

FORT BRAGG, NORTH CAROLINA (ARMY RECOMMENDATION)

SECRETARY OF DEFENSE RECOMMENDATION

Realign Fort Bragg, NC, by relocating the 7th Special Forces Group (SFG) to Eglin AFB, FL, and by activating the 4th Brigade Combat Team (BCT), 82d Airborne Division and relocating European-based forces to Fort Bragg, NC.

SECRETARY OF DEFENSE JUSTIFICATION

This recommendation co-locates Army Special Operation Forces with Air Force Special Operations Forces at Eglin AFB, activates the 4th BCT of the 82nd Airborne Division, and relocates Combat Service Support units to Fort Bragg from Europe to support the Army modular force transformation. This realignment and activation of forces enhances military value and training capabilities by locating Special Operations Forces (SOF) in locations that best support Joint specialized training needs, and by creating needed space for the additional brigade at Fort Bragg. This recommendation is consistent with and supports the Army's Force Structure Plan submitted with the FY 06 budget, and provides the necessary capacity and capability, including surge, to support the units affected by this action.

This recommendation never pays back. However, the benefits of enhancing Joint training opportunities coupled with the positive impact of freeing up needed training space and reducing cost of the new BCT by approximately \$54-\$148M (with family housing) at Fort Bragg for the Army's Modular Force transformation, justify the additional costs to the Department.

COMMUNITY CONCERNS

There were no formal expressions from the community.

COMMISSION FINDINGS

The Commission found that this recommendation was consistent with DoD's justification. Specifically, the Commission views that the relocation of the 7th Special Forces Group to Eglin AFB, FL, provides this unit an opportunity to achieve outstanding joint training through its collocation with the Air Force Special Operations Command. Also, the Commission found that this relocation enables the activation of the 4th Brigade Combat Team, 82D Airborne Division at Fort Bragg, NC, and it is consistent with the Army's transformation efforts and the Force Structure Plan.

COMMISSION RECOMMENDATIONS

The Commission found the Secretary's recommendation consistent with the final selection criteria and force structure plan. Therefore, the Commission approved the recommendation of the Secretary.

**FORT BRAGG, NORTH CAROLINA
(AIR FORCE RECOMMENDATION – POPE AIR FORCE BASE, NC,
PITTSBURGH INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT AIR RESERVE STATION,
PA, YEAGER AIR NATIONAL GUARD STATION, WV)**

SECRETARY OF DEFENSE RECOMMENDATION

Realign Pope Air Force Base, NC. Distribute the 43rd Airlift Wing's C-130E aircraft (25 aircraft) to the 314th Airlift Wing, Little Rock Air Force Base, AR; realign the 23rd Fighter Group's A-10 aircraft (36 aircraft) to Moody Air Force Base, GA; transfer real property accountability to the Army; disestablish the 43rd Medical Group and establish a medical squadron. At Little Rock Air Force Base, AR, realign eight C-130E aircraft to backup inventory; retire 27 C-130Es; realign one C-130J aircraft to the 143rd Airlift Wing (ANG), Quonset State Airport Air Guard Station, RI; two C-130Js to the 146th Airlift Wing (ANG), Channel Islands Air Guard Station, CA; and transfer four C-130Js from the 314th Airlift Wing (AD) to the 189th Airlift Wing (ANG), Little Rock Air Force Base.

Realign Yeager Airport Air Guard Station (AGS), WV, by realigning eight C-130H aircraft to Pope/Fort Bragg to form a 16 aircraft Air Force Reserve/active duty associate unit, and by relocating flying-related expeditionary combat support (ECS) to Eastern West Virginia Regional Airport/Shepherd Field AGS (aerial port and fire fighters). Close Pittsburgh International Airport (IAP) Air Reserve Station (ARS), PA, and relocate 911th Airlift Wing's (AFRC) eight C-130H aircraft to Pope/Fort Bragg to form a 16 aircraft Air Force Reserve/active duty associate unit. Relocate AFRC operations and maintenance manpower to Pope/Fort Bragg. Relocate flight related ECS (aeromedical squadron) to Youngstown-Warren Regional APT ARS.

Relocate all remaining Pittsburgh ECS and headquarters manpower to Offutt Air Force Base, NE. Air National Guard units at Pittsburgh are unaffected.

