

CHAPTER 3 BACKGROUND

HISTORY OF BASE CLOSURE

Many military installations were closed to reduce military overhead in the early 1960's, and hundreds were closed in the early 1970's after the end of the Vietnam War. Members of Congress, eager to protect the interests of their constituents, enacted Section 2687 of Title 10, United States Code. This statute required the Department of Defense to notify Congress if an installation became a closure or realignment candidate. This law also subjected proposed closure actions to time-consuming environmental evaluations which effectively halted base closures.

As a result, in the late 1980's, as the force-structure steadily declined, the base structure became bloated. Readiness was threatened as the Services struggled to pay the operating costs of unneeded bases. The Secretary of Defense, in close cooperation with Congress, proposed a base closure law to close obsolete military bases and bring the base structure in line with the declining force structure.

The 1988 Commission

Public Law 100-526, enacted in October 1988, created the Secretary of Defense's Commission on Base Realignment and Closure. The law charged the Commission with recommending installations for closure or realignment based on an independent study of the domestic military base structure. The 1988 Commission recommended the closure of 86 military and the realignment of 59 others with an estimated savings of \$693.6 million annually.

Despite the accomplishments of the 1988 DoD Commission, additional base closures were necessary with the declining force-structure brought on by the end of the Cold War. Since the 1988 Commission charter expired by this time, the Executive Branch attempted to propose further reductions on its own. In 1990, Secretary of Defense Cheney announced additional base closures and realignments.

Congress protested the Secretary's proposals were politically influenced. To overcome the potential stalemate and to ensure a fair process, Congress created an independent five-year Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission with the passage of Public Law (PL) 101-510 under Title XXIX.

The Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission

Congress created the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission "to provide a fair process that will result in the timely closure and realignment of military installations inside the United States". Lawmakers intended this Commission to be a model of open government. Unlike the 1988 DoD Commission, PL 101-510 required the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission to conduct public hearings on the Secretary of Defense's list of closures and realignments and on any proposed changes to those recommendations. In addition, its records were open to public scrutiny.

Procedurally, the 1988 DoD Commission and the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission differ substantially. The 1988 Commission, working for the Secretary of Defense, generated its own list of recommended closures and realignments. Under the new law, the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission independently reviews and analyzes the Secretary of Defense's recommendations and submits its findings directly to the President. To insure an independent process, the law requires the General Accounting Office (GAO) to provide a detailed analysis of the Secretary of Defense's recommendations and selection process to the Commission. The GAO also assists the Commission in its analysis of the Secretary's recommendations.

PL 101-510, as amended, provides for the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission to meet in 1991, 1993, and 1995. In 1991, the Commission recommended 34 base

closures and 48 realignments, with estimated FY 1992-97 net savings of \$2.3 billion and recurring savings of \$1.5 billion annually after one-time costs of \$4.1 billion.

Using lessons learned from the 1991 round of base closures, Congress amended the Commission's statute in 1992 to provide a more deliberate, auditable, and accountable process for future base-closure rounds. The legislative changes are annotated in italics in Public Law 101-510, as amended, contained in Appendix A.

Composition of the 1993 Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission

The Commissioners chosen to serve in the 1993 round of the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission have diverse backgrounds in public service, business, and the military. In accordance with the enacting statute, four commissioners were nominated in consultation with the U.S. House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate Majority Leader, and two with the advice of the House and Senate Minority Leaders. The two remaining nominations were made independently by the President.

The Commission staff was drawn from divergent backgrounds encompassing government, law, academia, and the military. In addition to those hired directly by the Commission, other staff were detailed from the Department of Defense, the General Accounting Office, the Department of Commerce, the Environmental Protection Agency, the Federal Aviation Administration, and the General Services Administration. The expertise provided by the detailees from these diverse government agencies contributed significantly to the Commission's independent review and analysis effort.

The Commission's review and analysis staff was divided into four teams — Army, Navy, Air Force, and Interagency Issues. A direct-hire civilian managed each of the teams in accordance with the amended law which also limits the number of Department of Defense detailees on each team to two.

THE 1993 BASE CLOSURE PROCESS

Key Provisions of the Law

Public Law 101-510 requires the Secretary of Defense to submit a list of proposed military base closures and realignments to the Commission by March 15, 1993. (see Appendix A) In accordance with the statute, these recommendations must be based upon a force-structure plan submitted to Congress with the Department of Defense budget request for Fiscal Year 1994, and upon final criteria developed by the Secretary of Defense and approved by Congress. For the 1993 Commission process, the Secretary of Defense announced in December, 1992, that the final criteria would be identical to those used during the 1991 base closure round.

The Secretary of Defense based the force-structure plan on an assessment of the probable threats to national security during the six-year period beginning, in this case, 1994, as well as the anticipated levels of funding that would be available for national defense (see Appendix B).

The final criteria cover a broad range of military, fiscal, and environmental considerations. The first four criteria, which relate to military value, were given priority consideration. The remaining four criteria which address infrastructure, environmental, and economic impacts, are important factors that may mitigate against the military value criteria (see Appendix C).

