



Base Realignment and Closure

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BRAC becomes law, changes on horizon for Fort Sam

(Sources: An article by Donna Miles of the American Forces Press Service contributed significantly to this report. Other information came from the Final DoD BRAC Report and an Army News article by Eric Cramer.)

WASHINGTON, D.C. — The Base Realignment and Closure Commission's recommendations for reshaping the Defense Department's infrastructure officially took effect at 12:01 a.m. Nov. 9 after Congress allowed them to pass into law.

The nine-member BRAC panel delivered its final report to President Bush Sept. 8, and he, in turn, sent it to Congress for legislative review Sept. 15. Congress had 45 legislative days, until Nov. 9, to accept or reject the report in its entirety. Congress was not authorized to make any changes.

By statute, the Defense Department now has until Sept. 15, 2007 — two years from the date President Bush sent Congress the BRAC commission's final report — to begin closing and realigning the installations as called for in the report. The process must be completed by Sept. 15, 2011, DoD officials explained.

The 2005 BRAC recommendations represent the most aggressive BRAC ever proposed, affecting more than 800 installations, officials said.

Fort Sam Houston is one of those installations, with several realignments and expansions on the horizon, which include:

- Medical training will become joint with Air Force and Army students coming from Sheppard Air Force Base, Texas; Navy students from Great Lakes, San Diego and Portsmouth, N.H.; and Army students from Walter Reed Army Medical Center, Washington, D.C.
- The 59th Medical Wing and all inpatient services from Wilford Hall Medical Center at Lackland Air Force Base, Texas, will move on post.
- The Directed Energy Lab from Brooks City-Base, San Antonio, will move to Fort Sam Houston. Other research components will come from the Great Lakes and Bethesda, Md.
- Fort Sam Houston will gain several headquarters, including the Installation Management Agency, the Community Family Support Center, Army Family Liaison Office, Network Enterprise Technology Command Northwest Regional Chief Information Office, the Army Contracting Agency, the Army Environmental Center and the Center for Health Promotion and Preventive Medicine South, from Fort McPherson, Ga.

As a result of these changes, the population at Fort Sam Houston will increase by 13,500 military and civilian employees and 5,493 family members.

Many of the recommendations call for major transformational changes. For example, McChord Air Force Base and Fort Lewis, Wash., will be combined; as will Fort Dix and McGuire Air Force Base and Naval Air Engineering Station Lakehurst, N.J.

Additionally, the Army will close 12 major installations over the next six years under the plan, and close or realign hundreds of small installations. Major Army installations slated for closure include:

- Fort Monroe, Va.
- Fort McPherson, Ga.
- Fort Gillem, Ga.
- Fort Monmouth, N.J.
- Newport Chemical Depot, Ind.
- Kansas Army Ammunition Plant, Kan.
- Selfridge Army Activity, Mich.
- Mississippi Army Ammunition Plant
- Umatilla Chemical Depot, Ore.;
- Lone Star Army Ammunition Plant, Texas
- Deseret Chemical Depot, Utah
- Riverbank Army Ammunition Plant, Calif.

The final BRAC report included six major realignments for the Army:

- Walter Reed Army Medical Center will relocate its specialty care to Bethesda. Its primary and secondary care will move to Fort Belvoir, Va.
- Rock Island Arsenal, Ill., will gain First U.S. Army headquarters but relocate offices from the Tank and Automotive Command, NETCOM, IMA and Defense Finance and Accounting Service.
- Fort Knox, Ky., will relocate its Armor School and Center to Fort Benning, Ga., but activate a new infantry brigade and gain units from overseas.
- Human Resources Command – St. Louis, Mo., will relocate some human resources activities.
- Fort Eustis, Va., will gain the Training and Doctrine Command headquarters and IMA-Northeast.
- Red River Army Depot, Texas, will relocate some functions to McAllister Army Ammunition Plant, Okla., and other depots.

Along with closing and realigning installations, BRAC will close many Army Reserve centers and National Guard armories, replacing them with new multi-component armed forces reserve centers.

The Army Reserve Command will also disestablish its 10 Regional Readiness Commands and stand up four Regional Readiness Sustainment Commands, six sustainment brigades and two maneuver enhancement brigades. The Regional Readiness Sustainment Commands will be located at Fort Dix; Fort Jackson, S.C.; Fort McCoy, Wis.; and Moffett Field, Calif.

A community conference, to be held in Baltimore Nov. 28 through Dec. 1, will focus on many of the issues involved in BRAC 2005 and the programs available to address them.

For more information, visit <http://www.defenselink.mil/brac/>.