SECRETARY OF DEFENSE JUSTIFICATION

Downsizing Pope Air Force Base takes advantage of mission-specific consolidation opportunities to reduce operational costs, maintenance costs and the manpower footprint. The smaller manpower footprint facilitates transfer of the installation to the Army. Active-duty C-130s and A-10s will move to Little Rock (17-airlift) and Moody (11-SOF/CSAR), respectively, to consolidate force structure at those two bases and enable Army recommendations at Pope. At Little Rock, older aircraft are retired or converted to back-up inventory and J-model C-130s are aligned under the Air National Guard. Little Rock grows to become the single major active-duty C-130 unit, streamlining maintenance and operation of this aging weapon system. At Pope, the synergistic, multi-service relationship will continue between Army airborne and Air Force airlift forces with the creation of an active duty/Reserve associate unit. The C-130 unit remains as an Army tenant on an expanded Fort Bragg. With the disestablishment of the 43rd Medical Group, the Air Force will maintain the required manpower to provide primary care, flight and occupational medicine to support the Air Force active-duty military members. The Army will maintain the required manpower necessary to provide primary care, flight, and occupational medicine to support the Army active-duty military members. The Army will provide ancillary and specialty medical services for all assigned Army and Air Force military members (lab, X-ray, pharmacy, etc).

The major command's capacity briefing reported Pittsburgh ARS land constraints prevented the installation from hosting more than 10 C-130 aircraft, and Yeager AGS cannot support more than eight C-130s. Careful analysis of mission capability indicates that it is more appropriate to increase the proposed airlift

mission at Fort Bragg to an optimal 16 aircraft C-130 squadron, which provides greater military value and offers unique opportunities for Jointness.

COMMUNITY CONCERNS

Representatives from the Pope Air Force Base (AFB) community expressed concerns about the effect of the recommendations on safety and Army operations. They maintained that safety is paramount at Pope AFB. It was noted that DoD's recommendation would not change the mission at Pope and that air transport is the most critical aspect of the nation's power projection capability. Community representatives stated "current leadership at Pope/Fort Bragg would execute the mission and make it successful" but that "it would be unique [in] the Army to run an airfield of the magnitude and operations tempo of Pope." It was suggested that costs could actually increase if the Army were to take over the installation because of the additional costs associated with contracted labor. The example cited was that a civilian air traffic controller salary is three times that of a military air traffic controller. Community representatives recommended instead that Pope AFB become a C-130J Operational Center of Excellence. The C-130J is air-refuelable, making it very conducive to the mission of Fort Bragg. The same concerns were expressed about the Commission's vote to consider expanding the scope of realignment of Pope as well.

The key issues for Pittsburgh International Airport Air Reserve Station pertained to the availability of land and whether it was considered in the Air Force model used to calculate military value. Community advocates contended that 50 to 100 acres are available for expansion of the airport, and cited memoranda of agreements since 1993 with the Pittsburgh International Airport to use an additional 21.7 acres adjacent to the Air Reserve Station. Community representatives maintained that DoD's recommendations ignored opportunities for jointness and pointed to a report which noted that the installation supports the Military Entrance Processing Station (MEPS) by providing 9,000 applicants annually with testing, billeting, and dining, resulting in annual savings for the Army of \$1.2 million. Additionally, the installation firing range is used by 50 local, State, and Federal (military and civilian) agencies and is one of the few ranges that allows for the firing of .50 caliber ammunition.

Advocates also expressed concerns about the base exchange, credit union, chapel, fitness center, consolidated club, and billeting, which are used by the 911th AW, the 171st ARW and the 99th Regional Readiness Command. The base also hosts the regional Casualty Assistance Office, and the 911th Communications Center provides Communications Security (COMSEC) and classified storage capability to over 50 Federal agencies and 100 percent of the Air National Guard's 171st Air Refueling Wing's communication needs. Last, advocates stated that the Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) value used in the Cost of Base Realignment Actions (COBRA) model for calculating economic impact was incorrect.

The West Virginia community, including elected officials, argued that approximately half of the 320 full-time employees would leave the unit if the planes are removed from the base and that this would cripple the mission effectiveness of a unit with over 100 percent endstrength. They also stated DoD's proposal would reduce joint training opportunities and significantly hinder the ability to rapidly transport a civil response team in the event of an emergency. The community contended DoD's claim that Yeager's ramp space could support no more than eight C-130s was refuted when 15 C-130s were on the ramp during a recent training exercise. Last, it would be difficult to recover from the loss of the base's \$71 million annual contribution to the local economy.