The law requires the Commission to hold public hearings on the Secretary of Defense's base closure and realignment recommendations and on any changes proposed by the Commission to those recommendations. The Commission must report its findings to the President by July 1, 1993, based on its review and analysis of the Secretary of Defense's recommendations. To change any of the Secretary's recommendations, the Commission must find that the Secretary deviated substantially from the force-structure plan and final selection criteria.

Once the President receives the Commission's final report, he has until July 15 to approve or disapprove the recommendations. If approved, the report is sent to the Congress which then has 45 legislative days to reject the report by a joint resolution of disapproval or the report becomes law. If the President disapproves the Commission's recommendations in whole or in part, he must transmit to the Commission and the Congress his reasons for disapproval. The Commission then has until August 15 to submit a revised list of recommendations to the President. At that point, the President either forwards the revised list to Congress by September 1, or the 1993 base closure process is terminated with no action taken to close or realign bases. The law prohibits Congress from making any amendments to the recommendations, thereby requiring an "all-or-nothing" acceptance of the recommendations.

The Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) Guidance to the Military Departments and Defense Agencies

The Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) provided policy guidance to the Services and Defense Agencies specifying procedures to ensure compliance with the base-closure law. The OSD issued several memoranda establishing policy, procedures, authorities, and responsibilities for the Military Departments and Defense Agencies in the selection of bases for realignment and closure, including the following requirements: studies must be based on the January, 1994, force-structure plan and the same eight final criteria used in 1991; all installations must be considered equally; comprehensive record-keeping, internal-control, and certification policies and systems for data requirements and sources definition, justification of data changes, and verification of accuracy must be implemented; installations must be grouped into appropriate categories and subcategories based on missions, capabilities, or affiliates; excess capacity must be determined; and, the "Cost of Base Realignment Actions" (COBRA) model must be used to calculate costs, savings, and return on investment of proposed closures and realignments.

Criteria 1 - 4: Military Department and Defense Agency Assessments

THE ARMY PROCESS

The Army established the Total Army Basing Study (TABS) Group of 10 full-time Army Staff members to make recommendations for potential base closures and realignments to the Army Chief of Staff and the Secretary of the Army.

TABS employed a two-phased process to make recommendations on base closures and realignments. First, the TABS Group arranged installations into 11 categories based on the primary mission, and then analyzed the military value of each installation within its category. Military value was based on five measures of merit — mission essentiality, mission suitability, operational efficiency, quality of life, and expandability.

From this analysis, the TABS Group identified its candidates for further study. Next, the TABS Group developed closure and realignment alternatives which they subjected to a cycle of analysis based on feasibility, affordability, socioeconomic impacts, environmental impacts, and the subjective pros and cons of each alternative. Finally, the TABS Group used these assessments to determine its recommendations which were ultimately delivered to the Acting Secretary of the Army and the Army Chief of Staff who forwarded the recommendations to the Secretary of Defense.

THE NAVY PROCESS

The Navy established an eight-member Base Structure Evaluation Committee (BSEC) to formulate closure and realignment recommendations, with the Base Structure Analysis Team (BSAT) providing support to the Committee.

The analysis process began by categorizing installations according to the support they provided to Navy and Marine Corps operational forces: personnel, weapon systems and material support, and shore support. These three categories were further divided into subcategories and subelements. The analysis began with numerous data calls to installations to

determine excess capacity and military value. Military value was based on the assessment criteria of readiness, facilities, mobilization capability, and cost and manpower implications.

The BSEC then developed closure and realignment scenarios using a computer model designed to achieve the maximum reduction of excess capacity and, to the maximum extent practicable, achieve an average military value equal to or greater than all installations currently in that subcategory. Finally, the BSEC applied military judgment to the results achieved with the computer model to develop a final scenario.

Once the BSEC developed candidate bases for closure or realignment, they evaluated them against final criteria five through eight. The final Navy recommendations were submitted to the Chief of Naval Operations, who, in his capacity as Acting Secretary of the Navy and with the advice of the Commandant of the Marine Corps, nominated bases to the Secretary of Defense for closure or realignment.

THE AIR FORCE PROCESS

The Air Force appointed a Base Closure Executive Group (BCEG) comprised of seven general officers and six Senior Executive Service-level civilian personnel to implement the base-closure law and the OSD guidance regarding base closures and realignments.

Based on data received from questionnaires, the Air Force performed capacity analyses on 99 bases and on-site surveys at 48 installations to evaluate the ability of each base to accommodate increased force-structure.

Next, the Air Force categorized bases according to their mission followed with an excess-capacity analysis to identify beddown opportunities for activities and aircraft that would relocate. Next, the BCEG developed a color-coded rating scale for approximately 160 subelements in order to examine specific data points related to the eight final selection criteria; "green" indicated a base was more desirable for retention, "red" was least desirable, and "yellow" was between the two.

For each category under consideration, the BCEG discussed the options and voted by secret

ballot on closure and realignment recommendations. The BCEG then briefed the Acting Secretary of the Air Force who nominated the selected bases to the Secretary of Defense.

