



# Base Realignment and Closure

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## **BRAC: \$2.4 billion boon for Fort Sam Houston**

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BRAC – short for Base Realignment and Closure – was once considered a four-letter word around these parts.

When historic Kelly Air Force Base on the southeast side of San Antonio closed in 2001 due to an earlier BRAC round and Brooks Air Force Base on the southwest side was next on the chopping block, anxiety ran high in regards to the future of what is known as “Military City USA.”

But now, as the mandates that came with the 2005 BRAC Round have blossomed into final fruition, it has turned out to be a bonanza for San Antonio in general and Fort Sam Houston in particular.

When the Department of Defense received Congressional authorization for a Base Realignment and Closure Round in 2005, it was a means to achieve several goals: eliminate excess infrastructure; reshape our military; pursue jointness; optimize military readiness; and realize significant savings in support of transforming the Department of Defense.

After a long list of moves and consolidations by numerous Army, Air Force and Navy units from across America, the result was Fort Sam Houston becoming one of the main hubs of Joint Base San Antonio. BRAC will go into the history books as the largest economic development event in the city’s history.

BRAC 2005 recommendations expanded Fort Sam Houston to become DOD’s premier medical training base and the home of Army installation management, and management of family support activities and community programs.

As a result of BRAC, San Antonio is the epicenter for training of enlisted medical technicians for all services. This change relocated Air Force training from Sheppard Air Force Base, Texas, as well as Navy training from Great Lakes, Ill., San Diego, Calif. and Portsmouth, Va.

These training missions relocated to Fort Sam Houston and became merged with Army training already at the post. At any given time, the on-post student population can be expected to be approximately 8,700. The annual through-put of students will be more than five times that number.

San Antonio received almost 5,000 new personnel, 5,500 family members, 9,000 additional students, and \$2.1 billion in construction of military facilities as a result of BRAC 2005. By comparison, Toyota and its suppliers invested \$1.1 billion in new manufacturing facilities and created 4,100 new jobs.

Now that BRAC is complete, its impact will support the employment of more than 11,000 additional people and provide additional \$621 million in economic impact.

According to James Henderson, deputy director of the Office of Military Affairs for San Antonio, the economic impact of the expanded military base operations is expected to increase by about \$1.6 billion each year.

Billions of dollars have poured in for construction of new facilities and upgrades of existing buildings. Thousands of construction jobs were provided, as BRAC-related work accounted for nearly two-thirds of all the commercial construction in San Antonio, according to Association of General Contractors in San Antonio.

San Antonio registered a \$2.4 billion boost in 2008 from the Fort Sam Houston work alone, according to an economic impact study by the Military Transformation Task Force, an initiative of the city of San Antonio and the Greater San Antonio Chamber of Commerce. Sales tax revenues were boosted by \$4.7 million in 2008 from all the BRAC activity at Fort Sam Houston.

Fort Sam Houston has become the home of Army North, Army South, Installation Management Command, Army 5th Recruiting Brigade, Brooke Army Medical Center, the Institute of Surgical Research, the Army Medical Department Center and School, the Army Medical Command, 470th Military Intelligence Brigade, 106th Signal Brigade and the 502d Air Base Wing.

Tens of thousands of military members, civilians and family members now call San Antonio home, thanks to this renaissance at Fort Sam Houston, one of the U.S. Army's most historic installations.