



## Where Did BRAC Originate?

The Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) process had its origins in the 1960s. President John F. Kennedy directed Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara to develop and implement an extensive base realignment and closure program to reduce the Department's base structure established during World War II and the Korean War. Hundreds of bases were closed and realigned during this period. More than 60 major bases were closed. Criteria governing selection of bases for closure were established primarily within the Office of the Secretary of Defense, with minimal consultation with the military departments or Congress.

Congress did not anticipate the broad extent of these actions. The cumulative political and economic impact was substantial and, with few exceptions, the closures were viewed negatively by Congress. In 1965, Congress passed legislation setting up reporting requirements designed to involve itself in any DoD base closure program. President Lyndon B. Johnson vetoed the bill. This per-

mitted DoD to continue realigning and closing bases without congressional oversight throughout the rest of the 1960s.

In the early 1970s, DoD found it increasingly difficult to realign or close installations because Congress regulated the base closure process and limited or denied base closure funding. In 1976, the Military Construction Authorization Bill contained a provision prohibiting any base closure or reduction of more than 250 civilian employees until DoD had notified Congress of the proposed actions, assessed the personnel and economic impacts, followed the analysis provision of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), and waited nine months. This bill was vetoed by President Ford. A subsequent congressional veto override effort failed.

Congress' response. The legislation was codified as Section 2687, Title 10, U.S. Code. This, coupled with the requirements of NEPA, effectively brought base closures to a halt, in part because the required studies took one to two years to complete.

As economic pressures mounted, the drive to realign and close military installations intensified. In 1983, during the Reagan presidency, the President's Private Sector Survey on Cost Control (the Grace Commission) concluded in its report that economies could be made in base structure. It recommended that a non-partisan, independent commission be established to study the issue and submit a list of closures. Nothing came of these early efforts. Finally, at the end of the second Reagan term, the administration recognized a window in which to address this political stalemate.

In 1988, Secretary of Defense Frank Carlucci recognized the need to close excess bases and the political possibility of gaining congressional support. By that time, even though the Cold War had no signs of ending, the defense budget had already been declining for three straight years from the 1985 peak, and it was predicted to decline further.

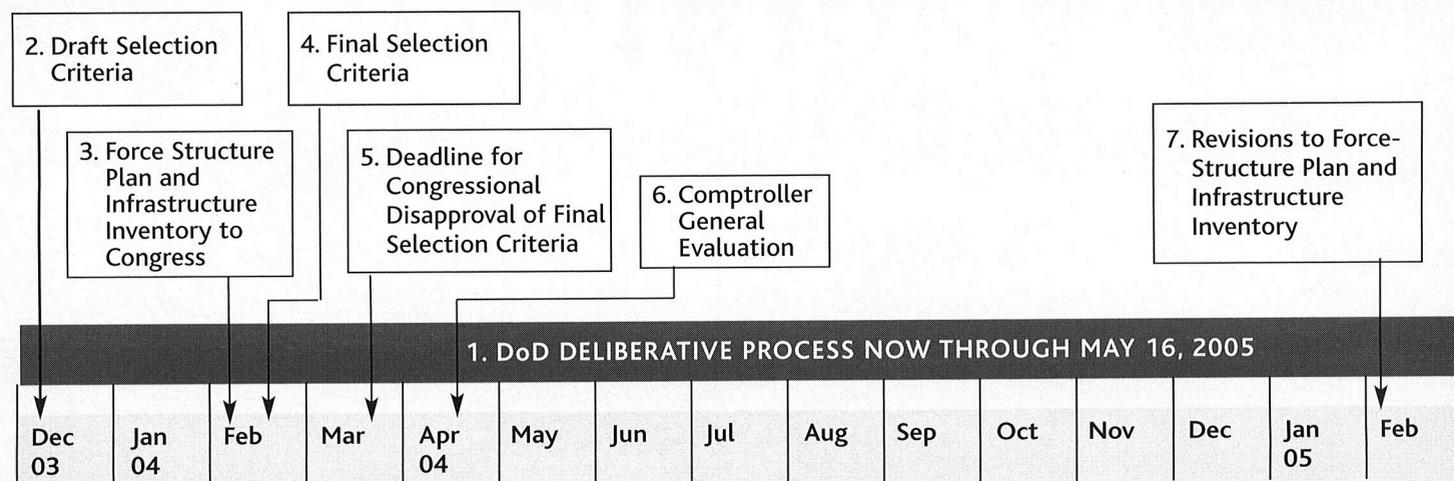
In 1988, Carlucci chartered the Defense Secretary's Commission on Base Realignment and Closure to recommend military bases within the United States for realignment and closure. Legislation that was subsequently enacted (P.L. 100-526) provided a statutory basis for this one-time approach and also provided relief from certain statutory impediments to the completion of