THE DEFENSE LOGISTICS AGENCY (DLA) PROCESS

The Director of the Defense Logistics Agency (DLA) established a Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) Executive Group comprised of both executive-level civilian and military personnel and a BRAC Working Group of full-time members and support staff from specific DLA technical areas. The BRAC Working Group collected data that had been analyzed and certified, developed and evaluated recommendations for Executive Group consideration, conducted sensitivity analyses, and compiled documentation to support the final DLA recommendations. The Working Group categorized activities based on general DLA missions and functions, in four categories: regional headquarters, distribution depots, inventory control points, and service/support activities. Excess capacity was evaluated through a series of questions to determine the physical space and throughput capacity available and used at each location. Their evaluation also considered projections for drawdowns in the force-structure plan, changes in basing and effectiveness, and initiatives expected to improve DLA operational efficiency and effectiveness.

The Executive Group next analyzed military value to determine the relative ranking of an activity compared to other installations in the same category, and then developed weighted measures of merit — mission essentiality, mission suitability, operational efficiencies, and expandability — to complete their analysis of military value.

Using the excess capacity and military value evaluations, the Executive Group identified potential candidates for closure or realignment. From these candidates, scenarios and alternative options were evaluated against the force-structure plan, as well as the COBRA model, to assess costs, savings, and return on investment. After the Executive Group considered the impacts of the scenarios, recommendations were made to the Director of the DLA for realignment or closure.

THE DEFENSE INFORMATION SYSTEMS AGENCY (DISA) PROCESS

The Director of the Defense Information Technology Services Office (DITSO) established the Defense Data Center Consolidation (DDCC) team to begin the consolidation of data processing centers under the base closure and realignment process. The DDCC team used the significant amount of work already performed by the Services to consolidate Service/Agency data processing centers into larger, more efficient “megacenters.” The DDCC team developed a site selection process to identify existing sites with the greatest potential to serve as megacenters.

The DDCC team, with the assistance of experts from various Defense Agencies and the Services, judged the relative merits of megacenter candidates using the criteria categories of facilities, security, and operations, and through data obtained from questionnaires and site visits to megacenter candidates. Of the 36 megacenter candidates scored, 15 were recommended in rank order as megacenter sites. The number of sites required was determined by first calculating the total processing workload requirements of those sites being consolidated, and then distributing the requirements beginning with the top-ranked site, until all the requirements were satisfied. An analysis was performed to determine how much the site ranking order depended on the weights assigned to each criterion and the inclusion or exclusion of a specific criterion.

Criteria 1 - 4: Commission Review

The Commission set up four teams within its Department of Review and Analysis — one team to review each respective Service application of the military value criteria to the base closure process, and an Interagency team which reviewed the Defense Agencies’ application of the military value criteria to the base closure process. The Interagency team also reviewed criteria five through eight for all of the Services and Defense Agencies. Each team analyzed its Service’s methodology to ensure general compliance with the law, to confirm accuracy of data, and to determine if base-specific recommendations were properly offered by the Secretary of Defense.

In accordance with PL 101-510, all of the information used by the Secretary of Defense to prepare recommendations must be sent to Congress, the Commission, and the Comptroller General. Within the Commission, each team began its review and analysis with an examination of the documents provided by the Services. First they determined whether the recommendations were based on the force-structure plan and eight criteria, and whether all bases were considered equally. Next, the teams considered if categories, subcategories and base exclusions were reasonable.

Each of the teams reviewed the process the Service used to assess military value, as well as the reasonableness of the data they used. Each team examined the capacity analyses performed by the Service and highlighted installation categories that required additional scrutiny. Specific data analyses included a review of the COBRA input data and military construction cost estimates, as well as the capacity of receiver installations to accept missions.

Throughout the review and analysis process, the Commission staff maintained an active and ongoing dialogue with the communities who made significant contributions to the entire process. Staff members also accompanied Commissioners on base visits, attended regional hearings, and visited closure and realignment candidates and receiving installations.

UNIQUE CHALLENGES CONSIDERED BY THE COMMISSION

The Commission addressed several unique challenges presented by each of the Services’ implementation of the base closure and realignment process.

ARMY

Based mainly on a comparative review of facility requirements and available assets, the Commission believed the Army may not have taken a sufficiently close look at excess capacity within its infrastructure. Therefore, the Commissioners voted to study additional bases for further consideration as closure or realignment candidates.

NAVY

The Commission shared the concerns of the General Accounting Office that the Navy's process could result in the closure of bases with higher military value scores than those recommended to remain open. Therefore, the Commissioners voted to study additional bases for further consideration as closure or realignment candidates in part because the computer model used to assess alternative scenarios was designed to maximize the reduction of excess capacity, and then to evaluate average military value. The Commission performed a thorough and exhaustive review to ensure the evaluation process used to determine whether the bases recommended for closure or realignment conformed to the force-structure plan and selection criteria.

AIR FORCE

Because a lack of documentation made it difficult to verify the Base Closure Executive Group's (BCEG) rationale for closure and realignment decisions, the Commission's Air Force team conducted an independent analysis of criteria 1, 2, and 3. The study was performed to validate Air Force base operational groupings, and to analyze a base's ability to support other missions that were not rated by the BCEG.

