

Appendix F

History of Base Closures

Background

In the early 1960s, under the direction of President Kennedy, Secretary of Defense McNamara developed and subsequently implemented the most extensive base realignment and closure program in the history of the United States. Hundreds of base closures and realignments took place during this period, and more than 60 major bases were closed. Criteria governing bases selected for closure were established primarily within the Office of the Secretary of Defense, with minimal consultation with the Military Departments or the Congress.

The Congress had not anticipated the broad extent of these actions, and their cumulative political impact was substantial. With very few exceptions, the closure actions were viewed negatively by the Congress.

Legislative History of Section 2687

In 1965, the Congress passed legislation setting up reporting requirements designed to involve itself in any DoD base closure program. The legislation was vetoed by President Johnson and the confrontation between the Executive and Legislative branches of government grew. Despite this situation, the Department of Defense was able to complete base realignments and closures routinely throughout the 1960s.

During the early 1970s, the Department found it increasingly difficult to realign or close installations due to repeated attempts by the Congress to regulate the base closure process and to limit or deny base closure funding. In 1976, the Military Construction Authorization Bill contained a provision prohibiting any base closure or reduction of more than 250 civilian employees until the Department had notified Congress of the proposed actions, assessed the personnel and economic impacts, followed the study provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), and waited nine months. This bill was vetoed by President Ford and the Congressional veto override effort failed.

In 1977, however, President Carter approved legislation requiring the Department to notify Congress that a base is a candidate for reduction or closure; prepare local economic, environmental, and strategic consequence reports; and wait 60 days for Congress' response. The legislation was codified as Section 2687, Title 10, U.S. Code and is at Appendix B. Section 2687, coupled with the requirements of NEPA, effectively brought base closures to a halt.

The Next Decade

For the next decade after passage of Section 2687, all attempts at closing major installations met with failure, and even proposed movements of small military units were frustrated.

Given that situation, President Reagan's Administration began discussing with the Congress the development of a comprehensive proposal recommending base closures to Congress. The President's Private Sector Survey on Cost Control (The Grace Commission) included in its 1983 report a finding that economies could be made in the base structure. They recommended that a non-partisan, independent commission be established to study the base closure issue in a less constrained process and submit a list of closures. Nothing came of these early efforts.

The 1988 Base Closure Commission

In 1988, Secretary of Defense Carlucci recognized that the stalemate between the Executive Branch and Legislative Branch had to be broken. The Defense budget by 1988 had declined for three straight years from the 1985 peak of the Reagan Administration buildup and was predicted to decline further.

On May 3, 1988, Secretary Carlucci chartered the Defense Secretary's Commission on Base Realignment and Closure to recommend military bases within the United States for realignment and closure. Legislation subsequently passed by the Congress and enacted by the President (Public Law 100-526) endorsed this approach and provided relief from certain statutory provisions which were impediments to the completion of base closures.

Enactment of this legislation constitutes an agreement between the Legislative and the Executive Branches that improvement in the military basing structure could be a means of realizing savings in the defense budget, while not impairing the ability of the armed forces to carry out their missions.

The 1988 Commission's Recommendations

The 1988 Base Closure Commission issued its report in December of 1988. It recommended closing 86 military installations and realigning 13 installations. An additional 46 installations were designated for increases as units and activities relocated as a result of the recommended closures and realignments. A recap of the major 1988 base closures and realignments is at Table 1 of this Appendix.

The 1988 Commission was required to base its recommendations on the force structure anticipated in 1988, which was stable. Even so, they recommended the closure of about 3 percent of the domestic base structure.

Implementing the 1988 Commission's Recommendations

Secretary Carlucci was required by Public Law 100-526 to accept or reject the 1988 Commission's recommendations in their entirety. In January of 1989, he accepted all of the recommendations. The law provided Congress with the same opportunity and by May of 1989, the Congressional review period expired without the enactment of a joint resolution of disapproval. Consequently, the recommendations of the 1988 Commission now have the force of law.

DoD's planning, budgeting and implementation of the 1988 recommendations is on track. The closures and realignments were required to begin by January of 1990 and must be completed by October of 1995. DoD's comprehensive financial plan for these closures indicates that DoD will realize a net savings during implementation (FY 89-95) of over \$300 million and annual savings of \$700 million each year thereafter. These savings could be further enhanced if expected land sale proceeds of \$1.1 billion are realized.

The January 1990 List of Candidates

The world situation was changing fast at the end of 1989 as DoD was preparing to send its revised FY 1991 Budget to the Congress. The Berlin wall had fallen, the Warsaw Pact was weakening, democracy was spreading throughout the region, and Soviet-U.S. relationships were improving worldwide.

It became clear that DoD's force structure and budget could decline dramatically over the next several years, in response to reduced tensions and threats worldwide. Base closures and realignments, therefore, became a part of each Military Department's budget strategy for balancing their base structure with their declining force structure.

The 1988 Commission, however, was a one-time Commission and without other changes to the public laws, closing bases meant using the very same Section 2687 procedures that had stopped base closures for over a decade.