*"Congress authorized a base realignment and closure (BRAC) round in 2005. At a minimum, BRAC 2005 must eliminate excess physical capacity; the operation, sustainment, and recapitalization of which diverts scarce resources from defense capability. However, BRAC 2005 can make an even more profound contribution to transforming the Department by rationalizing our infrastructure with defense strategy. BRAC 2005 should be the means by which we reconfigure our current infrastructure into one in which operational capacity maximizes both warfighting capability and efficiency."*

—Donald H. Rumsfeld, Secretary of Defense  
 November 15, 2002

In 1977, however, President Jimmy Carter approved legislation requiring DoD to notify Congress when a base is a candidate for reduction or closure; prepare reports on the strategic, environmental and local economic consequences of such actions; and wait 60 days for

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## BRAC 2005 TIMELINE

**1. Now through May 16, 2005: DoD Deliberative Process.** DoD undertakes internal data gathering and analytic process necessary to formulate recommendations and meet the statutory reporting requirements outlined below in No. 3.

**2. December 31, 2003: Draft Selection Criteria.** Not later than this date the secretary of Defense "shall publish in the Federal Register and transmit to the congressional defense committees the criteria proposed to be used by the secretary in making recommendations for the closure or realignment of military installations inside the United States." There is a 30-day public comment period.

**3. February 2004: Force Structure Plan and Infrastructure Inventory to Congress.** As part of the FY 05 Budget justification documents submitted to Congress, the secretary shall include: a force-structure plan for the armed forces; a comprehensive inventory of military installations worldwide for each military department; a description of infrastructure necessary to support the force structure described in the force structure plan; a discussion of excess categories of excess infrastructure and infrastructure capacity; an economic analysis of the effect of the closure or realignment of military installations to reduce excess infrastructure; and a certification regarding whether the need exists for the closure or realignment of additional military installations.

**4. February 16, 2004: Final Selection Criteria.** Not later than this date the secretary of Defense shall "publish in the Federal Register and transmit to the congressional defense committees the final criteria to be used in making recommendations for the closure and realignment of military installations inside the United States."

**5. March 15, 2004: Deadline for Congressional disapproval of final selection criteria**

**6. April 2004: Comptroller General Evaluation.** Not later than 60 days after the date on which the force-structure plan and infrastructure inventory are submitted to Congress, the comptroller general shall prepare an evaluation of the force-structure plan, infrastructure inventory, selection criteria, and the need for the closure and realignment of additional military installations

**7. February 2005: Revisions to Force-Structure Plan and Infrastructure Inventory.** If the secretary has made any revisions to the

force-structure plan and infrastructure inventory, the secretary shall submit those revisions to Congress as part of the FY06 Budget justification documents

**8. March 15, 2005: Nomination of Commissioners.** Not later than this date, the president must transmit to the Senate nominations for the appointment of new members to the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission.

**9. May 16, 2005: Secretary of Defense Recommendations.** Not later than this date, the secretary must publish in the *Federal Register* and transmit to the congressional defense committees and the Commission, a list of the military installations that the secretary recommends for closure or realignment.

**10. July 1, 2005: Comptroller General Analysis.** Not later than this date, the comptroller general shall transmit to the congressional defense committees a report containing a detailed analysis of the secretary's recommendations and selection process.

**11. September 8, 2005: Commission's Recommendations.** Not later than this date, the Commission must transmit to the president "a report containing its findings and conclusions based on a review and analysis of the secretary's recommendations."

**12. September 23, 2005: President's Approval or Disapproval of Commission Recommendations.** Not later than this date, the president shall transmit to the Commission and to the Congress, "a report containing the president's approval or disapproval of the Commission's recommendations."

**13. October 20, 2005: Commission's Revised Recommendations.** If the president disapproves the Commission's initial recommendations, the Commission must submit revised recommendations to the president not later than this date.