The Commission staff reviewed the Air Force questionnaires to determine which questions were relevant to operational military value within each mission area. Questions chosen for inclusion in the staff's independent analysis focused on operational areas for generating training sorties (e.g. fuel, ramp space, and weather) as well as the training airspace and ranges to support training once airborne. Next, the staff scored and analyzed the bases in four mission areas: airlift, bomber, fighter, and tanker. The staff then determined score values and a point score for each question response. The scoring and analysis of questionnaire data for operational aspects provided relative values among bases across a wide spectrum of mission aspects, rating more question responses than the BCEG. The staff then performed a base-by-base comparative analysis and scored all bases claiming a mission capability for the mission areas in question. This analysis provided Commissioners with alternatives to the Air Force's more subjective

and less quantifiable ranking methodology. The analysis was provided to supplement, not replace, the Air Force methodology. The analysis was not a stand-alone or sole determinant in the Commission's closure and realignment decisions.

DEFENSE MAINTENANCE DEPOTS

In the past, the Military Departments developed depot maintenance capabilities to suit their own mission needs. Recently, a Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) Depot Maintenance Consolidation Study determined defense depots collectively have 25 to 50 percent more capacity than necessary. The estimated depot excess capacity would be even higher if certain private sector capabilities were included in the analysis.

The Departments' attempts to eliminate duplicative depot operations in Service-controlled depots have been largely unsuccessful. The Commission found that similar work was conducted at multiple locations primarily as a result of the Services' parochial interests. For example, the Commission found: (1) tactical missile maintenance activities were performed at nine locations; (2) wheeled vehicle maintenance was performed at three locations; (3) rotary wing maintenance activities at three locations; and (4) ground communications maintenance at four sites. These inefficiencies could be avoided through interservicing of like commodities.

The total cost of depot-level repair programs exceeds \$13 billion, but only two percent of the total is expended through interservicing arrangements. The JCS study estimated DoD could save between \$2 billion and \$9 billion over the next 10 years if unneeded depots were closed and similar workloads were consolidated.

In December, 1992, the Deputy Secretary of Defense directed the Services to develop integrated base closure and realignment recommendations, taking full advantage of all possible interservicing options. According to OSD officials, the Services decided there was insufficient time to consider all possible interservicing options and, instead, attempted to eliminate excess depot capacity within Service boundaries. Consequently, the Secretary of Defense suggested the Commission examine the interservicing possibilities.

The Commission analyzed and evaluated the potential for increased interservicing of rotary-wing aircraft, wheeled vehicles, tactical missiles, and ground-communications and electronics systems workloads. Private sector capability was not assessed. The interservicing categories were selected from a matrix of duplicate repair functions included in the JCS study, from potential savings estimated by the Defense Depot Maintenance Council, and from suggestions made to the Commissioners during initial site visits.

The Commission analyzed depot capacity within the Navy and Air Force fixed-wing depot structure. However, no attempt was made by the Commission to analyze fixed-wing interservicing due to a wide range of problems and a lack of reliable comparative information.

Potential interservicing arrangements for the rotary-wing aircraft, wheeled vehicles, tactical missiles, and ground communications and electronics-system commodities were analyzed by analyzing comparative information and visiting potentially-impacted depots. Additionally, information was analyzed regarding: unique depot maintenance functions, related military value, investment in depot plant and equipment, depot capacity, projected workload and utilization rates, operating costs per hour, and cost per unit.

