

The community also argues closure of the hospital would have substantial negative impacts on the health and financial security of the large retired community in the Denver area. They say closing the hospital would break the promise of “free health care for life” that many feel was made to military retirees. They note the medical center’s mission as a regional referral center for a 14-state region and the lack of any other tertiary care hospitals in the region. Further, the community questions the readiness impact of closing the medical center and eliminating the civilian personnel positions, as well as the readiness impact of losing its satellite communications capability.

The community also argues the economic impact on the City of Aurora would be extremely high. They say the area has already been badly hurt by previous base closures, and closure of Fitzsimons Army Medical Center would mean more direct and indirect job losses than reported by the Army. Finally, they question the one-time costs in the Army’s analysis, the increased cost of transporting referral patients to other hospitals if the medical center closes, and the impact of the closure on DoD-Indian Health Service sharing agreements.

### ***Commission Findings***

The Commission found the Army’s recommendation to close Fitzsimons Army Medical Center is in line with the Army’s stationing strategy that military hospitals should primarily support active duty military personnel and their families. Fitzsimons does not primarily support a nearby active duty population, and its closure permits the Army to redirect medical personnel and resources to other hospitals that do. The Commission also found the medical center’s referral mission can be economically absorbed by other facilities. The Commission agreed with the community that closure of Fitzsimons will create disruptions and raise costs for retirees seeking health care, but noted other government programs—CHAMPUS, Tricare, Medicare, and continued pharmacy benefits—will help to mitigate these impacts. The Commission found DoD’s evaluation of joint service training consolidation alternatives could result in a decision to relocate tenants elsewhere; hence, it agreed to the request of the Secretary of Defense to not specify gaining locations.

### ***Commission Recommendation***

The Commission finds the Secretary of Defense deviated substantially from the force-structure

plan and final criteria 2 and 4. Therefore, the Commission recommends the following: close Fitzsimons Army Medical Center (FAMC), except Edgar J. McWhethy Army Reserve Center. Relocate other tenants to other installations. The Commission finds this recommendation is consistent with the force-structure plan and final criteria.

### **Stratford Army Engine Plant, Connecticut**

*Category: Industrial Facilities*

*Mission: Engine production*

*One-time Cost: \$6.6 million*

*Savings: 1996-2001: \$20.5 million*

*Annual: \$6.1 million*

*Return on Investment: 1998 (1 year)*

**FINAL ACTION: Close**

### ***Secretary of Defense Recommendation***

Close Stratford Army Engine Plant.

### ***Secretary of Defense Justification***

The Stratford facility has produced engines for heavy armor vehicles and rotary wing aircraft. Reduced production requirements and the Army’s increased capability for rebuild and repair have eliminated the need for the Stratford Army Engine Plant. There is no requirement for use of the installation by either the Active or Reserve Components.

The Army has an extensive capability to repair engines at Anniston and Corpus Christi Army Depots. The current inventory for these engines meets projected operational requirements. During mobilization, the capability to rebuild engines can be increased at both depots. In the event of an extended national emergency that would deplete stocks, the depots could reconfigure to assemble new engines from parts provided by the manufacturer until mothballed facilities become operational. Prior to closing the facility, the contractor will complete all existing contracts.

### ***Community Concerns***

The community contends closing Stratford Army Engine Plant will result in loss of the Army’s only capability to produce turbine engines for tanks. The loss of this capability and the associated technical and engineering support, in the community’s view, will have significant readiness impact. Another concern is the loss of 1600 contractor jobs from the local economy. The community claims a study, under Corps of Engineers direction, requires \$17 million in environmental stabilization

costs to close Stratford Army Engine Plant. The community questions whether or not the Army's recommendation complies with a Defense Science Board Tank Engine Industrial Base Task Force recommendation. The community challenges the Army's economic impact estimates and cost analysis. The community contends the Army is underestimating costs for equipment movement or disposal, military construction at gaining installations, and personnel. They also point out the Army analysis does not account for loss of \$2 million in rental income from the contractor.

### *Commission Findings*

The Commission found the Army can sustain the tank engine and helicopter turbine engine base through Anniston Army Depot, Alabama, and Corpus Christi Army Depot, Texas. With the decreasing need for new engines and technological capabilities currently available in the private industrial sector, retention of Stratford Army Engine Plant was not necessary. The Commission found the Army estimates on the costs of this recommendation were understated. Recognition of the costs associated with movement of Defense Contract Management Personnel and movement of equipment necessary to future production of spares for engine rebuild changed the return on investment to one year instead of immediate.

### *Commission Recommendation*

The Commission finds the Secretary of Defense did not deviate substantially from the force-structure plan and final criteria. Therefore, the Commission recommends the following: close Stratford Army Engine Plant.

### **Big Coppett Key, Florida**

*Category: Minor Installation*

*Mission: Formerly provided communication support to the U.S. Army*

*One-time Cost: None*

*Savings: 1996-2001: \$0.05 million*

*Annual: \$0.01 million*

*Return on Investment: 1996 (Immediate)*

**FINAL ACTION: Close**

### *Secretary of Defense Recommendation*

Close Big Coppett Key.

### *Secretary of Defense Justification*

Big Coppett Key, an island near Key West, consists of approximately five acres and 3,000 square feet of facilities. Big Coppett Key formerly provided communications support to United States Army. Since the Army no longer uses Big Coppett Key, it is excess and to Army requirements. Closing Big Coppett Key will save base operations and maintenance funds and provide reuse opportunities.

### *Community Concerns*

There were no formal expressions from the community.

### *Commission Findings*

The Commission found no reason to disagree with the recommendation of the Secretary of Defense.

### *Commission Recommendation*

The Commission finds the Secretary of Defense did not deviate substantially from the force-structure plan and final criteria. Therefore, the Commission recommends the following: close Big Coppett Key.

### **Price Support Center, Illinois**

*Category: Command, Control and Administration*

*Mission: Administrative and logistics support*

*One-time Cost: None*

*Savings: 1996-01: None*

*Annual: None*

*Return on Investment: None*

**FINAL ACTION: Remain Open**

### *Secretary of Defense Recommendation*

Close Charles Melvin Price Support Center, except a small reserve enclave and a storage area.

### *Secretary of Defense Justification*

Charles Melvin Price Support Center provides area support and military housing to the Army and other Federal activities in the St. Louis, MO, area. It is low in military value compared to similar installations. Its tenants, including a recruiting company and a criminal investigative unit, can easily relocate.

This recommendation is related to the Army's recommendation to relocate Aviation-Troop Command (ATCOM) from St. Louis, MO, to other