's plan. But the public officials and private citizens who made our installations' case have achieved some significant victories despite Charleston's bruises -- so far. South Carolina gained more than 700 net jobs even as the Pentagon proposed closing roughly 180 military installations, including 33 major bases, in the United States. Unfortunately, the Charleston area didn't fare as well as the rest of the state, losing more than 1,100 jobs.

Yet even if the Pentagon plan stands, it does not mean more than 1,100 local residents would be out of work. Some of those positions would be transferred. And Charleston would hardly be alone in losing a large number of jobs in the sweeping consolidation of the Defense Accounting and Finance Service.

Our job losses would still hurt, of course. But on Friday, that pain was much sharper elsewhere. Sen. Olympia Snowe, R-Maine, decried proposed base closings in her state as "nothing short of stunning, devastating, and above all, outrageous." Sen. Joe Lieberman, D-Conn., used the terms "irrational and irresponsible" for the plan to close the submarine base in Groton.

Certainly we're better off than they are now, or than we were in 1993. Gen. Mikolajcik stressed that the continuing effort for Charleston would keep emphasizing the "joint-use advantages" we offer. A former wing commander at Charleston Air Force Base, the general explained: "What we have done is articulate the military value of the Charleston military complex, and we think we've been very successful."

First District Rep. Henry Brown praised Gen. Mikolajcik as "the greatest salesman I've ever seen" and vowed to press "cost justification" arguments in trying to regain some of the local jobs. Gen. Mikolajcik had -- and has -- an impressive product to "sell." He sounded ready to keep selling Friday, explaining: "We're not sure there's an economic efficiency in moving 250 engineers [from Charleston] to Jacksonville."

He added, however, that a thorough analysis of the report was needed before challenging the Pentagon plan during BRAC commission hearings that will run into August.

If the Pentagon's proposals are approved, the negative economic impact on our community, while personally immense for those who lose their jobs, would be collectively miniscule in comparison to the fallout from the 1993 BRAC process. The Charleston area now has only slightly more jobs

(27,000) in active-duty military and civilians working directly for the military than were lost (22,000) when the Naval Base and Shipyard closed. And Charleston Southern University economist Al Parrish calculates that Friday's proposed cuts would reduce the current \$4.4 billion annual economic impact of the military here by \$105 million -- slightly more than 2 percent.

But Friday's economic losses and gains shouldn't obscure the primary purpose of U.S. military bases at home or abroad, and the primary consideration in decisions about when and where to close them. The overriding role of our armed forces is to assure national security. Maximizing our military's efficiency demands periodic re-evaluations of which bases should remain open, and which should not.

The Pentagon clearly recognizes the need to maintain most military installations in South Carolina. Those who have worked so long and hard to make our case -- and will continue to do so -- clearly deserve our thanks.



E





**2005 Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission
Suggested Qs and As for South Naval Facilities Engineering Command**

Q1. The South-East region of the United States, with a net gain of 5,761 jobs, fared well through the Department of Defense's (DoD) recommendations. Although DoD recommended a cut of 543 jobs in South Carolina, the state would be left with an overall net gain of 709 jobs due to suggested additions to some installations. Did this region fare well because its bases were in line with the current defense strategy of the United States?

A1. While DoD is responsible for creating the strategy to ensure that our military is well-prepared to meet modern global threats, the Congress established the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission (BRAC) to transparently, independently, and objectively evaluate the suggestions by DoD to close or realign various military installations across the country. The Commission will base its final decision regarding South Naval Facilities Engineering Command almost entirely upon the current military value of the installations.

Q2. Should DoD's suggestions be enacted, Charleston will lose nearly 1,100 jobs through the closure of South Naval Facilities Engineering Command and the Defense Finance and Accounting Service (DFAS) Charleston. Will the Commission take the full economic impact of the suggestion to close South Naval Facilities Engineering Command into account before coming to its final conclusion?

A2. While holding military value as the preeminent consideration, the commission is keenly aware of the human impact had by these suggestions to close or realign various military installations across the country, and will take the economic, environmental, and other effects on the local community into full account prior to making its conclusions regarding the installation.

Q3. Charleston has a history that includes a hard hit from a previous BRAC round. More than 36,000 military and civilian jobs and approximately \$1 billion in payroll were lost in the BRAC round ten years ago. Compared to this, the DoD's suggestion to close South Naval Facilities Engineering Command seems relatively light on the community. Will the Commission still take the military value of this installation into account before the Commission comes to its conclusion?

A3. The Commission will take all pertinent factors into account, as prescribed by law; the Commission will hold military value as the most important consideration. Through this round of BRAC, DoD is seeking to streamline our military and eliminate excess infrastructure that is ineffective in helping to achieve the goal of meeting modern global threats. The task of the Commission is to evaluate the suggestions made by DoD to close or realign various military installations to ensure that DoD's suggestions were made in keeping with the law and after all pertinent factors had been taken into account.

Q4. How can the general public make the Commission aware of factors that it feels may have been overlooked by DoD in DoD's evaluation and suggestion to close South Naval Facilities Engineering Command?

A4. The Commission welcomes community input, as that input is a valuable part of the Commission's evaluation process. Members of the community are encouraged to contact the Commission through the Commission's official website: www.brac.gov.

Facts compiled from included press clippings.



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Southeastern Shuffling: Pentagon Plan Offers Region Net Job Gains.

The Bond Buyer

Matthew Vadum

June 9, 2005

WASHINGTON -- The Southeast as a whole stands to come out ahead if the Pentagon's recently unveiled Base Realignment and Closure Commission report is put into effect in its current form.

Although some of the Southeastern states, particularly Kentucky, could be hit hard, the region would see a net overall gain of 5,761 jobs. Other potential net job losers include Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, Virginia, and West Virginia. The potential net job winners are Alabama, Florida, Georgia, South Carolina, and Tennessee.

"I think generally the Southeast did very well, but the Northeast did not," Standard & Poor's director Christopher Moriarty said Tuesday from Camp Lejeune, N.C., where he was meeting with the base commander to discuss an upcoming military housing privatization bond transaction. "A lot of the jobs the Northeast is losing are going to the Southeast."

Although Georgia could take a hit because the BRAC Commission recommends closing three bases around Atlanta, the state has done "pretty well" in the realignment process because it could experience a potential net gain of more than 7,000 jobs, Moriarty said. Fort Benning - slated to see a net gain of 9,839 jobs - is the biggest single beneficiary in the state.

Though Virginia would be a net loser of more than 1,500 jobs under the current BRAC plan, that figure doesn't tell the whole story, according to Moriarty. One of the most devastating proposals for the Old Dominion State would eliminate 22,925 jobs in leased office buildings around Arlington County, where the Pentagon is located, and in nearby Alexandria, he said.

The workers in those buildings are being relocated because the facilities failed to meet the government's new anti-terrorist safety standards, Moriarty said. Some of the employees would be transferred a few miles away to Fort Belvoir, but the rest could be scattered throughout the nation, he said.

On the other hand, Robert Kurtter, senior vice president at Moody's Investors Service, said the potential military job losses in northern Virginia would probably amount to little more than a blip on the local radar screen. "Northern Virginia is booming and will probably continue to boom," Kurtter said. "Any downsizing will probably be absorbed in the local economy pretty quickly," he said.

The BRAC recommendations, if they are enacted in their current form, are expected to provide a credit boost to many - but not all - taxable military housing privatization bond deals. Kurt van Kuller, director of municipal credit research at Merrill Lynch & Co., said in a report last month: "On balance, the impact on the military housing bond sector appears moderate." The taxable bond deals stem from the Pentagon's desire to improve its housing stock nationwide to reverse falling military reenlistment numbers.

Proceeds from the sale of taxable military housing debt are sometimes used for mortgage loans that allow the Defense Department to transfer existing military housing to developers subject to a 50-year ground lease. In exchange, the developer must agree to operate and maintain the housing, which is made available to military personnel. The major advantage of such transactions is the built-in demand the military provides.

The Pentagon is expected to privatize 100,000 or more units of military housing in coming years, and military housing is a particularly well-established priority for the federal government, according to Moriarty.

Whether the BRAC report's recommendations will actually be enacted is another question altogether. As in states across the country, the bipartisan lobbying to spare Southeastern bases on the list has begun. A committee of presidential employees will wade through the arguments for and against closures, and report to President Bush with a revised list on Sept. 8. Congress and the president then have until November to approve or reject the list submitted by the committee, but cannot line-item veto any of the panel's suggestions.

Although Alabama would gain 2,664 net positions under the BRAC plan, if Maxwell Air Force Base closes as proposed, 1,251 positions would be lost. The move could lead to an economic loss equal to \$ 750 million annually in the local Montgomery economy. In Birmingham, 488 positions would be lost with the closing of the Armed Forces Reserve Center and the Birmingham International Airport Air Guard Station. Elsewhere in the state, the Anniston Army Depot would gain 1,034 positions, Fort Rucker would gain 1,888 positions, and Redstone Arsenal would gain 1,655 positions.

Gov. Bob Riley has spearheaded efforts in Alabama to preserve bases, a spokesman said.

The state provided \$ 6 million for improvements to Enterprise-Ozark Community College's Aviation Campus to address Fort Rucker's need for a larger pool of workers trained to repair helicopters.

"In the weeks and months ahead, we will keep doing everything in our power to protect our installations from the Pentagon's ax," Riley said. Sen. Richard Shelby, R-Alabama, has also

vowed to fight the proposed job losses. Two of the state's military installations were closed in previous rounds of base closings and realignments.

Florida, with 13 facilities affected by the Pentagon's plan, could gain a net 2,757 jobs. Six facilities that would gain nearly 5,000 positions are Eglin Air Force Base, Naval Air Station Jacksonville, Naval Station Mayport, MacDill Air Force Base, Jacksonville International Airport Air Guard Station, and Homestead Air Reserve Station.

Eglin would see the state's biggest individual net gain of 2,218 positions because it would become the nation's training center for the Joint Strike Fighter - a new aircraft to be used by the Navy, Air Force, and Marine Corps.

The realignment of five Florida facilities would result in a total loss of 1,908 positions, with the biggest cut at Naval Air Station Pensacola, which would lose 1,579 jobs.

Patrick Air Force Base, where the Air Force privatized a \$ 92 million development for 552 new homes, would experience a net loss of 136 military jobs under the BRAC proposal. In April, Standard & Poor's rated Patrick Family Housing LLC bonds AA, the highest rating a military housing transaction can receive, according to analyst Ryan Fitzpatrick. He said the base was "highly essential to the Air Force and the Department of Defense because of the functions it serves for the Air Force Space Command and Cape Canaveral."

In a May 25 report after the BRAC recommendations were released, Standard & Poor's said the reduction in force proposed for Patrick was not expected to have an economic impact on military housing there. In Florida, defense-related spending has an annual economic impact of \$ 44 billion, including the employment of more than 714,000 residents, ranking it as the state's third-largest economic sector, according to Gov. Jeb Bush's office.

In 2003, Bush created the Governor's Advisory Council on BRAC comprised of senior business and retired military leaders. The state has also spent more than \$ 700 million buying land around bases to block development that could result in safety and noise issues. Florida has the sixth-largest number of military and civilians employed on bases in the country, with 55,815 military personnel and 27,144 civilians working on bases. Four bases were previously closed.