AIRSPACE

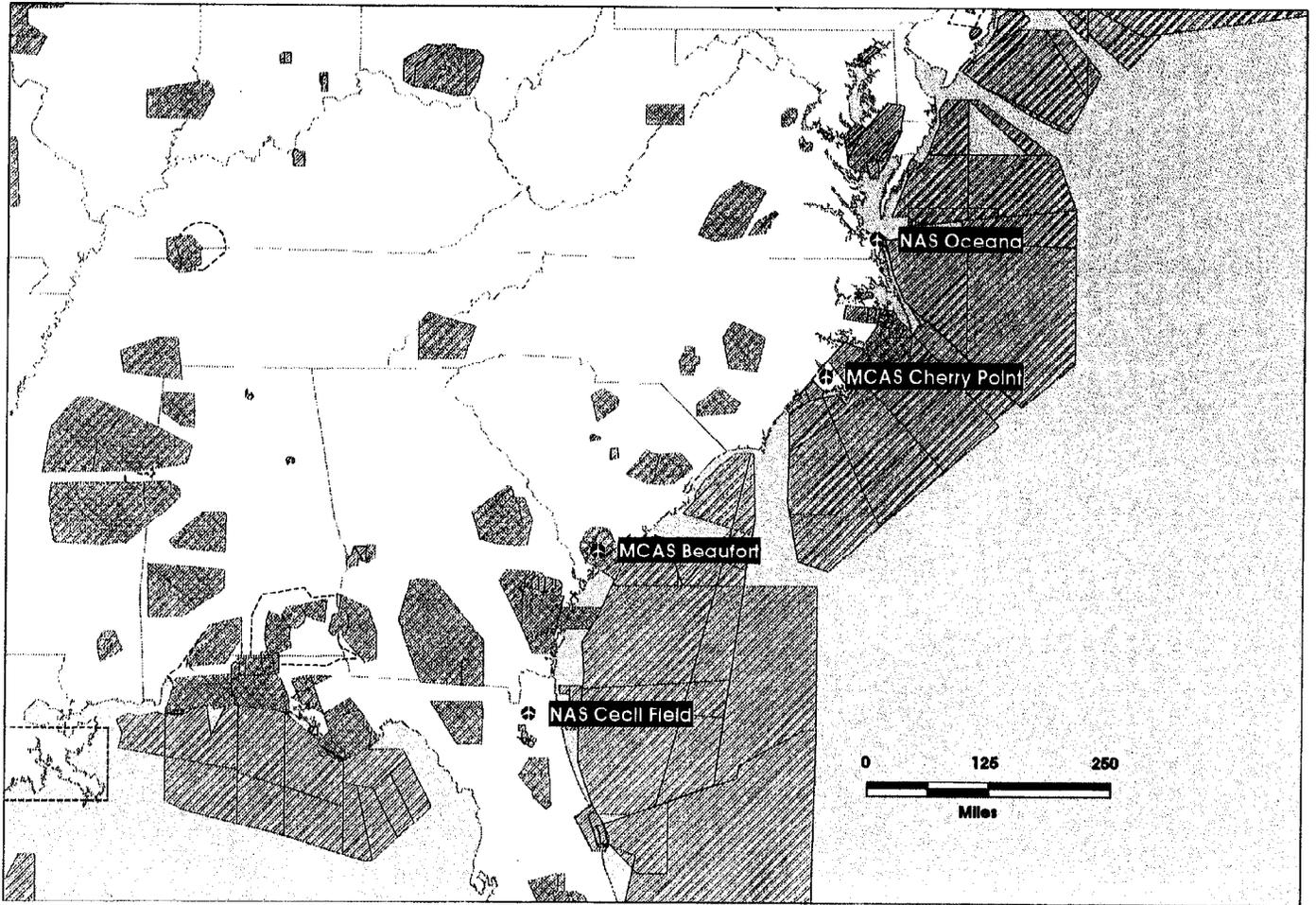
In evaluating airspace, the Commission received expert analysis support from a full-time Federal Aviation Administration detailee who reviewed criterion 2 which specifically addressed the availability and condition of associated airspace at both the existing and potential receiving locations.

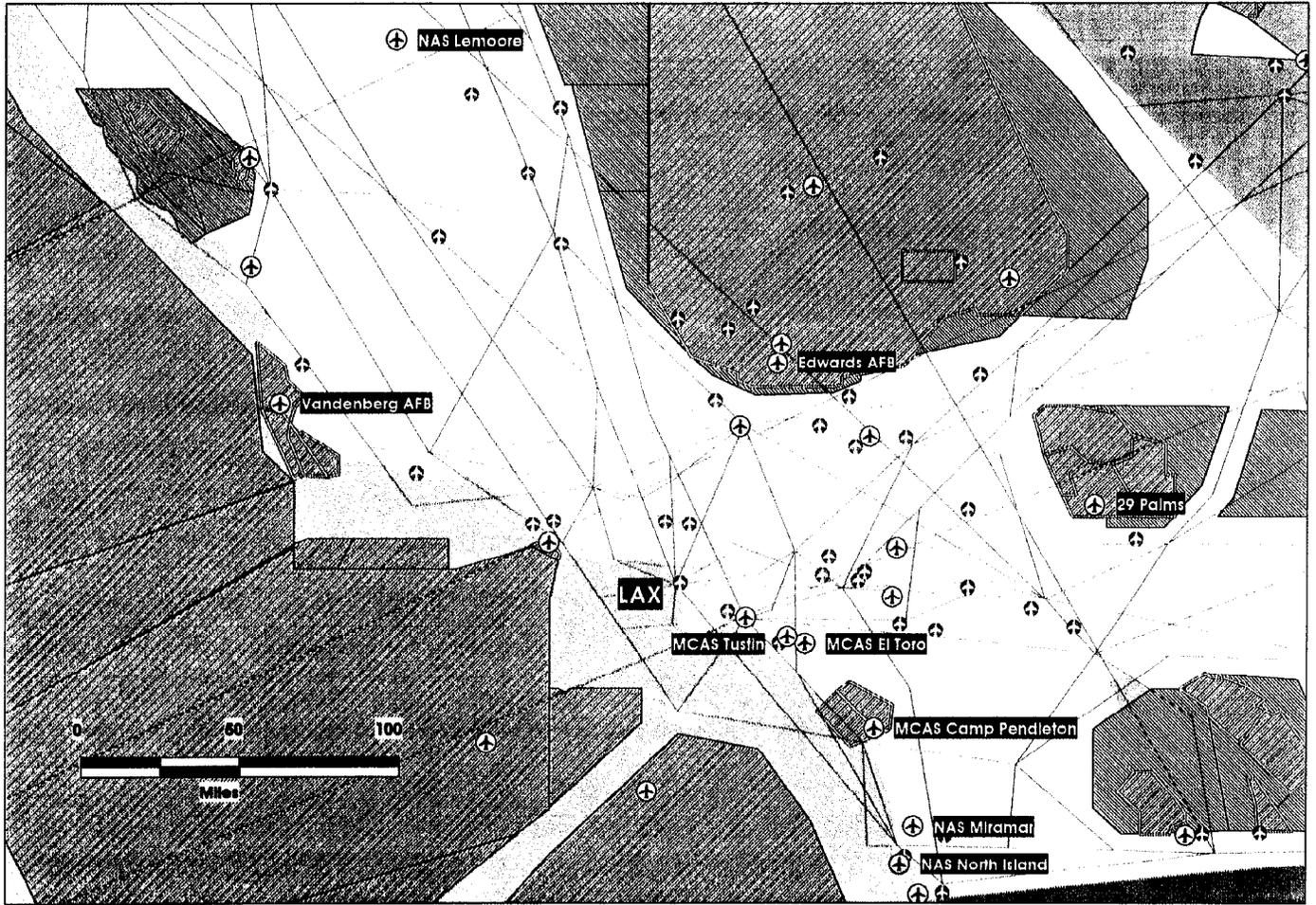
The detailee served as the liaison for the Commission with the FAA Washington headquarters, regional offices, and field facilities. Specific matters addressed included air traffic control operational, procedural, and equipment issues; military and civil airspace; and, airport and air and ground encroachment.

