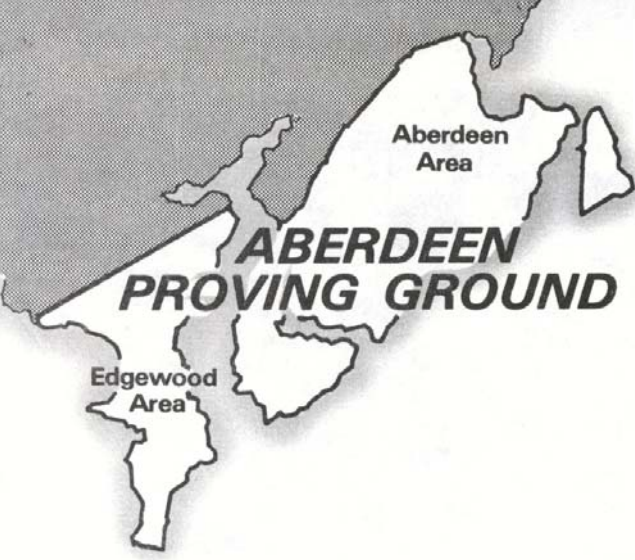


NEWS RELEASE



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Department of Defense Recommends Changes at Aberdeen Proving Ground Under BRAC 2005

The Department of Defense announced today its recommendation to move a variety of operations and military activities to Aberdeen Proving Ground, Md., at the same time moving other activities to installations elsewhere in the United States. Today's announcement was part of the Congressionally-authorized [2005 Base Realignment and Closure \(BRAC\)](#) process. This process is an essential step in the transformation of the Army and other military services, maximizing their capabilities to work together more effectively while providing substantial savings in military spending.

The DoD recommendations, which affect installations nationwide as the military strives to align its infrastructure with the needs of a more efficient and effective force, will be reviewed by a nine-member independent BRAC Commission. The Commission, chaired by former Secretary of Veterans Affairs Anthony Principi, must submit its recommendations to President Bush by Sept. 8.

Commanders of installations affected by BRAC 2005 were notified of their status this morning, shortly after Members of Congress were notified. Prior to the announcement, installations were only involved in the process by providing a broad range of specified data and information for evaluation.

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Among the activities proposed for relocation to APG are elements of the U.S. Army Research Laboratory currently located in Virginia, Ohio, and New Mexico; activities of the U.S. Army Communications-Electronics Command currently located in New Jersey, Virginia, Alabama and Kentucky; Headquarters, U.S. Army Test and Evaluation Command and Army Evaluation Center, from Virginia; some Civilian Personnel Operations from Illinois; and various chemical and biological defense research activities from Washington, D.C., Virginia, Indiana, and Texas.

Activities proposed to be relocated from APG include the U.S. Army Ordnance Center and School to Fort Lee, Va., and the U.S. Army Environmental Center to Fort Sam Houston, Texas.

The proposed net personnel impacts include the loss of approximately 600 permanent party military, 300 civilian employees, and 2800 military and civilian students, and a gain of more than 5300 civilian employees.

Installation personnel were not involved in the evaluation or selection of bases affected by BRAC, a process that was closely guarded within DoD to ensure fairness and rigor in evaluating data objectively. All information used by DoD to make its recommendations will be provided to the BRAC Commission as it deliberates the list through the summer.

Col. John T. Wright, deputy installation commander of Aberdeen Proving Ground, made the following statement upon being notified this morning of the base's status:

These realignment proposals recognize the fact that Aberdeen Proving Ground is a full spectrum military research, development, acquisition, test and evaluation center. The recommendations point toward a powerful center for soldier-focused systems that permit integration and coordination at every step from research and development through test and evaluation and acquisition.

The changes should be viewed as necessary for transforming the Army into the force the nation needs in a changing world with new threats.

The net growth of jobs into Harford County and the surrounding communities should have a positive impact on our neighbors. Of course, we understand that these changes must be managed carefully so that the quality of life for our Soldiers, their families and our civilian workers remains high.

It is important for everyone to remember that the BRAC decision process is ongoing and will not be finalized until this November at the earliest.

At Aberdeen Proving Ground we remain committed to doing what's right for our Soldiers, our work force and our nation, and we will do every thing possible to keep our neighbors fully informed.

The BRAC Commission will hold regional meetings to solicit public input prior to making its recommendations to the President in September for his review and approval. They may hold one in this area, but it has not yet been scheduled. The President then forwards the recommendations to Congress, which has 45 legislative days to act on the report. Under the BRAC statute, actions to close or realign an installation must be initiated within two years after Congressional approval, with completion in six years.

For current information on BRAC and how it affects installations nationwide, visit the DoD BRAC website at www.dod.mil/brac and the Army BRAC website at <http://www.hqda.army.mil/acsim/brac/braco.htm> .