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Deputy Director of Communications

DEFENSE BASE CLOSURE AND REALIGNMENT COMMISSION

MEDIA BRIEFING BOOK

ATLANTA, GEORGIA REGIONAL HEARING

DEFENSE BASE CLOSURE AND REALIGNMENT COMMISSION

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Media Advisory – Atlanta Regional Hearing

TIME: Doors Open to Public at 7:30AM
Hearing Coverage- Georgia Tech Hotel and Conference Center
8:30AM-12:30PM / MEDIA AND SATELLITE TRUCK PRE-SET 6:00AM,
No later than 7:00AM.

Media Availability – Conference Room D of Convention Center
As each State completes their presentation they will hold a media availability. The BRAC Commission's media avail will begin promptly 15 minutes after the end of the hearing.

Logistical information for media:
-Satellite truck parking available on Spring Street
-500 ft. Cable run to press risers
-50 ft. Max camera throw
-TV quality sound and lighting
-High speed, wireless internet available upon request. Please contact Allan Fine, Director of Information Technology at Georgia Tech Hotel, allan.fine@gatechhotel.com, to request a pass code for internet setup.

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2005 Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission
Suggested Talking Points for Naval Air Station Atlanta

1. **To the 2005 Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission (BRAC), military value is the most important consideration as the Commission evaluates the suggestion made by the Department of Defense (DoD) to close Naval Air Station Atlanta.**
   - The Commission will evaluate the economic, environmental, and other effects that the realignment of the installation could have on the surrounding community but the key factor in the Commission's decision as to whether or not to suggest NAS Atlanta for closure is military value.
   - Although the Commission is keenly aware of the human impact of the suggestion by DoD to close NAS Atlanta, the Commission will base its decisions, as to whether or not to suggest the installation for realignment, almost entirely upon the current military value of the base.
   - The Commission will carefully consider the role that Naval Air Station Atlanta plays in the defense of the nation. This is especially important with regard to the Reserve training role that NAS Atlanta serves.
   - The Commission recognizes and commends the role that military personnel from NAS Atlanta have played in current battlegrounds-Iraq and Afghanistan and will consider this as it determines the installation's current military value.

2. **The Commission is aware of the possible economic, environmental, and other effects that the suggestions to close Naval Air Station Atlanta could have and is taking these into consideration.**
   - The Congress established the Commission as an independent entity to ensure that all critical factors have been evaluated, and that the effects on the surrounding community have been taken into full account in the decision to recommend a base for closure or realignment.
   - The Commission will evaluate the economic impact that the installation closure would have on the community surrounding NAS Atlanta, while basing its decision almost entirely upon military value.
   - The local community and the installation have developed a strong relationship based upon a social and economic synergy. The loss of roughly 3000 jobs can have a significant impact on a community. The Commission understands this and will take it into account as it delineates its final recommendation.

3. **The Congress established the Commission as a non-political, transparent, and independent entity to perform a thorough evaluation, by a process set forth by law, of the bases suggested for closure or realignment by DoD.**
   - The Commission serves to ensure that all pertinent factors have been evaluated and to provide accountability to the public for the suggestion, made by DoD, to close NAS Atlanta.
   - The Commission encourages public input. Members of the community wishing to submit information that they feel may have been overlooked by DoD, are encouraged to submit their comments directly through the Commission's official website: www.brac.gov.

Facts compiled from included press clippings.

C

2005 Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission
Suggested Qs & As for Naval Air Station Atlanta

Q1. If the Commission adheres to the Department of Defense's (DoD) recommendations, Cobb County will see a large loss of jobs. Estimates are that the county stands to lose 707 active duty and 2,168 reserve sailors, along with 526 active duty and 1,027 reserve Marines. Understandably, this would have a large economic impact on the community. Will the Commission consider these economic ramifications in the Commission's final recommendation regarding NAS Atlanta?
A1. The factors to be included in the Commission's evaluation of DoD's suggestions for base closures and realignments are set forth by statute. The Commission is keenly aware of the human impact of these suggestions and will take this into account, while maintaining military value as its most important consideration in this evaluation.

Q2. NAS Atlanta is used by more than 20 Naval and Marine Reserve units. Several of these units have served, or are serving, in Iraq and Afghanistan. Will the Commission consider the effects on the soldiers' morale if DoD's suggestion to close the installation is enacted?
A2. The entire focus of the Commission is to evaluate whether or not DoD has followed the law in its suggestions to close or realign military installations across the country. The Commission will fully evaluate the current military value of an installation, according to the process prescribed by statute, in order to ensure that our military is as streamlined as possible without having to support excess infrastructure, ineffective in meeting modern global threats.

Q3. Will the BRAC closure of NAS Atlanta affect the Navy regional hospital located on the Dobbins Air Reserve Base side of the installation?
A3. The effect on medical facilities is of great importance to the Commission. The Commission recognizes the importance that medical facilities plays in the lives of active duty, Reserve, and retired military personnel. The Commission will consider the effects of DoD's recommendations on local medical facilities.

Q4. In 1987, NAS Atlanta was recognized by the Navy as the best air station in the nation. Will the Commission consider this in it recommendation?
A4. Part of what constitutes DoD's determination of military value is jointness, ease of mobility, and the base's strategic role with regard to today's changing global threats. Therefore, while the Commission recognizes the distinctions received in the past, the final recommendation will be based primarily on the current military value of the installation.

Q5. The base sits on a 166-acre site less than a mile north of downtown Smyrna. In addition, the base is located within the vicinity of Georgia Tech research facilities and Lockheed Martin manufacturing. If the base is closed, what will happen to the property?

A5. The question of what will happen with a base after its closure is under the purview of DoD rather than the BRAC Commission. Applicable laws dictate that federal property must first be made available to other federal agencies.
If the property is deemed excess by the federal government then it will be made available to homeless assistance groups. It is only after this point that the land may be offered to the local government or to private developers at market value.

Q6. What role will politics play in the Commission's decision regarding NAS Atlanta?
A6. The Congress established the BRAC Commission as an entirely non-partisan and non-political entity to independently evaluate whether DoD made its recommendations in accordance with the law. The Commission will serve to provide accountability to the public and ensure that all suggestions have been based upon the criteria set forth by statute. The Commission will perform a thorough, accurate, and objective analysis, in a completely open and transparent manner, which will take into account, chiefly, the military value of Naval Air Station Atlanta, but will also consider the economic, environmental and other effects that the closure of the installation would have on the surrounding community.

Q7. Every month roughly 3,000 Naval reservists from all over the country come to NAS Atlanta for drill weekends. Will the Commission consider both the effects that closure would have on the local Atlanta economy and on the recruitment/retention in the military's reserve force?
A7. The criteria for determining the value of a military installation has been set forth by statute. As outlined by law, the Commission will place priority on military value; while also taking into consideration economic, environmental, and other effects that the closure or realignment of a base would have on the community surrounding that base.
Information that is gathered in the analysis of a base, with the exception of information that is sensitive to national security, will be made accessible to the public. Part of what constitutes DoD's determination of military value is jointness, ease of mobility, and the base's strategic role with regard to today's changing global threats.

Q8. If NAS Atlanta closes, it stands to lose six E-2C command and control aircraft, 13 Cobras, and five UH-1N helicopters. Will the Commission consider the infrastructure required to house such equipment with regard to the installations slated to receive them?
A8. The Commission will perform a thorough, accurate, and objective analysis which will take into account, chiefly, the military value of the base, but will also consider other factors. The ability of the installation to support incoming military hardware is very important. Please be assured that the Commission will make a full evaluation, as prescribed by law, before coming to its conclusions and formulating its suggestions.

Q9. How can the community make the Commission aware of information that the Community feels may have been overlooked by DoD in DoD's evaluation and suggestion regarding the installation?

A9. The BRAC Commission encourages public input into this transparent and objective process. The public may submit comments through the Commission's official website, which is: www.brac.gov.

Facts compiled from included press clippings.

D

NAVAL AIR STATION ATLANTA
GEORGIA

National News Articles

Local News Articles

MARIETTA: Navy's presence often overlooked; Station has been overshadowed by Dobbins
2 bases on list for closure evaluated
Robins job gains from BRAC unclear as officials still sorting out what's what
Cobb Chamber aims to halt base closing

Editorial/Opinion Articles

National News Articles

Local News Articles

MARIETTA: Navy's presence often overlooked; Station has been overshadowed by Dobbins
The Atlanta Journal-Constitution
Brenden Sager
June 9, 2005

The U.S. Navy is a proud institution.

But the personnel at Naval Air Station Atlanta, with its entrance hidden from public view by a freight train embankment on rundown Dixie Avenue, admit to a certain inferiority complex.

The reason is that their much larger military neighbor, Dobbins Air Reserve Base, with whom they share a 10,000-foot runway, remains Cobb County's military rock star --- receiving all the praise and notoriety, even when the Navy's Blue Angel squadron performs to cheering crowds at the annual Dobbins air show. Locals usually associate the event with the Air Force.

But, after all, it isn't a regatta.

Shirley Payne is a civilian administrator at **NAS Atlanta** who helps run the nonmilitary operations. She's worked with most of the base's commanders since the 1980s and said each has struggled to get the community to appreciate the Navy's local presence.

"We would just like the community to know that the Navy is here," Payne said. "We're really separate from Dobbins, and understanding that has been an issue for the public with every commanding officer I've worked with."

Payne said the base has initiated a number of local charity drives. It also hosted a popular footrace, the **NAS Atlanta** Runway Races, once known as "the flattest course in North Georgia."

In 1987, the base was recognized by the Navy as the best air station in the nation.

But appreciating the Navy in Cobb will not be an issue much longer if Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld gets his way. The base is on the Defense Department's Base Realignment and Closure list.

The commission will finalize its list by September and turn it over to President Bush, who then passes it on to Congress for final approval. Congress must accept or reject the list as a whole; it can't change the list.

Military and Cobb civic officials still have a chance to appeal the BRAC decision before the end of the year. Communities affected by closings sent delegates to a conference in Colorado this week to discuss base redevelopments in that state, which was hit hard by the closings of Lowry Air Force Base and Fitzsimons Army Medical Center in the 1990s.

Officials have kept mum on exactly how the **NAS Atlanta** base might be used if it's closed, but it lies in an industrial area and its neighbors include Georgia Tech research facilities and Lockheed Martin manufacturing.

The 166-acre air station has more than 20 Naval and Marine Reserve units. Active and reserve members of two Marine units are now serving in Iraq. Another **NAS Atlanta** Marine unit recently returned from an 18-month deployment to Afghanistan.

The base has airplane hangars, living and guest quarters, administrative offices and a few amenities, including a gas station, convenience store, child care center and bowling alley.

Payne said if the base closes, many of the 3,000 local reservists who train at **NAS Atlanta** and live nearby will face a hardship, having to fulfill their requirements in Florida, Louisiana or Virginia.

But the hardest-hit workers will be the more than 160 full-time civilian employees.

"We have civilians in every type of function," Payne said. "We've got people who work on aircraft, carry guns and [work] on the flightline."

Moving compounds employment difficulties for military civilians, because expertise and experience at previous jobs may be of no use to the available jobs at the next installation.

"Every time you move you have to start over," Payne said. "You do what you have to do to get your foot in the door for the next job. You don't know if they're going to have the same type of position."

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2 bases on list for closure evaluated
Atlanta Journal-Constitution
Brenden Sager
May 27, 2005

A representative from the federal base closing commission visited two Georgia facilities on the list to be shut down, but gave no indication Wednesday whether either would receive a reprieve.

"We've only heard one side of the [closing] issue presented to us so far --- and that's the Department of Defense's side. We're here to get the other side," retired Adm. Harold W. Gehman Jr. said during a news conference at Naval Air Station Atlanta in Cobb County.

Gehman is one of nine members of the Base Realignment and Closure Commission who will spend the next several weeks evaluating the Pentagon's recommendations for base closings across the country.

After his visit to **NAS Atlanta,** he traveled to the Naval Supply Corps School in Athens. Gehman did not visit Fort McPherson in Atlanta or Fort Gillem in Clayton County, the other two local facilities on the BRAC list. No dates have been scheduled for visits to those bases.

Broadly, the commissioners are evaluating bases for military readiness and cost savings. Gehman said commissioners were examining whether closing **NAS Atlanta** would deliver the estimated $60 million in savings cited in estimates by the U.S. Defense Department.

The base supports more than 3,000 Reserve military personnel and has 1,274 active personnel, 156 civilians and 68 contractors, with an annual operations budget of about $10 million. The base shares a runway and other facilities with Dobbins Air Reserve Base.

U.S. Rep. Phil Gingrey (R-Ga.) toured the base Wednesday with Gehman. Gingrey said local officials would challenge "the alleged cost savings. . . . We want to make sure those cost estimates are correct."

Gehman said a series of public hearings would take place throughout the summer before the commission makes final recommendations to President Bush in the fall. The Atlanta regional hearing is June 30.

Gehman also said politics would not play a role in the decision to remove a base from the list. "We're all too old to be influenced by members of Congress," he said.

Robins job gains from BRAC unclear as officials still sorting out what's what
The Macon Telegraph
Gene Rector
May 20, 2005

ROBINS AIR FORCE BASE -- Many Middle Georgians were thankful last week when they learned Robins Air Force Base was not on the BRAC 2005 closure list.

But they shouldn't place too much confidence in the anticipated job gains.

The numbers -- the Department of Defense estimated 749 added jobs at Robins -- remain very fluid, admit officials both on and off the base. Also, many of the proposed gains are from reserve

units and defense contractors that may add little economic impact and create few demands on local schools, housing, roadways and other infrastructure categories.

"We're still sorting through the numbers," George Falldine said Thursday morning. "So, we can't say what the bottom line is, although it would appear that there is a net gain for Robins." Falldine is the Warner Robins Air Logistics Center's director of plans and programs.

The veteran logistician said the base responded to a number of Pentagon data calls prior to last Friday's announcement, but was not given an advance look at the overall closure and realignment scenario.

"For example, no one came in and said they were planning to move part of Naval Air Station Atlanta to Robins and asked what we would need to support that," he said. "Had that happened, we would know a lot more. Now, we're spending time clarifying issues and making sure our numbers are right. The devil is in the details, and we're still trying to sort out those details."

Data to this point show Robins losing 779 permanent positions -- people who bought homes, had children in local schools and shopped at area grocery and department stores. Projected gains exceed 1,500, but at least 500 are Naval reserve and Georgia Air National Guard slots -- people already living in the area or who will visit infrequently. Another 781 are contractor jobs, many of which might be filled by people from Middle Georgia.

"So, we need to wait until we see what we really have," said Ron Carbon, director of the 21st Century Partnership, a Middle Georgia group of civic, business and governmental leaders who have supported Robins during the BRAC process.

"We don't need to get into a lather over new schools, roads, hospitals, that kind of stuff," he said. "I want to see the numbers validated. We're a long way from having something accurate enough to take to the bank."

A major uncertainty is the BRAC process itself. Last Friday's announcement -- containing Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld's closure and realignment recommendations -- now will be scrutinized by an independent commission. The nine-member group -- after hearing rebuttal from communities throughout the country -- has the authority to add and delete bases from the list before filing its Sept. 8 report with the president. The president and Congress then will have an "all or nothing" opportunity to approve or disapprove the recommendations.

"I want to see the actual BRAC list approved by Congress -- which may not happen until December -- before I get all hot and bothered," said Carbon.

Tiffany Andrews, program manager for the Middle Georgia Regional Development Center in Macon, said her agency had received only part of the BRAC 2005 supporting data.

"We don't know how they graded Robins and what the outcome is going to be," she said Thursday. "So, it's too soon to tell. Other installations are working just as hard as we are and if they're successful it could change our outcome. I would really hate for anybody to make a shift one way or another until everything is finalized. We're certainly not telling anyone to go out and build. It's premature."

Dawn Dearden, Headquarters Defense Logistics Agency spokeswoman at Fort Belvoir, Va., underscored the BRAC uncertainty. Under the Defense Department's game plan, DLA will shift

781 contractor positions from Cherry Point, N.C.; Jacksonville, Fla.; and the Marine Corps Logistics Base in Albany to create a distribution center at Robins. Those potential jobs loom large in any positive outcome for the local installation.

"I certainly would not commit to that 781 number," she said late Thursday. "They are recommendations at this point. They're a planning factor."

Dearden was uncertain how many people might actually transfer to Robins or how many of the positions might be filled locally. "We're just trying to analyze the move at this point. You can see it all on paper, but it will take us a little time to determine what it exactly means to our people," she said. Fewer than 20 percent will make the shift, based on previous BRACs.

The proposed **NAS Atlanta** transfer -- including relocation to Robins of 6 E-2C command and control aircraft along with 13 Cobra and 5 UH-1N helicopters -- must clear the BRAC commission, which announced Thursday it would hold a series of hearings around the country, including one June 30 in Atlanta. The hearings will allow communities to respond to the Defense Department recommendations.

"I'm sure the commissioners will have a few questions once they start gathering more data," said Tom Cooney, the NAS public affairs officer. "Of course, the time line is very compressed."

Cooney said about 350 people could be impacted by the Robins transfer, most of them reservists. "There are a few active duty on the staff," he said, "but the majority are reservists who work one weekend a month. The reservists won't be moving to Robins, of course, but I guess the local hotels will be happy."

Most people in the unit are biding their time, added Cooney. "You don't want to make plans for something that might not happen," he said, "but you also want to be ready in case the recommendation holds."

Falldine said the pending BRAC 2005 decisions are only one aspect of an overall reshaping of the Defense Department's infrastructure. "Step one is to get the continental U.S. infrastructure determined," he said. "BRAC 2005 will do that."

There will be additional rebasing actions as the focus shifts worldwide. "As the department continues to do its reshaping, I fully expect to see more missions coming to the base," Falldine said. "I'm not surprised that we do not have a huge influx or outgo of workload proposed under BRAC 2005, but this is an ongoing process."

Cobb Chamber aims to halt base closing
Atlanta Journal-Constitution
Brenden Sager
May 19, 2005

The lobbying to save Naval Air Station Atlanta is just getting started. But even if the Pentagon carries through on its promise to close the facility, that process could take years.

Cobb County stands to lose 707 active duty and 2,168 reserve sailors, along with 526 active duty and 1,027 reserve Marines. The base could also lose 92 civilian jobs.

NAS Atlanta is used by more than 20 Naval and Marine Reserve units, several of which were battle-hardened in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Details of where these units will end up if the base closes are still being worked out, officials said this week.

These sailors and Marines won't be going without a fight. Don Beaver, chief operating officer of the Cobb Chamber of Commerce and head of a task force charged with preparing for the base closing, said his staff would pore over the data that led to the base's closing, hoping to poke holes in the Pentagon's rationale.

"We'll look at the data analysis," Beaver said. "The Defense Department went through a lot of effort to design this list to outline the military requirements for the next 25 years."

Meanwhile, a nine-member independent commission will study the Pentagon's Base Realignment and Closure list and make recommendations to President Bush. Bush can reject the commission's findings or approve them and send them to Congress, which then must either approve or reject the list without changing it.

BRAC commission members will visit the bases on the list, Beaver said. During the last round of base closings, in 1995, only about 15 percent of bases that appealed the BRAC recommendation avoided shutdown.

Georgia's congressional delegation will fight hard to keep **NAS Atlanta** open, Beaver said, along with other high-profile bases slated for closure, such as Fort McPherson and Fort Gillem.

"We'll make a full-court press," Beaver said. "**NAS Atlanta** was very important to us."

Still, state officials this week were putting a positive spin on Georgia's fate in the overall BRAC process. Cobb also benefited. While the loss of **NAS Atlanta** represents a net loss of jobs and resources, the larger Dobbins Air Reserve Base and Lockheed Martin manufacturing operations will remain.

The Defense Department also recommended that a new mission be added to Dobbins, suggesting that eight new C130-H's be moved to the Marietta facility.

The strong connection to aviation and manufacturing could make the facility attractive to private-sector companies, Beaver said, but he would not comment on specifics. County officials said the site could be a likely candidate for redevelopment or a new tenant.

NAS Atlanta has a few amenities, including a gas station, a convenience store, a child care center and a bowling alley. These are used mostly by base personnel, but nearby retirees sometimes visit. The base sits on 166 acres, with its entrance near the corner of Windy Hill and Atlanta roads, less than a mile north of downtown Smyrna.

"There's not a lot here for retirees. It's not like a big base like the Navy base in Norfolk," said Thomas Cooney, NAS public affairs officer. "Occasionally [retirees] will visit the gas station and the bowling alley."

The Navy also has a regional hospital on the Dobbins side, which is run by a separate Naval command in Jacksonville, Cooney said. Cooney said the fate of the hospital is uncertain, and nearby retirees do use it.

"I would imagine they are depending on the medical part of Dobbins," he said.

