



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
Of Florida's Space Coast

June 7, 2005

The Honorable Anthony Principi, Chairman
2005 Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission
2521 South Clark Street
Suite 600
Arlington, VA 22202

Dear Mr. Principi:

The BRAC 2005 recommendations released by the Department of Defense on May 13, 2005 reaffirm the significant importance of the military bases located in Brevard County and their long recognized contributions to National Defense and the Nation's Space Program. Their support of the nation's Joint Warfighters continues a long and proud history of commitment to insuring American superiority for the future. While none of our bases were targeted for closure, the realignment recommendation affecting the Naval Ordnance Test Unit (NOTU) at Cape Canaveral Air Station appears to have missed significant factors that run counter to the Department's emphasis on transformation, joint basing, and efficiencies that can drive true cost-savings.

We appreciate the opportunity to present the attached reclama to DoD's realignment recommendations for your consideration. We believe these factors are worthy of the Commission's evaluation as you work to produce highest military value in facility posture for the future, while enhancing the probability of mission success and producing true savings for the American taxpayer.

Sincerely,

Lynda L. Weatherman, President & CEO
Economic Development Commission
of Florida's Space Coast

Mr. Randall Harris, Chairman
Space Coast Defense Alliance

cc: Honorable James H. Bilbray
Honorable Philip Coyle
Admiral Harold W. Gehman, Jr. (USN, Ret)
Honorable James V. Hansen
General James T. Hill (USA, Ret)
General Lloyd W. Newton (USAF, Ret)
Honorable Samuel K. Skinner
Brigadier General Sue E. Turner (USAF, Ret)

REALIGNMENT OF NAVAL ORDNANCE TEST UNIT FROM CAPE CANAVERAL, FLORIDA TO KINGS BAY SUB BASE, GEORGIA

BRAC RECOMMENDATION:

Realign Nuclear Test and Evaluation at the Naval Ordnance Test Unit (NOTU) to Strategic Weapons Facility Atlantic, Kings Bay, Georgia.

BACKGROUND:

Most recent analysis reveals a number of operational and support anomalies that may not have been previously considered in the recommendation to realign NOTU to Kings Bay, GA to gain synergy in Anti-Terrorism Force Protection (ATFP), Fleet operational support and operational support infrastructure.

NOTU was postured in its current location on Cape Canaveral Air Station to gain synergy from being physically, as well as organizationally, close to NASA, Air Force missile and range activities, and from its close proximity to deep water access of the Eastern Test Range. The current arrangement produces significant savings through cost sharing arrangements with NASA and the Air Force in support of the Navy's Fleet Ballistic Missile TRIDENT (D-Series) Missile test launch program. Initial COBRA analysis indicated savings could be generated by realigning this test activity from its 'stand alone' site, where it has significant synergy with NASA and the 45th Space Wing, to an 'operational' site. Closer analysis indicates that from a military value perspective, the SSBN test mission will be degraded; the relocation will prove more costly in onetime costs and mission operations costs; ATFP will be less effective than at the current site; and infrastructure at Kings Bay and within the community is not sufficient to support proposed force movement into that site.

If relocated to Kings Bay, NOTU military operations will be degraded and significantly more costly due to the vast increase in transit time from pier to test sites on the Eastern Range Complex, and loss of synergism with test/range safety personnel resident at Patrick AFB/Cape Canaveral AS:

- Operations from Kings Bay will require a 5-hour drive to deep water submerge point compared to the current 2-hour drive
- Transit to nearest test site from Kings Bay is 170 nautical miles further
- These two factors combined increase a single mission's duration by 22-26 hours—a costly waste of submarine hours that reduces fleet availability for worldwide contingency operations
- NOTU personnel lose day-to-day coordination with mission critical test/safety personnel resident in the Patrick/Canaveral/KSC complex.
- NOTU leadership loses the Joint Force interaction with the 45th Space Wing, and with NASA as well.

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The SSBN mission is one of the least understood of all military missions. For example, the Demonstration and Shakedown Operation (DASO) mission is crucial to conveying requirements, complexities, and nuances to key decision makers, appropriators, and U.S. allies.

- Doubling transit time to test firing sites will make the DASO mission extremely difficult, if not totally non-feasible.
- Makes recovery to pier side for missile adjustment, injured personnel offload, or system emergency hazardous due to significant increase in transit time.

The Anti-Terrorism Force Protection (AETP) considerations are crucial to operations worldwide, to include those that stage from Homeland portage. While to some it may seem a benign environment, the test mission from Kings Bay will be subjected to significantly greater threat potential than in its current location.

- Transit to dive point at Kings Bay requires 2 ½ hour drive down a river where terrorist or saboteurs have greater opportunity to attack an unprotected submarine with a 75-foot test support mast mounted.
- Current operations emanate from a closed military base with a 15-minute drive to open water; landscape is open, providing little cover for terrorist operations.

The projected infrastructure availability at Kings Bay to support NOTU appears to have been developed without consideration of other moves into the site. Required additional construction could drive COBRA Return on Investment (ROI) beyond the normally accepted seven-year payback standard used by previous BRAC Commissions. The necessity to build new infrastructure for NOTU as well as the other missions proposed for realignment into Kings Bay has the potential to create adverse environmental impacts. Similarly, the lack of sufficient housing, infrastructure, and community support facilities in the Kings Bay locale will create an untenable situation for military personnel, civilian employees of the Government and the heavy contractor support base. It appears that this BRAC recommendation did not take into account the numbers of personnel realigning to the region based on other BRAC recommendations.

- Population of Kings Bay will double with realignment of submarines/personnel from Naval Submarine Base New London.
- Cost of move increases by factor of 2-3 times due to new construction costs.
- Cost of moving some 320 civilian contractors was not factored into COBRA summary costs.
- Potential environmental impacts involve Wetlands, Water Resources, Threatened & Endangered Species/Crucial Habitat, Marine Mammals/Resources/Sanctuaries, Land use constraints.
- Local area is relatively rural to small community environment with little capacity to support a large influx of personnel and families.

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SUMMARY:

Relocating the Naval Ordnance Test Unit (NOTU) from Cape Canaveral Air Station will:

- Degrade test mission accomplishment due to significantly greater transit distance to test sites in the Eastern Range.
- Increase operating hours on critical National submarine assets while actually increasing vulnerability to terrorist attack in a long, surface transit down a river to open water.
- Increase mission costs and create a situation of inadequate infrastructure to support the NOTU mission and personnel in the local Kings Bay area.
- Create a potentially dangerous situation since NOTU will not be communicating as closely or as frequently with the 45th Space Wing and NASA on range safety and test issues and requirements.

Preliminary analysis indicates that NOTU should remain at Cape Canaveral Air Station where synergies and operational effectiveness currently exist in to support critical test mission accomplishment.