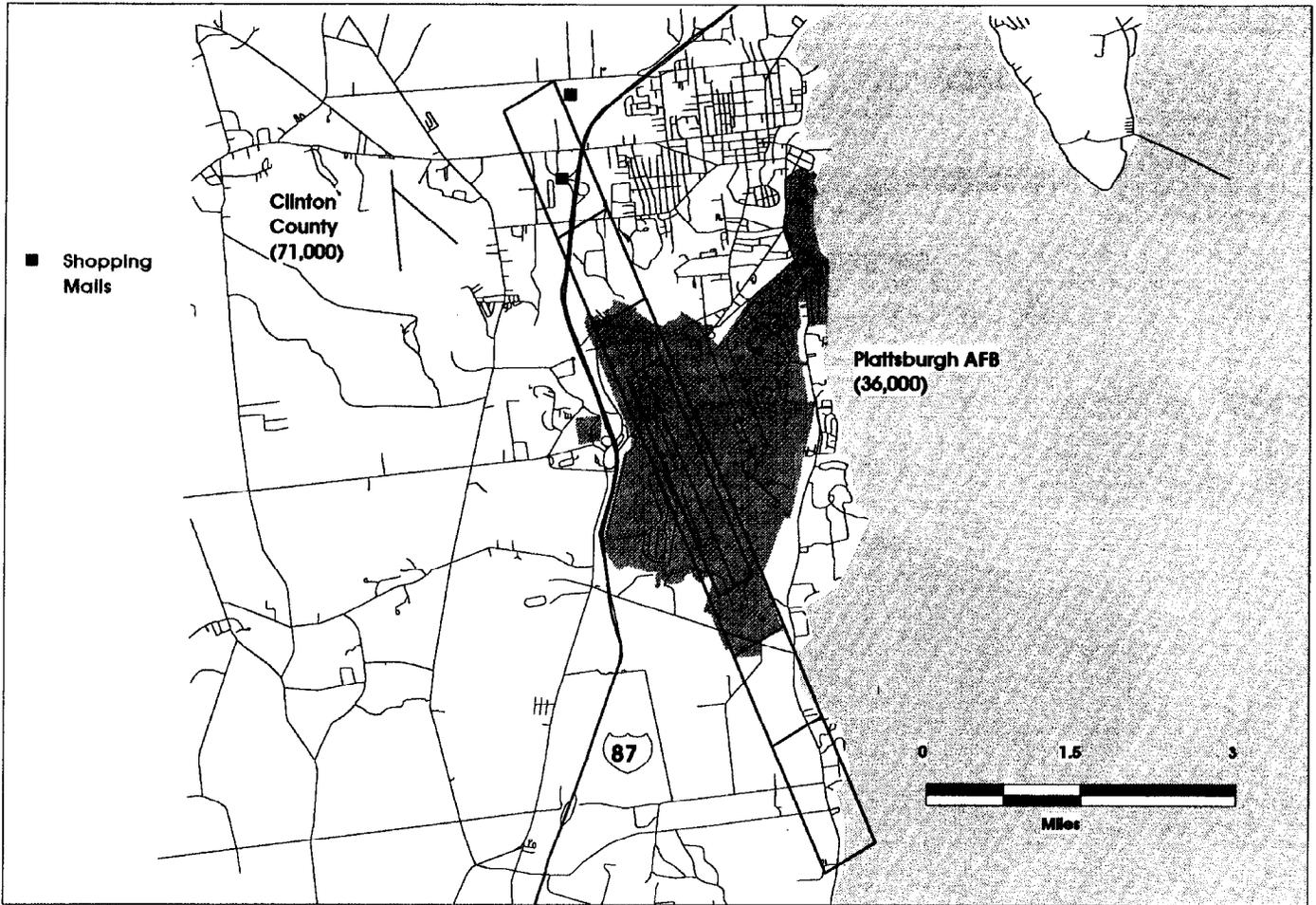
The FAA detailee provided valuable assistance by obtaining and reviewing data and information including current air traffic control services, aeronautical charts and publications, growth trend statistics, information on civil airports near military airfields, information on civil and military facilities and equipment, and planned or proposed airspace expansions.

