

# **FORT GILLEM, GEORGIA (ARMY RECOMMENDATION)**

## **SECRETARY OF DEFENSE RECOMMENDATION**

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Close Fort Gillem, GA. Relocate the Headquarters, 1st US Army to Rock Island Arsenal, IL. Relocate the 2nd Recruiting Brigade to Redstone Arsenal, AL. Relocate the 52nd Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) Group to Fort Campbell, KY. Relocate the 81st RRC Equipment Concentration Site to Fort Benning, GA. Relocate the 3rd US Army Headquarters support office to Shaw Air Force Base, SC. Relocate the Headquarters US Forces Command (FORSCOM) VIP Explosive Ordnance Support to Pope Air Force Base, NC. Close the Army- Air Force Exchange System (AAFES) Atlanta Distribution Center and establish an enclave for the Georgia Army National Guard, the remainder of the 81st RRC units and the Criminal Investigation Division (CID) Forensics Laboratory.

## **SECRETARY OF DEFENSE JUSTIFICATION**

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This recommendation closes Fort Gillem, an Army administrative installation and an AAFES distribution center. The recommendation moves the major tenant organizations to Rock Island Arsenal, Redstone Arsenal, Fort Benning, and Fort Campbell. It also moves small components of the Headquarters 3rd US Army and US Army Forces Command to Pope AFB and Shaw AFB. It enhances the Army's military value, is consistent with the Army's Force Structure Plan, and maintains adequate surge capabilities to address unforeseen future requirements. This closure allows the Army to employ excess capacities at installations that can accomplish more than administrative missions.

The closure of Fort Gillem also enables the stationing of its tenant units at locations that will increase their ability to associate with like units and promote coordination of efforts. Both the 52nd EOD Group and the 2nd Recruiting Brigade have regional missions in the Southeastern United States. The 52nd EOD Group was co-located with operational forces at Fort Campbell to provide training opportunities. The 2nd Recruiting Brigade is recommended to relocate to Redstone Arsenal because of its central location in the Southeast and its access to a transportation center in Huntsville, AL. The Army is converting the 1st US Army Headquarters into the single Headquarters for oversight of Reserve and National Guard mobilization and demobilization. To support this conversion the Army decided to relocate 1st Army to Rock Island Arsenal, a central location in the United States. The 81st RRC Equipment Concentration Site is relocated to Fort Benning, where there are improved training opportunities with operational forces.

## **COMMUNITY CONCERNS**

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The community emphasized that Fort Gillem and Fort McPherson are linked. They asserted that DoD understated costs, producing projected savings which appear to be the primary basis for the closure decision. They indicated relocation of three major headquarters (1st Army, 2nd Recruiting Brigade and 52nd EOD Group) would adversely affect Reserve Component training readiness, homeland defense, and efficient command and control. They also held that relocation of 1st Army Headquarters would separate it from the many related capabilities offered by homeland security organizations and Reserve Components located at Fort Gillem. They argued that cost, command and control obstacles, loss of Reserve Component synergies, homeland defense coordination issues, and security challenges for enclaved organizations should persuade the Commission to vote against closure. The community indicated the economic impact will be great on Clayton County and the surrounding community which suffers from high unemployment rates and low per-capita income. The community states that the proposed enclave at Fort Gillem would create security challenges and fragment potential reuse, in addition to challenges of long-term contamination cleanup.

## COMMISSION FINDINGS

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The Commission's findings supported DoD's overall recommendation, although the Commission found that DoD failed to adequately define its planned enclave at Fort Gillem, contrary to its agreement with the findings of a 2003 study by the Government Accountability Office (GAO) of prior BRAC enclaves. GAO recommended that the Secretary of Defense provide the 2005 BRAC Commission with data clearly specifying the infrastructure needed for any proposed enclaves and the estimated costs to operate and maintain such enclaves. The Commission found merit in community concerns about the adverse effect of multiple enclaves on reuse of the remainder of Fort Gillem, and therefore modified the DoD recommendation to require a contiguous enclave.