Every month 3,000 Naval reservists from all over the country come to **NAS Atlanta** for drill weekends. Reservists who come from more than 50 miles away stay in local hotels or on base and spend the weekend in metro Atlanta.

Among the three facilities --- the Lockheed plant, Dobbins and **NAS Atlanta** --- annual payroll comes to more than $712 million.

In addition to purely economic contributions, Dobbins ARB and **NAS Atlanta** provide instruction and training for more than 10,000 military personnel each year.

BASE CLOSINGS: AROUND GEORGIA: NAS ATLANTA

Atlanta Journal-Constitution
Brendon Sagar, Richard Whitt
May 14, 2005

Ship hasn't sunk yet
Naval Air Station Atlanta may be recommended for closure, but it's still in the fight.

The base has more than 20 Naval and Marine Reserve units, two of which are serving in Iraq, said Capt. Sean King, **NAS Atlanta** commander.

Another Marine unit recently returned from an 18-month deployment to Afghanistan.

King said 150 **NAS Atlanta** sailors are supporting ongoing operations in both countries.

While the prospect of losing the NAS hurts, Dobbins Air Reserve Base, which shares its airfield, could benefit.

The Defense Department has recommended that eight new C130-Hs be moved to the Marietta facility.

It's certainly not a day to be grim or despondent," said U.S. Rep. Phil Gingrey (R-Ga.).

--- Brenden Sager

Landlubbers eye Cobb property

While federal, state and local officials promised a dogfight to keep the Naval Air Station Atlanta open, they were making plans Friday to redevelop the 200 acres of prime Cobb County real estate.

In fact, if the base closes, it may be an economic benefit to Cobb County, according to Don Beaver, chief operating officer of the Cobb Chamber of Commerce and head of a task force charged with preparing for the base closing.

Development officials have been working on plans for more than a year, Beaver said.

"Now they go to action," he said. "We're looking for the best use. This could very well create more jobs."

When a military base closes, the land is routinely turned over to its home county for redevelopment, said Cobb Commission Chairman Sam Olens.

Olens wouldn't rule out private redevelopment but also said he has been talking with state officials about moving some Georgia National Guard units in to fill the space.

--- Richard Whitt

Editorial/Opinion Articles

E

2005 Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission
Suggested Talking Points for Naval Supply Corps School Athens

1. **To the 2005 Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission (BRAC), military value is the most important consideration as the Commission evaluates the suggestion made by the Department of Defense (DoD) to close Naval Supply Corps School Athens (NSCS).**
    - The Commission will evaluate the economic, environmental, and other effects that the realignment of the installation could have on the surrounding community but the key factor in the Commission's decision as to whether or not to suggest NSCS Athens for closure is military value.
    - Although the Commission is keenly aware of the human impact of the suggestion by DoD to close NSCS Athens, the Commission will base its decisions, as to whether or not to suggest the installation for realignment, almost entirely upon the current military value of the base.
    - The Commission will carefully consider the role that NSCS Athens plays in the defense of the nation. This is especially important with regard to the training role that NSCS Athens serves.
    - The Commission recognizes the role that NSCS Athens serves as a multi-service training facility. The base's high-tech satellite training programs provide an incredible teaching facility for the next generation of military professionals worldwide.

2. **The Commission is aware of the possible economic, environmental, and other effects that the suggestions to close NSCS Athens could have and is taking these into consideration.**
    - The Congress established the Commission as an independent entity to ensure that all critical factors have been evaluated, and that the effects on the surrounding community have been taken into full account in the decision to recommend a base for closure or realignment.
    - The Commission will evaluate the economic impact that the installation closure would have on the community surrounding NSCS Athens, while basing its decision almost entirely upon military value.
    - The local community and the installation have developed a strong relationship based upon a social and economic synergy. The loss of several hundred jobs—and potentially $70 million annually—can have a significant impact on a community. The Commission understands this and will take it into account as it delineates its final recommendation.

3. **The Congress established the Commission as a non-political, transparent, and independent entity to perform a thorough evaluation, by a process set forth by law, of the bases suggested for closure or realignment by DoD.**
    - The Commission serves to ensure that all pertinent factors have been evaluated and to serve as accountability to the public for the suggestion, made by DoD, to close NSCS Athens.
    - The Commission welcomes public input, as it is a vital part of the process of evaluation. The public may submit comments directly through the Commission's official website: www.brac.gov.

Facts compiled from included press clippings.

F

2005 Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission
Suggested Qs & As for Naval Supply Corps School Athens

Q1. If the Commission adheres to the Department of Defense's (DoD) recommendations, relocating the Navy school could cut as many as 831 jobs—513 direct jobs and 318 indirect jobs—if there is no economic recovery in the area. Will the Commission consider these economic ramifications in the Commission's final recommendation regarding NSCS Athens?
A1. The factors to be included in the Commission's evaluation of DoD's suggestions for base closures and realignments are set forth by statute. The Commission is keenly aware of the human impact of these suggestions and will take their economic effects on the region into account, while maintaining military value as its most important consideration in this evaluation.

Q2. In the past, NSCS Athens survived numerous BRAC rounds. If the installation survived closure recommendations in the past, why should it not be removed from the BRAC list again in this current round?
A2. The criteria are established by statute, and not by precedent. As outlined by the statute, the Commission will place priority on military value; while also taking into consideration economic, environmental, and other effects that the closure or realignment of a base would have on the community surrounding that base. Information that is gathered in the analysis of a base, with the exception of information that is sensitive to national security, will be made accessible to the public.

Q3. NSCS Athens opened in 1954 and sits on a military site that dates to the Civil War. Will the historical value of the installation be considered by the Commission in its final recommendation to the President?
A3. The Commission takes all pertinent factors into account, as prescribed by statute, as it performs an evaluation of the suggestions made by the DoD and formulates its own suggestions. The Commission is keenly aware of the human impact had by the closure or realignment of a base, and although current military value is the most important consideration, the Commission will also consider the effects that the closure of an installation would have on the surrounding community.

Q4. Recently, Secretary of the Navy Gordon England referred to NSCS Athens as "an absolute jewel." Will the Commission consider this in it recommendation?
A4. Part of what constitutes DoD's determination of military value is jointness, ease of mobility, and the base's strategic role with regard to today's changing global threats. Therefore, while the Commission recognizes the distinctions received in the past, the final recommendation will be based primarily on the current military value of the installation.

Q5. The base sits on a 56-acre site. In addition, the base is located within the vicinity of University of Georgia facilities. If the base is closed, what will happen to the property?

A5. The question of what will happen with a base after its closure is under the purview of DoD rather than the BRAC Commission. Applicable laws dictate that federal property must first be made available to other federal agencies.
If the property is deemed excess by the federal government then it will be made available to homeless assistance groups. It is only after this point that the land may be offered to the local government or to private developers at market value.

Q6. What role will political influence play in Commission's decision regarding NSCS Athens?
A6. The Congress established the BRAC Commission as an entirely non-partisan and non-political entity to independently evaluate whether DoD made its recommendations in accordance with the law. The Commission will serve to provide accountability to the public and ensure that all suggestions have been based upon the criteria set forth by statute. The Commission will perform a thorough, accurate, and objective analysis, in a completely open and transparent manner, which will take into account, chiefly, the military value of NSCS Athens, but will also consider the economic, environmental and other effects that the closure of the installation would have on the surrounding community—as prescribed by law.

Q7. Currently, NSCS Athens provides medical and dental services for 22,000 military retirees in the area. Will the Commission consider the medical ramifications that closing the base would have on the local community?
A7. The effect that DoD's suggestions, if enacted would have on the healthcare of our troops and the local community is important to the Commission. The Commission recognizes the role medical facilities play in the lives of active duty, Reserve, and retired military personnel. The Commission will consider the effects of the DoD's recommendations on local medical facilities.

Q8. If the DoD's recommendations occur in their entirety, the State of Georgia stands to gain 7,000 jobs. Will Georgia's overall net gain in jobs influence the Commission's decision on whether or not to close NSCS Athens?
A8. The criteria for determining the value of a military installation has been set forth by statute. As outlined by law, the Commission will place priority on military value; while also taking into consideration economic, environmental, and other effects that the closure or realignment of a base would have on the community surrounding that base.
Information that is gathered in the analysis of a base, with the exception of information that is sensitive to national security, will be made accessible to the public. Part of what constitutes DoD's determination of military value is jointness, ease of mobility, and the base's strategic role with regard to today's changing global threats.

Q9. How can the Community make the Commission aware of information that the Community feels may have been overlooked by DoD?
A9. The BRAC Commission encourages public input into this transparent and objective process. The public may submit comments through the Commission's official website, which is: www.brac.gov.

Facts compiled from included press clippings.

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NAVAL SUPPLY CORPS. SCHOOL
ATHENS, GEORGIA

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National News Articles

Chambliss: Georgia Bases In Good Shape For Cuts
The Associated Press
Doug Gross
May 4, 2005

Georgia's military installations should be well-positioned to survive, and even expand, after a round of government cuts set to begin this month, U.S. Sen. Saxby Chambliss said Wednesday.

"I think we're going to be a beneficiary," Chambliss, a member of the Senate Armed Services Committee, said after speaking to the Atlanta Press Club. "I think we're going to be a net gainer overall."

By May 16, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld will submit a list of bases that the Pentagon is recommending for closure. In the fall, the Base **Realignment** and Closure Commission will consider those recommendations and deliver its own revised list to the president, who must send it on to Congress by Nov. 7.

Since the commission began in the 1980s, none of Georgia's 13 major installations have been closed.

This time, experts expect the state's larger bases to be safe, but say a handful of smaller operations with few personnel and limited missions could be targeted.

Chambliss acknowledged that some Georgia bases could be on Rumsfeld's list this month.

"We had some last time; we're likely to have some this time," he said. "But we're prepared to defend them."

The **Navy Supply Corps School** in Athens and Moody Air Force Base in Valdosta have been targeted in past rounds of closings, but ultimately survived.

Chambliss noted that 12 of Georgia's 13 installations - all but King's Bay, the Navy's largest nuclear submarine base on the east coast - played some role in the war in Iraq.

"We could not have a better time to defend all of our bases than we do right now," he said. "If we can't show that now, we never will be able to show how important each of these bases is to the United States."

Rumsfeld has set a goal of reducing the military's infrastructure costs by 25 percent. That likely will mean many small installations will be shut down, with personnel and programs relocated to bigger posts.

Local News Articles

Navy Supply Corps School Hoping To Stay On Base
Knight-Ridder Tribune Business News - Athens Banner-Herald – Athens
Todd Defeo
May 8, 2005

Whether the **Navy Supply Corps School** can survive a fifth round of federal base closings remains to be seen, though not for much longer.

While local advocates of the school -- which has already survived Base **Realignment** and Closure (BRAC) rounds in 1988, 1991, 1993 and 1995 -- say they are "cautiously optimistic" the installation will not be closed in this year's rounds of base closings, they admit there is no way to know for sure. For now, it's a waiting game.

"Nobody can say that they're wildly optimistic," said retired Navy Capt. George Huban, who was commander of the **Navy Supply Corps School** from 1994-96.

"I think we're cautiously optimistic," said retired Navy Capt. Len Sapera, who commanded the school from 1987-90. "But then again, beauty is in the eye of the beholder."

By May 16, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld will submit a list of bases he recommends should be closed, but some say the list could be released as early as Thursday or Friday. The BRAC Commission -- a nine-member panel that will review the Pentagon's recommended list of base closures and **realignments** -- will deliver its own list to President Bush, who must send it to Congress by Nov. 7.

"I would put this in the analogy of musical chairs," Huban said. "Every time you get through a

BRAC, there are fewer chairs. And so whether the Navy was doing it again or the Department of Defense, the combination of having never lost a base in Georgia and we have so many bases and we're playing musical chairs for the fifth time, it's a challenge." In the previous four BRACs, the military closed a combined 97 installations -- roughly 25 percent of its bases. In 2005, another 25 percent of the military's installations could be closed, but it might not be that high, partly because the military needs a home for 70,000 troops returning from Europe and South Korea, as a part of a worldwide movement of troops.

"We're hearing it probably won't get that high," Huban said of the 25 percent estimate. "But, it could be 20 percent." About 4,000 students come through the Navy School each year for supply, transportation and maintenance logistical training. The 58-acre Prince Avenue facility, which opened in 1954 and sits on a military site that dates to the Civil War, employs about 130 military personnel and more than 190 civilians, according to the Georgia Military Affairs Coordinating Committee.

Closing or consolidating stateside facilities could save $ 7 billion annually and that money could be better spent improving fighting capabilities amid terrorist threats, Rumsfeld previously said.

But for individual bases, such as the Navy School, it's all about advocates pleading the case to the government for why the military shouldn't close a particular installation. However, military officials have released little information and provided no feedback to communities who meet with them, leaving advocates of the Navy School to wait on the Department of Defense to release its list.

"Everybody with a uniform on has signed (a confidentiality agreement), so they're not going to tell you anything," said James LaBoon, a strong supporter of the Navy School.

Regardless, local proponents of the Navy School say they've done all they can to tout the installation to the right people.

"We've had the opportunity to make our case," Sapera said. "It's a shot in the dark because you don't know what the other bases are doing. You don't even know who you're competing against. That's the problem."

Base Cuts Worry State;
Georgia Hopes Its Good Luck Holds As Pentagon Drafts List Of Facilities That May Close.
The Atlanta Journal-Constitution
RON MARTZ
May 8, 2005

Tim Martin admits he's a bit nervous about the future of Albany.

Nervousness is a part of the job description for the president and chief executive of the Albany Chamber of Commerce. His South Georgia community has weathered industrial plant closings over the last two decades and the devastating flood of 1994.

"My palms are sweating and my breathing is shallow, but I think I'll survive this, too," Martin said.

Martin's worries are summed up in a Pentagon-created acronym: BRAC --- Base **Realignment** and Closure.

BRAC is a recurring effort by the Pentagon to cut costs by closing some of its excess military facilities. Later this week, for the first time in a decade, the military will offer a list of bases it wants to close or realign. A committee appointed by Congress and the president will consider the list and draw up a final version by September.

While the process is highly secretive, the Marine Corps Logistics Base in Albany has long been rumored to be in the cross hairs of Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld.

"There are 10 gazillion unknowns and really very few knowns," Martin said.

Retired Army Brig. Gen. Phil Browning, executive director of Gov. Sonny Perdue's Military Affairs Coordinating Committee, said the communities that are home to the 13 military installations in Georgia have been preparing for this week since the last BRAC in 1995. They include Cobb County, home of Dobbins Air Reserve Base; Atlanta, which has Fort McPherson; and Forest Park, with Fort Gillem.

"I think we're all a little nervous right now but because we've talked about it so much and been straightforward in talking to our communities out there, there's really not a lot of discussion about it," Browning said.

Not long after Congress approved the process that will lead to the 2005 round of base closings, Rumsfeld said he wanted to cut as much as 25 percent of the military infrastructure. The implication was that about 100 of the nation's 425 military facilities could be affected.

Since then, Rumsfeld has lowered his sights. Newspaper editorial writers who spoke with him on a conference call late last week said he told them that excess capacity at U.S. bases is less than estimated, and that with troops returning from soon-to-be-closed overseas bases, the figure could be less than half his earlier estimate.

Suggestions by Rumsfeld and others have also indicated this round could be more about **realignment** than closure. That means some facilities in a state could lose missions and troops while others could gain.

Georgia, where the military is a $20-billion-a-year industry, could add soldiers and missions at large bases like Fort Stewart, Fort Benning and Fort Gordon. But smaller facilities, such as the **Navy Supply Corps School** in Athens and Fort McPherson could be closed.

Sen. Saxby Chambliss (R-Ga.), speaking to the Atlanta Press Club last week, said he believes Georgia is in good shape this time because 12 of its 13 installations --- all but the Kings Bay submarine base in Brunswick --- played some role in the war in Iraq.

"We could not have a better time to defend all of our bases than we do right now," he said. "If we can't show that now, we never will be able to show how important these bases are to the security of the United States."

The four previous rounds of base closures (1988, 1991, 1993 and 1995) shut down 97 bases across the country, but Georgia did not lose one.

Geography a blessing

Although BRAC is supposed to be politically neutral, the influence of Sen. Sam Nunn (D-Ga.), who chaired the Senate Armed Services Committee until his retirement in the mid-1990s, could not be discounted. Chambliss is a member of the committee, now chaired by Virginia Republican John Warner.

With Nunn gone, some have speculated that BRAC could be gunning for Georgia. But Loren Thompson, a defense analyst with the nonprofit Lexington Institute think tank in Washington, D.C., believes the state will do well again.

"I expect Alabama, Georgia and the Carolinas will fare better than almost every other state in the base-closing process," Thompson said.

His three reasons: Bases in the Southeast tend to be of high military value, are well-suited to getting troops and equipment overseas quickly, and are in the most pro-military part of the country, where they have been steadily supported by lawmakers.

"It has nothing to do with 'blue state, red state.' It has to do with what has been put into them in the past," Thompson said.

Once the list is released, the nine-member, independent BRAC commission will assess it and the information that went into the Pentagon's decision-making process.

The commission will hold regional hearings to let community leaders have their say. While the loss of a base in any community is an economic blow, that is far down the list of what the commissioners will consider.

Military value is the primary guide for the commission, which can come up with its own supplemental list of possible closures.

But getting a base on the supplemental list will take the approval of seven members of the commission this year. In the past, when it took only a simple majority to put a base on the supplemental list, the Marine base in Albany, Fort McPherson, Fort Gillem, Robins Air Force Base in Warner Robins and Naval Air Station Atlanta in Marietta were added for comparison purposes.

In the four previous rounds, only Moody Air Force Base in Valdosta was on the original Pentagon list. But intense lobbying spared it.

The commission must send its recommendation to President Bush by Sept 8. He must forward his recommendations to Congress by Sept. 23. If the president approves the commission's recommendations, Congress must approve or reject the entire list.

If Bush does not like the commission's recommendations, the panel has until Oct. 20 to prepare a new list.

Ready for anything

Georgia officials have taken a three-pronged approach to BRAC this year.

Community groups have been working with base officials to enhance the military value of their installations by attracting new missions.

In recent months, under the guidance of the state Military Affairs Coordinating Committee, each community has developed two groups. If a Georgia base is on the list, one group will study the data the Pentagon used in the decision to see if errors were made and if there's a reasonable argument to spare the base. The other group will begin planning for long-term redevelopment of the site once it reverts to the community.

"When that list comes out, they will be ready to execute," said Browning, who has overseen the development of the community groups.

In Albany, Martin believes the community will deal with whatever happens at the Marine base with the same resilience and equanimity it showed after floods and other industrial losses.

"We've grown through those, so it wasn't just a blank slate that we started out with here," he said. "We've got a lot of folks with a lot of experience and right now we are cautiously optimistic, but we are abundantly prepared for any eventuality."

Georgia Base Gains Mean Boost, Especially To Columbus, St. Marys
The Associated Press State & Local Wire
Doug Gross
May 14, 2005

For Susan Chriss, the significance of the Pentagon's announcement was easy to figure out: plans for nearly 10,000 new troops at nearby Fort Benning means she stands to sell more fatigues, backpack kits and other gear at her military surplus shop.

"We're excited," said Chriss, co-owner of Commando Military Supply near Fort Benning's gates. "It will be wonderful for us and wonderful for all the businesses here."

Chriss is not alone in the state. Despite the proposed shutdown of four bases, Georgia was one of the nation's big winners on the list of proposed base closures and **realignments** revealed Friday.

With a net gain of 7,000 military jobs - if the plan is approved by the President and Congress - Georgia would enjoy the nation's second-biggest increase in defense personnel, behind only Maryland.

Even while vowing to fight for Georgia's four targeted bases - Fort McPherson in Atlanta, Fort Gillem in Forest Park, the Naval Air Station-Atlanta in Marietta and the **Navy Supply Corps School** in Athens - Gov. Sonny Perdue noted that Georgia was "the second net gainer of jobs and missions in the country."

"We're very proud of that," he said. Fort Benning is responsible for most of that gain.

The post on the Alabama state line is slated to add 9,221 troops and 618 civilian workers - the third-largest gain of any military installation in the country.

Much of the increase would come from the addition of a tank center and training school now at Fort Knox in Kentucky.

"This is a big mission," said Fort Benning commander Brig. Gen. Benjamin Freakley. "Our schools, our downtown housing, our service providers will feel a significant increase in the coming years."

The Pentagon estimated that Fort Benning's growth would translate into 13,828 new jobs in the Columbus area, an 8.5 percent increase in the local economy.

Freakley credited his post's sprawling 184,000 acres, strong record on issues from readiness to environmental stewardship, and strong community support for the gains.

"We have wonderful communities that surround us that give us great support," Freakley said.

According to the Pentagon's economic-impact analysis, the nation's biggest winner would be St. Marys, Ga. Many of the attack submarines now based in New London, Conn., would be moved to Kings Bay Naval Submarine Base, near St. Marys, under the base **realignment** plan.