**14. November 7, 2005: President's Approval or Disapproval of Revised Recommendations.** The president must approve the revised recommendations and transmit approval to Congress by this date or the process ends. The recommendations become binding 45 "legislative" days after presidential transmission or adjournment *sine die*, unless Congress enacts joint resolution of disapproval.

**15. April 15, 2006. Commission terminates**

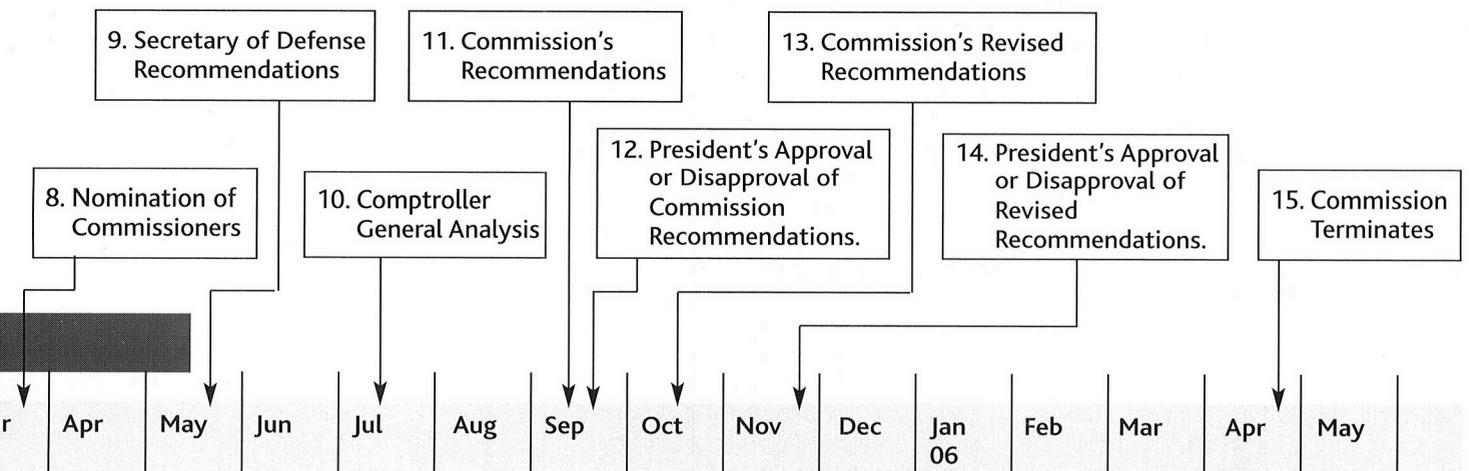
base closures.

The 1988 Base Closure Commission issued its report in December of that year. It recommended closing 86 military installations and realigning 13 others. An additional 46 were designated for increases because units and activities were relocated as a result

of the recommendations. Carlucci was required by P.L. 100-526 to accept or reject the commission's recommendations in their entirety. In 1989, he accepted all of the recommendations and Congress didn't reject the recommendations.

By the end of 1989, as DoD was preparing

to send its revised FY91 Budget to Congress, the world political landscape began changing dramatically. The Berlin Wall had fallen, the Warsaw Pact was weakening, democracy was spreading throughout the region, and U.S.-Soviet relations were improving. It became clear that DoD's force structure and





budget would decline over the next several years, in response to reduced tensions and threats.

Because it would take one to two years to complete the required base closure and environmental impact studies under the Section 2687 procedures, then-Secretary of Defense Cheney decided to get started and in January 1990, DoD announced a list of candidates for closure. These studies were never completed. With President Bush's signing of P.L. 101-510, DoD began its review of the base structure anew. The new law authorized independent presidential BRAC commissions in 1991, 1993 and 1995. The first of the three commissions to operate under the new law received Secretary Cheney's recommendations in April 1991. Cheney recommended a significant base structure drawdown and the 1991 commission accepted approximately 90 percent of those recommendations.

In 1993 and 1995, Commission recommendations for additional base closures and realignments were approved by President Clinton and approved by the Congress.

The 1997 QDR concluded that additional infrastructure savings were necessary and that retaining excess base infrastructure wasn't needed with a smaller military force, and wasted scarce defense resources essential to future military modernization. Base closings became an integral part of this plan.

