

Fort Benjamin Harrison, Indiana

**Category: Initial Entry Training/Branch
School**

**Mission: Army Soldier Support Center;
Defense Finance and Accounting Service**

Cost to Close: \$206 million

Savings: 1992-97: -\$123.8 million;

Annual: \$36.9 million

Payback: 4 years

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE RECOMMENDATIONS

Close Fort Benjamin Harrison and realign the Soldier Support Center from Fort Benjamin Harrison, Indiana, to Fort Jackson, South Carolina, to initiate the Soldier Support Warfighting Center. Relocate U.S. Army Recruiting Command from Fort Sheridan to Fort Rnox rather than Fort Benjamin Harrison. This part of the proposal is a revision to the 1988 Defense Secretary's Commission on Base Realignment and Closure recommendations. Retain Building 1 for the continued use by the Defense Finance and Accounting Service (DFAS) and retain part of Fort Benjamin Harrison for the Army reserves.

Fort Benjamin Harrison was rated lowest in its category. It has limited expansion capability, high operating costs, and high real-property-maintenance costs.

COMMUNITY CONCERNS

The community argued that the Army Soldier Support Warfighting Center would be more suitable at Fort Benjamin Harrison. Moving the two branch schools from Fort Jackson to Fort Benjamin Harrison would be easier than sending six schools from Fort Benjamin Harrison to Fort Jackson. The community also claimed that closing Fort Benjamin Harrison would cause significant job loss. Fort Benjamin Harrison has been a major source of employment for the handicapped and minorities and serves thousands of retirees. The community also argued that Building 1 is currently underused, thus DoD should relocate

functions currently in leased space to Building 1.

COMMISSION FINDINGS

The Commission found that Fort Jackson is a more economical location for the Army Soldier Support Warfighting Center than Fort Benjamin Harrison. It found that the missions at Fort Benjamin Harrison do not require extensive facilities and thus can be easily realigned at minimal costs.

The Commission found that Building 1 is underused. Building 1 is the current home of the branch of the Defense Finance and Accounting Service that is responsible for the Department of the Army finances. The Commission is aware of an ongoing Defense Management Review initiative to consolidate and streamline DoD's Finance and Accounting Services. DoD should look closely at using adequate excess government-owned facilities when evaluating its overall facility requirements.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Commission recommends to the President the closure of Fort Benjamin Harrison; the realignment of the Soldier Support Center to Fort Jackson, South Carolina; and the retention of the Department of Defense Finance and Accounting Service, Indianapolis Center. We also recommend the revision of the Defense Secretary's Commission on Base Realignment and Closure 1988 recommendation relocating the U.S. Army Recruiting Command (USAREC) from Fort Sheridan to Fort Knox rather than Fort Benjamin Harrison. The Commission also recommends an adjustment in the DoD recommendation. We find that the Secretary deviated substantially from criterion 2, the availability and condition of land and facilities at both the existing and potential receiving locations. Because of this, the Commission recommends to the President the closure of Building 1.