King's Bay, which currently employs about 8,000, looks to gain 3,367 new jobs - more than a 40 percent increase. The Pentagon also estimates that nearby St. Marys stands to gain 5,034 jobs, a 21.9 percent increase in the local economy.

A King's Bay spokesman, Ed Buczek, said the base would gain a submarine school for sailors right out of boot camp, an intermediate repair facility, and a portion of New London's fast-attack submarine squadron.

"It's very positive news for King's Bay," Buczek said. "This is only the first step of the process and things can change, so we have to proceed with caution."

The addition would vastly expand the mission for King's Bay, which is the East coast base for the Navy's nuclear weapons carrying submarines.

New jobs also are proposed for three other Georgia bases, but not nearly as many as Fort Benning and King's Bay.

Robins Air Force Base near Warner Robins is recommended to net 749 new jobs - all contractors; Moody Air Force Base near Valdosta, Ga., is set to net 575 - all military; and the Marines Corps Logistics Base in Albany is planned to see a net gain of 150 jobs - all civilian.

Despite the positive news, the possibility that four of the state's 13 military bases would close makes the process bittersweet for the state. Only one Georgia installation - Moody Air Force Base in Valdosta - had been targeted by the Pentagon in its previous three rounds of post-Cold War base closings. It was on the list in 1991 and 1993, and both times it was spared by the independent commission that passes final judgment on the Pentagon's lists.

Georgia's leaders must now embark upon a delicate balancing act - pushing for the four targeted bases to remain open while not hurting the prospects of those installations that stand to gain big.

"It's difficult to say what your chances are relative to whether or not you can be successful," said U.S. Sen. Saxby Chambliss. "But I do know this, the chances of us being able to make a strong case relative to the criteria the base closure commission's going to look at is very, very good."

Athens Does Not Want To End 'Love Affair' With Small Navy School

The Associated Press State & Local Wire
Charles Odum
May 14, 2005

The sound of a cell phone ringing from a classroom at the **Navy Supply Corps School** is golden to the owners of the Black Forest Bakery about a block away.

"If a young man's cell phone rings in class, he has to come and buy doughnuts for the class," said Sandy Reed, who runs the bakery with her husband, Christopher.

"Many young men have been in here to do that," she added.

The NSCS - known in Athens simply as the Navy School - has been an important part of the local economy for 51 years, but now it has been targeted to fall to the Base **Realignment** and Closure cuts.

The University of Georgia is Athens' major employer, but the loss of the base and its more than 500 jobs would be felt. A recent Chamber of Commerce study said the base provides an annual economic impact of about $70 million to the area.

That's a lot of doughnuts.

"It's substantial enough for us to know what a loss it would be," Reed said. "It's phenomenal what they do for us."

Aside from the economic impact, residents in the part of Athens known as Normal Town simply don't like change. Institutions like the Navy School, the neighborhood bakery and the local hardware store aren't supposed to leave.

Hugh Logan, 82, says he attended elementary school and high school on what is now the campus of the Navy School. For more than a half century he has watched from his Normal Hardware front doors as officers have passed through the school.

Logan points to an inscription on the doorway of his store that reads "Remodeled in 1909."

"This building was built in the 1800s," he said, adding "Some things have changed since back then."

Other things haven't changed. Since 1954, all active-duty supply corps officers have been trained in Athens.

"They've just been outstanding young people who have come through here," Logan said.

Just as local businesses have embraced the supply corps officers, some officers - including two retired commanders of the base - have retired in Athens.

"It's a love affair, and it's been a love affair for 51 years," said retired Navy Capt. Len Sapera, who commanded the school from 1987 to 1990.

"Athens is a great Navy town," Sapera said.

Added retired Capt. George Huban, commander from 1994 to 1996: "We've been fortunate to land here. This is a rare place."

Sapera says it doesn't matter that the only water near Athens is the Oconee River, or that the school is targeted to move to Newport, R.I., on a port.

"What we do, we don't need to be on the water," Sapera said. "We may not be on the water, but 95 percent of our students go directly to the fleet. This is one of the more efficient bases in the Navy. We are a great training base."

Despite widespread speculation that Athens would be included in the cuts, the supporters of the school say they expected good news.

"We're disappointed," said Sapera, part of a group that will continue to fight for the base to remain in Athens. "We thought we made our case very well. They're closing every small base in the world, no matter how excellent they are."

Georgia And The Armed Services Have Nurtured Each Other For Decades

The Macon Telegraph
Don Schanche Jr
May 15, 2005

The BRAC ax missed Middle Georgia this time, just as it spared most of Georgia's military communities. Georgia even stands to gain from other states' BRAC losses.

But the Base **Realignment** and Closure process cast a long shadow across a state whose economy is intertwined with military spending - particularly Georgia's cities.

It is no accident, historians say, that the Atlanta, Augusta, Columbus, Macon and Savannah areas all are home to major military installations - economic engines that reliably pump billions of dollars each year from the federal government into the local business communities. Nor that military bases sprang up near Valdosta, Albany and Brunswick.

Even landlocked Athens has done its part for the Navy - and got a military payroll - hosting the **Navy Supply Corps School** since 1954.

At key moments in the past century, national defense installations were sown beside those cities like seeds from the federal hand. In the red clay of the Piedmont and sandy soil of the coastal plain, they put down roots and grew.

Through a combination of congressional clout and mutual need, Georgia and the armed services have nurtured each other for decades.

Georgia officials now estimate the state's 13 military installations and the National Guard create a combined annual economic impact of $21 billion to $25 billion. The personnel roster at Georgia's military bases ranks among the six largest in the nation, according to figures from the privately run usmilitary.about.com Web site.

"It's probably one of the top employers and has one of the greatest economic impacts on the state," said Craig Pascoe, an assistant professor of history at Georgia College & State University in Milledgeville.

But as the BRAC process demonstrated, the high concentration of military bases leaves Georgia vulnerable to political and strategic shifts in Washington.

"You pull Warner Robins out and what does that part of Georgia have left to support it? Nothing. That's the real fear," Pascoe said.

From World Wars to Cold War

Most of Georgia's military bases owe their beginnings to the violence of the 20th century.

World War I brought Camp Benning to Columbus. Later it became Fort Benning, infantry training hub for the Army. Augusta had Camp Hancock during World War I, but the 1940s provided Augusta with Fort Gordon, home of the Army's Signal Corps. The Second World War gave birth to Fort Stewart, the largest Army installation east of the Mississippi River. It also transformed a patch of farmland south of Macon into Robins Air Force Base, one of Georgia's largest employers. In 1978, the Cold War brought the Kings Bay nuclear submarine base to St. Marys, not far south of Brunswick.

Pascoe said Georgia's powerful congressional leaders - among them Sen. Richard Russell and Rep. Carl Vinson - brought to bear the political clout to bring many of the bases into being. Local historians say it was Vinson who directed that an air base be located south of Macon.

"They saw that as a great potential - not that they were economic developers, but the federal government was offering the opportunity to introduce jobs and some kind of economic development to the area," Pascoe said.

And in the first half of the 20th century, Georgia and the South needed jobs.

"Not only did the South have a problem with poverty - and Southern per capita income levels are half the national per capita virtually up to World War II - but ... the South was singularly lacking in a lot of the basic requirements for modern industrial society, " said David L. Carlton, associate professor of history at Vanderbilt University in Nashville.

For instance, he said, the work force didn't know much besides farm labor.

"You could bring in industries like textiles because you could put 8-year-old girls up on peach crates to run (the equipment), but skill levels were generally lacking."

Carlton said he believes economics played an even bigger role than politics in the growth of Southern military bases.

"These are bases that typically need lots and lots of land, so it pays to find land that's fairly cheap for artillery ranges and bombing ranges and all of that," Carlton said. The military found what it wanted in the flatlands below the Fall Line. The South had cheap land, and lots of it. Building costs were low and you could train here year round.

"From early in the 20th century, local boosters are starting to look at military bases as good opportunities for economic development, particularly in old lumber areas that have been cut over," Carlton said. "Then basically what happens is local boosters start working with military guys and their representatives in Washington, and you start seeing local people looking to

assemble large tracts of land that they can offer and the like. You've got people in the South who see this as an opportunity, and military people really appreciate that: People who actually want bases there are the kind of people that the military decision makers tend to warm to."

He said, "People who are interested in using military bases as a development tool are inevitably going to go to politicians and say, 'We have a good opportunity here, can you help us out on it?' The representative is always on the lookout to earn brownie points with the voters."

It didn't hurt the South's efforts that its congressional representatives gravitated toward positions of military power.

The one-party Democratic South and the congressional seniority system combined to produce powerful lawmakers who remained committee chairs for decades. Russell and Vinson headed the Armed Services committees in their respective chambers.

Later, the Cold War heirs of Russell and Vinson - notably former Sen. Sam Nunn and former House Speaker Newt Gingrich, a Republican - helped ensure that Georgia kept what the earlier leaders planted.

And in last year's 3rd District Congressional race, the candidates said the chief issue centered on who could best protect Robins Air Force Base in the BRAC process.

Some say today it's no longer power brokers that keep Georgia's bases in business, but effective communication of their role in the national defense.

"I really don't think politics is playing as much of a role in the BRAC as you would think," said former Macon Mayor George Israel, who now heads the Georgia Chamber of Commerce. "I think probably it does some, but no individual congressman or delegation or even a well-placed senator is in a position to influence where they go with that."

Former U.S. Rep. J. Roy Rowland of Dublin served in Congress from 1983 until 1995. He saw the first BRAC process unfold. And he said watching over Georgia's military bases is among the biggest jobs that a congressman does.

"My staff people became pretty much involved in learning all they could about why these bases should be kept open - and not only what they were contributing to the national defense, but also to the economy of those areas," Rowland said.

Political power still matters, he said.

"The bases came into being because of the former members of the Georgia delegation, but now they're kept open because of the members who have been involved since BRAC started," Rowland said.

An economic kick-start?

Regardless of how the bases were born and cultivated, they're now something that Georgia depends on.

Their collective payroll amounts to $5.3 billion, according to the Georgia Military Affairs Coordinating Committee, a state agency that works closely with the Georgia Chamber.

The committee's executive director, retired Army Brig. Gen. Philip Y. Browning, estimated that the bases generate another $6 billion a year in contracts to Georgia companies. Collectively, he said, the bases create an annual economic impact in Georgia of $20 billion to $25 billion.

Roger Tutterow, chairman of the department of economics and and finance at Kennesaw State University, said that amounts to as much as 7 percent of the Georgia's $360 billion gross state product.

"It certainly is a pretty good chunk," he said.

If Georgia were suddenly to lose any of its major bases, he said, it would create a deep statewide void and an even deeper void for whichever community lost its base.

"It's not the kind of gap that could be filled in a couple of months or even a couple of years," he said.

Pascoe, the GC&SU professor, said there's a long-standing debate about the up and downsides of a military-based economy.

"Some people think military spending is what really kick-starts an economy," Pascoe said. "There's the other side that says it doesn't kick-start the economy, it actually substitutes for an active economy."

In other words, he said, take away the military dollars and not much is left.

"You take some place like Fort Stewart and you look at the manufacturing that's been developed over the past 40-50 years, and there's hardly anything that could support an infrastructure if Fort Stewart pulled out," Pascoe said. "Same thing with Warner Robins. If Warner Robins wasn't on the edge of that fruit growing (area) in central and south Georgia, there wouldn't be much there."

Expert Says Navy Supply Corps School Closing Much Like Loss Of Industry
Knight-Ridder Tribune Business News - Athens Banner-Herald - Athens
Todd DeFeo
May 17, 2005

While many people might not think of the **Navy Supply Corps School** as an industry, it is, and losing the 50-year-old base would hit northeast Georgia in much the same way as losing a major manufacturer, according to a business expert.

"You'd feel it immediately. In other words, maybe not economically, but psychologically you'd feel it immediately," George Benson, dean of the Terry College of Business at the University of Georgia, said last week, a day before the official closing announcement.

The Navy school off Prince Avenue in the Normaltown neighborhood is among about 180 installations nationwide and seven in Georgia that the U.S. Department of Defense recommends should be closed as a part of this year's Base **Realignment** and Closure process.

"You feel like something has been stolen from you, something's been lost. You immediately begin to have those feelings of regret, and that tends to be a damper then for the economy," Benson said. "You've been selling your community (and) now it has one less thing to sell. You'll

have the psychological pangs immediately, and then the economic impact starts to kick in later down the road."

The **Navy Supply Corps School** employs 130 military personnel and 193 civilians, according to the Georgia Military Affairs Coordinating Committee. The school, which provides logistics training in supply, transportation and maintenance for the Department of Defense and international personnel, has an average daily student load of 280 people, according to the committee.

In some ways, Northeast Georgia in recent months has grown accustomed to losing industries.

Several companies in Franklin, Hart and Stephens counties have pulled up stakes and headed for other areas. Now, the Navy school -- a fixture in Athens for more than 50 years -- might be added to that list.

"It's not a business in the sense of profit and loss as measured in dollars; it's not a business in that sense," Benson said. "But, in the sense that they are producing products and delivering services and the sense that they have employees and they have a hierarchy of officials -- they have essentially CEOs, they call them different names, they call them admirals and generals -- (it is a business)."

"You've got an organization that's very businesslike," he added. "And they're hiring people, they're firing people. They are doing business with other companies and organizations around the world. It's certainly businesslike."

In preparing for this year's round of BRAC, state and federal officials geared up for the worst, not knowing which installations will be cut.

"When they're re-evaluating everything in the country, you always anticipate that it could be any facility," said U.S. Sen. Johnny Isakson, R-Ga. "Over the course of the last two years, at one time or another, they've been rumored to close everything in Georgia. On the whole, as we said, Georgia came out exceedingly well."

Overall, the state would see 7,413 military and civilian positions cut at the four bases recommended for closure, while the Pentagon has proposed adding 14,836 new positions at Georgia's other bases. Some of the new jobs would be positions cut at other bases and reassigned to different bases within the state.

"We are the second-largest gainer in the United States, so you can't beat that," said Brig. Gen. Philip Browning, executive director of the Georgia Military Affairs Coordinating Committee. "The challenge I think we're going to have is trying to accommodate all this growth." The additional jobs would give Georgia the second-largest net gain among all states, trailing only Maryland.

"We wouldn't trade places with any other state in the union in terms of net new jobs, payroll and all of that," Isakson said. "But, we regret that the supply school is one of the things they want to move."

On a statewide level, military installations are much like the state's ports. They're vital to the economy, but on the average, most people don't realize or understand their importance, Benson said. "There are a couple of things in the state that tend to be somewhat invisible unless you're

involved with them," Benson said. "One is our set of military installations. -- Another one is our ports -- the port of Savannah and the port in Brunswick. They are economic engines for the state, just as these military posts are economic engines."

"But both of those entities tend to be somewhat invisible," he added. "If you think the ports, if you think about how you get products from here to there, how you get people from here to there, we all use the highways, we're familiar with the highways, we all fly airplanes, so we're familiar with that. But, how many of us actually use the ports? We really don't, but virtually everything that's sitting on your desk came through that port."

Businesses Near School Not Nervous
Knight-Ridder/Tribune Business News
Todd Defeo
May 18, 2005

The **Navy Supply Corps School** doesn't have much of a financial impact on the businesses closest to the Prince Avenue base, though financial leaders say the installation impacts the total Athens economy by $ 70 million each year.

While the Athens Area Chamber of Commerce says the Navy school -- which, according to a news release issued last week, is an "economic machine for the local economy" -- has a $ 70 million economic impact on Athens, the group's president admits he can't find a copy of the study that supports that figure.

"We're trying to locate that file," Larry McKinney, president of the Chamber, said Tuesday evening.

While the $ 70 million figure dates to the early or mid-90s, the exact economic impact of the base could be known by the end of the month. The Chamber is conducting a new study to determine exactly how much the base impacts the Athens area, McKinney said.

The school was among more than 180 military bases nationwide the U.S. Department of Defense identified Friday for closure as a part of this year's Base **Realignment** and Closure.

However, locals won't know until closer to the end of the year whether BRAC actually will move the base to Newport, R.I.

The Navy school's possible relocation to Rhode Island might leave Clarke County with 58 acres of property that could be redeveloped. A future home for a college or university is among the many possibilities that people often suggest for the site.

"I think if a university or one of the campuses takes it over, it'll be a big boon for the area," said Barry Carson, owner of the P&M Army Store on Prince Avenue across from the school.

And a handful of nearby business people say either they don't see much business from the **Navy Supply Corps School** or they can't tell because the base's personnel blend in with the rest of Athens.

Jaime Umana, a manager at El Pollo Criollo restaurant across from the school, estimated about 5 percent of the restaurant's business comes from the **Navy Supply Corps School.**

"Not that much, but maybe it's going to hurt a little bit," Umana said earlier this month when asked how the school's closure might hurt his business.

Relocating the Navy school could cut as many as 831 jobs -- 513 direct jobs and 318 indirect jobs -- if there is no economic recovery in the area, according to a Defense Department report detailing the recommended closings.

The school, which provides logistics training in supply, transportation and maintenance for the Defense Department and international personnel, has, on average, 280 students a day, according to the Georgia Military Affairs Coordinating Committee.

Managers of a few apartment complexes said they were not overly concerned about the prospect that the Navy school will close. Courtney Redmond, president of the Athens Apartment Association and property manager of University Commons off Riverbend Road, said smaller class sizes at the Navy school have already impacted the apartment industry and she doesn't think the base's closure would harm the industry much more.

James Alapatt, a cashier at Partner's Convenience Store on Prince Avenue, says he doesn't routinely see people who work at the Navy school shopping.

"They have their own store," he said.

"They always tell me, 'We have a store inside the Navy School that is very cheap,' " he added.

Base Hit List Threatens Southside
The Atlanta Journal-Constitution
Add Seymour Jr.
May 19, 2005

Aziz Kapadia worries that long lines will soon become a memory at the Exxon station he co-owns across the street from Fort Gillem.

The possible closure of Fort Gillem could deal a severe financial blow to Clayton County and to business people like Kapadia.

"It would definitely affect us pretty big if it shuts down," Kapadia said

The Pentagon is trying to streamline the number of military bases and make the ones that remain more efficient in today's world.

Officially called Base **Realignment** and Closure, or BRAC, the initiative has closed 97 bases in 1988, 1991, 1993 and 1995. A 2004 Defense Department study found that the military has 24 percent more base infrastructure than needed.

Four Georgia bases are on the Defense Department's 2005 BRAC list Fort McPherson in East Point, the Naval Air Station in Marietta, Fort Gillem in northern Clayton County and the **Navy Supply Corps School** in Athens.

"We are prepared to vigorously defend Fort Gillem and Fort McPherson," Gov. Sonny Perdue said. "This is not a decision that we are willing to accept."

The list of bases to be closed is only a recommendation at this point. Over the next few months, a BRAC commission will visit the bases and listens to pleas to keep them open. The commission will decide if it wants to make changes to the list before forwarding it to the President. President Bush would sign off on the plan and forward it to Congress, which can only accept it or decline it.

Nearly 1,100 civilian and military employees would be directly affected if Fort Gillem closes. But the trickle-down effect of Fort Gillem's closing would affect many others.

"It's not only military but also the civilian traffic, contractors and other businesses," said Kapadia, who estimates that 60 percent of his business comes from Fort Gillem. His station is across from Gillem's main gate.

Fort Gillem is one of the county's largest employers behind Delta Air Lines and the Clayton County school system.

Clayton County Economic Director Emory Brock said the closing of Fort Gillem would be a big blow, but not as bad as it could be.

"First of all, it would take them up to five years to close it," Brock said. "But all of the uses out there could remain."

For example, a state-of-the-art forensic crime laboratory at the base would probably remain because it serves the entire Army, he said.

"It's not as bad as it could be," Brock said, "so I'm not as concerned about that as I am about [financially ailing Delta]."

Clayton Commission Chairman Eldrin Bell said he hates to see Gillem close but thinks the closure could provide some economic stimulus for Clayton.

"Initially it'll have some [negative] impact, but what I'm excited about is the potential it provides for Clayton County and Forest Park, working together on developing the base for the future," he said.

Early plans would have a fourth of the base remaining undeveloped while 75 percent of the base's nearly 1,500 acres would be evenly split among residential, commercial and light industrial uses.

But first a coalition of local, state and federal officials plan to fight the closing of the base.

"There is no greater economic engine in Clayton County than Fort Gillem, and we're going to make that case," said U.S. Rep. David Scott (D-Georgia).

Opinions/ Editorials

Brac Process Is The Wrong Approach At The Wrong Time
The Augusta Chronicle (Georgia)
U.S. Rep. John Barrow
May 11, 2005

Across the country this week, military bases and their surrounding communities are bracing for BRAC - the Pentagon's Base **Realignment** and Closure process. In the coming days, the secretary of defense is expected to announce his recommendations for closing or moving military bases. The public relations goal of BRAC may be to help transform our military from the Cold War to the digital age, but its true underlying intent is simply to cut costs and save money.