Since it could take 1-2 years to complete the required base closure and environmental impact studies, the Secretary of Defense decided he had to get started. In this way, DoD could have some studies completed in time to submit to Congress with DoD's FY 1992/1993 Budget in January of 1991.

In January 1990, the Secretary announced a list of candidates for closures and realignments which began the 1-2 year required study process.

Public Law 101-510

Most of the January 1990 studies were never completed, for in November of 1990 Congress passed and the President signed Public Law 101-510 (see Appendix A). The law required that DoD begin its review of the base structure anew, without regard to the January 1990 list of candidates except when the study was below the numerical thresholds established by Public Law 101-510. The law established independent Presidential Commissions in 1991, 1993 and 1995 to review the Secretary of Defense's recommendations for base closures and realignments in those years.

The 1991 Base Closure Process

The first of the three Commissions to operate under the new law (P.L. 101-510) received Secretary of Defense Cheney's recommendations for base closures and realignments on April 12, 1991. Those recommendations were based on approved final selection criteria and a 6-year force structure plan as required by the law. By 1991, the Warsaw Pact had disintegrated and, therefore, DoD was planning on further force drawdowns.

Consequently, the Secretary of Defense recommended a significant base structure drawdown involving 31 major base closures and 48 realignments. The Commission accepted approximately 90 percent of those recommendations and in its report to the President of July 1991, recommended the closure of 27 major bases and the realignment of 48 others. A recap of the major 1991 base closures and realignments is at Table 1 of this Appendix.

Implementing the 1991 Commission's Recommendations

The President accepted all of the Commission's recommendations on July 11, 1991, and forwarded the Commission's report with his approval to the Congress. The Congressional review period established by P.L. 101-510 expired without enactment of a joint resolution of disapproval. Consequently, the recommendations of the 1991 Commission now have the force of law.

DoD's planning, budgeting and implementation of the 1991 recommendations are on track. The closures and realignments are required to begin by July of 1993 and must be completed by July of 1997. DoD's comprehensive financial plan for these closures indicates that DoD will realize a net savings during implementation (FY 92-97) of over \$1.4 billion and annual savings of \$1.4 million each year thereafter. These savings could be further enhanced if expected land sale proceeds of \$1.7 billion are realized.

The 1993 Base Closure Process

The 1993 base closure process is described in detail in the body of this report.

Table 1 - BASE CLOSURE AND REALIGNMENT RECAP

Baseline: Base Structure Report (495-U.S. includes 10 territories and possessions)

1988 Commission

16 Closures

Chanute AFB, IL
Mather AFB, CA
Pease AFB, NH
George AFB, CA
Norton AFB, CA
Naval Station Brooklyn, NY

Phila Naval Hosp, PA
Naval Station Galveston, TX
Naval Station Lake Charles, LA
Presidio of San Francisco, CA
Fort Sheridan, IL

Jefferson Proving Ground, IN
Lexington Army Depot, KY
Army Material Tech Lab, MA
Fort Douglas, UT
Cameron Station, VA

11 Realignments

Naval Station Puget Sound, WA
Pueblo Army Depot, CO
Umatilla Army Depot, OR
Fort Dix, NJ

Fort Bliss, TX
Fort Meade, MD
Fort Monmouth, NJ
Fort Huachuca, AZ

Fort Holabird, MD
Fort Devens, MA
Fort McPherson, GA

1991 Commission

26 Closures

Fort Ben Harrison, IN
Fort Devens, MA
Fort Ord, CA
Sacramento Army Depot, CA
Hunters Point Annex, CA
Tustin MCAS, CA
Chase Field NAS, TX
Moffett NAS, CA
Naval Station Long Beach, CA

Naval Station Philadelphia, PA
Philadelphia Naval Shipyard, PA
Naval Station Puget Sound, WA
NAV ELEC SYS ENGR CTR,
San Diego, CA
Bergstrom AFB, TX
Carswell AFB, TX
Eaker AFB, AR
England AFB, LA

Grierson AFB, IN
Loring AFB, ME
Lowry AFB, CO
Myrtle Beach AFB, SC
Richards-Gebaur ARS, MO
Rickenbacker AGB, OH
Williams AFB, AZ
Wurtsmith AFB, MI
Castle AFB, CA

19 Realignments

MacDill AFB, FL
Beale AFB, CA
AVSCOM/TROSCOM, MO
Fort Chaffee, AR
Fort Polk, LA
Letterkenny Army Depot, PA
Rock Island Arsenal, IL

NAVAIR Eng Ctr, Lakehurst, NJ
NAVAIR Devel Ctr, Warminster, PA
NAVAIR Propul Ctr, Trenton, NJ
NAV ORD STA, Indian Head, MD
NAV Avionics Ctr, Indianapolis, IN
NAV Costal Sys Ctr, Panama City, FL
NAV ORD STA, Louisville, KY

NAV Surf Wpns Ctr, White Oak, MD
NAV Undsea Warfre Eng Sta,
Keyport, WA
NAV Wpns Ctr, China Lake, CA
NAV Wpns Sup Ctr, Crane, IN
Pac Misle Tst Ctr, Point Mugu, CA