

Chapter 1

Base Realignment and Closure Overview and Results

The Need for Base Realignments and Closures

The national security environment in America--the threats it faces and its force to counter them--has seldom been more dynamic. The military base structure from which our forces are organized, trained, equipped, and deployed plays an important role in ensuring mission effectiveness and efficiency. The Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) process provided a unique opportunity to reshape the Department's physical plant, that is, its installations and associated weapons ranges, as well as the organization and stationing of its forces.

General Process

In 1988, 1991, 1993, and 1995, the Defense Department executed base realignments and closures through a legally specified process. That process, then and now, involves the President, the Defense Department, the Congress, an independent commission, and local communities.

Through the BRAC process, the Defense Department evaluates its current stationing plan against multiple variables: the changes in threat, force structure, technologies, doctrine, organization, business practices, and plant inventory. By assessing similar facilities using a set of comprehensive criteria, the Department develops realignment and closure recommendations in a fair, consistent, and transparent manner. An independent commission reviews the Secretary of Defense's BRAC recommendations and makes its own recommendations to the President. The President, in turn, reports his decision on the recommendations to the Congress for its review and approval. Both the President and the Congress are limited to accepting or rejecting the entire package of the Commission's recommendations.

Related Studies

As in previous BRAC rounds, the statutory focus for BRAC 2005 was on military installations and activities within the 50 States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, Guam, the Virgin Islands, American Samoa, and any other commonwealth, territory, or possession of the United States. The closure or realignment of military bases in foreign locations proceeds under a different, bilateral approval process between the United States and the host nation. Nevertheless, as in the early 1990s, changes in overseas basing and overall force projections affected BRAC 2005.

Before the initiation of formal BRAC 2005 activities, the Secretary of Defense requested that the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs direct geographic combatant commanders to prepare draft overseas basing plans for their respective areas of responsibility. These drafts were part of a larger interagency assessment of the Department's long-term overseas force projection and basing

needs. This assessment resulted in a series of recommendations that are included in the Department's "Integrated Global Presence and Basing Study" (IGPBS), which is classified. That study outlined the recommended size, character, and location of our long-term overseas force presence. On the basis of the IGPBS results, the Secretary of Defense announced that some forces currently based overseas will return to the United States over a period of years. The Department's BRAC analyses took into account all the basing recommendations of the IGPBS.

In addition to the interagency study, under section 2912 of the BRAC statute, the Department conducted an analysis of its facility inventory to determine whether its excess capacity warranted another BRAC round. For this assessment, the Department used a parametric approach to compare 1989 base loading, using indicators of forces and infrastructure existing at that time, to the proportionate requirements of forces and infrastructure projected for 2009. From this study, the Department concluded that it had an aggregate 24 percent of excess capacity. On March 23, 2004, the Secretary certified the need for an additional round of base realignments and closures.

While the parametric capacity analysis was useful to assess the need for an additional round of base realignments and closures, the results of the analysis could not be used to project the number of potential BRAC realignments or closures that could be achieved in each installation category. The report's methodology did not include a comparison of base capacity with specific *need* for that capacity. Nor did it include an assessment of particular characteristics of specific bases that are critical to assessing the relative military value of any specific BRAC option. Ultimately, specific BRAC recommendations are based on certified data regarding specific base capacity, the unique infrastructure needs of specific force elements or military functions, and the application of selection criteria that heavily weigh the military value of each installation considered for closure or realignment.

In addition to the Department's two studies, through the fiscal year 2004 Military Construction Appropriations Act (Public Law 108-132), the Congress created the Commission on Review of Overseas Military Facility Structure of the United States to provide Congress an independent assessment of the nation's requirements for overseas military bases. The Commission reported its findings on May 9, 2005.

Process Characteristics

The base closure process was designed in law to be objective, open, and fair. Each recommendation, rooted in the Department's long-term force structure plan and installation inventory, was measured against eight criteria that were previously subjected to both congressional review and public comment. In developing the criteria, the Department, pursuant to statute, gave priority consideration to military value (criteria 1-4), then considered costs and savings (criterion 5), and finally assessed the economic impact on local communities, the community support infrastructure, and the environmental impact (criteria 6-8). Ultimately, these criteria were amended and codified in law.

