



**TESTIMONY TO THE
DEFENSE BASE CLOSURE AND REALIGNMENT
COMMISSION**

STATEMENT
OF
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Introduction

Thank you, Chairman Principi and members of the 2005 Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission for allowing me to testify before you today. I am here today on behalf of Secretary Chertoff, who sends his regret that he could not attend today's hearing.

As you may know, I am a Rear Admiral in the United States Coast Guard, an organizational element within the Department of Homeland Security. I appear before you today, not as an officer of the United States Armed Forces, but as a representative of the Department.

Overview

The Commission's purpose, as directed by law, is to provide an objective, non-partisan, and independent review and analysis of the list of military installation recommendations that the Department of Defense has issued. Among the factors for your consideration are the operational and financial impacts that base closures and realignments will have on securing and defending the Homeland.

I am here today to talk about the impacts of base closures and realignments on the Department of Homeland Security's mission. I'd like to start by providing you with potential specific impacts on Homeland Security facilities and then close by addressing concerns within the broader context of Homeland Defense.

DHS Facilities

There are a number of components within DHS that have facilities co-located at DoD installations. As well, DHS components often rely upon DoD for operational support. The proposed realignments and closings of Department of Defense installations are expected, in general, to have limited impact on DHS's ability to carry out its mission. However, they do bear a financial impact.

Coast Guard: The Coast Guard with its long history of interoperability and shared infrastructure with the Defense Department is the most impacted by any BRAC initiatives. The Commandant of the Coast Guard identified a category of potential efficiencies that could result from BRAC and two categories of financial impacts resulting from BRAC.

An example of potential efficiencies is evident on the west coast, where realignment potentially frees up ground facilities and critical unrestricted air space at Naval Base Ventura County, California. There is potential for the Coast Guard to consolidate at Ventura, which offers a unique opportunity to co-locate several commands and achieve efficiencies in mission performance. Ventura is the only west coast location that meets all the Coast Guard requirements for a consolidated facility, with access to airspace that allows unrestricted UAV deployment. UAV deployment is a key emerging capability for increasing maritime domain awareness in support of homeland security.

The first of the two financial impacts of the BRAC proposal occur in the cases where DoD vacating a facility places a significant direct cost impact on Coast Guard mission performance. This is the case with the movement of the 102nd Air National Guard Squadron off the Massachusetts Military Reservation at Cape Cod, closure of the

Portsmouth Naval Shipyard in Kittery, Maine and closure of the Naval Station at Pascagoula, Mississippi. In each of these three cases, the preferred Coast Guard option is to remain at the legacy site, establish a fence line, and assume operations, security and maintenance for the new, smaller facility. For each of the two Naval Stations, the costs are estimated to be about \$1.5 million up front and an additional \$1.0 million recurring.

At Cape Cod, the costs associated with operating an airfield as the sole user, are comparatively large. Most of the Coast Guard air stations share their operating costs with a public facility or a multi-unit military facility. This will not be the case if the 102nd Air National Guard leaves Massachusetts. The 102nd Air National Guard's share of common airfield operating requirements totals about \$17 million per year. This figure, set upon the Coast Guard, would reflect a very significant portion of the agency's discretionary spending. But if the Coast Guard were forced to move from the current site, there would also be a significant cost impact, both one-time and recurring. Plus, there will be an opportunity cost if the Coast Guard is forced to move from the central location of its busy northeast U. S. operating area. The operation will increase mission response times beyond accepted standards.

The second financial impact is increased support costs due to loss of Coast Guard access to DoD housing, medical treatment facilities and supply sources. The Coast Guard has alternate sources for these forms of support, but it comes at an incremental increase in cost. A very rough estimate puts this in the eight to ten million dollar range annually. Housing and medical services, on the local economies, are expected to cost more to our soldiers, sailors and airmen than on military facilities. And storage of

mission critical components will cost more at commercial facilities than the current arrangements at DoD facilities.