At Fort McPherson in Atlanta, more than 4,141 jobs could be lost, but Georgia overall stands to come out of the BRAC process the biggest net winner in the Southeast, with a potential net gain of 7,423 jobs. Gov. Sonny Perdue has noted his state is second only to Maryland, which could gain 9,293 net jobs, in net military job gains.

Of Georgia's 13 bases, four could be closed. Facilities could be added at Dobbins Air Reserve Base, Fort Benning, the Marine Corps Logistics Base, Moody Air Force Base, Robins Air Force Base, the Savannah International Airport Air Guard Station, and the Submarine Base at Kings Bay.

Although the additions are good news, state officials said the impact on the local economies where bases might be closed cannot be downplayed. The total economic impact of all of the military facilities and bases is about \$ 20 billion a year.

At Fort McPherson, the more than 4,000 jobs that could be lost might have a severe impact on the local community, which does not have much industrial and commercial development. Atlanta Mayor Shirley Franklin has said she is evaluating how best to redevelop the base if it closes.

Kentucky stands to lose 3,658 net jobs as a result of the BRAC plan, the largest possible job loss in a Southeastern state. Almost 3,000 of the jobs would be lost at historic Fort Knox. Local politicians had braced for the worst before the report came out; when it did, Sen. Mitch McConnell, R-Ky., said he was "relieved" that BRAC did not recommend shutting down Fort Knox.

But state officials there have experience in ameliorating the local economic impact of base closures by converting former military bases to commercial uses. For example, the Kentucky Asset/Liability Commission sold \$ 11 million of taxable notes last month to construct two buildings at a former military base in Lexington. It had been an Army depot but closed in 1988 following an earlier BRAC process. The facility, now called Bluegrass Station, offers commercial and warehouse space.

Louisiana would lose 1,297 net jobs if the BRAC report were to be implemented in its current form. About 2,700 jobs could be lost at the Naval Support Activity base in New Orleans, but some of those would be offset by a gain of 1,407 jobs at the Naval Air Station near the city.

However, Louisiana, like Kentucky, has a track record in overcoming the economic problems created by military base closings. Officials faced significant economic hurdles when the England Air Force Base closed in 1992.

Officials aimed to turn the land near Alexandria into a viable area for economic development projects and created the England Economic and Industrial Development District, which this week sold \$ 32 million in revenue bonds to develop some of the land. Proceeds will be used to renovate some of the property for the Union Tank Car Co. Officials have worked for years to bring the deal to market. The proposed development includes a state-of-the-art rail car manufacturing facility and administrative offices for the company.

Naval Station Pascagoula in Mississippi is slated for closure, leading to a loss of 963 positions. It is among nine major Navy bases to be closed under the BRAC plan. Altogether, Mississippi would lose 1,678 net positions under BRAC from the 10 military facilities in the state. The Magnolia State would lose an additional 741 positions from realignments at the Southeast Human Resources Support Center, Keesler Air Force Base, Key Field Air Guard Station, and Naval Air Station Meridian.

Sen. Trent Lott, R-Miss., has vowed to vigorously fight the proposed actions and appears confident of his chances of success. "No state is more familiar with the BRAC process than Mississippi," Lott said. "Three times in the 1990s we saw Mississippi bases targeted by BRAC lists, and yet our state has never lost a base to BRAC."

Although at Pope Air Force base in North Carolina, about 4,145 jobs could be lost, the state stands to lose only 422 net jobs. Sen. Elizabeth Dole, R-N.C., seemed relieved that BRAC did not propose ending more jobs in her state. "Support for our state and our military bases transcends party lines," she said.

According to Standard & Poor's, some metropolitan statistical areas, such as Fayetteville, N.C., could be hit with both job outflows and inflows. The city may realize a negative 6,800 in proposed job changes with the realignment of Pope Air Force Base. But this is expected to be offset by a 7,420 gain in jobs at Fort Bragg, which could increase employment there by 3.7%, according to the rating agency. When combined, both potential actions would result in a 0.2%

total net employment increase.

Standard & Poor's Moriarty said Tuesday the Pentagon is working on a \$ 240 million taxable military housing privatization bond deal that will probably come to market this summer. The housing units affected are located at the Marine Corps' facilities in Camp Lejeune and Cherry Point, he said. The new BRAC report definitely helps the transaction, he added.

Though the **South Naval Facilities Engineering Command** station in South Carolina is expected to close with a loss of 543 jobs, the state is expected to experience a net gain of 709 jobs if BRAC's current recommendations are carried out. Sen. Lindsey Graham, R-S.C., acknowledged that his state might come out of the process a net winner.

"While it was unfortunate that we did lose some positions, our footprint actually increased," Graham said.

Although BRAC has slated the Army Reserve facility in Kingsport, Tenn., for closure, the state is expected to gain 1,088 net jobs overall. Sen. Lamar Alexander, R-Tenn., said he plans to work with local military leaders to ensure BRAC understands how important the Kingsport facility is to Tennessee.

Virginia "appears to have fared reasonably well" in light of the recommendations, Gov. Mark R. Warner said last month. "For instance, Fort Belvoir leads the nation with a proposed gain of almost 12,000 military and civilian positions. Fort Lee could see an additional 7,300 personnel. Our Hampton Roads shipyards will grow, as will the world's largest navy base at Norfolk," Warner said.

However, the state overall stands to lose 1,574 net jobs.

The BRAC proposals for Virginia are expected to have a positive credit impact on a taxable \$ 512.8 million Defense Department military housing privatization deal involving 2,070 housing units at Fort Belvoir that closed Feb. 24. Clark Realty Capital was financial adviser on the deal and Lehman Brothers was the sole underwriter.

The deal refinanced the original transaction that closed in December 2003. The bonds that sold almost four months ago received ratings ranging from Aa3 to Aaa from Moody's, and ranging from A to AA from Standard & Poor's.

One municipal market participant who did not wish to be identified noted that the Navy is currently working on a large taxable bond transaction involving the privatization of almost 6,000 units of military housing in Maryland, Virginia, and West Virginia. It is unclear how much debt will be issued, but the transaction could go to market this summer, he said.

For West Virginia, the BRAC proposal would mean a net loss of 251 jobs, with the closure of two Army Reserve centers, a Navy Marine center, and the realignment of the Air National Guard's 130th Airlift Wing from Yeager Airport in Charleston to Pope Air Force Base in North Carolina.

"It really will be difficult for the state to lose that [Air Wing] facility up there; it's one of the top-rated guard units in the military system and it's sort of baffling to us as to why it was targeted," said Nelson Sorah, West Virginia's deputy treasurer.

The state is trying to demonstrate to the Pentagon that it can expand the capacity of the guard

station, which houses eight C-130 turboprop cargo planes, but has enough space for 15. Sen. Robert C. Byrd, D-W.Va., met with the president last month and hand-delivered a letter signed by the state's congressional delegation that urges Bush to reject any list that recommends closure or realignment of the Airlift wing at Yeager Airport.

Local News Articles

South Carolina Military Bases Are Highly Ranked by the Defense Department

KRTBN Knight-Ridder Tribune

Chuck Crumbo

June 12, 2005

South Carolina's major military installations ranked highly in the analysis that the Defense Department used to decide which bases to close.

The reports, made public after the recent round of base-closing proposals, bode well for the future of Palmetto State bases. The assessments could mean the bases will attract more missions and jobs, supporters in military communities said.

"We're pleased to see the military value of our bases as strong as it is," said Brig. Gen. George Patrick, coordinator of the state's Military Base Task Force. "We thought it was, but we didn't have the empirical data."

The reports show:

-- The state's two active-duty Air Force installations -- at Charleston and Sumter -- ranked in the top 11 percent of U.S. air bases.

-- McEntire Joint National Guard Base in Lower Richland's Eastover was ranked as the country's No. 1 Air Guard station. It also placed in the upper-third of all air bases.

-- Columbia's Fort Jackson was rated 26th out of 97 Army installations in terms of military value.

-- The Marine Corps considered consolidating all of its basic training for recruits at Beaufort County's Parris Island.

The Midlands was a big winner when the Pentagon released its base-closing recommendations May 13 to the Base Realignment and Closure Commission, or BRAC.

The area's three bases -- Fort Jackson, McEntire Joint National Guard Base and Shaw Air Force Base in Sumter -- are slated to gain 1,800 jobs because the Defense Department assigned new missions to each base.

Those gains offset the loss of 1,100 jobs in Charleston. There, the Pentagon wants to close the **South Naval Facilities Engineering Command** and Defense Finance and Accounting Service.

The Defense Department studies support claims that S.C. bases measure up well against other facilities, base supporters said. The reports also show at least one base in a better light than some observers had believed.

Shaw, home to the 20th Fighter Wing and 9th Air Force, ranked No. 7 among fighter bases, according to an analysis of Air Force statistics by The State.

In addition, Shaw rated high as a possible site for tanker and airlift operations, not now flown from the Sumter base. Overall, the analysis showed Shaw ranked 18th of 154 Air Force bases, just outside of the top 10 percent.

That ranking contradicts a rash of reports and Internet rumors earlier this year stating Shaw was in jeopardy of being closed or was on the Pentagon's hit list.

"I think the numbers bear out that Shaw will be open for a long time," said Tom Olsen, who led Sumter's efforts to keep the base open.

Shaw is the Air Force's largest F-16 base and host to the 9th Air Force, which oversees bases in the eastern United States and air operations in the Middle East.

The presence of the 9th Air Force -- a command, not a flying unit -- at Shaw is responsible for the Pentagon's plan to move to Sumter the 3rd Army's headquarters and more than 800 soldiers, Olsen said. The 3rd Army, now in Atlanta, handles ground operations in the Middle East.

"I know when I was assigned to the 9th Air Force in the late 1970s and later in the 1980s and early 1990s, there always was talk of how to get the two headquarters together," said Olsen, a retired major general and former Shaw commander. "This BRAC gives them that opportunity."

Nearby, McEntire ranked 48th among Air Force bases. It too had to fight off perceptions it was not needed since Shaw is just 20 miles east on U.S. 378.

But McEntire not only survived but was a winner as the Pentagon said it plans to transfer nine F-16s and 426 airmen to the Lower Richland base.

Charleston, home to 54 C-17 transport planes and the 437th Airlift Wing and 315th Airlift Wing Reserve, ranked No. 1 among the Air Force's airlift bases, according to The State's analysis. Overall, it rated sixth among 154 Air Force bases.

However, Tom Mikolajcik, one of the leaders of the effort to save the Charleston base, cautioned the rankings -- while important -- do not tell the whole story.

"Some communities are trying to use this and say, aEMy base ranked higher and is closed (rather) than one that remains open," said Mikolajcik, a retired Air Force brigadier general and former Charleston base commander.

As an example, he cited Ellsworth Air Force Base in South Dakota. While it ranked 22nd among Air Force bases in The State's analysis, it is on the closing list. Meanwhile, Hickam Air Force Base in Hawaii, which ranked 68th, will remain open.

"The data on Charleston is what we have stated all along from an operational and training perspective," Mikolajcik said. "If you look at past data, Charleston was in Tier 1, the most capable."

Fort Jackson's No. 26 rating for military value among the Army's 97 installations says a lot about its importance to that service, said Donald "Ike" McLeese, president of the Greater Columbia

Chamber of Commerce.

The high rating means the Columbia fort should hold onto its current missions, including serving as the Army's largest training center, and possibly gain more, McLeese said.

More than 37,000 soldiers a year graduate from basic training at Fort Jackson; an additional 15,000 receive advanced training.