Each person submitting data for the BRAC analysis certified that the information was accurate and complete to the best of his or her knowledge and belief. The DoD Inspector General, the

Service audit agencies, and the Government Accountability Office oversaw the Department's procedures.

The Department's recommendations are the results of two and a half years of intense work. In his initial instruction in November 2002, the Secretary of Defense challenged the Department to use the opportunity of the BRAC authority to "reconfigure our current infrastructure into one in which operational capacity maximizes *both* war fighting capability and efficiency." The Secretary directed that senior civilian and military leadership across the Department engage in this effort.

As in the past, each Military Department analyzed and recommended ways to reshape its operational base structure to more effectively support its forces located in the United States. Seven joint cross-service groups scrutinized the bases and functions that constitute the Department's common support infrastructure. They were challenged to look beyond Service boundaries to create joint basing options. The groups were organized around the following functions: education and training, headquarters and support, industrial activities, intelligence, medical support, supply and storage, and technical functions. For BRAC 2005, the chairs of these seven groups were empowered to formulate their own recommendations for the Secretary's consideration.

Process Results

The Secretary of Defense initiated the BRAC 2005 process to rationalize the Department's base infrastructure within the United States in support of the Department's long-term strategic capabilities. The Secretary's initial BRAC planning guidance, contained in a memorandum dated November 15, 2002, focused the BRAC effort on five key goals:

- Transforming the current and future force and its support systems to meet new threats;
- Eliminating excess physical capacity;
- Rationalizing the base infrastructure with the new defense strategy;
- Maximizing both warfighting capability and efficiency; and
- Examining opportunities for joint activities.

This package of recommendations advances all of these goals. The following themes emerge from the Department's recommendations:

- Support force transformation. Forces returning from overseas will be transformed through technology enhancements, capabilities-based restructuring, and basing that provides the needed training infrastructure. Support functions within both the Active and Reserve Army components will be reorganized into capabilities-based combat forces.
- Rebase forces to address new threat, strategy, and force protection concerns. Dispersed forces and activities within the United States will be placed on more secure, military-controlled sites. This rebasing offers opportunities to increase combat power, enhance security, and promote efficiency while generating significant savings.

- Consolidate business-oriented support functions. Supply, maintenance, and medical functions will be consolidated to capitalize on proven, state-of-the-art business technologies and practices. Technical facilities, including research and development laboratories, will be consolidated to encourage better-focused investment strategies.
- Promote joint and multi-Service basing. Joint activities will be established in key administrative functions and selected training missions. A joint training environment will be created for initial pilot training for the new Joint Strike Fighter. Other multi-Service basing will encourage integration and achieve economies of scale.
- Achieve savings. The recurring and aggregate savings will almost equal the total savings of all previous BRAC rounds. Restructuring support functions will generate unprecedented savings. The reduction of support personnel and disposal of land and facilities are less predictive of savings. In comparing the one-time cost to the total net present value, the Department will realize two dollars in savings for every dollar in BRAC costs.

While it is difficult to measure the full extent of the improvements in effectiveness and efficiency of the BRAC 2005 recommendations, the following statistics illustrate the breadth and depth of the impact of these actions:

- Five percent of plant replacement value will be reduced;
- About 12 million square feet of leased space will be vacated for more secure, functionally enhanced facilities;
- About 18,000 civilian support positions will be eliminated; and
- At the 6-year point in implementation, the Department will begin to realize annual net savings of over \$5 billion from BRAC 2005 actions, in addition to about \$7 billion from previous BRAC rounds.

Conclusion

BRAC is a powerful management tool for the Department. It invites a comprehensive, long-term review of the Department's basing and offers a unique authority to reposition forces and reevaluate support missions. The rapidly changing national security threat and the evolving military response suggest that fundamental change will always be a part of the national defense mission. For this reason, the Department needs to conduct a BRAC review every five to ten years.