Federal Emergency Management Agency: The closing of Fort Gillem in Atlanta, Georgia could force the re-location of the FEMA Logistics Center in Atlanta. The logistics center is currently located on the premises of Fort Gillem and is one of five FEMA logistics centers in the United States strategically located to provide critical commodities and supplies during disaster response operations or National Special Security Events. The logistics center in Atlanta primarily serves the Southeast United States Region, and also provides back-up and supplemental support for all the regions and States.

Fort Monmouth in New Jersey currently supports the FEMA Region II COOP Facility. This facility of 7,500 square feet serves as a Joint Field Office, and a Regional Response Coordination Center. Travel time from New York City to these vital national response facilities is only 80 minutes, and the Army post offers significant backup communications capabilities.

Many of the proposed closures could affect potential sites selected for FEMA Mobilization Centers which are used extensively during incidents of national significance. However, Mobilization Centers are temporary sites that are frequently relocated due to space issues or proximity to the affected jurisdiction. As with the Coast Guard, alternate sites are available, but at an increased cost that is not within current budgetary flexibility.

With the few exceptions I've noted, the base closures and realignments will have overall a limited impact on DHS and its mission; the effects are minimal in scope when compared to the overall effects of the BRAC recommendations. Of course, where BRAC decisions do have an impact on DHS, the realignment and closure process should afford adequate time to find and fund appropriate measures to protect our missions and support our people. When the final determination is released, DoD has two to six years to close or realign the facility. DHS will work with the Congress, DoD, and state and local governments to develop mitigation strategies whenever DHS components are tenants of a DoD facility slated for closure. DHS is also preparing plans to take advantage of intergovernmental transfer of properties that will enhance our mission performance in those cases where the total operating costs are favorable.

Homeland Defense

Protecting the United States from direct attack is the highest Defense priority of our country. The military has traditionally secured the United States by projecting power overseas. The terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 demonstrated that we are confronting fundamentally different challenges from those faced during the Cold War. The Base Closure and Realignment recommendations are important milestones and significant proposals when considering the Department of Defense's concept of an active, layered defense outlined in the National Defense Strategy.

Air National Guard: Providing the nation with timely, competent, and responsive defense against airborne threats has been a vital component to this layered defense of the United States. This has been accomplished through a network of fighter

aircraft that fly air patrol and air intercept missions. These aircraft are currently located at Regular, Reserve and Air National Guard bases located along the Atlantic, Caribbean, and Pacific coasts and along our northern border. The Air Force's BRAC recommendations recognize that—difficult decisions had to be made regarding air patrol and other Air Force missions.

My understanding is that Air Force BRAC recommendations call for ending Air National Guard fighter missions currently assigned to units in Massachusetts, Minnesota, Montana, New York, North Dakota, Oregon and Virginia, along with units in Illinois and Missouri. The Air Force has stated that new, more capable aircraft will be stationed at Elmendorf AFB in Alaska, Langley AFB in Virginia, Tyndall AFB in Florida, and Nellis AFB in Nevada; and that these aircraft will then be capable of providing air patrol coverage for the Northwest, Northeast/Mid-Atlantic, Southeast, and Southwest quadrants of the United States. According to the Secretary of the Air Force, the Air Force was mindful of the need to address homeland defense requirements. We are confident that the Department of Defense and the Air Force will continue to be able to capably carry out its roles in Homeland Defense in the air domain which supports our Homeland Security efforts at DHS.

National Guard: We also understand that the transformation of the Army and National Guard requires a realignment of Reserve Component facilities. The Secretary of the Army noted that due to the sheer number of facilities and the difficulty of comparing Reserve Component capabilities to Active Component capabilities, he invited the Adjutants General from each state and commanders from Army Reserve Regional Readiness Commands to provide information for the analyses of Reserve Component

facilities. The Army identified existing or new installations in the same demographic area to provide enhanced homeland defense, training, and mobilization capabilities. The Army sought to create multi-component facilities (Guard, Reserve and Active) and multi-service, Joint facilities to further enhance mission accomplishment. DHS understands the Army and National Guard's need to transform to best combat the asymmetrical threat to our nation and we know that the Department of Defense fully considered Homeland Defense and Homeland Security in its recommendations.

Closing

Again, thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today. I look forward to your questions.