If the Pentagon's recommendations are approved, the Army's three drill sergeant schools will be consolidated at Fort Jackson. The fort also will train all of the military's chaplains. The post will gain about 615 jobs.

The base-closing studies show Beaufort was in line to be a big winner.

The Marine Corps considered closing its only other recruit training facility -- in San Diego -- and consolidating its two boot camps at Parris Island.

However, the idea was discarded because of the expense. Instead, the Marine Corps recommended keeping its San Diego training center open.

But some military leaders still say the Marines should close San Diego and operate just one boot camp -- like the larger Air Force and Navy.

However, closing San Diego and sending its recruits to Parris Island would put the Beaufort base "at the pinch point" in terms of space, said John Payne, chairman of Beaufort's Military Enhancement Committee.

Consolidating boot camps would nearly double the size of the Parris Island operation.

San Diego trains about 16,000 male recruits a year. Also, it has 1,725 Marines and sailors and 900 civilians on staff.

Parris Island trains about 19,000 recruits a year -- male and female. It also has 2,220 Marines and sailors, and 800 civilians assigned to it.

Still, Parris Island has trained more Marines in the past. During World War II, for instance, it averaged 50,000 recruits a year.

If more recruits are brought to Parris Island, the Marines would have to cut back the length of basic training, now 13 weeks, Payne said.

That could hurt recruits, Payne said. "I think we're turning out a better product now. Training is longer and more thorough."

According to the base-closing reports, Beaufort managed to dodge one bullet as well.

The military considered closing the Marine Corps Air Station at Beaufort and consolidating all Marine air operations on the East Coast at Cherry Point, N.C.

Instead, the Defense Department opted to keep Beaufort open in case it needed another base along the Atlantic seaboard to move some of its planes from the highly populated area near

Oceana Air Station, Va.

Payne said Beaufort would be ready for an additional fighter squadron, already having tackled the encroachment issue the military faces at Oceana.

The city and county have worked with the military to ensure development does not encroach upon the air station, hampering its operations, Payne said. "We're the poster child for working with (them)."

While positive, the reports do not mean South Carolina is home-free in the latest base-closing round.

BRAC is holding hearings around the country and could reverse some of the Pentagon's recommendations before submitting a final closing list to President Bush in September.

The commission plans a June 28 hearing in Charlotte and S.C. officials will attend, Patrick said. Charleston, which stands to lose 1,100 jobs, will make its case to save those jobs.

"We still feel like we're about midway or maybe in the third quarter of the game," Patrick said. "So we're gonna keep pushing the issues."

Base closing commissioners to visit South Carolina

Associated Press State and Local Wire

Bruce Smith

May 31, 2005

Members of the commission on base closings will visit South Carolina next week to tour two facilities the Defense Department wants to close.

They will visit the Defense Finance and Accounting Service and the **South Naval Facilities Engineering Command** on June 7.

The commission has a regional hearing that day in St. Louis to hear state and local officials defend bases targeted for closing in seven Midwestern states.

The commission generally doesn't release commissioners' names before a site visit and it has not been determined whether commissioners visiting Charleston will meet with reporters, said Audrey Jones, a commission spokeswoman.

South Carolina and local officials will defend the Charleston facilities at a later formal hearing before the commission.

The nearest hearings to South Carolina are scheduled in Charlotte, N.C., and Atlanta in late June. It hasn't been determined which hearing might deal with the South Carolina bases.

The Defense Finance and Accounting Service, with about 370 jobs, began operations in February 1995 and was brought to the old Charleston Naval Base after the base was ordered closed two

years earlier.

The center is one of 13 the military wants to consolidate in three locations.

Gov. Mark Sanford's office has said the state will try to persuade the commission to consolidate those operations in Charleston.

About 550 jobs at the Naval Facilities Engineering Command's Southern Division are targeted to be moved to Jacksonville, Fla., Great Lakes, Ill., and Norfolk, Va. The agency handles construction management for Navy projects.

In all, the Charleston area will lose about 1,100 jobs in the latest round of closures although the state as a whole will gain more than 700.

The base closing commissioners visit facilities losing either 300 civilian jobs or a total of 400 civilian and military jobs.

State stands to gain military jobs

The Greenville News

Dan Hoover

May 14, 2005

Pentagon wants to move Army headquarters from Alabama to Shaw

By Dan Hoover

STAFF_WRITER

Battered a decade ago, South Carolina dodged a bullet Friday in the second round of post-Cold War military base closings.

At stake were the livelihoods of thousands of families. Bad news could have sent shock waves throughout the state's economy.

"It's a good day," said Lt. Col. Pete Brooks, spokesman for Adjutant General Stan Spears.

The state could see a net gain of 709 military jobs and an Army headquarters.

Gov. Mark Sanford told The Greenville News the Pentagon "looked at its military assets in South Carolina and decided they were of national significance to the overall fabric of our defense."

While politicians jockeyed in the limelight of good news and described South Carolina's role in America's defense, people like Patricia Hunt, a civilian secretary for the 20th Fighter Wing at Shaw Air Force Base, merely breathed a sigh of relief. Her paycheck will continue.

"There was a lot of apprehension, plenty of rumors and everybody seemed to think they know what's going on and they don't," Hunt said of the agonizing weeks leading up to the Friday

morning announcement.

"Now I feel great" that Shaw not only was spared but will acquire added missions, planes and personnel, she said.

Hunt, 54, was perhaps more worried than others because base closure was a road she had been down before.

In 1995, she was working at Griffiss Air Force Base outside her Rome, N.Y., hometown when the first Base Realignment and Closure Commission ordered it shut down. Her husband, retired from the military, lost his contractor's job, too.

Next stop, Shaw. Then the butterflies returned, with ample justification.

Shaw expanded

Shaw, previously feared vulnerable, will gain 3rd Army Headquarters as a result of the recommended closure of Fort McPherson in Alabama. Shaw, which is 9th Air Force headquarters, will gain 817 jobs, 742 of them military and 75 civilian.

U.S. Rep. John M. Spratt Jr., senior Democrat on the House Budget Committee, said Shaw and other bases have "cleared the first and by far the most important hurdle in this base closure round."

"Military value counts the most in this process. The Air Force has decided not only that Shaw is an asset but one that it wants to build upon," Spratt said.

He said the Pentagon's decision "puts us in good standing before the Base Realignment and Closure Commission" but cautioned that the final decision still rests with the independent panel.

Charleston again will take it on the chin, although nowhere near the scope of the 1993 Base Realignment and Closure Commission's shutdown of its historic and economically huge naval base and shipyard.

This time, Charleston is slated to lose the Defense Finance and Accounting Service and its 368 civilian jobs and the **South Naval Facilities Engineering Command** with six military and 492 civilian positions.

Also, the Naval Weapons Station will lose 170 military and 149 civilian jobs through realignment.

Earlier losses

A decade ago, Charleston lost more than 36,000 military and civilian jobs, along with their \$1 billion annual payroll.

At the time, South Carolina had in Republican Strom Thurmond and Democrat Ernest F. Hollings two of the Senate's most senior members. Their combined efforts couldn't save the Charleston facilities and jobs.

Charleston Air Force Base, a major point of re-supply and airlift for U.S. troops in Iraq and

Afghanistan, will remain intact.

State and local officials had feared for Fort Jackson, near Columbia, one of the Army's major basic training installations, and the shutdown or possible merger of Shaw and the McEntire Air National Guard Base at Eastover.

All three will gain military and civilian positions, as will the Marine Corps Air Station at Beaufort. Fort Jackson will now train all Army drill sergeants and be a training center for chaplains of all services.

For U.S. Rep. Jim Clyburn, it was a mixed bag, gains at McEntire, losses at Charleston.

His 6th District, sprawling from the Midlands to the Pee Dee to the Lowcountry, contains only McEntire, but many of the civilian workers and contractors at Fort Jackson, Shaw AFB and Charleston naval facilities live in the district.

"I was hoping for it to be as good as it is, but to be realistic, I had no idea," he said. "The big thing for me was (keeping) McEntire," but the addition of nine advanced F-16s, augmenting the 18 already there, there was a big surprise, he said.

Sweeping scope

Defense officials said they would recommend the closing of 33 major bases and hundreds of smaller installations around the country. The Pentagon said 29,005 military and civilian jobs would be eliminated, 8,600 in Connecticut alone, the hardest-hit state.

Several historic posts were marked for closure, including Walter Reed Army Medical Center, Fort Monroe across from Norfolk, Va.; Fort Monmouth in New Jersey, and the Navy's first submarine base at Groton, Conn.

U.S. Sen. Jim DeMint of Greenville said it is encouraging that South Carolina was recommended for an increase in missions and personnel because "we have supportive communities and the missions being performed in our state are indispensable to the war on terror."

Sen. Lindsey Graham, a Seneca Republican and Armed Services Committee member, said the state fared well "because we have supportive communities and the missions being performed at installations in our state are indispensable to the war on terror. As this round of BRAC proves, our state represents growth potential for the Department of Defense.

"While it was unfortunate that we did lose some positions, our footprint actually increased," he said.

Hard to change

It would take the votes of seven of the nine BRAC members to add or subtract from the Pentagon's recommended list.

The commission will begin its review Monday and must send its recommendations to President Bush by Sept. 8. If Bush agrees, he must send the report to Congress by Sept. 23. If he doesn't, it must go back to the commission, which is required to issue a revised report by Oct. 20.

Bush then has until Nov. 7 to submit the revised report to Congress whose members have 45 legislative days to issue a joint resolution of disapproval. Lacking that, the report will take effect.

Spratt said that in the past, BRAC has adopted 90 percent of the Pentagon's recommendations and, under new regulations, has even less leeway for change.

'Dan Hoover covers politics and public policy issues. He can be reached at 298-4883.

South Carolina dodges major base closings

Net gain/(loss)

Installation	Recommendation	Military	Civilian	Total
Defense Finance & Accounting				
Service, Charleston	Close	0	(368)	(368)
South Naval Facilities				
Engineering Command	Close	(6)	(492)	(543)
Fort Jackson	Gain	435	180	615
Marine Corps Air				
Station, Beaufort	Gain	0	12	12
McEntire Air Guard Station	Gain	418	8	426
Shaw Air Force Base	Gain	742	75	817
Naval Weapons				
Station, Charleston	Realign	(125)	(125)	(250)
State total		1,464	(710)	709

Brief

The Sun News
Chuck Crumbo

South Carolina walked under ladders, kicked black cats and sneered at broken mirrors as Friday the 13th turned out to be a lucky day for almost all of the state's military communities.

As the Defense Department unveiled proposed base closings, the Midlands emerged as the big winner, gaining nearly 2,000 new jobs at Fort Jackson, Shaw Air Force Base and McEntire Joint

National Guard Base.

Possible S.C. closings and realignments wouldn't have much effect on the Myrtle Beach area, said local officials who handled the decommissioning of the local Air Force base during a round of base closings in 1993.

For some areas, base closing can be painful, but the Myrtle Beach area rebounded quickly after its base closing, said Buddy Styers, executive director of the Air Force Base Redevelopment Authority.

The economy was fortunate to have tourism to fall back on and now the 3,900 acres of previously untaxed military land generates \$1 million in property taxes each year for schools, Myrtle Beach and Horry County, Styers said.

Beaufort's Marine Corps installations were virtually untouched by Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld's base-closing proposals to the Base Realignment and Closure Commission.

