

RIVERBANK ARMY AMMUNITION PLANT, CALIFORNIA (JOINT CROSS SERVICE GROUP – INDUSTRIAL)

SECRETARY OF DEFENSE RECOMMENDATION

Close Riverbank Army Ammunition Plant, CA. Relocate the artillery cartridge case metal parts functions to Rock Island Arsenal, IL.

SECRETARY OF DEFENSE JUSTIFICATION

There are 4 sites within the Industrial Base producing Metal Parts. To remove excess from the Industrial Base, the closure allows DoD to generate efficiencies and nurture partnership with multiple sources in the private sector.

COMMUNITY CONCERNS

The community believes the recommendation to close the Riverbank Army Ammunition Plant (RBAAP) defied logic and common sense. They pointed out that NI Industries, Inc. has successfully operated the installation since 1951. They noted RBAAP hosts thirteen tenants with more than 200 employees. The community and NI Industries Inc. asserted that RBAAP is the only plant producing the deep-drawn steel cartridge cases needed for the Navy's next generation fleet and the Army's Future Combat System. The City of Riverbank challenged the rationale for, and pointed out risks associated with, closing this high-military-value production plant and asserted that production interruptions could hinder current and future military missions. The City adamantly opposed the closure, saying the closure recommendation was based on invalid criteria and faulty information, and questioned DoD's estimated costs for dismantling, moving, and reassembling the plant's complex equipment. They contended an unsuccessful relocation of equipment and a lack of highly skilled (artisan level) transferees would have significant repercussions on military access to needed ordnance. The community concluded that the RBAAP should remain a vital entity in the military arsenal.

COMMISSION FINDINGS

The Commission found no reason to disagree with the recommendation of the Secretary of Defense. The commission acknowledges the community's concerns with the challenges of moving the deep-drawn steel cartridge case production line. However, the commission does not find that the uniqueness of this production line reaches the level of substantial deviation from the final selection criteria. The low utilization of this ammunition plant, coupled with the significant excess capacity for munitions manufacturing in the US industrial base, created a very compelling case to rationalize manufacturing capacity.

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.