

Pentagon Wants 33 Major Military Bases Closed

Sunday, May 15, 2005

Associated Press



WASHINGTON — The Defense Department on Friday proposed shutting down 33 of the 318 major military bases across the United States.

Aside from the 33 bases recommended for closure, another 29 based are being recommended for realignment. More than 775 other smaller military installations, including National Guard and Reserve facilities, will also be closed or realigned, according to the recommendations.

The Pentagon's list merely comprises recommendations. The list then goes to a nine-member commission that will review it, travel to those installations and discuss the potential closings with community members.

In four previous rounds of closures starting in 1988, BRAC commissions have accepted 85 percent of bases the Pentagon recommended for closure or consolidation.

Defense Secretary Rumsfeld has said the move would save \$48.8 billion over 20 years while reshaping the military for America's expected 21st century adversaries and the War on Terror.

Rumsfeld's plan calls for a massive shift of U.S. forces that would result in a net loss of 29,005 military and civilian jobs at domestic installations. Overall, he proposes pulling 218,570 military and civilian positions out of some U.S. bases while adding 189,565 positions to others. The plan would add at least 400 jobs to each of 49 domestic bases, with troops and other workers coming from other U.S. facilities or abroad. The closures and down-sizings would occur over six years starting in 2006.

In previous rounds, 97 out of 522 major bases were closed, saving an estimated \$29 billion. This year's cuts were expected to be even bigger, but U.S. military officials are planning to move some 70,000 personnel currently based in Europe and Asia back to the United States.

Closures in 1988, 1991, 1993 and 1995 eliminated or realigned 451 installations, including 97 major ones, resulted in a net savings to the government of about \$18 billion through 2001. The Pentagon projects recurring annual savings of \$7.3 billion from those four rounds combined.

1. How much does Secretary Rumsfeld project in annual savings via significant base closures?
2. If the 1988 BRAC percentage of base closure occurs at the same rate in this round of base closures how many may we anticipate being closed?
3. As a ratio, how many more civilian positions are being cut in relation to those being added?
4. What percentages of the 318 major military bases, across the U.S., are proposed to be shut down?
5. What is the current plan for some 70,000 personnel currently based in Europe and Asia?
6. How soon are these base closures slotted to take place?
7. Explain the process which now unfolds to determine what bases will be closed.
8. In your opinion, do you feel base closures are an effective means to saving money? Explain.
9. What new information have you learned in this edition of The Daughtry Times?
10. In appropriate five-paragraph essay format, compare and contrast the pros and cons these projected base closures possess on a) the economy, b) the community, and c) people's lives.