Charleston, which lost 22,000 jobs in 1993 when the Pentagon shuttered the Navy base, suffered two small blows. A Defense Department finance office and a Navy engineering unit are slated to be moved. The Naval Weapon Station in nearby Goose Creek also would lose jobs but remain open. In total, the three moves would cost Charleston 1,161 jobs.

Pope Air Force Base in North Carolina would lose 4,800 troops and come under Army control. Two Army commands, the U.S. Army Forces Command and the Headquarters U.S. Army Reserve Command, would shift to Pope and Fort Bragg, N.C., from Fort McPherson, Ga., which is slated for closure.

Fort Bragg would gain 4,078 troops and 247 civilian jobs from an influx of European-based forces and the creation of a new combat brigade in the 82nd Airborne Division.

The biggest loss in N.C. civilian jobs would come at Marine Corps Air Station Cherry Point, where the Pentagon plan calls for sacrificing 656 positions as helicopter maintenance is shifted to four other states. The base would gain 48 military positions. More than 5,700 civilians now work at Cherry Point. Camp Lejeune would lose 182 military jobs and one civilian position.

Rumsfeld's proposals included moving the Third Army's headquarters from Fort Gillem in Atlanta to Shaw. Nine F-16 fighters and 426 Air Force jobs would move from Mountain Home Air Force Base, Idaho, to McEntire.

The Third Army, which brings 817 jobs to Sumter, is a three-star general's command, responsible for ground operations in Iraq and the Middle East. It will be across the street from another Shaw tenant, the Ninth Air Force, which is responsible for air operations in the same region of the world.

Landing the Third Army headquarters should bolster Shaw, which some observers thought could be closed, said Rep. John Spratt, a Democrat whose district includes Sumter County. "Military value counts the most in this process," he said. "The Air Force has decided not only that Shaw is an asset, but one that it wants to build upon."

If Rumsfeld's recommendations are approved, Fort Jackson, which gains 615 jobs, will be the only post to train Army drill sergeants. Also, its chaplaincy program will be expanded to train all

chaplains in the Army, Navy, Marine Corps and Air Force.

At Beaufort, the Marine Corps Air Station would gain 12 jobs. There was no change at the Parris Island Marine boot camp.

Staff writer Travis Tritten and The Associated Press contributed to this report.

S.C. effect

Fort Jackson:

will add 435 military and 180 civilian positions.

The drill-sergeant school at the installation will add instructors from Fort Benning, Ga., and Fort Leonard Wood, Mo.

The Joint Center of Excellence for Religious Training and Education will consolidate religious education by the various service branches.

An Army Reserve center will coordinate Army reservists in the southeast region.

Shaw Air Force Base:

will add 817 positions.

The headquarters of the Third Army from Fort McPherson, Ga., will be added.

McEntire Air National Guard Station:

will add 418 military and eight civilian positions.

will receive nine F-16s from Mountain Home Air Force Base in Idaho.

The Marine Air Corps Station Beaufort:

will add 12 civilians in depot maintenance jobs.

Charleston Naval Weapons Station:

will lose about 250 jobs, mainly as the result of moving some positions elsewhere.

Defense Financing and Accounting Service, Charleston:

will be closed, with 368 civilian positions lost.

South Naval Facilities Engineering Command, Charleston:

will be closed with six military, 492 civilian and 45 contractor jobs lost.

Jobs from the command would be moved to Jacksonville, Fla., Great Lakes, Ill., and Norfolk, Va.

N.C. effect

Pope Air Force Base:

The installation would be transferred to the Army.

The U.S. Army Forces Command and the Headquarters U.S. Army Reserve Command would relocate from Fort McPherson, Ga., which would be closed.

The 43rd Airlift Wing's 25 C-130E aircraft would shift to Arkansas; the 23rd Fighter Group's A-10s (36 aircraft) would shift to Georgia.

A 16-aircraft Air Force Reserve/active duty associate unit would be formed to support Army Airborne operations at Fort Bragg.

The 43rd Medical Group would be dismantled in favor of a medical squadron.

Fort Bragg:

European-based forces would relocate to Fort Bragg.

A 4th Brigade Combat Team would be created in the 82nd Airborne Division.

The 7th Special Forces Group would transfer to Florida, joining the Air Force Special Operations Forces at Eglin Air Force Base.

Seymour Johnson Air Force Base:

F100 engine repair facilities for the F-15 aircraft, currently based in Florida and Virginia, would be centralized at Seymour Johnson, and 87 F-15s would be stationed at the base.

Eight of the 40 KC-135 tanker aircrafts to be removed from Grand Forks, N.D., would join the 10 KC-135s currently based at Seymour Johnson.

Cherry Point Naval Air Station:

Helicopter maintenance would shift to Virginia, Maryland, Louisiana and South Carolina, as well as restructured facilities at Cherry Point and Camp Lejeune, with an estimated loss of 1,190 jobs.

Aircraft maintenance duties would be shifted from two Pennsylvania bases slated for closure, gaining 670 jobs.

Supply, storage and distribution functions would move to satellite depots.

The Naval Hospital would convert to a clinic with an ambulatory surgery center, eliminating inpatient service.

Editorial/Opinion Articles



**2005 Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission
Suggested Talking Points for Pope Air Force Base**

- 1. The Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission (BRAC) will base its final decision as to whether or not to recommend Pope Air Force Base (AFB) for realignment, almost entirely upon the military value of the installation.**
 - While the Commission will take the economic, environmental, and other effects that the suggestion to realign Pope Air Force Base (AFB) could have on the surrounding community, the Commission will base its final decision almost entirely upon military value.
 - The Department of Defense's (DoD) strategic determination of military value is partially based upon factors such as jointness, ease of mobility, and efficiency. As the Commission ensures that DoD made its suggestions in accordance with the law, the Commission will take the military value of an installation into full account.

- 2. The factors taken into consideration, and the process followed, by the Commission have been specifically outlined by law.**
 - The Congress established the Commission as an independent entity to evaluate, in an open, transparent, thorough, and objective manner—as prescribed by law, the suggestions made by DoD to close or realign various installations.
 - The Commission will be a source of accountability to the public for the decisions made by DoD to close or realign various military installations, ensuring that DoD made its suggestions in accordance with the law.
 - While DoD determines the strategy for best streamlining our military such that it is well-prepared to meet modern global threats, the sole task of the Commission is to ensure that DoD has made its suggestions according to statute and taken all pertinent factors into account in its evaluations. The Commission will make a full evaluation of the military value of Pope AFB before coming to its conclusion.

- 3. The Commission is very aware of the human impact had by the suggestion to realign Pope AFB, should that suggestion be enacted.**
 - The Commission understands the very significant ties the military has to the economy of North Carolina and will take this into full account, while basing its final decision almost entirely upon military value.
 - The Commission encourages members of the Community to contact the Commission with information that they feel may have been overlooked by DoD in DoD's evaluation and suggestions, through the official BRAC website: www.brac.gov.



**2005 Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission
Suggested Qs and As for Pope Air Force Base, Spring Lake**

Q1. In North Carolina, 135,000 people are employed by the military, giving the state the ranking of having the 4th largest military presence. The state has 6 major installations and the military contributes approximately \$18 billion a year to the state's economy. Should the Department of Defense's (DoD) proposal be enacted, Pope Air Force Base (AFB) would lose close to 4800 jobs. Will the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission (BRAC) consider the effect that this suggestion would have on the region?

A1. The Congress established the BRAC Commission as an independent entity to perform an open and transparent evaluation of the suggestions by DoD to close or realign various military installations across the country and ensure that those suggestions were made in accordance with the law and after all pertinent factors had been taken into account.

Q2. North Carolina has military installations from 4 branches and has the Sunny Point Military Ocean Terminal. Did this factor into DoD's suggestion move the military to more southern installations?

A1. While DoD is responsible for creating the strategy to ensure that our military is as streamlined as possible in order to meet modern global threats, the Commission's only task is to ensure that the suggestions made by DoD to close or realign various military installations have been made in accordance with the law and after all pertinent factors have been taken into account. The Commission will base its decision almost entirely upon the military value of the installation.

Q3. Should DoD's suggestions be enacted, Pope AFB would receive the U.S. Army Forces Command (FORSCOM) and the Headquarters U.S. Army Reserve Command from Ft. McPherson--which would be closed. Will the Commission consider whether the realignment suggested by DoD for Pope AFB would make it more or less able to hand these?

A3. The Commission will perform a full evaluation, as prescribed by law, before coming to its conclusions. While military value will be the preeminent consideration, the Commission will also consider whether the surrounding community has the necessary supporting infrastructure to receive more troops, or what the economic, environmental and other effects on the surrounding community would be, should the suggestion be enacted.

Q4. The Community appears relatively pacific regarding the realignment of Pope AFB, as the growth suggested for Ft. Bragg has a consoling value. Will the Commission consider the effect that these suggestions would have, beyond just considering the military value of the installation, before it reaches its final conclusions?

A4. The commission is well aware of the human impact that the suggestions by DoD would have on the surrounding community and will take the economic, environmental, and other effects into consideration, as prescribed by law, prior to making its conclusions.

Q5. How can members of the Community make the Commission aware of factors that they feel have been overlooked by DoD in DoD's evaluation and analysis?

A5. Public input is not only welcomed by the Commission, the input is vitally important to the process. Members of the Community are encouraged to contact the Commission through the official Commission website: www.brac.gov.

Facts compiled from included press clippings.



POPE AIR FORCE BASE SPRING LAKE, NORTH CAROLINA

National News Articles

Pope base would shed troops under Pentagon proposal

New face for Pope, thousands of new faces at Bragg in BRAC plan

Dole To Help People Displaced After Proposed Base Closings

Sen. Dole reacts to BRAC announcement

Local News Articles

BRAC work not over, officials say (Goldsboro, NC)

Yeager pledges cash, land to Guard (Charleston, WV)

Base-closing plan goes easy on N.C. (Winston-Salem, NC)

N.C. will face no base closings (New Bern, NC)

Military at Pope Air Force Base react to BRAC (Spring Lake, NC)

Mix of N.C. reaction: Concern, elation (Charlotte, NC)

Carolinas spared in Pentagon proposal to close bases (Charlotte, NC)

Opinions/ Editorials

For many workers who call this area home, 656 is not just a number, but it's their lives (New Bern, NC)

N.C., S.C. avoid big hit (Charlotte, NC)

State Wants Stronger Military Connections: (Greensboro, NC)

State dodges a bullet (Durham, NC)

National News Articles

Pope base would shed troops under Pentagon proposal

The Associated Press

May 13, 2005

RALEIGH -- Pope Air Force Base would lose 4,800 troops, and Marine Corps Air Station Cherry Point would lose 656 civilian jobs under a base closing proposal released this morning by the Pentagon.

In other North Carolina moves, the Department of Defense also proposes closing a Navy Reserve center in Asheville and an Army Reserve center in Albemarle, resulting in a total loss of 36 positions.

Fort Bragg would gain 4,078 troops and 247 civilian jobs under the plan, while Seymour Johnson Air Force Base would add 345 troops. In addition to losing the civilian jobs, Cherry Point would add 48 military positions.

Camp Lejeune is losing 182 military jobs and one civilian position, according to the proposal.

In all, the state would lose 568 military positions and gain 307 civilian positions.

By comparison, neighboring Virginia would gain more than 5,000 military positions but lose more than 8,800 civilian jobs. South Carolina is to gain 1,400 military positions and lose more than 700 civilian jobs.