I believe that closing military bases in a time of war represents the wrong approach at the wrong time. In a global war on terror, when American men and women are laying their lives on the line every single day, now is not the time for our government to be penny-wise and pound-foolish with the future of our military.

THE BRAC PROCESS dates to the early 1960s, when the military complex built during World War II and the Korean War no longer served the military needs of the time. Consolidating bases proved a common sense way to effectively manage and organize the military during peacetime. Since then, we have undergone numerous rounds of military base closures, with the last one taking place in 1995, soon after the collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War.

The world has changed dramatically in the 10 years since our last round of base closings. Since the attacks on the Pentagon and the World Trade Center, more than 1 million of our men and women have been called up for duty and deployed to fight overseas. Our nation has suffered more than 1,700 deaths and nearly 12,500 injuries, and our country has spent hundreds of billions of dollars providing our troops with the support, equipment and infrastructure they need to get the job done and return home safely.

Even with the battles won and victories achieved, the war on terror is far from over. Global terrorism is an elusive and unrelenting enemy. In times like these, it simply does not make sense to condense our military in an effort to cut costs. Imagine if we had attempted to cut our military infrastructure in 1943, during World War II, or if we had started closing military bases in 1951, when tens of thousands of American troops were fighting in Korea. Our nation would never have stood for that then, and we should not stand for it now.

Earlier this year, I toured all four of the military bases in and around Georgia's 12th Congressional District - the **Navy Supply Corps School,** Fort Gordon, Fort Stewart and Hunter Army Airfield. All four were spared during previous rounds of base closures, and all four continue to play a vital role in the nation's ongoing military operations.

RECENTLY CALLED "an absolute jewel" by Secretary of the Navy Gordon England, the **Navy Supply Corps School** is an essential multi-service training facility, performing state-of-the-art joint training missions and providing development and training for the Department of Defense and additional international personnel. The base's high-tech satellite training programs provide an incredible teaching facility for our next generation of military professionals worldwide, while keeping costs extraordinarily low. Any so-called "benefits" of closing NSCS would be far outweighed by the negative effects of closure on the training and education of our navy and worldwide military.

Additionally, NSCS is a support center for active duty personnel stationed at ROTC units and recruiting stations in northeast Georgia, as well as military retirees in the area. The base provides medical and dental services for 22,000 military retirees in the area, and the Athens local government provides police and fire protection at no cost to the Navy. Any proper cost/benefit analysis of this base's impact on our military would conclude that closure is simply the wrong decision.

Fort Gordon's training missions are critical to the effectiveness of the United States military. The base is a central training facility for the U.S. Army Reserve and National Guard, homeland security training, Joint Strategic Intelligence Operations and the United States Air Force's Air Reserve heavy-drop training.

FORT GORDON is equipped with a number of 21st-century training services, including the U.S. Army Signal Center and state-of-the-art medical facilities. The Signal Center is the worldwide headquarters for the Signal Corps, providing resources, knowledge, and a central command structure to Signaleers across the globe. The medical facilities, which partner with the Medical College of Georgia and the Augusta Veterans Administration Medical Center, provide a lifeline for the Army. Gordon's Regional Training Site-Medical is one of only three U.S. Army Reserve Command sites, supplying medical training critical to helping save lives on the battlefield.

Strategically located near the Port of Savannah, Fort Stewart and Hunter Army Airfield house the most highly trained military force in the world - the 3rd Infantry Division. As the largest and most productive base east of the Mississippi, the location, size, and strength of Fort Stewart and Hunter Army Airfield make them critical assets for the nation's joint military operations.

Soon after taking office in January, I visited the V.A. Medical Center in Augusta and Walter Reed Hospital in Washington, D.C. During those trips, I spoke one-on-one with a number of vets who had been injured while serving overseas. Their injuries, and the injuries that befall troops almost every day in Iraq and Afghanistan, signal that our mission in the war on terror is still under way. Our military has made great strides in bringing a new era of freedom to the Middle East, but the road ahead remains riddled with potential pitfalls and challenges.

AS AMERICANS, we don't ignore challenges; we rise to meet them. And as long as the men and women of America's armed forces are fighting overseas, we have a responsibility to support them at any and all cost. At this point in our nation's struggle against terrorism, trying to save money by closing some of our nation's military bases and training centers could pose a dangerous and unintended step in the wrong direction. In particular, any move to diminish the capabilities of the bases in and around Georgia's 12th District could very well compromise our efforts in the war on terror.

Now is the time for building up - not cutting back - our military infrastructure.

H

2005 Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission
Suggested Talking Points for Ft. McPherson

1. **Military Value is the most important consideration to the Defense Base Realignment and Closure Commission (BRAC) as the Commission evaluates the suggestion made by the Department of Defense (DoD) to close Ft. McPherson.**
    - The Commission will evaluate the economic, environmental, and other effects that the closure of the base could have on the surrounding community but the key factor in the Commission's conclusion as to whether or not to suggest Ft. McPherson for closure is military value.
    - The Commission understands the long history of Ft. McPherson--dating back to its use as an Army Post beginning in the 1830s and then its establishment as a base in the 1880s--but the Commission will evaluate the current military value of the base as the DoD seeks to streamline and transform our military to meet changing global threats.

2. **The Commission is aware of the human impact that the suggestions to close Ft. McPherson could have and is taking this into consideration.**
    - The Commission is a separate entity, established by the Congress to ensure that all critical factors have been taken into account, and that the effects that the closure of Ft. McPherson could have will be considered by the Commission as it makes its analysis.
    - The Commission understands that while some see the opportunity for development and community growth through private use of the beautiful land and facilities which the base now occupies, for others it would be at least temporary strain and hardship. The Commission seeks to take the full economic impact that the installation closure would have into consideration, while basing its decision almost entirely upon military value.
    - The local community has woven a rich history around Ft. McPherson--going back to the 1830s and including memories of President Franklin Delano Roosevelt staying there as a stopping point on his trips--and the infrastructure the community has formed, supporting the base, will be considered.

3. **The Congress established the Commission as a non-political, transparent, and independent entity to perform a thorough evaluation, through a process set forth by law, of the bases suggested for closure or realignment by DoD.**
    - The Commission serves to ensure that all pertinent factors have been evaluated and that the impact that the suggestions to close or realign a base would have on the surrounding community, have been taken into full account.
    - The Commission encourages public input. Members of the community wishing to inform the Commission of information that they feel was overlooked by DoD in DoD's evaluation and suggestion regarding the installation, are encouraged to submit their comments directly through the Commission's official website: www.brac.gov.

Facts compiled from included press clippings.

2005 Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission
Suggested Qs & As for Visit to Fort McPherson

Q1. Is the Commission aware that Fort McPherson is the oldest Army post in Georgia, having initially served as such in the 1830s, and later established as a base in the 1880s? Will the history of this base have an impact on the Commissioner's decision?
A1. The Commission will take all pertinent factors into account, as prescribed by statute, as it performs an evaluation of the suggestions made by the Department of Defense (DoD) and formulates its own suggestions. The Commission is keenly aware of the human impact had by the closure or realignment of a base, and although current military value is the most important consideration, the Commission will also consider the ties the base has to its supporting community.

Q2. There is some fear that if the troops from Ft. McPherson are relocated, that other forts will not be able to match the supporting infrastructure that McPherson has, including roads, Harstfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport, community and logistical Facilities, a skilled work-force, and affordable housing. Will the Commission take this into account as it evaluates the suggestions, made by DoD, for the closure of Ft. McPherson?
A2. The Commission will perform a thorough, accurate, and objective analysis which will take into account, chiefly, the military value of the base, but will also consider other factors. The ability of the community to support a military installation is very important, as is the effect that the closure of that installation would have on the community. Please be assured that the Commission will make a full evaluation, as prescribed by law, before coming to its conclusions and formulating its suggestions.

Q4. Ft. McPherson includes many historic buildings, constructed as far back as the early 1880s and has 50 buildings, covering 488 acres, in the National Registry of Historic Places. Some have said that the private development of the base could be beneficial to the region and have begun task forces to prepare in the case that the outcome of the base is closure. Others say that closing the base would be extremely hurtful, causing many small businesses in this military town to close. Will the Commission help to ensure continued economic success of the surrounding region, should the Commission recommend the base for closure?
A4. The question of what will happen with a base after its closure is under the purview of DoD rather than the BRAC Commission. DoD will continue to work with communities to ensure the best possible outcome. The Congress established the Commission as an independent entity to evaluate--in a thorough, non-political and accurate way, as prescribed by statute--the suggestions made by DoD to close or realign bases around the county. The Commission is well-aware of the human impact that the suggestions made by DoD would have on the surrounding communities and the Commission encourages public input. It is important to the Commissioners to know the degree of financial impact that the decision to close and installation would have on a

A4. Continued
community, even though the Commission's decision will be almost entirely based upon the military value of the installation.

Q5. Fort McPherson is home to three major headquarters: the U.S. Army Forces Command, the 3rd U.S. Army, and the U.S. Army Reserve Command. Does this not significantly contribute to the military value of the base?
A5. You can be assured that the Commission will make a full, thorough, accurate, and transparent analysis before it comes to its conclusions. DoD recognizes the positive contributions that the majority of the bases have made, but in an effort to streamline our military and transform it such that it is best prepared to meet changing global threats, it has been deemed necessary to rid the military of what the DoD considers excess, burdensome infrastructure. The Congress established the Commission to ensure that DoD followed the legal procedure in making these determinations and to ensure that all the necessary factors were evaluated—especially those that pertain to the military value of a base.

Q6. Is the Commission aware of the suggestion that some have made that DoD combine the forces, currently at Ft. McPherson, with those at Ft. Gilliam?
A6. The Commission will perform an independent evaluation of all the contributions to DoD's suggestion regarding each base, and will perform the complex process of separating out each of the highly intermingled factors. Although the state of Georgia's bases, recommended for closure, represent close to 1/8th of the total nation-wide closures, should the DoD's suggestions be enacted, the state will have a total gain of 7,423 defense jobs. The foremost important concern of the BRAC Commission is the military value of the base in question.

Q7. How can the Community inform the Commission of information that the Community feels may have been overlooked by DoD?
A7. The BRAC Commission encourages public input into this transparent and objective process. Community groups who wish to submit information for the Atlanta Regional Hearing, scheduled for Thursday, 30 June, are urged to contact their Congressional representative. Additionally, the public may submit comments through the Commission's official website, which is www.brac.gov.

Facts compiled from included press clippings.

FORT MCPHERSON
GEORGIA

National News Articles
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Local News Articles
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State Officials Work to Cover Military Bases
Planners Consider Redevelopment Options if Bases Close
BRAC Plan Proposes Net Gain of 479 Jobs at RAFB

Editorial/Opinion Articles
Preserving Atlanta: Forts a Valuable Link that Shouldn't Be Broken

National News Articles

The 10 largest on the hit list
Scripps Howard News Service
Thomas Hargrove
May 13, 2005

These are the 10 largest military bases the Pentagon wants to close and the total number of jobs that would be lost to the local communities:

New London Submarine Base, Conn. 8,460

Fort Monmouth, N.J. 5,272

Portsmouth Naval Shipyard, Maine 4,510

Fort McPherson, Ga. 4,141

Ellsworth Air Force Base, S.D. 3,852

Fort Monroe, Va. 3,564

Brooks City (Army) Base, Texas 2,923

Cannon Air Force Base, N.M. 2,824

Naval Support Activity New Orleans 2,711

Red River Army Depot, Texas 2,500

(E-mail Thomas Hargrove at HargroveT(at)shns.com.)

Cries of 'flat wrong' greet Pentagon's base closings list
Eric Schmitt And David Stout
The New York Times
May 14, 2005

WASHINGTON:
The Pentagon recommended Friday the closing of more than 30 big military bases from Maine to Hawaii, setting off immediate and furious reaction from the affected communities and the politicians who represent them.

The bases proposed for closing include some familiar names in military history: the navy's submarine base in New London, Connecticut, Fort McPherson in Georgia, Fort Monmouth in New Jersey, and the Pascagoula Naval Station in Mississippi. Scores of smaller installations would also be closed and others would be consolidated.

"Today's announcement is a very important component of the military transformation that President Bush asked us to conduct in 2001," Michael Wynne, under secretary of Defense for acquisition, technology and logistics, said at a news briefing.

While the list of recommended closings was smaller than expected, the reaction from those affected was intense.

Senator Joseph Lieberman, Democrat of Connecticut, called the recommendation to close the New London base "irrational and irresponsible."

"It insults our history and endangers our future," he told The Associated Press.

Governor Sonny Perdue of Georgia pledged "a vigorous defense" of the bases in his state. "The battle is not over," he said at a news briefing.

His state would be hit by six closings if the Pentagon's recommendation is followed by the Base Realignment and Closure Commission, or BRAC.

That independent nine-member commission will hold public hearings and visit bases through the summer. The panel can add or subtract bases from the list, but it needs seven panel members to approve any changes.

Senator Trent Lott, Republican of Mississippi, has fought hard to protect the Pascagoula facility,

and is certain to do so again.

The recommendation to close Ellsworth Air Force Base in South Dakota sparked bipartisan reaction from the state's two senators.

"Flat wrong," Senator John Thune, a Republican, told The Associated Press. His Democratic colleague, Tim Johnson, agreed. "We're not throwing in the towel at all," he said.

Texas would be hit with 14 closings, if the Pentagon recommendations are followed.

Alabama and California would be hit with 11 closings, Pennsylvania with 10. New York would lose eight bases, including three in the economically pressed Buffalo and Niagara Falls region.

Perdue offered a comment that could have come from any one of scores of politicians Friday: "When it's you, it makes a big difference."

Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld said Thursday that the Pentagon would recommend closing fewer domestic bases than originally expected because the military had less surplus space and capacity than were initially estimated. The military earlier estimated it had 20 percent to 25 percent more capacity than it needed.

But Rumsfeld said military officials had found only 5 percent to 10 percent excess capacity once they took into consideration the need to accommodate 70,000 troops returning from Europe, as well as Pentagon agencies moving from leased commercial space to less vulnerable offices on military bases.

He also cited the need to preserve the ability to step up operations at ammunition plants and maintenance depots in times of crisis.

Although the closings and consolidations are less severe than anticipated, the changes will still significantly alter the operations of many of the nation's 425 bases, and the local economies that depend on them, as the reaction Friday indicated.

Many National Guard and Reserve bases will close and their functions will be consolidated at active-duty installations or other reserve bases. Maintenance depots, research laboratories and hospitals now operated by each of the armed services will be merged.

Rumsfeld said the closings and realignments would save about $5.5 billion a year after initial closing costs were paid, and $48.8 billion over 20 years.

Local News Articles

Defense coming down to a 2-hour
News Daily
Ed Brock
June 6, 2005
Now is the time for the communities around Army Garrison Forts McPherson and Gillem to prepare to make their case to save the forts from the Base Realignment And Closure list, supporters say.

On June 30 the BRAC Commission will hold its regional hearing in Atlanta, Fred Bryant, deputy director of the Georgia Military Affairs Council, told Clayton County Chamber of Commerce members at an Early Bird Breakfast Thursday.

"Georgia will have a sum total of 120 minutes to make its case," Bryant said.

Bryant was a member of a three-person panel who came to the meeting to answer questions on what the community can do to help save the forts from the final BRAC list that the commission will recommend to President Bush on Sept. 8. Joining Bryant were Tom Salter, head of the Save Forts McPherson/Gillem Foundation, Inc., and retired Army Major Andy Alexander.

On May 13 the U.S. Department of Defense announced its version of the BRAC list that recommended Fort McPherson in Atlanta and Fort Gillem in Forest Park for closing. The Naval Air Station-Atlanta in Marietta and the Naval Supply Corps School in Athens were also on the list.

Across the nation 33 major bases have been recommended for closing and 29 others for realignment, a move Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld said should save the Defense Department $50 billion over the next 20 years and $5.5 billion a year after that.

Salter said at this point there is a 90 percent chance that the forts will remain on the list, but he added that he wanted to "see the water glass as 100 percent full." However, part of his foundation's current effort is to encourage communities that could be affected by the base closings to form local planning redevelopment authorities that would work with the Defense Department on redeveloping the forts.

"I don't want to roll over and play dead dog," Salter said. "At the same time I don't think it would be prudent of us to not prepare for the closing of the forts."

The key to saving the forts is not in complaining about the local impact, Salter said. The purpose of this BRAC list is to emphasize the most cost efficient way for the military to undertake joint operations, so the arguments must reflect how the forts can help the military achieve that goal.

He said one way of doing that is pointing out that the forts have the benefits of Atlanta's developed infrastructure that isn't available at some of the bases to which units from the forts could be moved. That infrastructure includes roads, Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport, communications and logistics facilities, a skilled work force and affordable housing.

Bryant said he is still waiting for the Defense Department to release the details of the data used in its analysis that led to the creation of the list. When the data becomes available, the council will have two men who worked on previous BRAC lists review the information for errors.

"There is boilerplate in (the executive summaries released with the lists) and there are mistakes in there which tells us there may be mistakes in their analysis too," Bryant said.

Bryant also said one option the council may present to the BRAC commission is the moving of some elements at Fort McPherson to Fort Gillem where there is more room for growth. The focus of efforts now is not about saving "grass and concrete" but about saving functions and jobs that are important to the military, he said.

"It's not about a building somewhere. It's about the people in those buildings and what they bring to the table," Bryant said.

On Wednesday BRAC Commissioner retired Adm. Harold Gehman visited the two Naval facilities that are on the list. Bryant said retired Army Gen. Tom Hill with the BRAC Commission is scheduled to visit Fort McPherson and possibly Fort Gillem on June 8 for a fact-finding mission in preparation for the June 30 hearing.

Alexander urged chamber members to get involved in the process of saving the forts.

"If you want to do something about it, do it now," Alexander said.

Fort McPherson is home to three major headquarters, the U.S. Army Forces Command, 3rd U.S. Army and U.S. Army Reserve Command. Fort Gillem is a satellite of McPherson and it houses the headquarters for the U.S. Army Recruiting Brigade and 1st U.S. Army.argument

Evaluation date set for Fort McPherson
Atlanta Journal and Constitution
Add Seymour Jr.
May 27, 2005

Fort McPherson will soon be visited by some of the officials deciding whether the East Point base should close.

Retired Army Gen. Tom Hill, a member of the Base Realignment and Closure Commission, will meet with **Fort McPherson** officials June 8, members of the Clayton County Chamber of Commerce were told Thursday.

"This is a fact-finding mission," said Fred Bryant, deputy executive director of the Georgia Military Affairs Coordinating Council.

Defense officials want to streamline the nation's military bases and also save millions in taxpayer dollars. Four Georgia bases are on the national list of bases to be closed --- **Fort McPherson,** Fort Gillem in Forest Park, the Naval Air Station Atlanta in Cobb County and the Naval Supply Corps School in Athens.

Retired Adm. Harold W. Gehman Jr. visited the NAS Atlanta and the Naval Supply Corps School on Wednesday. Hill will speak with **Fort McPherson** base commander Col. Angela Manos and other staff members.

"We hope he'd come to Fort Gillem as well," Bryant said.

One of the options Gillem/McPherson backers will offer BRAC commissioners will be to close **Fort McPherson** and move some of its units to Fort Gillem, which would remain open. Bryant said **Fort McPherson** is completely built out while Fort Gillem is not as old, has available space and is already home to new projects such as a state-of-the-art forensic crime laboratory that serves the entire U.S. military.

BRAC commissioners, who can make changes to the Defense Department's list, are visiting bases and holding regional meetings as they listen to pitches from communities and elected officials who are trying to keep their bases open. An Atlanta regional meeting is scheduled for June 30.

The commission will submit their conclusions to President Bush by Sept. 8. The president can only accept or reject their recommendations. His recommendations will then go to Congress for approval.

Bryant said they are also awaiting the release of Defense Department data used in making its recommendations.

"If we can find mistakes in the analysis, then we have a chance of getting overturned," he said.

'PLAN B' FOR THREATENED BASES: Gems at our door
Christopher Quinn
Atlanta Journal-Constitution
May 30, 2005

"Plan B" teams are quietly organizing in metro Atlanta. Their mission: redeveloping local military bases targeted for closing by the Pentagon.

The teams are keeping a low profile because Georgia's Plan A has always been to fight the closings like Trojans on the walls of their doomed city. Officials fear that developing alternative plans will give the Base Realignment and Closure Commission a hint that the state is willing to capitulate and quietly accept the shuttering of Naval Air Station Atlanta, Fort Gillem and **Fort McPherson,** which together pay out $565 million a year in salaries. Positions for 4,000 civilian employees and 6,823 full-time and active military reservists will evaporate if the three bases close.