Additionally, airport and airspace data submitted by the Services relative to recommendations regarding a military airfield were reviewed, verified, and validated. Data prepared by the Commission such as aeronautical charts depicting military and civil airports, special military use airspace, training areas/routes, and the structure of the national airspace/route system were discussed and reviewed for accuracy and completeness.

The detailee and members of the Interagency Issues, Air Force, and Navy teams prepared and reviewed detailed and consistent airspace briefing maps for each base. These maps were developed to clearly depict ground encroachment, the airspace structure around military and civil airports, and the availability and accessibility of military special use airspace and training areas. Examples of the maps prepared are on the following pages and show ground encroachment at Plattsburgh AFB, the airspace structure around military/civil airports in Southern California, and the availability and accessibility to military special use airspace and training areas on the East Coast from Virginia to Florida.







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Criteria 5 - 8: Military Department, Defense Agency and Commission Review

While the first four selection criteria assessed military value and were given priority consideration, the remaining criteria were also applied in base closure and realignment evaluations. Because these criteria were not driven by military considerations specific to a Service, the Commission's Interagency Issues team evaluated criteria application across all Services to ensure process uniformity and compliance with the legal requirement to evaluate recommendations based on the final selection criteria.

CRITERION 5: RETURN ON INVESTMENT

As prescribed by OSD policy guidance, the Cost of Base Realignment Action (COBRA) model was used by the Services and Defense Agencies to calculate costs, savings, net present value, and return on investment for base closure and realignment actions. Return on investment was the expected payback period in years for each proposed base closure or realignment. COBRA input data consisted of standard factors, which generally remained constant, and base/scenario factors which were unique. Standard factor examples included civilian pay, national median home price, discount rates, and costs per mile of moving personnel and equipment. Examples of base/scenario factors included the number of authorized personnel at a base, the size of the base, the number of personnel moving, and construction costs required by the move. The output data was used by each of the Services and Defense Agencies in their decision-making process.

All of the COBRA runs used by the Services and Defense Agencies in formulating their recommendations were provided to the Commission with the Secretary's list. Other COBRA runs were submitted by the Services and Defense Agencies by request from the Commission. Review of the data by the Commission continued throughout the Commission's evaluation process.

CRITERION 6: ECONOMIC IMPACT

OSD policy guidance instructed Services to measure community economic impact including the direct and indirect effect on employment at closing, realigning, and receiving locations.

To estimate indirect job losses in the communities (the economic area), indirect employment multipliers developed by the DoD Office of Economic Adjustment (OEA) were used in conjunction with direct job loss. Based on the size of the community affected and the type of personnel located at the installation, the multipliers were conservatively developed to reflect the worst-case scenario, and were affirmed by the Department of Commerce Bureau of Economic Analysis. Indirect employment losses resulted from base contracts to local businesses, as well as spending by DoD personnel in the local community for housing, utilities, and services.

Each of the Services provided direct-employment figures which included proposed personnel changes for military and civilians (including contractor personnel employed on the base or in the immediate vicinity) and military trainees at each base. Manpower changes directly associated with changes in the force structure were excluded from the economic analysis.

If more than one closing or realigning base was located in the same economic area, regardless of Service, OSD calculated the cumulative impact of all the proposed actions on a community. Employment impacts resulting from the 1988 and 1991 base-closure process were also included in the cumulative-impact calculations by including personnel losses scheduled to occur in the future as a result of past base-closure actions. The July 1992 Bureau of Labor Statistics employment data captured job losses which had already occurred due to previous base closures.

The Commission's Review and Analysis Interagency Issues team, with the assistance of Department of Commerce economists, validated

the methodology used by the Services. The Services generally complied with the OSD guidance to estimate economic impact. Verification of the data and methodology was accomplished by confirming DOD personnel impacts, documenting indirect employment multipliers, reviewing the process used to select impacted communities (economic area), validating employment levels within the community, and documenting calculations used to estimate installation and cumulative economic impacts. The Commission also made independent employment impact assessments, with the assistance of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), and collected additional economic data for the 31 major bases included in the Secretary's recommendations.

CRITERION 7: COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE

Absent specific policy guidance from OSD regarding criterion seven, "the ability of both the existing and potential receiving communities' infrastructure to support forces, missions, and personnel", the Services took varied approaches in their evaluations.

Common community infrastructure factors evaluated included housing, health care, education, transportation, and recreation. The Army and Defense Logistics Agency compiled military value assessments, which included community infrastructure components for each installation eligible for closure and realignment. The Navy and Air Force collected data pursuant to this criterion in community infrastructure data calls for each installation eligible for closure and realignment. Neither the Air Force nor DLA specifically addressed community infrastructure in their analyses of impacts from specific recommendations.

The Defense Information Systems Agency (DISA) activities are generally small tenants on larger military installations. Therefore, DISA concluded its consolidation would not have significant community infrastructure impact since an entire base community would not be affected by a small tenant's dislocation.

In conclusion, while little direction was given to the Services by OSD, the Services did evaluate community infrastructure in their decision-making process in compliance with this criterion.