Under the BRAC process, the secretary of Defense makes recommendations to a commission, nominated by the president and confirmed by the Senate. The commission, after being confirmed by the Senate, reviews these recommendations and makes its own recommendations to the president. The president then reviews the recommendations, either sends those back to the commission for additional work or forwards them, without changes, to the Congress, and then the recommendations of the commission go into effect unless disapproved by a joint resolution of the Congress.

Lawmakers did not agree until 2001 to schedule another round of base closings. Before it was resolved, the dispute held up a conference agreement on the fiscal 2002 defense authorization bill (PL 107-107) and led President George W. Bush to threaten to veto the bill if it did not allow a new round in 2005.

Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld and Army GEN Henry H. Shelton, then chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, told the House Armed Services Committee in July 2001 that the Pentagon maintained 25 percent more facilities than it needed, even after four rounds of base closings in the 1990s. By some accounts, the excess military bases annually cost taxpayers an estimated \$3.5 billion.

In July 2001, the Department of Defense announced an Efficient Facilities Initiative (EFI), which will enable the U.S. military to match facilities to forces. EFI ensures the primacy of military value in making decisions on facilities and harnesses the strength and creativity of the private sector by creating partnerships with local communities. The EFI will encourage a cooperative effort between the president, Congress and the military and local communities to achieve the most effective and efficient base structure. It will give local communities a significant role in determining the future use of facilities in their area by transferring closed installations to local redevelopers at no cost (provided that proceeds are reinvested) and by creating partnerships with local communities to own, operate, or maintain those installations that remain.

In mid-December 2001, House and Senate negotiators authorized a new round of military base closings, but delayed any action until 2005. Although the Bush administration and the Senate had wanted the base-closing process to begin in 2003, the House had been opposed. Under the compromise plan, the secretary of Defense will submit a force structure plan and facility inventory, with a certification that proposed closings were justified by the force structure plan and that they would produce net savings. The Bush administration has estimated that 20 to 25 percent of military bases are surplus, and that the Pentagon could save \$3 billion a year by eliminating surplus facilities.

In August 2002, it was estimated the next round of base closings in 2005 could save \$6 billion a year, even if it cut only 12 percent of DoD's military infrastructure. In January 2004, the Department of Defense announced that it had requested commanders of installations in the United States, territories and possessions to gather information about their installations as part of the 2005 round of BRAC. All installations are to participate in these calls. In a related action, the department also published Draft Selection Criteria in the 23 December 2003 *Federal Register* for public comment, which will be used as part of the evaluation process.

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*Compiled from the Department of Defense Web site and [www.globalsecurity.org](http://www.globalsecurity.org). Full reports can be found at [defenselink.mil](http://defenselink.mil).*

## All You Need to Know about BRAC

FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

### **Q: What is BRAC?**

**DoD:** "BRAC" is an acronym that stands for base realignment and closure. It is the process DoD has previously used to reorganize its installation infrastructure to more efficiently and effectively support its forces, increase operational readiness and facilitate new ways of doing business.

### **Q: How is BRAC transformational?**

**DoD:** BRAC provides a singular opportunity to reshape defense infrastructure to optimize military readiness. The BRAC 2005 process will help find innovative ways to consolidate, realign, or find alternative uses for current facilities to ensure that the United States continues to field the best-prepared and best-equipped military in the world. BRAC will also enable the U.S. military to better match facilities to forces, meet the threats and challenges of a new century, and make the wisest use of limited defense dollars.

### **Q: What benefit does the Department anticipate from a future BRAC round?**

**DoD:** The Department will be able to divest itself of unnecessary installation infrastructure and use the resultant savings for improving fighting capabilities and quality-of-life for military forces. This will allow the Department to rationalize installation infrastructure with 21st century national security imperatives.

### **Q: What are some of the major elements of the BRAC 2005 process and what will ensure it will be fair?**

**DoD:** The process is governed by law; specifically, the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Act of 1990. The process begins with a threat assessment of the future national security environment, followed by the development of a force structure plan and basing requirements to meet these threats. DoD then applies published selection criteria to determine which installations to recommend for realignment and closure.

The secretary of Defense will publish a report containing the realignment and closure recommendations, forwarding supporting documentation to an independent commission appointed by the president, in consultation with congressional leadership. The commission has the authority to change the Department's recommendations if it determines that the secretary deviated substantial-