Those directing the fight, however, know that the chances of the bases' survival are slim and are preparing for the worst. Only 15 percent of the bases targeted in the last round of nationwide closings were granted a reprieve, and some think the percentage will be even lower this time around.

Mayor Chuck Hall of Forest Park, home of Fort Gillem, said, "Plan B is very important. You don't want to wait [until a final notice] and throw your hands up and say, 'What do we do now?' "

To avoid that, area governments are appointing committees to begin what could be a years-long process of directing the change from military to civilian control. The committees are made up of government officials, citizens, planners and businessmen.

Retired Gen. Phil Browning, who is leading Georgia's fight against closure, said the state wants to avoid the lack of planning, foresight and political infighting for control of base changeovers that slowed base redevelopment in some other states.

"About six months ago, the board of directors of the [Georgia Military Affairs Coordinating Committee] suggested to the governor that we change our focus from getting ready to fight closing, because we had done about everything we could, to looking at Plan B," Browning said.

"Some communities have lost months and months and months getting their planning groups together," he said. "We want our groups ready to go as soon as we hear."

Atlanta has the controlling interest in **Fort McPherson;** Forest Park has Fort Gillem. Marietta and Cobb County are putting together the team for Naval Air Station Atlanta.

Atlanta Mayor Shirley Franklin has appointed East Point Mayor Patsy Jo Hilliard to the committee she formed. **Fort McPherson** is between the two cities.

Hilliard isn't happy about the potential closing of **Fort McPherson.**

"I was walking in town . . . and we saw all these military people in our restaurants," she said. "They really do patronize our businesses, and I know our business people will feel the pinch."

Hilliard has formed a city committee to work on softening the impact of the potential loss. But closing **Fort McPherson** won't be like closing an old industrial site.

"It has historic buildings, an [Army] museum, a pool, a lake, a golf course," Hilliard said. "Oh, my goodness, it has those rolling beautiful hills."

Fort McPherson has been in use as a military post since the 1830s. Many of its historic buildings were constructed of red brick beginning in the 1880s.

The Commandant's Quarters, which has 12-foot ceilings, hosted Gen. Douglas MacArthur when he commanded the fort briefly in 1925. It has a sleeping porch built for President Franklin D. Roosevelt, who would stop over on trips to and from Warm Springs.

"It has gorgeous houses, tree-lined streets, and would make a beautiful community," said Emory Brock, Clayton County's director of development. Fifty buildings on the 488-acre post are listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Redeveloping around those could be a challenge. But it is a historic area "that is probably better than anything in Atlanta" and could form a unique core of a new community, said Ellen Heath, a vice president in the Atlanta office of EDAW Inc., an international planning firm that has helped redevelop 29 previously closed military bases.

"I think it's a great opportunity to develop a nice, livable community inside the Perimeter," Heath said. "It's right on the MARTA line. It's got a lot going for it."

The Naval Air Station, at 166 acres, is smaller and adjoins the industrial complex of Lockheed Martin manufacturing and Dobbins Air Reserve Base. Its strength could be in marketing it to business or industrial concerns associated with flight.

Brock said that 1,427-acre Fort Gillem, with its well developed infrastructure of rail, roads and quick access to interstate highways and Hartsfield-Jackson International Airport, is well situated to develop as a new business park. Other discussions have included everything from creating new parks to commercial areas.

"The question is, how long is it going to take?" Brock said.

Hall, Forest Park's mayor, said his office is already getting phone calls from planning and development firms.

The results of a successful base transition can be spectacular, if difficult and time-consuming, when the right combination of market forces and local drive come together.

Lowry Air Force Base in Denver closed in 1991, costing Denver and the adjoining town of Aurora 7,000 jobs and $295 million in annual spending. It took 10 years, but the successfully redeveloped base now has 3,000 new houses, 100 businesses and 10 schools and is home to more than 20,000 workers and residents.

Other communities have been less successful. K.I. Sawyer Air Force Base near Marquette, Mich., was closed in 1995 and turned into an international airport in 1999. In 2003, 103,000 passengers used it --- about 280 a day.

Communities trying to redevelop closed bases in urban or suburban areas have distinct advantages over those in rural areas, Heath said. Bases near fast-growing areas often have a ready market for reuse.

All three metro Atlanta bases have seen suburban development gobble up all the large tracts of land around them.

"**Fort McPherson** is inside the Perimeter, and we all know how hot that housing market is," Heath said.

Browning, the retired general, wants the committees to have redevelopment plans ready for consideration within 18 months of the expected final word in November --- a tough task, he admits, considering the complexity of a base turnover.

The committees can apply for planning grants from the federal government to help pay for the costs.

Committee members will visit the bases to inventory their buildings and infrastructure and then hammer out ideas and compromises over what they envision. Once a plan is in place, complex negotiations with the military and federal government over turnover timetables, the appropriateness of redevelopment and price will begin.

Some bases have been given back to local governments, especially if a public use, such as a park, is planned on the land. In other cases, the governments buy the bases or act as a middleman to sell the property to developers.

The turnovers can happen in stages as the military moves out, and bases can be redeveloped piecemeal. The naval yard in Charleston, S.C., was closed 10 years ago, but the Charleston Naval Complex Redevelopment Authority did not receive the final pieces of property until this year.

Turnovers can also be delayed by environmental problems left behind by the military, such as sites where fuel was stored or spilled. The military is responsible for the cleanups.

Once all sides reach agreement, a state-legislated implementation group, using the plan as a guide, will handle the property transfers, financing for redevelopment and marketing of the property.

On June 30, Georgia has a last chance to plead its cases to the commission to keep the bases open. The commission will turn over final recommendations to President Bush on Sept. 8, and he will send his recommendations to Congress, which must accept or reject all of them as a package.

Combining bases may be option
Add Seymour Jr.
June 2, 2005

If McPherson, Gillem can't both be kept, officials may pitch consolidation at Gillem.

Backers of Fort Gillem and **Fort McPherson** want to keep both bases open. But they've got a second option --- close **Fort McPherson** and move everything to Fort Gillem, which would stay open. That idea may be pitched when officials visit Wednesday and June 30 to discuss the proposed closings.

"If that makes sense, then that will be the approach we take," said Fred Bryant, deputy executive director of the Georgia Military Affairs Coordinating Council. "But that's one of the things we're looking at."

The reasoning: Fort Gillem isn't as old, has the available space **Fort McPherson** doesn't and is already the site of several new building projects.

Local officials are preparing for a Wednesday visit to **Fort McPherson** by retired Gen. Tom Hill, who is a member of the Base Realignment and Closure Commission. No visit to Fort Gillem has been scheduled, although local officials hope Hill will make a stop at the Forest Park base.

Commissioners will also hold an Atlanta regional hearing June 30.

BRAC commissioners will spend the next three months evaluating a list of military bases that the Defense Department is recommending to be closed or restructured.

Defense Department officials say they are attempting to save millions in taxpayer dollars and to achieve a more modern military readiness by paring the number of military installations.

Four Georgia bases are on the closure list --- **Fort McPherson,** Fort Gillem, Naval Air Station Atlanta in Cobb County and the Naval Supply Corps School in Athens.

Members of the Save **Fort McPherson/**Gillem Foundation realize chances are slim that both McPherson and Gillem will remain open. Both are considered administrative bases, unlike those such as Fort Benning in Columbus that directly prepare units for military action.

"Both forts are far too expensive to maintain for their military value," said the group's leader, Tom Salter.

Bryant said another chance of keeping at least one base open may come when local officials actually see the data Defense officials used to make their recommendations.

Defense officials haven't released that information.

"If we can find mistakes in the analysis, then we have a chance of getting this overturned," he said.

The commission, which can make changes to the list, will forward its conclusions to President Bush in September. The President then will either accept or reject its recommendations. Eventually, Congress will get the list for its approval.

Southside weighs in on fort closures; Minimal impact expected
Kevin Duffy
Atlanta Journal-Constitution
May 19, 2005

Even if **Fort McPherson** and Fort Gillem close, the impact on Fayette and Coweta counties would be minimal, political and business leaders say.

In fact, it would help local businesses looking for quality workers, according to Brian Cardoza, CEO of the Fayette County Development Authority.

"Business may see an untapped work force," Cardoza said. "It would be a benefit, no doubt. People are hiring."

The Pentagon last week recommended closing four Georgia military installations, including **Fort McPherson** in East Point and its satellite, Fort Gillem in Forest Park. The two forts are the metro area's seventh largest employer.

The bases employ more than 5,200, many of whom live on the Southside. The closings list will be considered by a commission, which forwards its report of recommendations to the president.

Retired Army Maj. Tom Salter of the Save **Forts McPherson/**Gillem Foundation said keeping the two facilities open will be "an uphill battle," but he's trying to stay positive.

"I prefer to look at it as the water glass is 10 percent full," he said.

Peachtree City Mayor Steve Brown said some **Fort McPherson** employees had planned to retire to Peachtree City, anyway.

"Even if the fort is moved to another location," Brown said, "I think we'll see a lot of those people coming back to Peachtree City. I don't think it's going to have a monumental impact."

Candace LaForge, president of the Newnan/Coweta Chamber of Commerce, said the closings could have a ripple effect throughout the Southside.

"Regionally, we all work together," LaForge said, citing the six-county group called Metro South. "When something like that happens, you have that residual effect. It would possibly affect real estate. It could affect a variety of industries."

In the long run, however, those properties will be redeveloped, providing a boon to the Southside, LaForge said.

"The facilities have been so well maintained, there is a definite use for them in a different format," she said.

Virginia Gibbs, president of the Fayette County Chamber of Commerce, said it's too early to gauge the impact if the forts close.

"We don't have a clear picture of what they're talking about, as far as time frame," Gibbs said. "Would it be a phase-out? Would they be shut down right away? It's way too premature to speculate."

Town worried over future without post
Craigh Schneider
Atlanta Journal-Constitution
May 13, 2005

FORT MCPHERSON, Ga.
They call lunchtime at the American Wing & Deli the military rush. The soldiers line up, the fish are frying, the burgers are sizzling, and the smell of good business fills the air.

Now workers at the restaurant, in a strip mall near **Fort McPherson,** imagine all that gone. When they heard Friday that the fort next door to East Point was on the list of military bases the Pentagon wants to close, it was dread that filled the air.

Cashier Sharene Batchelor said more than half the shop's business came from the fort and that without it the restaurant might have to shut down. Of even greater concern to her, the 32-year-old has been dating a staff sergeant from the base for six months and they've talked about marriage. If he were transferred, they would have to do more than dream about their future.

"If he asked, I would move."

Linda Walker, who cuts hair in a salon a few doors down in the strip mall on Main Street, worries that once the base disappears, so will her business.

"It's really going to be a great hurt," she said. "It's going to crunch ... the city."

The prospective closing of "Fort Mac" has a lot of people assessing their future, and the future of a military town for more than 100 years.

Not everyone is grim. While some believe the loss of the base could devastate the revitalization of East Point, others see the 488 acres as an economic opportunity. The land could be filled with homes, condos and stores for people eager for an affordable location 10 minutes from downtown Atlanta, right on the MARTA line.

"It could be a fantastic thing for Atlanta and East Point," said Lisa Marie Smith, a local real estate agent.

Others said they couldn't imagine East Point without **Fort McPherson,** which opened in 1889 and is the oldest Army post in Georgia.

Its ties to the community are strong. The city of 35,000 people, the largest municipality in south Fulton County, has no pool, so the fort opens its pool to local students in the summer. The base stages a tea party for girls in the middle school, who dress up and get to meet people who've traveled all over the world.

Fort Mac employs 2,000 civilians. The fort provides East Point with revenue, including the sale of the city's water. The approximately 1,300 soldiers at the base provide steady income for

restaurants, barbershops and other businesses.

Jocquill Sims' mother works in the base store, so the family shops on base for clothes, food and gas. They go to movies there, and her sister wants to get married at the fort.

Sims is worried because the family just moved into a new townhouse two weeks ago. Now the 18-year-old fears her mother will be out of a job.

"**Fort McPherson** is like home," Sims said. Closing the base "will affect a lot of people, including us ... in big ways and little ways."

Even those who say East Point can rebound from the loss of Fort Mac acknowledge there could be economic pain early, and much depends on how quickly the property, which straddles the border with Atlanta, could become economically viable again.

East Point Mayor Patsy Jo Hilliard said she was already being contacted by worried constituents. She plans to discuss the situation with Atlanta Mayor Shirley Franklin as early as next week.

"It'll mean that we'll lose citizens _ people who work there (at the base), people who live here," Hilliard said. But "I don't think we'll be a ghost town."

During a news conference at the base Friday, base commander Col. Angela Manos tried to soothe some fears. She said the military might offer civilian employees jobs at other bases, and local reservists who buy medicine at the fort may be referred to other bases.

But off base, at places like the strip mall, people worry how long uniforms will fill the laundry bins at cleaners, how long soldiers will be coming around for haircuts, how long the military rush will go on.

East Point dreads loss of Fort Mac; Business, flavor won't be the same

Atlanta Journal-Constitution
Craig Schneider
May 14, 2005

They call lunchtime at the American Wing & Deli the military rush. The soldiers line up, the fish are frying, the burgers are sizzling, and the smell of good business fills the air.

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But off base, at places like the strip mall, people worry how long uniforms will fill the laundry bins at cleaners, how long soldiers will be coming around for haircuts, how long the military rush will go on.

Four Georgia bases recommended for closure
Associated Press State and Local Wire
JEFFREY McMURRAY
WASHINGTON
May 13, 2005

Four Georgia military bases - including three in the Atlanta metropolitan area - are being recommended for closure by the Pentagon.

Fort McPherson in Atlanta, Fort Gillem in Forest Park, the Naval Air Station-Atlanta in Marietta and the Navy Supply Corps School in Athens were included on a nationwide list released Friday of about 180 military installations recommended by the Pentagon for closure.

"We're disappointed. We think the community action group did a great job. ... We're prepared to challenge the recommendation," said Fred Bryant, deputy director, Georgia Military Affairs Coordinating Committee. "We don't know yet what were the key factors in the decision."

The Georgia's four bases represented almost one-eighth of the total closures nationwide, yet the state actually stands to gain 7,423 defense jobs through gains at other bases. Fort Benning in Columbus would gain the most - 9,839 jobs. **Fort McPherson,** which is Atlanta's seventh largest employer, would lose the most - 4,141 jobs.

Benning's gain ranked third nationally after Fort Belvoir in Virginia and Fort Bliss in Texas, and Georgia's overall job gains were behind only Maryland.

"You probably have 47 states that would change places with Georgia on this report," Rep. Jack Kingston, a Georgia Republican who sits on a panel that directs defense spending.

Two other military installations, the Inspector/Instructor facility in Rome and the U.S. Army Reserve Center in Columbus, were also on the list. They each have nine military employees and no civilian employees.

The proposed list will now be considered by a federal base closing commission. In four previous rounds of closures since 1988, past commissions have signed off on 85 percent of bases the Pentagon recommended for closure or consolidation.

Gov. Sonny Perdue, at a news conference with Sens. Saxby Chambliss and Johnny Isakson, vowed to fight to keep the four bases open. "The battle is not over," he said. "This is the opening volley."

Even with the news of the losses, he said the state was "fortunate to be the second net gainer of

jobs and missions in the country, and we're very proud of that."

Chambliss said closing even one base "has never been an option" and said he thought the state had a strong chance to turn the decision around.

Fort McPherson is home to three major headquarters - the U.S. Army Forces Command, 3rd U.S. Army and U.S. Army Reserve Command. Fort Gillem is a satellite of McPherson in nearby Forest Park, and it houses the headquarters for the U.S. Army Recruiting Brigade and 1st U.S. Army.

McPherson is one of the nation's oldest bases. First established in 1886, it became a permanent Army installation in 1889. Known for its on-base golf course, McPherson has 40 buildings on the National Register of Historic Places.

Gillem is Clayton County's third largest employer. Together McPherson and Gillem have military personnel numbering 2,771 and a civilian work force of 2,451 - for a total annual payroll of $512 million.

The Naval Air Station-Atlanta, in Marietta, has an annual payroll of $48 million. It has 1,274 military personnel and a civilian work force of 224.

The Navy Supply Corps School in Athens is Georgia's smallest military installation, open since 1954. It's a training school and a support center for active duty personnel stationed at ROTC units and recruiting stations in northeast Georgia. It has a military population of 389, a civilian work force of 124 and an annual payroll of $8.7 million.

Rep. John Barrow, D-Ga., said closing the Athens school was a huge mistake.

"Closing or realigning bases in times of war is a mistake in and of itself, but deciding to close a base whose core capabilities are smarter, faster and cheaper than any other Department of Defense school is indefensible," he said.

Len Sapera, head of Navy School Task Force, said they will challenge the base's inclusion on the list.

"I thought they would be closing bases that were inefficient. Our base here is one of the most efficient - if not the most efficient - in the country. But beauty is in the eye of the beholder, I guess," said Sapera.

Four previous closures - in 1988, 1991, 1993 and 1995 - eliminated or realigned 451 installations across the country, including 97 major ones, resulted in a net savings to the government of about $18 billion through 2001.

By Sept. 8, this latest BRAC commission will have to submit its recommendations to the president, then must accept or reject the list in its entirety. Congress then has to accept or reject the report, also with no changes allowed.

One surviving base that had been speculated as a candidate for closure in the latest round was the Marine Corps Logistics Base in Albany. The base is one of the top employers in southwest Georgia, and its economic impact to the community tops $1 billion annually.

"I could not be happier with the news, but I am not surprised," said Rep. Sanford Bishop, D-Ga. "We have worked hard and done well, but I have found that the exceptional job being done at MCLB speaks for itself."

State officials work to cover military bases
Atlanta Journal-Constitution
Ron Martz
May 21, 2005

Despite apparent support for several of Georgia's four endangered military facilities by a member of the federal base closing commission, state officials said Friday they are taking nothing for granted as they formulate their defense of the installations.

During four days of hearings in Washington earlier this week by the independent Base Realignment and Closure Commission, members sharply questioned Pentagon officials about putting **Fort McPherson** in Atlanta and Fort Gillem in Forest Park on the chopping block.

Former U.S. Rep. James Bilbray of Nevada told Army officials that "we shouldn't shut down facilities that we may need in the future," specifically citing the two metro Atlanta installations.

But Retired Army Gen. Phil Browning, executive director of the Georgia Military Affairs Coordinating Committee, said that he did not read anything into Bilbray's comments that would indicate Bilbray was in support of the two posts.

Instead, said Browning, the Georgia committee will begin an in-depth analysis of the Pentagon's reasons for putting **Fort McPherson** and Fort Gillem on the list along with the Naval Air Station Atlanta in Marietta and the Naval Supply Corps School in Athens.

"We are looking at every possible way to determine if in fact the military's analysis is truly thorough and therefore valid," said Browning, who attended the Washington hearings.

Browning said the hearings provided insights into the types of questions commissioners might ask when they come to Atlanta on June 30 as part of a series of 16 regional hearings nationwide.

"The commission is a very bright group of men and women who asked very penetrating questions that have given us some thoughts on how we might approach them in the regional hearings," said Browning.

Over the next five weeks, Browning said he will work with the governor's office and each of the communities that could be adversely affected by the closures to develop presentations for the regional hearing.

Those regional hearings could help communities save their bases if they are able to demonstrate the Pentagon made errors in its reasons for wanting to close certain facilities.

The BRAC commission can add or delete bases before sending its recommendations to the president by Sept. 8.

In addition to preparing for the June 30 hearings, Georgia officials also plan to attend several other regional hearings to get some idea about what does and does not work for other communities as they plead their cases.

Planners consider redevelopment options if bases close
Associated Press State and Local Wire
Atlanta
May 30, 2005
Some metro Atlanta communities are hoping for the best but planning for the worst as they consider redevelopment options for military bases in their area targeted for closing by the government.

Among the Georgia installations recommended for closing by the Base Realignment and Closure Commission are Naval Air Station-Atlanta in Marietta, Fort Gillem in Forest Park and **Fort McPherson** in East Point.

The communities are appointing committees made up of government officials, citizens, planners and businessmen to consider options if the recommendations are approved. Georgia's last chance to push to keep the bases open comes June 30. After the commission makes its final recommendations on Sept. 8, President Bush will send his recommendations to Congress.

Local officials note that lack of planning slowed base redevelopment in some other states during earlier closures.

"Plan B is very important. You don't want to wait (until a final notice) and throw your hands up and say, 'What do we do now?'" said Mayor Chuck Hall of Forest Park, where Fort Gillem is located.

Hall said his office is already getting phone calls from planning and development firms.

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"The question is, how long is it going to take?" said Emory Brock, Clayton County's director of development.

BRAC plan proposes net gain of 749 jobs at RAFB
The Macon Telegraph
Gene Rector
May 13, 2005

WARNER ROBINS
Robins Air Force Base would not close, but instead would gain 749 jobs - all of them contractor positions, according to base closure recommendations released Friday by the Department of Defense.