COMMISSION FINDINGS

The Department of Defense recommendation for realigning Pope Air Force Base, NC; closing the Pittsburgh IAP ARS PA; and realigning Yeager Air Guard Station (AGS), WV was part of a larger effort to restructure the C-130 fleet. The need for restructuring was driven by the age of the C-130E model aircraft and the participation in the replacement C-130J procurement program.

Given the importance of airlift to the Fort Bragg mission, there was concern regarding how the Air Force recommendation would be implemented. Other than the recommendation to form an Active Duty/Reserve Associate unit with the 16 C-130s transferred to Pope from Yeager and Pittsburgh, there was

no discussion of how airlift operations would continue to be conducted in support of Fort Bragg. Particular concern focused on the loss of an execution planning cell and the informal working relationships that currently exists between elements at Fort Bragg and the 43rd Airlift Wing at Pope. In light of the importance of the Fort Bragg mission to national security, the Commission found the proposed action had the potential to detrimentally affect that mission. Therefore, the Commission modified the DoD recommendation to establish an Air Force Air Operation Support Group at Pope AFB.

The justification for realigning Yeager and closing Pittsburgh was based on a 2003 data call. These data indicated that Yeager was unable to host more than eight C-130s and that Pittsburgh was unable to host more than ten C-130s. The Air Force had previously determined that the optimal size for a C-130 squadron was 16, but that 12 was an acceptable number for an Air Force Reserve or Air National Guard Squadron. Whether the data were outdated or the response misinterpreted, the Commission found that the resulting conclusions were incorrect. The Wing Commander at Yeager AGS, WV reported that the unit can park 12 C-130s. Commission staff observed eleven aircraft parked at the installation during our base visit.

Rather than closing Pittsburgh IAP ARS, the Commission determined that it should be realigned as an enclave on which a Regional Joint Readiness Center would be established. Since the Commission retained C-130 Aircraft at Pittsburgh, the Commission urges that the Department of Defense take affirmative action to identify and permanently locate and operate an optimum number of C-130 aircraft as a detachment to the Pittsburgh IAP ARS enclave in order that it may support the mission of the Regional Joint Readiness Center as well as current Air Force Reserve Command missions.

The Commission found reason to be concerned about Little Rock AFB's ability to receive the recommended number of aircraft. BRAC staff verified that a comprehensive capacity analysis had not been conducted. Consequently, the total Military Construction costs to accommodate all the C-130 BRAC related moves to Little Rock were originally underestimated by approximately 63 percent. Recent USAF estimates are \$246.7 million.

The Commission also found that the existing national security issues and the need to support the Fort Bragg mission overruled the deviations from the BRAC selection criteria. The Commission established a C-130 wing at Quonset State Airport Air Guard Station, Rhode Island; Channel Islands Air Guard Station, California; Little Rock AFB, Arkansas; and at Yeager Air Guard Station, West Virginia; consistent with the Commission's Air National Guard and Reserve Laydown plan.

COMMISSION RECOMMENDATIONS

The Commission found that the Secretary of Defense deviated substantially from final selection criteria 1, 2 and 3, as well as from the Force Structure Plan. Therefore, the Commission recommends the following:

Realign Pope Air Force Base, NC. Distribute the 25 C-130E aircraft assigned to the 43d Air Lift Wing and the 36 A-10 aircraft assigned to the 23d Fighter Group to meet the Primary Aircraft Authorizations (PAA) requirements established by the Base Closure and Realignment recommendations of the Secretary of Defense, as amended by the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission.

Establish 16 PAA C-130H aircraft at Pope Army Air Field, Fort Bragg, North Carolina.

Establish 48 PAA A-10 aircraft at Moody Air Force Base, Georgia.

Transfer real property accountability to the Army; disestablish the 43d Medical Group and establish a medical squadron. The Air Force will establish an Air Support Operations Group to provide unity of command of Air Force units on Pope Army Air Field, mission execution planning, and management of efficient loadout of Fort Bragg assets.

Realign Little Rock Air Force Base, Arkansas. Distribute 39 of the C-130 aircraft assigned to Little Rock Air Force Base, Arkansas to meet the Primary Aircraft Authorizations (PAA) requirements established by the Base Closure and Realignment recommendations of the Secretary of Defense, as amended by the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission.

Establish 8 PAA C-130J aircraft at the 143d Airlift Wing (ANG), Quonset State Airport Air Guard Station, Rhode Island;

Establish 8 PAA C-130J aircraft at the 146th Airlift Wing (ANG), Channel Islands Air Guard Station, California;

Establish 9 PAA C-130 aircraft at 189th Airlift Wing (ANG), Little Rock Air Force Base.