The Commission also found that units other than those explicitly stated in the approved recommendation, such as the Military Entrance Processing Station, may need to remain in the enclave, although the Commission strongly believes that the size of the enclave needs to be minimized to give the community maximum opportunities for reuse. The Commission found that the recommendation failed to address the Ammunition Supply Point, the only Army ASP in north Georgia supporting the Federal Transportation Security Administration, Army Reserves, and National Guard. The Commission was advised by the Department that the ASP was not part of the enclave recommendation and that disposition of the ASP will be determined during implementation. The Commission found that DoD designated Fort Gillem as the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) mobilization site for the Southeast United States and that further determinations by FEMA and DoD are required during implementation. The Commission found DoD's economic impact analysis failed to consider significant loss of jobs associated with closing the Army and Air Force Exchange Service Atlanta Distribution Center. The Commission notes that Fort Gillem borders Forest Park, GA, an Historically Underutilized Business (HUB) Zone and that the Garrison provides employment opportunities to a number of individuals with severe disabilities. The Commission strongly urges the Department to proactively work with the community to minimize these economic impacts.

## COMMISSION RECOMMENDATIONS

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The Commission found that the Secretary of Defense deviated substantially from final selection criteria 7 and the force structure plan. Therefore, the Commission recommends the following:

Close Fort Gillem, GA. Relocate the Headquarters, 1st US Army to Rock Island Arsenal, IL. Relocate the 2d Recruiting Brigade to Redstone Arsenal, AL. Relocate the 52d Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) Group to Fort Campbell, KY. Relocate the 81st RRC Equipment Concentration Site to Fort Benning, GA. Relocate the 3d US Army Headquarters support office to Shaw Air Force Base, SC. Relocate the Headquarters US Forces Command (FORSCOM) VIP Explosive Ordnance Support to Pope Air Force Base, NC.

Close the Army-Air Force Exchange System (AAFES) Atlanta Distribution Center and establish a contiguous enclave for the Georgia Army National Guard, the remainder of the 81st RRC units and the Criminal Investigation Division (CID) Forensics Laboratory.

The Commission found 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 other recommendations can be found in Appendix Q.

# **FORT GILLEM, GEORGIA (NAVY RECOMMENDATION – NAVAL AIR STATION ATLANTA, GEORGIA)**

## **SECRETARY OF DEFENSE RECOMMENDATION**

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Close Naval Air Station Atlanta, GA. Relocate its aircraft and necessary personnel, equipment and support to Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base New Orleans, LA; Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base Fort Worth, TX; and Robins Air Force Base, Robins, GA. Relocate Reserve Intelligence Area 14 to Fort Gillem, Forest Park, GA. Relocate depot maintenance Aircraft Components, Aircraft Engines, Fabrication and Manufacturing, and Support Equipment in support of F/A-18, C-9 and C-12 aircraft to Fleet Readiness Center West Site Fort Worth at Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base Fort Worth, TX. Relocate intermediate maintenance in support of E-2C aircraft to Fleet Readiness Center Mid-Atlantic Site New Orleans at Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base New Orleans, LA. Consolidate the Naval Air Reserve Atlanta with Navy Marine Corps Reserve Center Atlanta located at Dobbins Air Reserve Base, Marietta, GA. Retain the Windy Hill Annex.

## **SECRETARY OF DEFENSE JUSTIFICATION**

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This recommendation reduces excess capacity while maintaining reserve forces in regions with favorable demographics. The aviation assets will be located closer to their theater of operations and/or will result in increased maintenance efficiencies and operational synergies. Relocating Reserve Intelligence Area 14 to Fort Gillem creates synergies with joint intelligence assets while maintaining the demographic base offered by the Atlanta area for this function. The Fleet Readiness Center portion of this recommendation realigns and merges depot and intermediate maintenance activities. It supports both DoD and Navy transformation goals by reducing the number of maintenance levels and streamlining the way maintenance is accomplished with associated significant cost reductions.

## **COMMUNITY CONCERNS**

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The community expressed concern that relocating Navy/Marine Corps Reserve squadrons to areas where the presence of qualified and trained personnel resources are uncertain would significantly degrade the military readiness of the combat ready and tested Atlanta area Reserve forces. These forces are presently engaged in the Global War on Terror and actively monitoring and deterring drug trafficking along the southern US coast. They further argued that DoD's stated savings would not be realized by closing NAS Atlanta, because the remaining infrastructure of hangars, ramps, and administration and support buildings would be absorbed by Dobbins Air Reserve Base, and other Department of Defense and governmental agencies.

## **COMMISSION FINDINGS**

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The Commission found no reason to disagree with the recommendation of the Secretary of Defense. However, the original cost savings were overstated because of incorrect data submitted by Naval Air Station Atlanta. Consequently, the cost data was revised by the Department of Defense and recertified.

## **COMMISSION RECOMMENDATIONS**

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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.