CRITERION 8: ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

OSD guidance required a summary statement and status for each of the services' recommendations which addressed: threatened or endangered species, wetlands, historical and archeological sites, pollution control, hazardous materials/wastes, land use and airspace implications, and programmed environmental costs/cost avoidances. Each Service had a different perspective when they considered the relationship between closure and realignment actions and the seven environmental attributes.

Although each Service and the Defense Logistics Agency, provided environmental summaries for eligible installations, the Army and the Air Force did not address programmed costs/cost avoidances. The Army's recommendation report and installation summaries provided inconsistent information regarding this attribute. In response to questions from the Commission, the Army stated they did not use this attribute in return on investment calculations. The Air Force was unable to document that these costs were considered.

OSD's guidance was sufficiently general to allow the Services to apply varied perspectives to the environmental attributes. The documentation provided by the Navy and DLA addressed all seven environmental attributes found in the OSD policy guidance. While the Army and the Air Force base closure decisions did not consider programmed environmental costs/cost avoidance, each fully addressed the remaining six attributes. It is reasonable to believe that a more complete evaluation of this attribute would generally not have altered their recommendations.

The Commission did not agree with the Army's position that the high cost of environmental cleanup precluded their recommending the closure of Fort Monroe, Virginia. The Commission does not support the implication that Fort

Monroe real estate is environmentally safe enough for Army soldiers but will not be safe enough for the Commonwealth of Virginia if the installation was returned to the state.

ADDITIONS TO THE SECRETARY'S LIST FOR FURTHER CONSIDERATION

During the Commission's review and analysis process, several concurrent activities provided information to the Commission. First, the Commission thoroughly analyzed all of the information used by the Secretary of Defense to prepare the recommendations. The Commission also held seven investigative hearings in Washington, DC, where Military Department representatives directly responsible for the Secretary's recommendations testified to the Commission. Several defense and base closure experts within the federal government, private sector, and academia testified about the specifics of the base-closure process and the potential impacts of the Secretary of Defense's recommendations. The Commissioners and staff members also conducted over 125 fact-finding visits to activities at each major installation recommended by the Secretary of Defense and considered by the Commission for closure or realignment, held 17 regional hearings to hear directly from communities nationwide, heard from hundreds of Members of Congress who testified before the Commission, and received over a quarter of a million letters from concerned citizens across the country. Additionally, the Commission received input from the General Accounting Office, as required by the base-closure statute, which included a report containing its evaluation of DoD's selection process.

Based on the information gathered and the analyses performed, alternatives and further additions to the Secretary's list were considered. To perform a thorough analysis and consider all reasonable options, the Commissioners voted on March 29 and on May 21 to add a total of 73 installations for further consideration as alternatives and additions to the 165 bases recommended for closure or realignment by the Secretary of Defense (see Appendix E).

As required by law, the Commission published the required notice in the Federal Register to inform communities that their bases were under consideration by the Commission for possible closure or realignment. Public hearings were held for each of the installations the Commission added for consideration and each major base was visited by at least one Commissioner.

THE ROLE OF THE GENERAL ACCOUNTING OFFICE (GAO)

Under Public Law 101-510, as amended, GAO evaluated DoD's selection process, provided the Commission and Congress a report containing their detailed analysis of the process, and assisted the Commission in its review and analysis of the Secretary of Defense's recommendations.

Nine professional staff members were detailed by the GAO to serve full-time on the Commission's Review and Analysis teams. The GAO detailees participated fully in each phase of the review and analysis effort. They verified data, visited candidate bases, participated in local hearings, and testified before the Commission at its public hearings. Additionally, GAO field personnel visited bases to gather information first-hand and verify data solicited by the Commission.

GAO reported to Congress and the Commission that the Services' selection process was reasonable, and the Secretary of Defense's recommendations appropriate, even though some were singled out for additional review. GAO was concerned the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) did not exercise strong leadership in providing oversight of the military Services and Defense Agencies during the process, and had generally ignored government-wide cost implications.

The GAO reported that the Army's methodology and decision-making process used to evaluate and recommend installations for closure or realignment complied with legislation, was well documented, and generally supported by accurate data and appeared reasonable.

While the GAO report agreed with the Army's selection methodology, the GAO took exception with the Army's decision to retain Fort Monroe, Virginia. The GAO report also noted the Secretary of Defense's action to remove the Army's recommendation to close the Presidio of Monterey, California, because intelligence community concerns generated conflicting points of view within DoD on this issue. The GAO also questioned the cost and savings projections raised questions of this recommendation.

The GAO concluded the Navy process was well documented. However, GAO noted senior military and civilian officials' judgements and assumptions were part of the decision-making process, and several reasonable questions could be raised about some of the final recommendations.

Although the Air Force process appeared reasonable and the data used generally accurate, the GAO found the process difficult to verify and noted some judgements which were not clearly documented. In some cases, Air Force decisions could not be verified using existing documentation.

The GAO certified the accuracy and completeness of data and found the Defense Logistics Agency's selection process complied with statutory requirements, although some estimated cost savings appeared questionable.

Finally, GAO reported the Defense Information Systems Agency (DISA) process and implementation was generally sound. The GAO concluded the approach DISA used to select megacenters sites were reasonable.