Georgia would gain a net of 7,423 personnel - the second largest gain of any state - in the closings and base realignment recommendations announced by defense officials in Washington, D.C.

The state's biggest loss would be the closing of **Fort McPherson** near Atlanta, which take away 4,141 personnel. Others closings would include Naval Air Station Atlanta with a loss of 1,498 personnel; Fort Gillem near Atlanta would close, with a loss of 1,081 personnel; Naval Supply Corps School in Athens would close, with a loss of 513 personnel.

Other smaller facilities would close in Rome (loss of nine jobs), Atlanta Peachtree Leases (loss of 162), and an Army reserve center in Columbus (loss of nine).

The state's biggest gainers would be Fort Benning in Columbus, which would gain 9,839 personnel; Kings Bay Submarine Base in St. Marys would gain 3,367 personnel; Robins Air Force Base would gain 749 personnel; Moody Air Force Base in Valdosta would gain 575 personnel; the Marine Corps Logistics Base in Albany would gain 150 personnel; Dobbins Air Reserve Base in Atlanta would gain 118 personnel; and Savannah International Airport Air Guard Station would gain 38 personnel.

No other Georgia facilities are included in the list of military facilities recommended for closure or realignment.

Robins AFB officials, as well as members of the 21st Century Partnership, were continuing Friday afternoon to analyze the data released with the base closing list. Officials could not immediately determine the source of the 700 contractor employees said to be coming to the base.

Specifically, according to the Defense Department figures, the impact on Robins from the BRAC

recommendations would be these: 484 military jobs and 225 civilian jobs would be transferred out; 453 military and 224 civilian jobs would be transferred in; and 781 "mission contractor" jobs would come to the base. The net of all those moves would be 749 jobs gained.

Officials speculated Friday that the military and civilian jobs lost are related to the transfer of a refueling wing currently at the Robins - but that transfer had been announced many months ago. Officials also speculated that the jobs gained could be from the closing of the Naval Air Station in Atlanta. But those job shifts had not been confirmed Friday afternoon.

Over the next six months, the Defense Department recommendations will be reviewed by the nine-member Base Closure and Realignment Commission, with a final report being sent to the president and Congress for approval this fall.

Editorial/Opinion Articles

Preserving Atlanta: Forts a valuable link that shouldn't be broken
Atlanta Journal-Constitution
David Scott
May 30, 2005

Fort Gillem and **Fort McPherson** have extraordinary and unique military value for our defense and national security. These two bases provide critical links for our troops abroad and at home as we face difficult military needs today and in the future.

In the wake of the recent announcement that Fort Gillem and **Fort McPherson** are on the list of base closures, two key factors critical to our national security and defense were ignored: We are not at peace and our military force is becoming overextended because of a lack of recruitment.

If we focus on the primary factor the Pentagon used for evaluating the bases --- military value --- the closure of Forts Gillem and McPherson would be a blow to our military mission and strategic mobility, a step backward in our recruitment efforts in time of war, and would hurt homeland security.

Gillem and McPherson are ideally located to support the military's need for rapid deployment and strategic mobility. The forts are home to four major Army command headquarters that train, mobilize, deploy, sustain and reconstitute combat-ready active and Reserve forces directly engaged in the worldwide war on terrorism.

The proximity of these bases to Atlanta's Hartsfield-Jackson International Airport, as well as major rail and ground transportation, ensures the strategic mobility needed in today's rapid deployment of our forces to various hot spots around the world. Closing these bases and moving forces to more remote bases in the United States would severely curtail this ability.

Gillem and McPherson are major components in the nation's ability to recruit and maintain an all-volunteer army, the backbone of which is the Army Reserves and National Guard units. These forts include the U.S. Army Reserve Command, which provides command and control for all assigned Army Reserve forces.

In addition, the First U.S. Army ensures the training, mobilization, deployment, redeployment

and reconstitution of Army Reserve and National Guard units in the eastern United States. The benefits of the metro Atlanta area in terms of affordable housing, employment and world-class transportation, educational, medical and recreational facilities are important factors in our nation's ability to recruit Army Reserve and National Guard units.

The closing of these forts would further weaken our country's recruitment ability at a time when the military is overextended and is failing to meet recruiting deadlines.

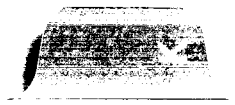
Finally, the forts provide a critical link to federal and state agencies directly engaged in homeland security, homeland defense and domestic disaster relief operations. The U.S. Army Criminal Investigation Laboratory based at Gillem provides worldwide forensic laboratory services and training for the Department of Defense, Department of Justice and other authorized users.

Also, regional headquarters, including the Federal Emergency Management Agency, the Georgia Emergency Management Agency, and the Red Cross coordinate homeland security from Gillem. The proximity of these services to major infrastructure is crucial to our nation's ability to respond to a terrorist threat or attack at home.

As a businessman, longtime elected official and supporter of the smart growth of this great region, I understand the eagerness to highlight the economic benefits that development could bring in peaceful times.

But this is a time of war, and we cannot afford the cost to our military value if we shutter Forts Gillem and McPherson, critical military links for the war abroad and the security efforts at home.

* U.S. Rep. David Scott is a Democrat representing Georgia's 13th Congressional District.



2005 Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission
Suggested Talking Points for Fort Gillem

1. **Although Ft. Gillem may have made valuable contributions to U.S. Defense in years past, the Commission will evaluate the Installation's current military value and base its decision almost entirely upon this factor.**
   - The Congress established the Commission to evaluate the Department of Defense's (DoD) suggestion to close the installation, and ensure that DoD made its suggestions in accordance with the law and after a full evaluation of all pertinent factors.
   - The Commission is aware that installations in the state of Georgia have been on prior BRAC lists, but have always been removed, for one reason or another. Previous decisions regarding an installation are not indicative of this Commission's decision; the factors to be included in the Commission's evaluation, as well as the process by which the Commission will make its evaluation and analysis, have been specifically prescribed by law and the Commission's determination of military value will be compared to DoD's strategy for meeting changing global threats.
   - The Commission is aware that Ft. Gillem houses a "state-of-the-art" forensics lab which services all branches of the military, and will take this into account in the Commission's determination of the military value of the installation.

2. **The Commission is keenly aware of the human impact that the decision to close Ft. Gillem would have and will take this into full account.**
   - While maintaining military value as the preeminent consideration, the Commission will perform a full evaluation of the economic, environmental, and other effects that the closure of Ft. Gillem could have on the surrounding community.
   - The Commission is aware that Ft. Gillem, together with Ft. McPherson, and Naval Air Station Atlanta, spend $565 million a year on salaries and employs four thousand civilians and 6,823 part-time active duty reservists. The Commission will consider the large economic impact that DoD's suggestions could have on the region.
   - While these economic effects are important to the Commission, and the final decisions may cause short-term hardship for some, the overriding goal of the Commission is to ensure that DoD's suggestions were made in the best interest of US security, by ensuring that the suggestions were made in accordance with the guidelines set forth by law and after taking the current military value of the installations suggested for realignment or closure, into full account.

3. **The Congress established the Commission as an independent entity to perform a completely transparent and open review of DoD's suggestions to close or realign various military installations across the country. The process that the Commission will follow--as well as the factors the Commission will include in its evaluation—have been specifically set forth by law.**
   - Part of the purpose of the Commission is to ensure public accountability for the decision to close or realign various military installations.
   - The Commission welcomes community input; it is a vital part of the evaluation process. Members of the community are encouraged to submit information through the Commission's official website: www.brac.gov.

Facts compiled from included press clippings.

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2005 Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission
Suggested Qs & As for Fort Gillem

Q1. Installations in the state of Georgia have been on previous BRAC lists for realignment or closure, but have never made it to the actual enactment stage of those earlier suggestions. Would that be indicative of the military value of Georgia's installations, and point towards Georgia's installations being removed from the 2005 BRAC list as well?
A1. The Congress established the 2005 Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission (BRAC) as an independent entity to evaluate the suggestions by the Department of Defense (DoD) to close or realign various military installations across the country. The process followed by the Commission has been specifically outlined by law, and while the Commission will take many factors into account, military value will be the preeminent consideration. DoD has included factors of jointness, ease of mobility, and efficiency in its strategic definition of military value, and the Commission will review these factors in the Commission's independent and transparent evaluation.

Q2. While members of the Community are working to retain Ft. Gillem, the second option that they may suggest is that, rather than closing both Ft. McPherson and Ft. Gillem, that everything from the two forts be combined at Ft. Gillem. Of the two, Ft. Gillem has the advantage of being younger, having more room to expand, and currently undergoing construction. Would the Commission consider this option?
A2. While DoD has the responsibility of creating the strategy to ensure that our military is well-prepared to meet changing global threats, the sole task of the Commission is to evaluate DoD's suggestions to close or realign various military installations across the country and ensure that those suggestions were made, both in accordance with the law and after all pertinent factors had been taken into account. Please be assured that the Commission will perform a full evaluation, prior to reaching its conclusion regarding Ft. Gillem.

Q3. The Governor of Georgia has established a commission, entitled the "Georgia Military Affairs Coordinating Committee," to work to save military installations in the state as well as to create plans for redevelopment, should the installations be closed. Additionally, Brigadier General Phil Browning (Ret.), is heading the effort to prevent base closures in the state. Does political influence have any sway on the Commission?
A3. The Congress established the Commission as a completely non-partisan and non-political entity to independently evaluate the suggestions made by DoD to close or realign various military installations to ensure that the suggestions were made in accordance with the law and after all pertinent factors had been taken into account. The factors to be evaluated in the Commission's analysis have been specifically prescribed by law.

Q4. Together with Naval Air Station Atlanta and Ft. McPherson, Ft. Gillem spends $565 million a year on salaries and employs about four thousand civilians and 6,823

Q4. Continued
part-time active duty reservists. Will the Commission consider the effect that cutting these jobs would have on the economy of the region?
A4. While the Commission will base its final decision almost entirely upon military value, it will also take into account the economic, environmental, and other effects that the closure or realignment of an installation would have on the local community. Please be assured that the Commission will conduct a full economic analysis prior to reaching its conclusion regarding Ft. Gillem.

Q5. Ft. Gillem houses a "state-of-the-art" forensics lab which serves all branches of the U.S. Military. Will this contribution by the installation be included in the evaluation of the military value of Ft. Gillem?
A5. The factors to be included in the BRAC Commission's evaluation have been specifically prescribed by statute. Please be assured that the Commission will conduct a thorough, accurate, objective, and transparent evaluation and analysis, which will include all pertinent factors, before coming to its conclusion.

Q6. How can the community make the Commission aware of factors that it feels may have been overlooked by DoD in DoD's analysis and suggestions?
A6. Input from the community is not only welcomed by the Commission, but is a vital part of the 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.

FORT GILLEM
GEORGIA

National News Articles

Local News Articles

State Most Likely Lost Cuase; Miller Says Fight but Get Plan B
Lessons Lie in Old Base Closures
Combining Bases May Be Option; If McPherson, Gillem Can't Both Be Kept, Officials May Pitch Consolidation at Gillem.
Evaluation Visit Planned for Fort Gillem
Planners Consider Redevelopment Options if Base Closes
Gems at Our Door
Evaluation Date Set for Fort McPherson
Release of Georgia's BRAC Data Under Fire; State's Delegation Seeks Bush's Help to Get More Information

Editorial/Opinion Articles

National News Articles

Local News Articles

State bases most likely lost cause; Miller says fight but get Plan B
The Atlanta Journal-Constitution
Christopher Quinn
June 7, 2005

Denver --- When Zell Miller was governor in the 1990s, he helped gain Georgia's military bases a reprieve when they turned up on previous BRAC Commission closure lists.

But the four bases in Georgia on the current closure list are less likely to survive, Miller told a large audience of city and state officials gathered here Monday to prepare for the coming decisions of the Base **Realignment** and Closure Commission.

"It can happen. It may happen. But don't count on it," he said. "I doubt very many changes will be made to that list."

Georgia has four bases on the list: Fort McPherson, **Fort Gillem** and Naval Air Station Atlanta in metro Atlanta and the Navy Supply Corps School in Athens.

Gov. Sonny Perdue said Monday that while Georgia officials will continue to fight to keep the bases open, "Statistically it would be unlikely we would be successful in saving all four."

Members of the BRAC Commission will visit Fort McPherson on Wednesday and **Fort Gillem** on Friday. Also this week, contingents from the communities surrounding Naval Submarine Base Kings Bay and the Marine Corps Logistics Base in Albany will travel to Washington to meet with BRAC staff members to assure them they have the capacity to expand.

Both communities expect to gain military and civilian positions as a result of this round of closures and **realignments.**

Retired Army Gen. James Hill, who served at Fort McPherson during his career, will visit that post Wednesday. Former Nevada Rep. James Bilbray will visit **Fort Gillem.**

Georgia bases have appeared on previous BRAC lists, but the state never suffered a loss. Many have credited the work of Georgia politicians, including Miller and then-Sen. Sam Nunn, who was chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee.

Miller named a 38-member committee in 1993, shortly after the BRAC Commission surprised Georgia by putting four state bases on the closure list.

The committee members worked to educate local leaders about how to strengthen their bases' positions in the military system, and they began to look for military technology spinoffs that the civilian market could use to create jobs.

Miller also organized a base consortium to buy power at cheaper rates and lead the state to buy 37 homes in the flyover zone at Robins Air Force Base near Macon. He said the BRAC Commission believed homes in flyover zones were a strike against a facility.

Today, the closings are the result of a new vision of 21st-century warfare, he said. The military is moving toward closer integration of services, training and technology and is fighting less apparent threats than standing armies.

Those bases that have strengthened their positions by attracting new uses or high-tech jobs are more likely to survive in the future, but those communities with bases on the current closure list should not count on being able to politick their way off the list.

"The fact that the list is part of a larger plan means the Pentagon has done a more thorough job [of determining what is needed] than in any previous round," said Miller, who is now a policy consultant with McKenna Long & Aldridge, a legal firm with offices in Atlanta and across the country.

He encouraged those in the audience to prepare for hearings the communities will have with the closing commission. Georgia's hearing is June 30.

Perdue said Georgia officials will attend other regional hearings to get a sense of what the commission is looking for so that the affected communities will be better prepared for the hearing in Atlanta.

"It's helpful to us that we're not first out of the box," he said.

Miller said communities are unwise if they are not preparing for a redevelopment plan, a theme that has been a key point of the National Association of Installation Developers conference. Twenty-eight percent of bases closed in previous rounds have not been redeveloped.

"The communities most hit were the ones that did not have a redevelopment plan or were late in coming up with one," Miller said.

Perdue said his office has been working with local communities through the Georgia Military Affairs Coordinating Committee for months to look at ways to first save the bases while at the same time exploring long-term redevelopment plans.

"We think it's in our best interests," to get the redevelopment plans moving, Perdue said.

Forest Park already has applied for a $110,000 grant to help pay for planning for the redevelopment of **Fort Gillem,** said Forest Park Mayor Chuck Hall, who is attending the conference.

Crandall Bray, former chairman of the Clayton County Commission and of the Atlanta Regional Commission, has been appointed as the head of the local redevelopment authority that will come up with the plan.

Bray said authority members plan to tour the base next week and assess its infrastructure. They hope to complete a preliminary plan by late fall.

Atlanta, which will manage Fort McPherson's redevelopment, sent three people to the conference: businessman Felker Ward, who will head Atlanta's redevelopment authority; Councilwoman Joyce Sheperd; and Peggy McCormick of the city's development office. The city will appoint more authority members in coming weeks.

Many bases have been successfully redeveloped when the military moved out. Denver has two prime examples: Lowry Air Force Base and Fitzsimons Army Medical Center. They are similar to metro Atlanta's bases in that they were in fast-growing suburban areas.

Lowry now has 3,000 houses and a new smart-growth town center; Fitzsimons is a hospital and high-tech bioscience center.

Ward was encouraged and said the redevelopment of Fort McPherson could present Atlanta with a great opportunity.

"I think what we are doing is going to have a significant impact on southwest Atlanta for many, many years to come," Ward said.

Lessons lie in old base closures
The Atlanta Journal-Constitution
Christopher Quinn
June 6, 2005

Denver --- Lowry Air Force Base and Fitzsimons Army Medical Center were guinea pigs for Denver and Aurora, Colo.

Everyone else facing the closure of a military base, including Georgia, will benefit from the cities' experiments.

The Base **Realignment** and Closure Commission dealt Denver and Aurora successive punches, targeting Lowry for shutdown in 1991 and Fitzsimons in 1996. About 11,000 jobs were lost, along with hundreds of millions of dollars in local spending.

The local governments, like others across the country, scrambled to bring the former bases back to life. They pursued development and spending programs, lobbied for changes in laws and worked through the tangle of environmental and governmental regulations.

It took a decade, but it worked. Now a new round of base closings has dozens of communities trying to learn from the experiences of places like these.

More than 750 people, including some from Georgia, are in Denver at the National Association of Installation Developers conference to learn or teach others how to deal with the coming changes of base closures or **realignment.**

Former Gov. and U.S. Sen. Zell Miller, who helped steer Georgia through the threat of base closures while in office, is scheduled to address the gathering today. Four of the state's military installations are targeted for closure: Fort McPherson in Atlanta; **Fort Gillem** in Forest Park; Naval Air Station Atlanta in Marietta; and the Naval Supply Corps School in Athens.

Ten years ago, few people would have shown up for such a conference just three weeks after seeing their local bases on the list for possible closure. They would be too busy working the political system to try to get their bases removed from the list, said retired Brig. Gen. Phil Browning.

Browning is guiding Georgia's fight against base closures as head of the Georgia Military Affairs Coordinating Committee.

Today, representatives of at-risk communities are working both angles, trying to get their bases removed from the list but preparing for the worst.

"It's the most people we've ever had at a [National Association of Installation Developers] conference," Browning said.

They are learning how those first tough transitions from military to civilian control helped get new federal laws and procedures written to smooth the process. They are talking to planners and developers who have gained valuable experience and insights into how the process works and how to work the process.

Finally, the success stories of base redevelopment like Lowry, now home to 3,000 new houses, 10 schools, 100 businesses and more than 20,000 workers and residents, have eased some of the panic that used to greet a visit from the Base **Realignment** and Closure Commission.

"So much of the fear was fear of the unknown," said Kay Miller with the Development Services Department of Aurora.

Miller is helping with the redevelopment of Fitzsimons. Denver, Aurora and the University of Colorado are well on their way to turning the base into a medical and science research center with

a complex of new hospitals and a growing cluster of high-tech companies.

A new $57 million urban community with housing, retail and commercial spaces will open in the former base in 2006.

People were unsure of what would happen in the 1990s. They feared seeing shuttered, weed-choked bases or were afraid that new development would be poorly done, dragging down local property values, Kay Miller said.

Now that dozens of communities have survived closings successfully, the unknown has been dismissed, she said.

But that is not to say it's going to be easy, conference speakers warned. There will be environmental challenges in dealing with toxic materials handled on the bases and the political challenges of getting local governments to work with a single vision. There will be long, frustrating delays as locals work through the complex process of taking land back from the federal government or taking over sewers and roads or buildings not constructed to local codes.

And it won't be cheap, though successful base redevelopments do pay off in the long run.

"Most have a negative cash flow for five or six years," said Jimmy Hicks, executive vice president for RKG Associates of New Hampshire, a consulting firm.

Tom Markham, the executive director of the Lowry Redevelopment Authority, said: "There is life after base closure. But it's really hard."

BRAC commissioners released the latest list of more than 150 installations targeted for closure in May.

The commission will finalize its list by September and turn it over to Congress, which will pass it on to President Bush. He must accept or reject the list in whole; he can't change it.

In four previous rounds of closings dating to 1988, Georgia has not lost a base.

Combining bases may be option; If McPherson, Gillem can't both be kept, officials may pitch consolidation at Gillem.
Atlanta Journal-Constitution
Add Seymour Jr.
June 2, 2005

Backers of **Fort Gillem** and Fort McPherson want to keep both bases open.

But they've got a second option --- close Fort McPherson and move everything to **Fort Gillem,** which would stay open. That idea may be pitched when officials visit Wednesday and June 30 to discuss the proposed closings.

"If that makes sense, then that will be the approach we take," said Fred Bryant, deputy executive

director of the Georgia Military Affairs Coordinating Council. "But that's one of the things we're looking at."

The reasoning: **Fort Gillem** isn't as old, has the available space Fort McPherson doesn't and is already the site of several new building projects.

Local officials are preparing for a Wednesday visit to Fort McPherson by retired Gen. Tom Hill, who is a member of the Base **Realignment** and Closure Commission. No visit to **Fort Gillem** has been scheduled, although local officials hope Hill will make a stop at the Forest Park base.

Commissioners will also hold an Atlanta regional hearing June 30.