Realign Yeager Airport Air Guard Station (AGS), West Virginia. Establish 8 PAA C-130H aircraft at Yeager Airport Air Guard Station (AGS), West Virginia.

Realign Pittsburgh International Airport (IAP) Air Reserve Station (ARS), Pennsylvania. Establish a contiguous enclave at the Pittsburgh ARS, Pennsylvania sufficient to support continued operations of the reserve station units, including flight operations, and compatible with combined use of the civilian airport by the Air Reserve, Air National Guard and civilian users. Within that enclave, establish a Regional Joint Readiness Center (RJRC) at the Pittsburgh International Air Station with the mission of providing civil-military operations, homeland security and community-based medical support to the Department of Defense and the Department of homeland security National Incident Management Plan and the National Response Plan. The enclave and RJRC will be staffed at the current manning level of the ARS. The PAA and personnel allocations of Air National Guard units at Pittsburgh are unaffected by this recommendation.

The Commission found that this change and the recommendation as amended are consistent with the final selection criteria and the Force Structure Plan. The full text of this and all Commission recommendations can be found in Appendix Q.

FORT BRAGG, NORTH CAROLINA (JOINT CROSS SERVICE GROUP – HEADQUARTERS AND SUPPLY ACTIVITIES; CREATE JOINT MOBILIZATION SITES)

SECRETARY OF DEFENSE RECOMMENDATION

Realign Aberdeen Proving Ground, MD, Washington Navy Yard, Washington, DC, and Naval Submarine Base New London, CT, by relocating all mobilization functions to Fort Dix, NJ, designating it as Joint Pre-Deployment/Mobilization Site Dix/McGuire/Lakehurst. Realign Submarine Base Bangor, WA, by relocating all mobilization processing functions to Fort Lewis, WA, designating it as Joint Pre-Deployment/Mobilization Site Lewis/McChord. Realign Fort Huachuca, AZ, by relocating all mobilization processing functions to Fort Bliss, TX, designating it as Joint Pre-Deployment/Mobilization Site Bliss/Holloman. Realign Fort Eustis, VA, Ft Jackson, SC, and Fort Lee, VA, by relocating all mobilization processing functions to Fort Bragg, NC, designating it as Joint Pre-Deployment/Mobilization Site Bragg/Pope.

SECRETARY OF DEFENSE JUSTIFICATION

This recommendation realigns eight lower threshold mobilization sites to four existing large capacity sites and transforms them into Joint Pre-Deployment/Mobilization Platforms. This action is expected to have the long-term effect of creating pre-deployment/mobilization centers of excellence, leverage economies of scale, reduce costs, and improve service to mobilized servicemembers. This recommendation specifically targets four of the larger capacity mobilization centers located in higher density Reserve Component (RC) personnel areas. These platforms have the added military value of strategic location, Power Projection Platform (PPP) and deployment capabilities. The gaining bases all have an adjoining installation from another service(s), thereby gaining the opportunity to increase partnership and enhance existing joint

service facilities and capabilities. The eight realigned, lower thresholds/mobilization sites have significantly less capacity and many less mobilizations. The realignment of these pre-deployment/mobilization missions to the other joint pre-deployment/mobilization sites will not overload the gaining joint mobilization installations. These new joint regional predeployment/redeployment mobilization processing sites, Fort Dix, Fort Lewis, Fort Bliss and Fort Bragg, have the capability to adequately prepare, train and deploy members from all services while reducing overall mobilization processing site manpower and facilities requirements. Numerous other intangible savings are expected to result from transformation opportunities by consolidating all services' mobilization operations and optimizing existing and future personnel requirements. Additional opportunities for savings are also expected from the establishment of a single space mobilization site capable of supporting pre-deployment/mobilization operations from centralized facilities and infrastructure. The establishment of these Joint Pre-Deployment/Mobilization Sites will not preclude the services from using any/all of their other existing mobilization sites, nor will they affect any service rapid mobilization units/wings. These joint platforms will not affect any of the services units that have specific unit personnel/equipment requirements necessitating their mobilization from a specified installation.

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 RECOMMENDATIONS

The Commission found the Secretary's recommendation consistent with the final selection criteria and the Force Structure Plan. Therefore, the Commission approves the recommendation of the Secretary.