Details of the moves came from a copy of the plan that was distributed to members of Congress and made available to The Associated Press.

Much of eastern North Carolina was waiting to find out whether the military _ one of the region's major economic drivers _ would be downsized as part of the latest round of base closings.

Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld has indicated that closings will be less severe than expected, saying he had scaled back his recommendations because the military had less surplus space than once estimated.

The recommendations were being submitted today to an independent base closing commission.

North Carolina has the fourth-largest military presence of any state, directly employing more than 135,000 people at its six major bases and contributing \$18 billion annually to the North Carolina economy, according to a state-sponsored study.

The state's strong military culture, supportive locals and aggressive courting by elective officials may result in the addition of troops as bases elsewhere close, said Loren Thompson, a defense analyst with Lexington Institute, an Arlington, Va.-based think tank.

Rumsfeld said Thursday at a Pentagon news conference that domestic bases have 5 percent to 10 percent more space than they need, contrasting with earlier estimates of a 20 percent to 25 percent capacity surplus. That indicates that his list of proposed base closings and consolidations is shorter than originally expected.

The changes, if approved, would save the government an estimated \$48.8 billion over a 20-year period, Rumsfeld said.

Lt. Gov. Beverly Perdue has spearheaded North Carolina's \$2 million lobbying effort to protect the state's military facilities. The state has also earmarked \$20 million in bond money to buy buffer land to protect bases from encroaching development and give them room to expand.

Sen. Elizabeth Dole, R-N.C., a member of the Armed Services Committee, has also lobbied the nine-member Base Realignment and Closure Commission to protect North Carolina from cuts.

North Carolina has bases from four of the five branches of the military, as well as Sunny Point Military Ocean Terminal. That mix of service branches should also help the state weather closings, since the military has been looking to integrate bases and missions, Thompson said.

New face for Pope, thousands of new faces at Bragg in BRAC plan

Associated Press

Margaret Lillard

May 13, 2005

RALEIGH, N.C. - A drastic shift in identity and mission are being eyed for Pope Air Force Base, which would lose 4,800 troops and come under Army control in recommendations made Friday by the Pentagon for streamlining its worldwide operations.

Two Army commands - the U.S. Army Forces Command (FORSCOM) and the Headquarters U.S. Army Reserve Command, a FORSCOM subordinate - would shift to Pope and Fort Bragg from Fort McPherson, Ga., which is slated for closure.

Fort Bragg itself would gain 4,078 troops and 247 civilian jobs from an influx of European-based forces and the creation of a new combat brigade in the 82nd Airborne Division.

"I'm not sure any of us understand the full range of opportunities that will provide the community and the base," Sen. Richard Burr, R-N.C., said. "What this does is confirm what we thought and it's that the military still looks at North Carolina's bases as the front line of defense in this country."

The biggest loss in civilian jobs would come at Marine Corps Air Station Cherry Point, where the Pentagon plan calls for sacrificing 656 positions as helicopter maintenance is shifted to four other states. The base would gain 48 military positions.

More than 5,700 civilians now work at Cherry Point.

Sen. Elizabeth Dole, R-N.C., the state's senior senator who has lobbied commission members on behalf of the state's bases, said she would work to help people displaced from jobs by the realignment of Pope Air Force Base and the Naval Air Depot at Cherry Point. Dole also promised to try to head off the recommendations and persuade the commission to save the jobs.

Col. John Gumbel, commanding officer of the Naval Air Depot at Cherry Point, said the proposed cuts were no worse than officials expected, and perhaps even better than their initial projections.

He noted that the depot will keep the bulk of its work, while some jobs will be transferred only to other parts of Cherry Point and the Marines' New River air station nearby.

"Anything we would do we can easily accomplish through attrition," Gumbel said. "Will there be perfect fits with everything? No."

In all, the state would lose 568 military positions and gain 307 civilian positions if the Department of Defense proposals were implemented as written - an unlikely prospect, with months to go in the base realignment and closure process.

The changes include shutting a Navy Reserve center in Asheville and an Army Reserve center in Albemarle, resulting in a total loss of 36 positions.

Seymour Johnson Air Force Base would add 345 troops, while Camp Lejeune would lose 182 military jobs and one civilian position.

By comparison, neighboring Virginia would gain more than 5,000 military positions but lose more than 8,800 civilian jobs. South Carolina is to gain 1,400 military positions and lose more than 700 civilian jobs.

Making Pope into the home base for one of the Army's biggest commands would be an accolade for Fort Bragg, which already houses the Army's Special Operations Command.

"It would be a tremendous win for North Carolina to get the U.S. Forces Command, no question about it. It is one of the really major U.S. Army commands," said Hugh Overholt, a retired Army major general and a member of Gov. Mike Easley's Advisory Commission on Military Affairs.

Pope would actually gain 808 civilian jobs under the proposal to bring FORSCOM - currently commanded by Dan K. McNeill, a four-star general who previously was head of the 18th Airborne at Fort Bragg - and the Reserve command to the base.

Pope officials noted that the proposed movement of military units is likely to unnerve many people in the ranks.

"There's got to be a little bit of concern and I want to make people relax a little bit. There's a long process ahead of us. A long, long process," said Col. Darren W. McDew, commander of the 43rd Airlift Wing at Pope. "And right now the key word is 'if' and 'recommendation.' If these recommendations are passed and approved, then we have some work to do to make sure we accommodate the futures of the men and women assigned to Pope Air Force Base."

The recommendations made Friday by Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld were being submitted to an independent commission that will hold public hearings, conduct site visits, and collect data on each facility on the list.

The commission will make its recommendations to President Bush by Sept. 8. He, and then Congress, must accept the recommendations in their entirety, or the commission will have to submit a revised report by Oct. 20.

Once a final report is approved, the Pentagon will have six years to close, relocate or downsize bases on the list.

Dole To Help People Displaced After Proposed Base Closings

Durham Would Lose 100-Employee Army Research Unit

NBC 17

May 13, 2005

SEYMOUR JOHNSON AIR FORCE BASE, N.C. -- Sen. Elizabeth Dole, R-North Carolina, the state's senior senator, who has lobbied commission members on behalf of the state's bases, said she would work to help people displaced from jobs by the realignment of Pope Air Force Base and the Naval Air Depot at Cherry Point. Dole also promised to try to head off the recommendations and persuade the commission to save the jobs.

Marine Corps Air Station Cherry Point would lose 650 civilian jobs while adding 50 military positions, MCAS New River also would see Marines shifted and Camp Lejeune would lose close to 200 jobs. In all, the state would lose 568 military positions and gain 307 civilian positions.

Col. John Gumbel, commanding officer of the Naval Air Depot at Cherry Point, said the proposed cuts were no worse than officials expected, and perhaps even better than their initial projections.

Meanwhile, Goldsboro-area officials were breathing easier Friday, while Fayetteville officials were left with mixed emotions following the release of a nationwide list of recommended military base closings and realignments.

Seymour Johnson AFB, which was widely thought to be on the chopping block, actually would grow if the Base Realignment and Closure Commission (BRAC) and President George W. Bush approve Defense Department recommendations in September.

Pope Air Force Base outside Fayetteville would be dismantled, with its 4,800 airmen transferred to Little Rock Air Force Base in Arkansas and Moody Air Force Base in Georgia. Fort Bragg would take over the vacated Pope AFB by 2009, and its growth would leave the area with a net increase of 200 troops.

"The Army will relocate the Forces Command headquarters and the U.S. Army Reserve Command to the current facilities at Pope Air Force Base," said Col. Al Aycock, garrison commander at Fort Bragg.

But Pope AFB commanders said they aren't ready to leave the area that has been home to the air base since 1919.

"Right now, the key words are 'if' and 'recommendation,'" said Col. Darren McDew, commander of the 43rd Airlift Wing, which is stationed at the base. "Fayetteville has been a great community for us, but we'll move on to another great community if all of this were to take place."

Pope AFB has a \$300 million payroll, and Fayetteville-area officials estimate its local annual economic impact at \$477 million.

But Bradley Prince, a drycleaner in nearby Spring Lake, said the closing of the air base could be good for some area residents.

"I used to live right across the river from Pope, so I know that people that live around that area aren't going to be upset, aside from jobs losses, because the noise is all night long," Prince said. "All you hear at night is C-130s (military transport planes) running."

Vincent Flowers, a barber at Bragg Military & Civilian Barber Shop, said the potential growth of Fort Bragg would more than offset the loss of Pope AFB.

"Fort Bragg is here forever. We're good. I don't think this community has anything to worry about," Flowers said.

Goldsboro officials were also worrying a lot less Friday than earlier in the week, when Seymour Johnson AFB was seen as a likely target for Defense Department cuts.

But the realignment proposal unveiled Friday calls for the base to gain 360 military personnel, an F100 jet engine repair unit from Langley Air Force Base in Virginia and eight refueling tanker planes from Grand Forks Air Force Base in North Dakota.

"As airmen, we're in favor of all the things we can do to spend our money better and to make our capability better in the future," said Col. James Holmes, commander of the 4th Fighter Wing, which is based at Seymour Johnson AFB.

Goldsboro and Wayne County officials had worked hard in recent months to save the base by passing zoning regulations and buying about 3,000 acres around the base to prevent development from encroaching on the base's borders.

About 6,000 military personnel and 2,000 civilians work at Seymour Johnson, which has an estimated \$507 million annual economic impact on the area.

"Even though we were confident, you do breathe a sigh of relief," said Troy Pate, co-chairman of Governor's Advisory Council on Military Affairs. "You can't win them all if you don't win the first one."

North Carolina has the fourth-largest military presence of any state, directly employing more than 135,000 people at its six major bases and contributing \$18 billion annually to the North Carolina economy, according to a state-sponsored study.

Other changes to North Carolina installations recommended by the Defense Department include relocating an Army Research Center in Durham, where 100 civilians are employed, to Bethesda, Md., and closing an Army Reserve center in Albemarle and a Naval Reserve center in Asheville.

Sen. Dole reacts to BRAC announcement

News 14

Office of Sen. Dole Press Release & News 14 Staff

May 13, 2005

Office of Sen. Dole Press Release & News 14 Staff

(WASHINGTON, DC) -- U.S. Senator Elizabeth Dole made the following statement regarding the Secretary of Defense's submission to the BRAC Commission. The submission includes a list of bases that the Department has selected for closure or realignment:

I believe that overall North Carolina fared well in the Defense Department's recommendations. The most significant impact on North Carolina involves the realignment of Pope Air Force Base and the expansion of the mission of Fort Bragg, which will result in a net gain of more than 900 civilian jobs. This would involve significant job transition for a number of personnel, and I will work to assist folks who are affected.

I am especially pleased that Seymour Johnson Air Force Base would gain 362 personnel, including 17 civilian jobs. I am also pleased that more than 4,000 personnel would remain at Naval Air Depot Cherry Point. Unfortunately, we would lose 676 civilian and contractor jobs. I will do my best to save these jobs, but should the Commission accept these recommendations, I will work to provide whatever assistance is necessary to help alleviate the impact on people who may lose jobs and the Havelock community as a whole.

I am pleased that the Department recognizes the incredible value of North Carolina's military installations. Support for our state and our military bases transcends party lines, and the Delegation has worked tirelessly to build on our military tradition and strengthen its future.