BRAC commissioners will spend the next three months evaluating a list of military bases that the Defense Department is recommending to be closed or restructured.

Defense Department officials say they are attempting to save millions in taxpayer dollars and to achieve a more modern military readiness by paring the number of military installations.

Four Georgia bases are on the closure list --- Fort McPherson, **Fort Gillem,** Naval Air Station Atlanta in Cobb County and the Naval Supply Corps School in Athens.

Members of the Save Fort McPherson/Gillem Foundation realize chances are slim that both McPherson and Gillem will remain open. Both are considered administrative bases, unlike those such as Fort Benning in Columbus that directly prepare units for military action.

"Both forts are far too expensive to maintain for their military value," said the group's leader, Tom Salter.

Bryant said another chance of keeping at least one base open may come when local officials actually see the data Defense officials used to make their recommendations.

Defense officials haven't released that information.

"If we can find mistakes in the analysis, then we have a chance of getting this overturned," he said.

The commission, which can make changes to the list, will forward its conclusions to President Bush in September. The President then will either accept or reject its recommendations. Eventually, Congress will get the list for its approval.

Evaluation visit planned next for Fort Gillem
Atlanta Journal-Constitution
Add Seymour Jr.
June 2, 2005

A second member of the commission evaluating a Defense Department list of military base closings will be in metro Atlanta next week.

According to U.S. Congressman David Scott (D-Georgia), **Fort Gillem** in Forest Park will get a visit from a yet-to-be-determined member of the Base **Realignment** and Closure Commission on June 10.

That follows the already announced Fort McPherson visit Wednesday from another BRAC commissioner, retired Army Gen. Tom Hill.

"I'm siding for both of these bases," Scott said. "They are both very critical."

The commissioners will talk mainly to commanders of each base and their staffs.

Four Georgia bases were recommended for closure --- Fort McPherson in East Point, **Fort Gillem,** the Naval Air Station Atlanta in Cobb County and the Naval Supply Corps School in Athens. A BRAC commissioner spoke to NAS Atlanta brass last week.

BRAC commissioners will also hold a June 30 Atlanta regional hearing where communities and elected officials can make their pitches to keep bases open.

Planners consider redevelopment options if bases close
Associated Press State and Local Wire
May 30, 2005

ATLANTA
Some metro Atlanta communities are hoping for the best but planning for the worst as they consider redevelopment options for military bases in their area targeted for closing by the government.

Among the Georgia installations recommended for closing by the Base **Realignment** and Closure Commission are Naval Air Station-Atlanta in Marietta, **Fort Gillem** in Forest Park and Fort McPherson in East Point.

The communities are appointing committees made up of government officials, citizens, planners and businessmen to consider options if the recommendations are approved. Georgia's last chance to push to keep the bases open comes June 30. After the commission makes its final recommendations on Sept. 8, President Bush will send his recommendations to Congress.

Local officials note that lack of planning slowed base redevelopment in some other states during earlier closures.

"Plan B is very important. You don't want to wait (until a final notice) and throw your hands up and say, 'What do we do now?'" said Mayor Chuck Hall of Forest Park, where **Fort Gillem** is located.

Hall said his office is already getting phone calls from planning and development firms.

Fort McPherson has been in use as a military post since the 1830s. Many of its historic buildings were constructed of red brick beginning in the 1880s.

The Commandant's Quarters, which has 12-foot ceilings, hosted Gen. Douglas MacArthur when he commanded the fort briefly in 1925. It has a sleeping porch built for President Franklin D. Roosevelt, who would stop over on trips to and from Warm Springs.

Redeveloping around those could be a challenge. But it is a historic area "that is probably better than anything in Atlanta" and could form a unique core of a new community, said Ellen Heath, a vice president in the Atlanta office of EDAW Inc., an international planning firm that has helped redevelop 29 previously closed military bases.

"I think it's a great opportunity to develop a nice, livable community inside the Perimeter," Heath said. "It's right on the MARTA line. It's got a lot going for it."

The Naval Air Station, at 166 acres, is smaller and adjoins the industrial complex of Lockheed Martin manufacturing and Dobbins Air Reserve Base. Its strength could be in marketing it to business or industrial concerns associated with flight.

The 1,427-acre **Fort Gillem,** with its well developed infrastructure of rail, roads and quick access to interstate highways and Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport, is well situated to develop as a new business park. Other discussions have included everything from creating new parks to commercial areas.

"The question is, how long is it going to take?" said Emory Brock, Clayton County's director of development.

Gems at our door
Atlanta Journal-Constitution
Christopher Quinn
May 30, 2005

"Plan B" teams are quietly organizing in metro Atlanta. Their mission: redeveloping local military bases targeted for closing by the Pentagon.

The teams are keeping a low profile because Georgia's Plan A has always been to fight the closings like Trojans on the walls of their doomed city. Officials fear that developing alternative plans will give the Base **Realignment** and Closure Commission a hint that the state is willing to capitulate and quietly accept the shuttering of Naval Air Station Atlanta, **Fort Gillem** and Fort McPherson, which together pay out $ 565 million a year in salaries. Positions for 4,000 civilian employees and 6,823 full-time and active military reservists will evaporate if the three bases close.

Those directing the fight, however, know that the chances of the bases' survival are slim and are preparing for the worst. Only 15 percent of the bases targeted in the last round of nationwide closings were granted a reprieve, and some think the percentage will be even lower this time around.

Mayor Chuck Hall of Forest Park, home of **Fort Gillem,** said, "Plan B is very important. You

don't want to wait (until a final notice) and throw your hands up and say, 'What do we do now?'" To avoid that, area governments are appointing committees to begin what could be a years-long process of directing the change from military to civilian control. The committees are made up of government officials, citizens, planners and businessmen.

Retired Gen. Phil Browning, who is leading Georgia's fight against closure, said the state wants to avoid the lack of planning, foresight and political infighting for control of base changeovers that slowed base redevelopment in some other states.

"About six months ago, the board of directors of the (Georgia Military Affairs Coordinating Committee) suggested to the governor that we change our focus from getting ready to fight closing, because we had done about everything we could, to looking at Plan B," Browning said.

"Some communities have lost months and months and months getting their planning groups together," he said. "We want our groups ready to go as soon as we hear."

Atlanta has the controlling interest in Fort McPherson; Forest Park has **Fort Gillem.** Marietta and Cobb County are putting together the team for Naval Air Station Atlanta.

Atlanta Mayor Shirley Franklin has appointed East Point Mayor Patsy Jo Hilliard to the committee she formed. Fort McPherson is between the two cities.

Hilliard isn't happy about the potential closing of Fort McPherson.

"I was walking in town ... and we saw all these military people in our restaurants," she said. "They really do patronize our businesses, and I know our business people will feel the pinch."

Hilliard has formed a city committee to work on softening the impact of the potential loss. But closing Fort McPherson won't be like closing an old industrial site.

"It has historic buildings, an (Army) museum, a pool, a lake, a golf course," Hilliard said. "Oh, my goodness, it has those rolling beautiful hills."

Fort McPherson has been in use as a military post since the 1830s.

Many of its historic buildings were constructed of red brick beginning in the 1880s.

The Commandant's Quarters, which has 12-foot ceilings, hosted Gen. Douglas MacArthur when he commanded the fort briefly in 1925. It has a sleeping porch built for President Franklin D. Roosevelt, who would stop over on trips to and from Warm Springs.

"It has gorgeous houses, tree-lined streets, and would make a beautiful community," said Emory Brock, Clayton County's director of development. Fifty buildings on the 488-acre post are listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Redeveloping around those could be a challenge. But it is a historic area "that is probably better than anything in Atlanta" and could form a unique core of a new community, said Ellen Heath, a vice president in the Atlanta office of EDAW Inc., an international planning firm that has helped redevelop 29 previously closed military bases.

"I think it's a great opportunity to develop a nice, livable community inside the Perimeter," Heath

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Brock said that 1,427-acre **Fort Gillem,** with its well developed infrastructure of rail, roads and quick access to interstate highways and Hartsfield-Jackson International Airport, is well situated to develop as a new business park. Other discussions have included everything from creating new parks to commercial areas.

"The question is, how long is it going to take?" Brock said.

Hall, Forest Park's mayor, said his office is already getting phone calls from planning and development firms.

The results of a successful base transition can be spectacular, if difficult and time-consuming, when the right combination of market forces and local drive come together.

Lowry Air Force Base in Denver closed in 1991, costing Denver and the adjoining town of Aurora 7,000 jobs and $ 295 million in annual spending. It took 10 years, but the successfully redeveloped base now has 3,000 new houses, 100 businesses and 10 schools and is home to more than 20,000 workers and residents.

Other communities have been less successful. K.I. Sawyer Air Force Base near Marquette, Mich., was closed in 1995 and turned into an international airport in 1999. In 2003, 103,000 passengers used it -- about 280 a day.

Communities trying to redevelop closed bases in urban or suburban areas have distinct advantages over those in rural areas, Heath said.

Bases near fast-growing areas often have a ready market for reuse.

All three metro Atlanta bases have seen suburban development gobble up all the large tracts of land around them.

"Fort McPherson is inside the Perimeter, and we all know how hot that housing market is," Heath said.

Browning, the retired general, wants the committees to have redevelopment plans ready for consideration within 18 months of the expected final word in November -- a tough task, he admits, considering the complexity of a base turnover.

The committees can apply for planning grants from the federal government to help pay for the costs.

Committee members will visit the bases to inventory their buildings and infrastructure and then hammer out ideas and compromises over what they envision. Once a plan is in place, complex negotiations with the military and federal government over turnover timetables, the appropriateness of redevelopment and price will begin.

Some bases have been given back to local governments, especially if a public use, such as a park, is planned on the land. In other cases, the governments buy the bases or act as a middleman to sell the property to developers.

The turnovers can happen in stages as the military moves out, and bases can be redeveloped piecemeal. The naval yard in Charleston, S.C., was closed 10 years ago, but the Charleston Naval Complex Redevelopment Authority did not receive the final pieces of property until this year.

Turnovers can also be delayed by environmental problems left behind by the military, such as sites where fuel was stored or spilled. The military is responsible for the cleanups.

Once all sides reach agreement, a state-legislated implementation group, using the plan as a guide, will handle the property transfers, financing for redevelopment and marketing of the property.

On June 30, Georgia has a last chance to plead its cases to the commission to keep the bases open. The commission will turn over final recommendations to President Bush on Sept. 8, and he will send his recommendations to Congress, which must accept or reject all of them as a package.

Evaluation date set for Fort McPherson
Atlanta Journal-Constitution
Add Seymour Jr.
May 27, 2005

Fort McPherson will soon be visited by some of the officials deciding whether the East Point base should close.

Retired Army Gen. Tom Hill, a member of the Base **Realignment** and Closure Commission, will meet with Fort McPherson officials June 8, members of the Clayton County Chamber of Commerce were told Thursday.

"This is a fact-finding mission," said Fred Bryant, deputy executive director of the Georgia Military Affairs Coordinating Council.

Defense officials want to streamline the nation's military bases and also save millions in taxpayer dollars. Four Georgia bases are on the national list of bases to be closed --- Fort McPherson, **Fort Gillem** in Forest Park, the Naval Air Station Atlanta in Cobb County and the Naval Supply Corps School in Athens.

Retired Adm. Harold W. Gehman Jr. visited the NAS Atlanta and the Naval Supply Corps School on Wednesday. Hill will speak with Fort McPherson base commander Col. Angela Manos and other staff members.

"We hope he'd come to **Fort Gillem** as well," Bryant said.

One of the options Gillem/McPherson backers will offer BRAC commissioners will be to close Fort McPherson and move some of its units to **Fort Gillem,** which would remain open. Bryant

said Fort McPherson is completely built out while **Fort Gillem** is not as old, has available space and is already home to new projects such as a state-of-the-art forensic crime laboratory that serves the entire U.S. military.

BRAC commissioners, who can make changes to the Defense Department's list, are visiting bases and holding regional meetings as they listen to pitches from communities and elected officials who are trying to keep their bases open. An Atlanta regional meeting is scheduled for June 30.

The commission will submit their conclusions to President Bush by Sept. 8. The president can only accept or reject their recommendations. His recommendations will then go to Congress for approval.

Bryant said they are also awaiting the release of Defense Department data used in making its recommendations.

"If we can find mistakes in the analysis, then we have a chance of getting overturned," he said.

Release of Georgia's BRAC data under fire; State's delegation seeks Bush's help to get more information
The Macon Telegraph
Gene Rector; Telegraph Staff Writer
May 27, 2005

ROBINS AIR FORCE BASE
A sharp controversy is brewing about what Georgia's congressional delegation is calling the Pentagon's "limited and sketchy" release of data supporting Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld's May 13 base **realignment** and closure recommendations.

In a letter sent late Thursday to President Bush, the delegation said, "It is imperative that we, the governor and communities affected by the BRAC process, and the BRAC Commission itself, have full access to all the data on which these decisions were based."

Four Georgia installations - **Forts Gillem** and McPherson, Naval Air Station Atlanta and the Athens Naval Supply Corps School - were recommended for closure by Rumsfeld. The letter asks the president to consider delaying the BRAC process until all information has been released and reviewed.

The independent, nine-member BRAC commission has already begun its review of the Defense Department's recommendations and must provide its assessment to the president no later than Sept. 8.

Clyde Taylor, military aide to Sen. Saxby Chambliss, R-Ga., said Georgia's military communities have no time to waste both in understanding and contesting the closure decisions.

"We've already had BRAC commissioners visiting our bases, so we're already behind," he said by telephone late Thursday.

The Pentagon is required by law to release all BRAC data - including detailed backup information - within seven days of the May 13 announcement, Taylor said. "It's slowly trickling out, but we don't have it all," he said. "That means our communities have less time and less ability to accurately understand why their bases were selected for closure."

Glenn Flood, a Defense Department spokesman, said the Pentagon has met what the law requires and that security issues are delaying the release of additional data.

"We have to make sure that we don't inadvertently release sensitive information," he said by telephone. "We don't want to put out documents that discuss things like where we have things stored and how much. So the data has to be looked at almost line-by-line, and that takes time."

Ron Carbon, director of Middle Georgia's 21st Century Partnership, said the additional data is important even for communities with bases not selected for closure. The partnership, consisting of local business, political and civic leaders, is working to defend Robins Air Force Base during the BRAC 2005 process.

"Of course, the people in Atlanta and Athens have more at stake in the near term," he said, "but the data means something to all of us in the longer term. We want to see what was said about Robins. We want to know our strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. We think this data will be the baseline not only for BRAC but for decisions over the next five to 10 years."

Chambliss press aide Annie Laurie Walters said late Thursday that other states were also concerned about missing BRAC data.

"In fact, Sen. (Olympia) Snowe is introducing a bill tonight that will require the Pentagon to release the backup data," she said. "So we're not alone."

Snowe is a Republican senator from Maine, where three installations are tapped for closure, including the Naval Shipyard at Portsmouth.

Carbon said his contacts indicated that at least 10 other states have complained to the Pentagon about the slow release of data.

Editorial/Opinion Articles

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

1. **As the BRAC Commission evaluates the suggestions by DoD to close or realign various installation, the Commission will base its final decision regarding each installation almost entirely upon military value.**
    - The Commission is aware of the impact that the loss of 1,251 jobs from the Community surrounding Maxwell AFB would have and will take these economic effects into full consideration, while holding military value as the preeminent consideration.
    - As the Department of Defense (DoD) seeks to streamline our military in order to meet changing global threats, the Commission will evaluate whether the military value of each installation suggested by DoD for closure or realignment has been properly taken into account.
    - The Commission will evaluate whether DoD's suggestion to move C-130s from Mansfield-Lahm Municipal Airport Air Guard Station to Maxwell AFB and Little Rock AFB, will be in our best defense interests and creates more efficiency within the U.S. Military.

2. **The process followed by the Commission is completely non-political in nature.**
    - The Congress established the Commission as a completely non-partisan, non-political entity to independently evaluate, in a transparent, objective, and thorough manner—as prescribed by law—the suggestions by DoD to close or realign various military installations across the country.
    - The factors to be included in the Commission's evaluation have been specifically outlined by law.
    - The time in which the Commission performs its evaluations is not a time of political maneuvering, but of thorough and objective fact-gathering and analysis.

3. **The Commission is very aware of the human impact that the suggestion to close or realign a military installation would have on a community, should that suggestion be enacted.**
    - While making its final decision almost entirely based upon the military value of Maxwell AFB, the Commission will take the economic and other effects that the realignment of the installation would have on the surrounding community into full account.
    - The Commission recognizes the short-term hardship that these decisions may cause for some, yet must act in accordance with the law and in accordance with the security interests of our country, ensuring that our military is prepared to meet modern global threats.
    - The Commission encourages public input through the Commission's official website: www.brac.gov.

Facts compiled from included press clippings.

2005 Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission
Suggested Qs and As for Maxwell Air Force Base

Q1. Although the state of Alabama would have a net gain of 2,664 jobs if the suggestions made by the Department of Defense (DoD) were enacted, Maxwell Air Force Base (AFB), itself would lose 1,251 jobs. Will the Commission take the economic effects that this would have on the local community into account?
A1. The Congress established the Commission as an independent entity to evaluate--in an objective, transparent, and thorough manner, as prescribed by law—the suggestions by DoD to close or realign various military installations across the country. Although the Commission will hold military value as the preeminent consideration, it will take the economic, environmental, and other effects that the realignment of Maxwell AFB could have on the community into full account.

Q2. Should DoD's suggestions be enacted, troops would be moved from Maxwell and Wright-Patterson Air Force Bases to Hanscom AFB. Will the Commission evaluate whether Hanscom has the necessary community infrastructure to support this influx of troops?
A2. The factors to be included in the BRAC Commission's analysis have been specifically outlined by statute. The Commission will perform full evaluations of all pertinent factors prior to reaching its conclusions.

Q3. Some have suggested that the reason DoD's list is not final, is that there is still time and room for "political maneuvering." Will political influence have any sway with the Commission?
A3. The Congress established the Commission as an entirely non-partisan and non-political entity, to independently evaluate DoD's suggestions to ensure that those suggestions were made in full accordance with the law and only after all pertinent factors had been taken into account. The Commission is entirely open and transparent and was established, in part, to serve as a means of public accountability for the decisions to close or realign various military installations. The process followed by the Commission, as well as the factors to be included in the Commission's evaluation, have been specifically prescribed by law.

Q4. According to DoD's suggestions, the C-130s from Mansfield-Lahm Municipal Airport Air Guard Station would be redistributed between Little Rock AFB and Maxwell AFB. Will the Commission take into account whether the infrastructure surrounding Maxwell AFB is able to handle this?
A4. The Commission will make a full evaluation of all pertinent factors, as prescribed by law. While holding military value as the preeminent criteria, it will also consider the effects that DoD's proposed changes would have on the local communities.

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

A5. The Commission not only welcomes input from the community, it is a vital part of the Commission's process of evaluation. The public is encouraged to contact the Commission through the Commission's official website: www.brac.gov.

Facts taken from included press clippings.

P

MAXWELL AFB
ALABAMA

National News Articles
Defense Department Brac Plan Cuts Isr Bases By More Than Half
Pentagon Recommends 10 Air Force Installations For Closure

Local News Articles
Officials Gear Up To Lobby For Military Bases In Their Areas
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National News Articles

Defense Department Brac Plan Cuts Isr Bases By More Than Half
Inside the Air Force
May 20, 2005

The Air Force should consolidate the number of bases that handle the service's intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance capabilities by more than half, according to a Defense Department body established to help the Pentagon make recommendations to the Base **Realignment** and Closure Commission.

The Technical Joint Cross-Service Group, which contributed to DOD's base closing report, recommends the service consolidate the number of bases specializing in C4ISR from six to two. The remaining two bases would then become C4ISR centers of excellence.

The Pentagon delivered its list of recommended base closings and **realignments** to the commission last week. The list included 10 Air Force base closures and 62 **realignments.** Throughout the summer, the nine-member base closing commission will determine which DOD installations will be closed.

The cross-service group's recommendation calls for realigning Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, OH; **Maxwell** AFB, AL; and Lackland AFB, TX, by relocating air and space information systems research and development and acquisition to Hanscom AFB, MA. It also suggests realigning Eglin AFB, FL, by moving air and space sensors, electronic warfare and electronics and information systems test and evaluation to Edwards AFB, CA.

The total estimated cost to implement this recommendation is $254.4 million, according to the cross-service group. The total savings to DOD is estimated at $238 million over 20 years. The Pentagon would recoup the implementation cost in eight years with annual savings projected at

$36.2 million.

The recommendation assumes a worst-case scenario that no economic recovery will take place once the bases are realigned. In that case, Montgomery, AL would bear the biggest hit with around 3,300 jobs lost with **Maxwell** AFB's **realignment.** The second largest impact would be on Dayton, OH, with about 2,300 jobs lost due to Wright-Patterson's **realignment.** The potential combined total jobs lost in the areas around Lackland AFB and Eglin AFB is just over 600 jobs.