North Carolina's military installations are a model for joint interoperability and readiness. They are leaders on compatible land use, aggressively keeping encroachment in check, and are environmental standard bearers. Additionally, North Carolina is a leader in quality-of-life

programs and educational support for military personnel and their families. I believe these qualities make our bases well-positioned for expansion rather than closure, and I have made this case to the key BRAC decision makers.

I commend our military personnel for their skill and professionalism in making North Carolina a proud military state, and I commend our communities for their strong support of those personnel and their families. I also applaud our many civilian contractors whose work keeps our bases running smoothly and safely. I look forward to working with the BRAC Commission as the evaluation process continues to ensure that they are fully aware of the contribution North Carolina's installations' make to our national security.

Dole, the senior Senator from North Carolina, is a member of the Senate Armed Services Committee.

Local News Articles

BRAC work not over, officials say

Goldsboro News- Argus (Goldsboro, NC)

Turner Walston

May 19, 2005

Even though Seymour Johnson Air Force Base got good news from the Department of Defense Friday, local officials say their work to make sure the base stays safe is not over.

"Right now, we're just kind of sitting tight," said Jimmie Edmundson, chairman of the Military Affairs Committee of the Wayne County Chamber of Commerce.

The Base Realignment and Closure commission will review the DOD's recommendations over the summer, hold public hearings across the country and present a final recommendation to Congress in September. Until then, local officials say, the campaign to protect the base must go on.

"You always feel better when you get it officially," said Troy Pate, co-chairman of the state Advisory Commission on Military Affairs and the local chairman of the Seymour Support Council. "But this is the first step in a process, and there's three more things that have got to happen before we're home-free."

Those steps include the commission's review of the recommendations, President George Bush's approval of the list and the House and Senate's final OK.

"You have to monitor that intermediate window between the recommendations and when they send the actual list to the president," said Leigh McNairy, a special assistant for military issues for Gov. Mike Easley.

A lot can happen between now and then, McNairy said. During a round of base closings in 1993, squadrons of F/A-18 Hornet fighters were slated to move from Florida to the Marine Corps Air Station at Cherry Point. By the time the final vote was taken, the jets and their hundreds of support personnel were sent to Virginia, Georgia and South Carolina.

"That's evidence of how the process is fluid," McNairy said.

Defense officials said last week this round of base closings would save \$48.8 billion over 20 years by streamlining services and promoting cooperation across the military, while also shutting down bases deemed inefficient.

The Pentagon's recommendations include moving the Army Forces Command and the Headquarters U.S. Army Reserve Command to Fort Bragg, as well as adding a brigade to the Bragg-based 82nd Airborne Division. But the state would lose personnel at Pope Air Force Base and a Bragg-based Special Forces group.

In all, the state would lose 568 military positions and gain 307 civilian positions out of some 135,000 jobs directly related to the military. Seymour Johnson was the state's big winner, with 362 military and civilians gained at the Air Force base.

"We still feel good about it," Pate said, "But there's always a possibility that things can change, and we have to be aware of that. That's why we're monitoring things."

"We still have all of the plans in place that we had if we were on the re-alignment list, and we're just sitting on those," Edmundson said. "Hopefully, we'll never have to take them out of the box."

Adding the Army Forces Command to Fort Bragg would bring a four-star general to the base, something that adds to the military importance of an area, McNairy noted.

That move has already led to protest from Georgia officials. Fort McPherson outside Atlanta is the command's current home. It would close under the Pentagon's recommendations, with many of its personnel moving to Fort Bragg.

"We're prepared to go before the BRAC commission in regional hearings and make the case for why they made a mistake," said Fred Bryant of the Georgia Military Affairs Coordinating Committee.

But even as efforts continue to save jobs and bases, officials in both states said they expect most of the recommendations to be approved. In previous rounds of base closings, commissions have changed only about 15 percent of what the Pentagon proposed.

Tom Salter, a former Army battalion commander who is chairman of a foundation to save McPherson, said the chance of saving the installations is "certainly an uphill battle."

"We will continue to challenge it," he said.

Still others hope to push forward changes as recommended. "I think the way that they've done this, there are a lot of things that are intermingled," Edmundson said. "If you take a piece of the puzzle out, then it changes the whole puzzle."

**Yeager pledges cash, land to Guard
Airport board prepares to make room for more C-130s**

The Charleston Gazette (Charleston, WV)

Rick Steelhammer

May 19, 2005

Yeager Airport's governing board voted Wednesday to close the Charleston airport's shorter general aviation runway, if necessary, to provide space for additional C-130 aircraft, if such a move would convince the Base Realignment and Closure Commission to keep the 130th Airlift Wing open.

Among reasons given by Pentagon officials in justifying plans to transfer the 130th's C-130 aircraft to North Carolina's Pope Air Force Base is an assertion that the Charleston Air Guard base can accommodate only eight of the four-engine cargo planes.

"That part of the BRAC report is simply wrong," said Ed Hill, chairman of Yeager's board of directors.

According to the 130th's commanding officer, Col. Timothy Frye, "We can park 12 on our ramp and two more in our hangar right now."

By closing the shorter of Yeager's two runways to add more parking room, up to 26 C-130s could be parked at the airbase. Air Force planners apparently consider a 16- to 20-plane complement of C-130s to be the optimum size for an airlift wing. Under Pentagon recommendations, Yeager's eight C-130s and eight more from an Air Force Reserve base at Pittsburgh International Airport would be transferred to Pope to create a new 16-plane unit.

Meeting in emergency session, the airport board voted to sell whatever amount of the 4,500-foot general aviation runway would be necessary to meet the 130th's parking apron needs to the Air Guard base for \$1, but only if such a move would ensure that the base remains open.

Transferring a portion of the general aviation runway to the Air Guard would effectively end that runway's usefulness to private aircraft traffic.

"It will affect general aviation traffic, but not all that much," said Hill, himself a private pilot. "It will mainly mean that general aviation pilots will have to taxi a little bit more to get in position for takeoff on the main runway. Overall, the benefits of keeping the 130th here would outweigh the inconvenience."

Yeager's 6,302-foot main runway now handles all commercial and military flights, as well as many general aviation flights. A construction project is underway to extend the main runway to 7,000 feet.

By closing the shorter general aviation runway, Yeager would have development space in which to build new hangars and off-runway businesses. It would also accommodate expansion of the airport's growing commercial airline operation.

"But solving the 130th's parking issue alone will not win the day," said Kanawha County Commission President Kent Carper. "In order to survive this uphill battle, we'll also have to produce a factual, merit-based study showing why it's more cost-effective to keep the 130th open than to send its planes to North Carolina."

The Yeager board voted to spend \$25,000 in parking revenue to help finance such a study, and called on the County Commission, state government and a newly formed citizens' support group for the 130th to chip in similar amounts.

"It will be the easiest vote the Kanawha County Commission will ever take," said Commissioner David Hardy, who added that the Charleston Area Alliance would soon vote on a proposal to donate funding to the cause.

Among arguments to be used in keeping the 130th's aircraft in Charleston, instead of Fayetteville, N.C., is the fact that the North Carolina airport, unlike Yeager, has night flight restrictions that limit night training exercises and round-the-clock deployment possibilities.

Airspace restrictions in the built-up area surrounding Pope, adjacent Fort Bragg and nearby Fayetteville, N.C., greatly limit the amount of terrain available for low-altitude flight training exercises needed by C-130 crews, according to Col. Frye. "There are very few limitations for low-level flying here in West Virginia," he said.

"We won the fight with the Transpark supporters, who wanted to shut Yeager down," Carper said. "Now, now this is the fight we need to undertake."

Base-closing plan goes easy on N.C.
Reorganization would shift bases' missions
Winston-Salem Journal (Winston-Salem, NC)
Mary M. Shaffrey
May 14, 2005

The South would gain troops and civilian jobs while other regions would lose them under the Pentagon's base closure and realignment plan released yesterday.

Nationwide, the military wants to close 33 major bases and transfer troops and civilian employees from 29 other large installations. Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld said that the plan would save \$50 billion over the next 20 years.

Nearly 29,000 people would be added to bases in 16 Southern states as the Army and Navy plan to transfer thousands of soldiers and sailors to bases in North Carolina, Georgia, Florida and Alabama.

North Carolina fared better than most of the states. It would lose 422 jobs over the next six years. More than 136,000 people work in civilian and military jobs at the state's installations.

Under the plan, Pope Air Force Base would be absorbed by Fort Bragg Army Base, and a new Armed Forces Reserve Center would be built in Wilmington.

The plan also calls for closing the Navy Reserve Center in Asheville and the Niven Army Reserve Center in Albermarle.

The military is eliminating the seven positions filled by military personnel in Asheville, but the 34 military personnel affected by the Albemarle closing would be reassigned to the new reserve center in Wilmington.

The Naval Air Depot in Cherry Point, which had been considered one of the most vulnerable North Carolina operations, would be renamed the Fleet Readiness Center - East. Under the Pentagon's plans, more than 600 jobs would be lost in the realignment.

U.S. Rep. Walter Jones, R-3rd, whose district includes Cherry Point and the Seymour Johnson Air Force Base in Goldsboro, said that it was more important to look at the big picture than to dwell on the loss to Cherry Point.

"You can't look at it (as a loss). We have protected over 3500 jobs, and these other 600 jobs will be reassigned," Jones said, noting that 35 percent of these reassignments are scheduled to go to New River, which is a part of Camp Lejeune.

Although Cherry Point would sustain the largest net loss of jobs by any military community in North Carolina under the Pentagon proposal, some local residents appeared relieved that the toll wasn't higher.

"It could have been worse, but it should have been better," said Jimmy Sanders, a retired employee of the Naval Air Depot at Cherry Point who is now president of the local support group.

"Right now, we know what our game plan is. We know what our marching orders are. We're trying to save 650 jobs at Cherry Point," Sanders said.

Lt. Gov. Beverly Perdue, who led the state's effort to keep military jobs here, seemed pleased that the six major bases in North Carolina escaped major hits in the Pentagon proposal.

Perdue had to shout to be heard over the roar of a Marine Corps jet that passed overhead as she spoke to the crowd yesterday at the Havelock Tourist and Event Center.

"That's the sound of freedom we're hearing there," she said. "We're going to keep hearing that sound here in North Carolina.

"It's been a great day for North Carolina."

She tempered her optimism a short time later as she took questions from reporters about the potential job losses at Cherry Point.

She and other elected officials pledged to keep lobbying members of the federal Base Realignment and Closure Commission to try to stave off the cuts. The bipartisan commission was appointed to pass judgment on the Pentagon's list

Military analysts said that several factors played into the Southern states' relatively good fortune in the base-closing proposal. Among them are a population that is shifting southward, a lower cost of doing business, good weather and a military-friendly climate that is lacking in some Northern states.

"I don't think there is any question that the Carolinas are becoming a preferred location for the military," said Loren Thompson, a defense analyst and professor of military affairs at Georgetown University. "There is a certain intangible quality to living in the Carolinas because the military knows that no one there is ever going to complain about their presence.

"People in places like Massachusetts and Connecticut don't like having the military around, but that's not a concern in the Carolinas," Thompson said.

Both of North Carolina's senators credited state legislators and local communities for working to make the region more hospitable to military personnel, including expanding in-state tuition programs for military members and their families.

Jones, who is a member of the House Armed Services Committee, said that stronger encroachment laws also helped demonstrate to the Pentagon that the state was open for military business and wanted to keep it that way.

The plan calls for adding 362 employees at Seymour Johnson.