A recent General Accountability Office report found that most communities surrounding closed bases are continuing to recover from the impact of past BRAC rounds. The report cites DOD data showing that nearly 85 percent of local civilian jobs that were lost on bases as a result of **realignments** and closures have been replaced though development of the properties.

"Two key economic indicators -- the unemployment rate and the average annual per capita income growth rate -- show that BRAC communities are generally doing well when compared with average U.S. rates," the report explains.

In terms of community infrastructure, the cross-service group says "there are no community infrastructure impediment to implementation of all recommendations affecting the installations."

Environmentally, the **realignments** could impact air quality and archaeological sites at both Hanscom and Edwards. Additional operations may impact wetlands at Hanscom and impact threatened or endangered species habitats around Edwards, the recommendation goes on to say.

The cross-service group concedes its recommendation may require building on constrained acreage at Hanscom and that the hazardous waste program at the base will need modification. The recommendation will require spending around $500,000 for "waste management and environmental compliance activities" but that figure is included in DOD's projected $238 million savings.

Pentagon Recommends 10 Air Force Installations For Closure
Inside the Air Force
May 20, 2005

The Defense Department is recommending the closure of 10 Air Force installations and a host of **realignment** activities that will affect 76 percent of the service's U.S. bases, the Pentagon announced late last week.

The Air Force-related moves will, if approved, produce a net savings of $14.5 billion over 20 years, according to Pentagon documents.

Three active-duty Air Force bases and seven of the service's reserve installations are candidates for closure. Also, the Pentagon has offered 62 **realignment** recommendations affecting 115 installations, or 76 percent of all Air Force bases in the United States, according to DOD's detailed recommendations in its 2005 report to the Base **Realignment** and Closure Commission.

Of the service's 142 installations with operational flying missions, 28, or 20 percent, would lose those missions under the Pentagon's plans.

The active-duty Air Force stations selected for closure include Ellsworth Air Force Base, SD, home to the 28th Bomb Wing, which flies the B-1; Cannon AFB, NM, home to the 27th Fighter

Wing, which operates the F-16; and Onizuka Air Force Station, CA, where Air Force Satellite Control Network and Defense Information Systems Agency Defense Satellite Communication System missions are located.

Ellsworth's 24 B-1 bombers would be sent to Dyess AFB, TX, home to the 7th Bomb Wing. The move is intended to consolidate the service's entire B-1 fleet at one installation to achieve "operational efficiencies," according to the report.

The document describes Cannon's F-16 fleet as a "unique force structure mix." The base's fighters are a variety of different block aircraft, and each block would be better suited elsewhere, according to DOD. The F-16s would be redistributed to Andrews AFB, MD; Nellis AFB, NV; Hill AFB, UT; and Air Guard stations in Wisconsin and South Dakota, the report says.

Meanwhile, DOD is recommending Onizuka for closure in order to consolidate satellite command-and-control operations, according to the report. Both of the base's missions would be moved to Vandenberg AFB, CA.

The reserve installations recommended for closure include Kulis Air Guard Station, AK, from which C-130s and HH-60s would move to Elmendorf AFB, AK; Otis Air National Guard Base, MA, home to F-15s that would be redistributed to Guard installations in Florida and New Jersey; W.K. Kellogg Airport Air Guard Station, MI, from which A-10s would be relocated to Selfridge Air National Guard Base, MI; Niagara Falls Air Reserve Station, NY, home to C-130Hs that would move to Little Rock Air Force Base, AR, and KC-135Rs slated for Bangor International Airport Air Guard Station, ME; Pittsburgh Airport Air Reserve Station, PA, home to C-130Hs that would be sent to Pope Air Force Base, NC; Mansfield-Lahm Municipal Airport Air Guard Station, OH, whose C-130s would be redistributed between **Maxwell** AFB and Little Rock AFB; and General Mitchell Air Reserve Station, WI, home to C-130Hs that would be divided between Dobbins Air Reserve Base, GA, and Little Rock AFB.

The Air Force's strategy in formulating recommendations for the 2005 BRAC round was "to consolidate and right-size operational and support units and in the process reduce infrastructure and capacity," the report says. The service's analysis was based on its facility inventory and the BRAC selection criteria. The analysis also was grounded in the Air Force's 20-year Future Total Force Force Structure Plan, the culmination of an intensive two-plus-year study that took an in-depth look at the service's future investment portfolio pitted against budget realities.

Other Air Force-related closure candidates of note include Brooks City-Base, TX, where the Air Force Center for Environmental Excellence, Human Systems Program Office, School of Aerospace Medicine and 311th Human Systems Wing are located.

The human studies outfits at Brooks City-Base in San Antonio, TX, would be moved to Wright-Patterson AFB, OH, to strive for "technical synergy" and enable to the Air Force to "exploit a center-of-mass of scientific, technical and acquisition expertise" at Wright-Patterson, which is a hub of the service's aerospace medicine and occupational health activities, DOD says. The environmental center would be moved to Lackland AFB, TX, under the Pentagon's plans.

Also, the Air Force Research Laboratory branch in Mesa City, AZ, that studies warfighter readiness, is a candidate for closure. The Pentagon has recommended moving the lab's research and development activities in warfighter training techniques and technologies to Wright-Patterson AFB, home to AFRL headquarters.

Next up in the BRAC process will be a Government Accountability Office report on DOD's list. That report is due out July 1. The BRAC Commission will produce its own list after many hearings and analyses, and that list must be submitted to the president in September.

The president can approve or reject the list and the commission has another chance to make changes to it after his review. The president must then "certify" the list and submit it to Congress in November, after which lawmakers can accept or reject the list in its entirety.

Local News Articles

Officials Gear Up To Lobby For Military Bases In Their Areas
Birmingham News (Alabama)
Kent Faulk And Mike Cason
May 17, 2005

Now that the Pentagon has released its recommended list to close or shuffle military bases around the country, Alabama leaders are digging in to protect expected gains and fight proposed losses.

Over the coming summer, the nine-member Base **Realignment** and Closure Commission will hold hearings on the proposals near bases around the country. The commission's recommendations go to President Bush by Sept. 8.

In the balance for Alabama is a net gain of 2,664 jobs transferred into the state, according to estimates. Those would include net gains of 1,800 at Fort Rucker near Dothan, 1,655 at Redstone Arsenal near Huntsville, and 1,034 at the Anniston Army Depot. Officials in those three communities are drawing up plans for making sure their military bases are showcased in the best possible light when the BRAC Commission holds its hearings.

Part of their mission will be making sure the commission gets the right information, local leaders say. "If anything is said that's not true, we will get the information back in to correct the record," said Nathan Hill, military liaison for the Calhoun County Chamber of Commerce.

Selling their community as the best place for the new work is also part of that goal. "It's just monitoring the situation and selling the Tennessee Valley to the commission and, really, to the country," said Dave Hargrove, co-chairman of the Tennessee Valley BRAC committee said Friday.

Tennessee Valley area officials also will be looking at what the community needs to do regarding housing, roads, city services and the like to make sure the BRAC Commission is aware the community can handle extra workers and their families, Hargrove said. That group has already spent $700,000 to $1 million in lobbying efforts.

Last week, at the request of Huntsville Mayor Loretta Spencer, the Huntsville City Council approved a contract with the local BRAC committee for $100,000 more. The new money would be spent for promotional material and videos about the community that could eventually go to workers asked to transfer to Huntsville, mayor's spokeswoman Melissa Bullard said.

Fighting back

Officials in Montgomery, meanwhile, are formulating a plan to protect against the possible net

loss of 1,251 government jobs at the Gunter Annex of **Maxwell** Air Force Base.

"We're obviously looking through the data that DOD (Department of Defense) used to make the decision and trying to look at it and find out if there's any errors that they made," said Paul Hankins, retired Air Force general and consultant for the City of Montgomery and the Montgomery Area Chamber of Commerce. "And then we're also trying to look at the logic that they used for the decision to find out if we think there's any justification for trying to counter that argument."

Alabama Gov. Bob Riley will visit Huntsville and Anniston today and Dothan and Montgomery on Wednesday to talk with officials about their next steps.

At the same time, officials in the states that stand to lose or gain will be trying to convince that panel otherwise.

"We're in battle fatigues here on some of these issues and we're interested in preserving what we have," said G. Mark Gibb, executive director of the Northern Virginia Regional Planning Commission. Under the Pentagon's BRAC recommendation, northern Virginia near Washington stands to lose some 20,000 workers, a portion relocated to Redstone Arsenal.

Much of the net gain at the Anniston Army Depot would come from the closing of Red River Depot in Texas. Sen. Kay Bailey Hutchison, R-Texas, vowed in a Sunday story that the state's congressional delegation "will use every tool at our disposal to save Red River," according to the Texarkana Gazette.

Hill, with Calhoun County Chamber of Commerce, said Anniston advocates will argue that the Pentagon's proposals are sound.

"The intent of BRAC is to strengthen the military and save money. We're not going to attack Red River. We're going to show what Anniston's capabili-

ties are," Hill said.

Riley: Depot Workers' Hard Work Saved Jobs
Birmingham News (Alabama)
Mike Cason And Kent Faulk
May 18, 2005

ANNISTON - Gov. Bob Riley told workers at the Anniston Army Depot on Tuesday that their hard work persuaded the Pentagon to propose 1,000 new jobs at the facility.

Riley also reminded employees and local officials that the next few months are crucial, as the Base **Realignment** and Closure commission reviews the Pentagon's list.

"We've got to perform like we've never performed before, because that's the way you keep politics out of it," Riley said.

Don Gleaton, 49, a tank engine mechanic from Anniston, said Riley "really went to bat for us." Gleaton said the governor told depot workers two years ago not to worry, even though the depot's main competitor, Red River Depot, is in Texas, the president's home state.

On Friday, the Pentagon recommended closing Red River and sending jobs to Anniston.

In all, Anniston would gain 1,034 jobs and become the Defense Department's main hub for combat vehicle maintenance.

Riley also visited Redstone Arsenal in Huntsville on Tuesday, which is also slated to gain jobs.

Today, he will visit Dothan and Montgomery. Fort Rucker, near Dothan, would gain 1,888 jobs under the Pentagon's plan. **Maxwell** Air Force Base in Montgomery would lose 1,251 jobs.

The BRAC commission has until Sept. 8 to review and make changes before sending the Pentagon list to President Bush. Bush faces a Nov. 7 deadline to send the list to Congress, which can accept or reject it but can't make changes.

Riley said the depot has made a stunning turnaround in the past five years. The governor, who represented the Anniston area in Congress from 1996 to 2002, said the depot's future was in doubt four years ago.

Nathan Hill, former deputy commander at the depot who is now military liaison for the Calhoun County Chamber of Commerce, said the depot will exceed 5 million labor hours this year, up from about 2 million during the 1990s.

Part of the increase is to support the war on terror, such as building armor for Humvees used in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Riley met at the Huntsville/ Madison County Chamber of Commerce with economic development and local elected officials.

Redstone Arsenal stands to have a net gain of 1,655 jobs plus another 1,289 support personnel if those BRAC recommendations happen.

But Riley said the number of jobs could be even greater than that if the contractors clustered around those military offices planned for transfer do end up at Redstone. One such command slated to relocate to Redstone, the Army Materiel Command, buys $20 billion worth of items each year to equip soldiers, officials noted.

Officials Look To Counter BRAC
The Montgomery Advertiser (Alabama)
William F. West
May 19, 2005

Governor, mayor vow to fight base shift

Gov. Bob Riley and Montgomery Mayor Bobby Bright said Wednesday they'll step up efforts to counter Base **Realignment** and Closure recommendations to move an Air Force technical support service from the city to Massachusetts. Riley, speaking at a news conference at the Montgomery Area Chamber of Commerce, said he believes an articulate team already is in place but that it would be expanded. "We're going to come up with a game plan for this area," he added. Much is at stake, including the potential loss of more than 3,200 jobs at Operations and Sustainment Systems Group (OSSG), located at Gunter Annex of **Maxwell**-Gunter Air Force Base. Though Paul Hankins has been serving as the chamber's consultant on BRAC matters, he said afterward

that he has proposed hiring "credible economic analysts" nationally to help review figures released by the Defense Department last Friday that call for the **realignment** of OSSG. Hankins said Riley has offered state funds and that efforts would be made to raise municipal funds in addition to money from the business community. He said there would be no need to hire a lobbyist. "We've got pledges" from Riley and U.S. Sens. Richard Shelby and Jeff Sessions, he said. Bright told reporters that local experts, including Hankins, are poring over documents released by the Defense Department last week. They want to learn why the Defense Department's BRAC report calls for OSSG to be shifted from Gunter to Hanscom Air Force Base. Riley and Bright spoke to reporters at the chamber after privately meeting with local and state leaders, and also speaking by telephone call with the area's two congressmen, Terry Everett and Mike Rogers. It'll be up to an independent nine-member BRAC commission, appointed by President Bush and Congress, to decide whether to reverse the proposal to move OSSG. There's no word yet on when and where the BRAC commission would meet to hear pleas for keeping OSSG in Montgomery, and there's no sign yet who specifically would address the commission on the issue. "We don't know what we're going to say until we have the data and be able to compare it and make sure that what we say is accurate," the governor said. But the governor said, "We're going to make sure that when we go and testify before the BRAC commission that everything that we say is based on sound, hard numbers that are irrefutable." The mayor added, "If we feel there was one piece of evidence that was overlooked, we'll challenge that and bring it to the attention of the commission." Riley and Bright emphasized they don't take issue with the need to consolidate and streamline with the purpose of BRAC to shape a more efficient military. Rather, they said they want to make a compelling argument that, if the information in favor of Massachusetts is feeble, OSSG should stay in Montgomery. "We will do whatever it takes, within the legal and ethical bounds, the professional bounds, to keep the jobs in Montgomery. Is that good enough?" Bright said when pressed about strategy. Carl Barker, a local bank president who serves as the chamber's board chairman, said he believes the correct things were said at the news conference. "I think we're on the right track," he said.

BRAC INFORMATION

Phone: (703) 699-2950

Web site: www.defenselink.mil/brac/

ONLINE EXTRA

Frequently asked questions about BRAC

QUESTION: What is BRAC?

ANSWER: Base **Realignment** and Closure.

It is the congressionally authorized process the Defense Department has previously used to reorganize its base structure to more efficiently and effectively support the armed forces, increase operational readiness and facilitate new ways of doing business.

Q:What benefit does the Department of Defense anticipate from a future BRAC round?

A: To divest itself of unnecessary installation infrastructure and use the savings for improving fighting capabilities and quality of life for military forces.

Q: What is the BRAC timeline?

A: By Sept. 8, a nine-member BRAC commission must submit a report to President Bush containing its findings and conclusions based on a review and analysis of Defense Donald Secretary Rumsfeld's recommendations.

By Sept. 23, Bush must give the BRAC commission and Congress his approval or disapproval of the commission's recommendations. If Bush approves the recommendations, they are binding 45 legislative days, unless Congress disapproves.

If Bush disapproves the commission's initial recommendations, the commission must submit revised recommendations to him by no later than Oct. 20.

The president would have until Nov. 7 to approve the revised recommendations and submit his approval to Congress, or the process ends. The recommendations become binding in 45 legislative days, unless Congress disapproves. The commission dissolves on April 15.

Q: How much has been saved by BRAC?

A: Approximately 20 percent of the Defense Department's capacity that existed in 1988 and, through 2001, a net savings of approximately $17.7 billion, including the cost of environmental cleanup. Recurring savings beyond 2001 are approximately $7 billion annually.

Q: What is the BRAC Commission?

A: An independent body responsible for reviewing Rumsfeld's recommendations. The federal Base Closure and **Realignment** Act specified the selection process for commissioners. The president was required to consult with the congressional leadership on nominations.

Q: Who is the BRAC Commission chairman?

A: Anthony J. Principi, a former Veterans Affairs secretary.

Q: Who are the other eight BRAC commission members?

Former congressman, James H. Bilbray of Nevada.

Philip Coyle, a former assistant defense secretary from California.

Retired Navy Admiral Harold W. Gehman Jr. of Virginia.

Former congressman, James V. Hansen of Utah.

Retired Army Gen. James T. Hill of Florida.

Retired Air Force Gen. Lloyd Warren Newton of Connecticut.

Former Transportation Secretary Samuel Knox Skinner of Illinois.

Retired Air Force Brig. Gen. Sue Ellen Turner of Texas.

Q: What authority does the commission have?

A:To change the Defense Department's recommendations. The commission will hold regional meetings to solicit public input prior to making recommendations.

Tempered Optimism At Hanscom
The Boston Globe
Davis Bushnell
May 19, 2005

While Hanscom Air Force Base officials in Bedford begin charting expansion plans in buoyed spirits, they say they're also mindful that future operations are guaranteed only if a nine-member federal base closure commission concurs with last week's Defense Department recommendations.

"We're one step closer" to surviving this year's round of base closings, Colonel Timothy C. Ceteras, commander of the 66th Air Base Wing at Hanscom, said at a press conference following the Pentagon's release last Friday of a recommended list of base closures and **realignments.** The Hanscom base escaped the initial cuts along with the US Soldier Systems Center in Natick.

Unlike Hanscom, which will gain more than 1,000 jobs under the Pentagon plan, the Army's Natick Labs will not benefit from reassignments from other installations.

Nothing should be taken for granted until the process has been completed, Ceteras emphasized, as did state and local officials. They noted that the Base **Realignment** and Closure Commission, commonly called BRAC, is mandated to submit its findings to President Bush no later than Sept. 8. Then Bush has until Sept. 23 to approve or reject the commission's recommendations. If he backs the commission's findings, they will become binding 45 legislative days later. If the findings are disapproved, the commission has until Oct. 20 to submit revised recommendations.

Because the commission will be doing most of its work in the next three months, the state's lobbying forces are keeping in touch with commissioners on a regular basis.

"We're already reaching out to them with a booklet and video," both of which are intended to reinforce the value of the air base and the Army's research laboratories, said Cort C. Boulanger, spokesman for the Massachusetts Defense Technology Initiative, cochaired by Governor Mitt Romney and Senator Edward M. Kennedy. "We're taking advantage of every opportunity" to be heard, Boulanger said.

"All of us must continue an aggressive campaign until September to keep the [Hanscom] base open," said Sara Mattes, of Lincoln, chairwoman of the Hanscom Area Towns Selectmen's group, made up of officials from Bedford, Concord, Lexington, and Lincoln, the communities adjoining the 846-acre air base.

"While we were obviously thrilled by the news" that Hanscom was not on the May 13 list, "it's

not over until it's over," added Mattes, referring to the base closure process. She is also the representative of the selectmen's group to the technology initiative.

Bedford Selectman Sheldon Moll, who's also a longtime member of the selectmen's committee, described the base closure process as "a story that's still unfolding.

"There's always political maneuvering in Washington to contend with," he said.

No one is more familiar with the BRAC process than one of the state's lobbyists, Alan J. Dixon, who chaired the commission in 1994 and 1995. He is a former Democratic US senator from Illinois.

Commissioners can, and do, tinker with the Defense Department's list of bases targeted for closure, Dixon has said.

"In 1995, we had generals and admirals [on the commission] who were independent thinkers on some matters," he said.

As the process is now being played out, Ceteras and others at the Bedford air base are looking into what infrastructure changes will be needed to accommodate **realignments** involving personnel who will be coming to Hanscom or leaving the base for installations in Ohio and New Mexico.

If Hanscom's remaining open should prove to a sure thing, the reassignments, resulting in a net gain of 1,104 jobs for the Bedford base, will be made from two to six years after the base **realignment** and closure decisions are finalized, Ceteras said.

It's been recommended that some 270 people from two Hanscom laboratories be transferred to Wright-Patterson Air Force Base in Ohio and Kirtland Air Force Base in Albuquerque, N.M.

Coming to Hanscom under the current Pentagon plan will be contingents from Wright-Patterson and **Maxwell** Air Force Base in Alabama. The military and civilian workers will all be information technology support system specialists, Ceteras said.

The air base now has 1,780 military personnel, 1,631 civilian workers, and 2,525 contractors. The Army's Natick Labs, which will lose 19 workers unrelated to the facility's core food and apparel research efforts, has a workforce of 2,958.

The defense technology initiative and MassDevelopment, the quasi-public economic development agency, are working with Air Force and Army officials on infrastructure needs, such as additional

housing and new buildings for Hanscom and new research-and-development space for Natick if the facility is awarded a new mission, Boulanger said. Hanscom now has 850 housing units managed by a private firm.

Earlier this year, the state Legislature earmarked $242 million in bond money for Hanscom improvements and $19 million for the Natick center.

Although it's not known now how much of this money the Pentagon will need, "the state remains committed" to providing the funding, depending on Defense Department wishes and needs, Boulanger said.

Opinions/ Editorials