The recommendations will go before the nine-member base-closure commission that has until early September to accept or reject the plan. Its recommendations then go to Congress and the president.

There have been four previous rounds of base closings, and about 85 percent of the initial recommendations in the past have been accepted.

N.C. will face no base closings

Sun Journal (New Bern, NC)

Sue Book

May 14, 2005

The 2005 Base Realignment and Closure list made public Friday proposes changes for nine military facilities in North Carolina, but it does not recommend closing a major military base in the state with the fourth-largest military presence in the nation.

"No closures is positive news overall," said Lt. Gov. Bev Perdue, who joined the Allies for Cherry Point's Tomorrow at a 1 p.m. press conference in Havelock, where the list's recommendation to cut 656 civilian jobs made the news bitter-sweet.

For the state, the proposed list reduces the military and civilian-military force by a total of 422 positions, including major cuts at Pope Air Force Base.

The list leaves the Marine footprint in the state intact, reducing Camp Lejeune's military force by 182 and adding 48 at Cherry Point. The source of the 48 jobs is unknown, said Marine Col. David Lee Buland, acting commander for Marine Corps Air Bases East, which is headquartered at Cherry Point.

"It should be a slight gain so we don't foresee any major changes in Cherry Point," Buland said. "There's a lot of details about that list that we're still trying to assess and understand."

The proposed list calls for more than 150 major changes to the country's military facilities, including closing 33 major bases. In North Carolina, the Navy Reserve Center in Asheville and the Niven U.S. Army Reserve Center in Albermarle will close, representing 36 positions.

Military facilities in the state slated to gain in the defense department's recommended list are Seymour Johnson Air Force Base, Fort Bragg and Charlotte/Douglas International Airport.

"We have worked hard - this is an important first step and there's still work to do," Perdue said of the process that begins with the defense department input and with praise for bipartisan support from local, state and congressional leaders.

"We can all be proud of North Carolina's tremendous team effort over the last few years," said Perdue, who has led the state's \$2 million BRAC-related efforts, including heading the Military Advisory Commission with assistant Leigh McNairy.

That effort must continue with a serious look at the recommendations with an eye toward Fort Bragg's airlift and training requirements now provided by Pope AFB, she said.

This fifth round of base closings - the first in a decade after 1988, 1991, 1993 and 1995 - hopes to transform the nation's military into a new millennium, cost-effective war machine. The recommendations go to the General Accounting Office until July 8, then to the BRAC commission for its review before presenting it to the president on Sept. 8.

"This preliminary announcement is the recommendation of the Department of Defense and the bases in eastern North Carolina came out very well," said Rep. Walter Jones, District 3, in a 10 a.m. telephone interview.

"Our future is very bright if this is the end result, and who's to say what changes might take place. If you are alive and an active base, I think good things will come your way," said Jones, an 11-year member of the House Armed Services Committee and observer of a previous BRAC.

"I am pleased that the department recognizes the incredible value of North Carolina's military installations. North Carolina's military installations are a model for joint interoperability and readiness," Sen. Elizabeth Dole stated in a news release.

Sen. Richard Burr agreed, but said in a telephone interview that he is disappointed by the changes at the Naval Air Depot Cherry Point.

"I will work to ensure their fine work is reviewed by the commission," he said.

"Now is when we'll begin to look at the real details of the proposal and try to understand the opportunities," said Burr, a member of the Senate Armed Services Committee, who argued to postpone the 2005 BRAC while the country's military is engaged.

"The closures and downsizings would occur over six years, starting in 2006," said First District Rep. G.K. Butterfield. He said he hopes job losses at Cherry Point can be offset by MV-22 Osprey maintenance and repair operations currently scheduled to start in 2006.

"The BRAC recommendations bear out what we already knew here in eastern North Carolina - Seymour Johnson is a first-rate facility," Butterfield said.

"We're glad the speculation is over and to know what our focus will be," Col. James M. "Mike" Holmes said, noting "the realignment of Air Force assets makes better use of taxpayer's money. In addition, SJAFB will receive eight KC 135-R's to add to its aircraft fleet.

Secretary of Defense Donald H. Rumsfeld said an aggressive assistance program will be in place to aid employees adversely affected by the BRAC once the process is complete," Burr said.

The proposed job cuts represent 17 percent of the NAVAIR workforce but officials speaking to the prospects Friday feel the implementation time line could keep current workers employed by using staff transitions, regular attrition, and retirement.

At least two members of the 2005 BRAC commission must visit the facilities slated for change and host hearings for any mitigating information. By statute they must vote and submit the list to the president by Sept. 8, but have said they will vote by Aug. 23 or 24 on the recommendations. Any changes require a vote to do so from at least seven of the nine commission members.

The president may turn it down, send it entirely to the Congress, or do nothing, after which Congress has 45 working days to approve or reject it. If Congress does nothing, the recommendations take effect.

We will continue to make our case for all of these jobs," Gov. Mike Easley said in a release that highlights state initiatives to be "the most military friendly state in the nation."

Allies for Cherry Point's Tomorrow will meet to begin that work at 2 p.m. Monday, said Jimmy Sanders, the organization's president.

"We have our marching orders now," Sanders said. "We will be trying to save 656 jobs at Naval Air Depot Cherry Point."

Military at Pope Air Force Base react to BRAC

News 14 (Spring Lake, NC)

David Kernodle

May 14, 2005

(SPRING LAKE)-- The Department of Defense plans to slash personnel at Pope Air Force Base by about 4,800 troops. That recommendation is just one of many in the controversial base closing proposal released Friday.

Nestled outside Fort Bragg and Pope Air Force Base, Spring Lake is a military town. That's why Chad Minton moved there a year ago. Minton is currently stationed at Pope. After Friday's news, he may be sent packing again.

Minton said, "When you're in the military you should be ready to go. You're not guaranteed to stay in one place forever."

The Base Closings and Realignment report reads like an eviction notice. It recommends that Pope Air Force Base relocate 4,800 troops and nearly 700 civilians.

43rd Airlift Wing Commander, Colonel Darren McDew said in a press conference Friday, "Civilians won't necessary be moved unless they want to be. Most of civilians are part of the community born and raised here or transferred in. We want to provide them options."

Minton continued, "It could be good, it could be bad. A lot of people might not mind going somewhere else or they really like it here and may not want to go."

The economy in Fayetteville and Spring Lake isn't expected to take a big hit. It is actually expected to get better. Real estate agents are foaming at the mouth because they are going to have a lot of homes for sale.

And with over 4,000 troops being added to Fort Bragg, a lot of those homes will be snatched up quickly.

Willie Harrison is a 20 year army veteran. He says since the realignment report the mood around Spring Lake hasn't changed.

Harrison said, "It wouldn't make that much difference to these young people. Most of the people I spoke to are young and don't see this base closures or reductions to have that big of an impact personally.

Chad Minton has a 7 month old daughter. But still says moving won't be a problem. It's part of the military life.

According to the recommendations in the base closings report, most of the 4,800 relocated troops from Pope will be relocated to either Arkansas or Georgia.

Mix of N.C. reaction: Concern, elation

Proposed absorbing of Pope a 'slight surprise'; good day in Fayetteville

Charlotte Observer (Charlotte, NC)

Mark Johnson

MAy 14, 2005

POPE AIR FORCE BASE - Col. Darren McDew, a slender cargo pilot and son of a career Air Force enlisted man, took over as the new commander of Pope Air Force Base in February only to come to work Friday and learn that he may be the last one.

McDew said he felt "slight surprise but not shock" when the Pentagon announced it was recommending that the base merge with the neighboring Fort Bragg Army post and fall under Army command.

"There's got to be a little bit of concern," McDew said of the hundreds of Air Force personnel expected to move. "I want to help people relax a little bit. There's a long process ahead of us. We're going to take care of the people here involved in this transformation."

That was the sting of the Defense Department's base closure recommendations. The reward was also felt in the Fayetteville area, North Carolina's largest military community, reflecting the good news-bad news wave that hit the state.

Leaders in Havelock, home to the Cherry Point Marine Corps Air Station, winced at the loss of 650 jobs but knew it could have been worse. Seymour Johnson Air Force Base in Goldsboro, east of Raleigh, gained more jobs after being considered vulnerable to a cutback.

"To say we are excited is an understatement," said Jimmie Edmundson, chairman of the Wayne County chamber's military affairs committee. "We felt confident, but you just were never sure."

Near Fayetteville, on the other side of a miles-long fence from Pope, commanders at Fort Bragg learned they would gain more than 4,000 additional troops and take over Pope, the place next door from which Army airborne units launch many of their parachute training exercises and deployments to the world's battlefields.

The change in ownership brings history full circle to when the base was Pope Army Airfield, in 1919, before the creation of the Air Force. Army and Air Force commanders said they don't know what the new name will be.

Pope Air Force Base loses a net 4,100 people under the Pentagon plan, while Fort Bragg adds more than 4,300, many of them to be based at Pope, for a net gain. "From a sheer numbers perspective and economic impact, it's a wash," said Fayetteville Mayor Marshall Pitts, adding the community was caught off guard by the cutback at Pope.

Fort Bragg gains the Forces Command Headquarters, or FORSCOM, now based near Atlanta. This is the headquarters that controls all training and operations of Army forces within the United States. They get the troops ready and then turn them over to another command for their deployment.

Pope Air Force Base's A-10 Thunderbolts, tank-killing attack jets, head to a Georgia base under the Pentagon plan. The propeller-driven C-130 transport planes go to Louisiana and are replaced by a Reserve unit. Army Col. Al Aycock, garrison commander at Fort Bragg, said the airborne troops already fly with a variety of units and planes.

The Army's 7th Special Forces Group, based at Bragg, moves to Eglin Air Force Base in Florida under the Pentagon plan, relocating nearly half of the Special Forces units at the post. The Special Operations Command, however, remains at the post.

In Havelock, near the coast, city leaders greeted Friday's news that Cherry Point Marine Corps Air Station and its Naval Air Depot could lose roughly 650 civilian jobs with muted relief. The region could have lost as many as 14,000 jobs had the base and the depot been closed.

"It's not as bad as it could have been," said Jimmy Sanders, a Havelock city commissioner and retired Marine who has lobbied on behalf of the base. Leaders of Allies for Cherry Point's Tomorrow, or ACT, said they plan to challenge the realignment.

Carolinas spared in Pentagon proposal to close bases

The Charlotte Observer (Charlotte, NC)

Tim Funk and Henry Eichel

May 15, 2005

WASHINGTON _ While other states reeled at the likelihood of losing major military installations and their jobs, the Carolinas exhaled Friday as the Pentagon released its long-dreaded list of proposed base closings and realignments.

Only four military bases in the Carolinas, none of them large, were targeted for closing. And several bases _ including Seymour Johnson Air Force Base in Goldsboro, Shaw Air Force Base in Sumter, S.C., and especially Fort Bragg in Fayetteville _ would see their missions and payrolls grow.

The good news came after months of behind-the-scenes lobbying by a bipartisan coalition of political and community leaders. And it offered fresh evidence that the two states' military-friendly environment have made the Carolinas "the preferred destination" for the armed forces, as one top defense analyst put it Friday.

"Both states have built up their bases over the decades, so that they're capable and look good on paper," said Loren Thompson of the Lexington Institute, a think tank in Arlington, Va.

The Carolinas did take some hits:

A realigned Pope Air Force Base will lose scores of planes and more than 4,000 military personnel if the Pentagon's recommendations survive reviews by a presidential commission, President Bush and Congress.

The Cherry Point Marine Corps Air Station will lose 656 civilian jobs _ and see its military hospital downsized to a clinic.

Two facilities in the Charleston area _ the Defense Accounting and Finance Service and the Naval Facilities Engineering Command's Southern Division _ will close, costing the city 920 jobs.

But South Carolina Gov. Mark Sanford, citing Charleston's diverse economy and strong population growth, said, "If there is one part of South Carolina that can absorb a loss in jobs, it is that area."

U.S. Rep. Walter Jones, R-N.C., whose district includes Cherry Point, Seymour Johnson and Camp Lejeune, called the Pentagon's list "positive news" for Eastern North Carolina _ home to several military bases.

And compensating for Pope Air Force Base's grim numbers was the spike envisioned for Fort Bragg, Fayetteville's other major base. It will become the new home of 4,000 troops, many now stationed in Europe. And moving in next door, at what is now Pope, will be FORSCOM, the nerve center of the Army.

"It's the Army's Pentagon," said Rep. Robin Hayes, R-N.C., a member of the House Armed Services Committee.

Hayes and others cited a combination of factors for North Carolina's good showing Friday.

In Raleigh, state laws were enacted and spending approved to upgrade military facilities and grant in-state tuition and other benefits for military families.

Military towns took action, too, often to keep development from encroaching on military-owned land. This year, Goldsboro and Wayne County also enacted zoning ordinances to protect the air space surrounding Seymour Johnson.

An aggressive lobbying campaign headed by Sen. Elizabeth Dole, R-N.C., in Washington and Democratic Lt. Gov. Beverly Perdue in Raleigh may also have helped sway the Pentagon.

Dole personally spoke with Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld. And on Friday, she reminded reporters that she also convened a meeting in her office in which she, Perdue and House members lobbied Phil Grone, deputy undersecretary for defense installations.

For more high-powered help, the state paid \$200,000 to Womble, Carlyle, Sandridge & Rice _ a law firm whose members include former North Carolina Gov. Jim Hunt, a Democrat, and Jimmy Broughton, a top aide to longtime GOP Sen. Jesse Helms.

Also working for North Carolina, some said Friday, was its natural and historical advantages _ lots of land, a prime spot on the East Coast, and a large and long-lasting military presence.

Fort Bragg's stature as the home of the 82nd Airborne also didn't hurt, said Christopher Hellman, a military policy analyst with the Center for Arms Control and Nonproliferation.

"With Bragg and Pope next door, it seems like the Pentagon wanted to tear down the fences (by realigning Pope) and create a superbase," Hellman said.

That suggests an even greater role for Fort Bragg in a post-Cold War military charged with fighting the war on terror.

"Rapid deployment, light mobile forces _ the 82nd has always prided itself on being the first to fight," Hellman said. "That's the way of the 21st century."

As for South Carolina: Rep. John Spratt, D-S.C., who sits on the House Armed Services Committee, pointed to efforts to improve Shaw Air Force Base as reasons for its Friday showing.

Said Spratt: "We have rebuilt Shaw from top to bottom."

Opinions/ Editorials

For many workers who call this area home, 656 is not just a number, but it's their lives

Sun Journal (New Bern, NC)

Ken Buday

May 17, 2005

The impact of Friday's release of the preliminary list for the Base Realignment and Closure Commission depends upon who you ask.

For politicians, BRAC provides them an opportunity to do what they do best.

The first thing they get to do is spin.

The loss of more than 4,000 jobs at Pope Air Force Base near Fayetteville is not bad because Fort Bragg, also near Fayetteville, is gaining about 4,000 jobs.

And, by the way, Seymour Johnson Air Force Base near Goldsboro gained military personnel.

The loss of 656 civilian jobs at Cherry Point wasn't as bad as it could have been.

And, did we mention Seymour Johnson Air Force Base near Goldsboro gained military personnel?

They were more than willing to look at their BRAC glass as half full, rather than half empty.

Now, they'll get to do another thing they enjoy, which is lobby.

Just hours after the list became official, state politicians were putting on their lobby hat, saying they would do everything in their power to save those jobs at Cherry Point.

Of course, all this is just speculation until the BRAC makes its recommendations, which is expected sometime in August. The commission could decide against the Pentagon's suggestions.

In the case of Naval Air Depot jobs at Cherry Point, that seems unlikely. The reason behind the transfer of those jobs at Cherry Point to other locations is to streamline the process. In the eyes of the Department of Defense, why send a part from Oceana in Virginia to be fixed at Cherry Point when you can just move the people to Oceana and fix it there?

Even that makes sense to me. You're saving shipping costs if nothing else, and if the facilities are available at the other location to do the work, then that's all the better.

But then you have the personal side of the story.

For those who have made their homes in the area, those who have gotten married, those who have had children, those who have grown to love this area for its people and its scenery - 656 is not just a number. It's their lives.

I would say there isn't a person in Havelock who won't know someone this BRAC will impact. If you don't know someone, maybe it's your friend's brother, a co-worker's uncle, your hairdresser's husband.

Somewhere, somebody is going to uproot their life and move it to Virginia or Maryland or Louisiana.

If someone told me that I would have to leave this area, pull my daughter out of school, make my wife quit her job, I don't know what I would do.

And, that's the real side of this BRAC.

I understand why it's done. I understand about saving money, and I am all for that.

But when it's your job and your life, understanding will go only so far.

I guess the only solace is that 656 wasn't 1,000, wasn't 2,000 or wasn't 4,000.

For once, I understand where the politicians are coming from.

N.C., S.C. avoid big hit
Base closing list brings gains and losses for the Carolinas
Charlotte Observer (Charlotte, NC)

May 15, 2005

Repeat after us, North Carolina and South Carolina: The worst did not happen.

That's small comfort to the families and communities whose lives will change because of the military base closings and readjustments the Pentagon announced Friday.

Those shifts did not deliver any body blows. Instead, they represent a complement of wins and losses.

In North Carolina, Pope Air Force Base near Fayetteville will lose 4,800 troops but will get 808 civilian jobs.

Nearby Fort Bragg will expand by 4,078 troops and 247 civilian jobs. Seymour Johnson Air Force Base in Goldsboro -- considered one of two vulnerable installations in North Carolina -- will gain 345 troops.

In particular, rural Eastern North Carolina will breath a deep sigh of relief that Cherry Point Marine Naval Depot in Havelock will remain open. Some 656 civilian jobs there will end. But with 8,987 active-duty employees and 5,711 civilian employees, closure would have dealt the region a hard blow, and handed the state a difficult economic redevelopment task.

In South Carolina the story is much the same: Two facilities in Charleston will close, yet Shaw Air Force Base and Marine Corps Air Station Beaufort will see gains. Overall, South Carolina will gain 1,400 military positions and lose more than 700 civilian jobs.

We'd like to think in North Carolina the major bases fared well on their strengths: efficiency, flexibility and urgency -- troops from Camp Lejeune and Fort Bragg are among the first to deploy when global emergencies erupt. The Tar Heel state also spent \$2 million lobbying to protect its bases. It has earmarked \$20 million to buy land to protect bases from encroaching development and give them room to expand.

The bottom line is this: Overall, the Carolinas fared better than many other states. Bases in both states will see some changes. Those changes present some clear economic challenges. But for now, the Pentagon has not dropped the Big One on the Carolinas.

That provides hope the enormous strategic value of major military installations in these two states is recognized, and will give them central roles as the process of realignment continues.

State Wants Stronger Military Connections:

Most of North Carolina's Bases Escape Big Hits From the Pentagon, but Continued Effort to Make the State More Military Friendly are Needed

News and Record (Greensboro, NC)

May 18, 2005

North Carolina aims to be "the most military-friendly state in the nation."

State Sen. Kay Hagan of Greensboro employed that phrase last week, but the attitude runs through the N.C. General Assembly, where military-friendly legislation is pending.

That doesn't hurt when the federal government makes decisions about the status and future of economically important military installations in North Carolina.

Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld's recommendations for base closings and consolidations passed lightly over most North Carolina facilities last week. Only Pope Air Force Base is slated for major losses. Meanwhile, Fort Bragg would gain substantially.

The process isn't over. The independent Base Realignment and Closure Commission will review Rumsfeld's list and offer its own recommendations in the fall. Then President Bush and Congress will make the final call.

The lobbying already has begun. Political leaders in Georgia, for example, declare they will fight the decision to close Fort McPherson in Atlanta and move its Army Forces Command and Army Reserve Command operations to Pope Air Force Base, where in turn they will be taken over by Fort Bragg.

Analysts say Rumsfeld's recommendations follow a pattern of removing installations from urban to more rural areas that present fewer security concerns. That's a big advantage for North Carolina.

The rural character of North Carolina military bases also heightens their economic importance. A 2004 report pegged the economic impact of military establishments in North Carolina at \$18 billion annually. That included an employment impact of 333,000 jobs directly or indirectly linked to defense spending. In some eastern North Carolina communities, the military presence props up the economy.

For years, North Carolina has pursued a coordinated strategy to protect its military bases. The effort continues with current legislative proposals to provide in-state tuition at state universities and community colleges for members of the military and their families stationed here; streamline professional licensing procedures for military spouses so that they can more easily find employment while living in North Carolina; return one-third of state gasoline taxes collected on bases to those installations to support quality-of-life programs for military families; and other initiatives.

This round of designated base closings isn't the last word in military restructuring. Changes will be made continually as defense missions are redefined. Greater integration among the services is likely, and North Carolina, with substantial Army, Air Force and Marine presence here now, is in prime position to capitalize on future consolidation. Being known as the most military-friendly state in the nation will be a big plus.

State dodges a bullet

The Herald-Sun (Durham, NC)

May 17, 2005

State officials were understandably thrilled last week at the news that North Carolina would be spared the brunt of historic base closings in the Pentagon's sweeping realignment of U.S. military muscle. The news bodes well for the many towns and communities throughout the state that lean heavily on military bases for jobs and economic growth and development.

But while no major military installation in the state is slated for closure, several will undergo considerable change as the U.S. military seeks to streamline operations to create the nimble fighting force Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld has long advocated.

Pope Air Force Base in Fayetteville, for example, would lose 4,800 troops and be taken over by the Army. Meanwhile, nearby Fort Bragg would gain 4,078 soldiers to offset the impact of losses at Pope. The new troops at Bragg would come with the creation of a new combat brigade in the 82nd Airborne Division and the reassignment of European-based forces.

Make no mistake, North Carolina will see some job losses but the impact will not be nearly as dramatic as it will be in many other states where the news about the base-closings hit like a bomb. Indeed, some states will suffer great economic pain under the realignment proposal. South Dakota, for example, stands to lose highly prized Ellsworth Air Force Base, its second leading employer. Needless to say, the state would be devastated economically if that comes to pass.

If there is one area of concern in North Carolina, it has to be the Pentagon's recommendation to close the Army Research Office (ARO) in RTP. Under the plan, the ARO, which administers grants for army-technology research, would move to Bethesda, Md., where it would be consolidated with seven similar research centers at the Naval Medical Center. The move would cost the region up to 193 good-paying government jobs and the economic impact would be significant. It's estimated that the center contributes \$86.3 million to the local economy in salaries, leases and research funding to local institutions.

We hope ARO can be saved. But still, North Carolina should count itself lucky. The recommendations could have been a lot worse.