



# California Institute Special Report: Pentagon Base Closings List Has Fewer US and California Cuts Than Expected

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*This report is available on the web at <http://www.calinst.org/defense/bracMay.htm>. Several tables are associated with this report, including *Proposed BRAC Changes Announced 5/13/2005 -- California Installations, DoD Military and Civilian Personnel by State Before and After 2005 BRAC Round, and BRAC 2005 Closure and Realignment Impacts by Economic Area*. These tables are available at <http://www.calinst.org/defense.htm>.*

For the first time in recent memory, the Pentagon has announced a list of base closings that does not disproportionately reduce California's bases or personnel. In sharp contrast to the closures in the 1980s and 1990s, where California shouldered more than half of the nation's net cuts, California would lose barely more than 2,000 personnel under the Pentagon plan. Compared to early predictions of cuts more than 10-fold as large, the proposed reductions are a relief to many across the nation. Whereas it is impossible to say why the closures round was less painful for the state, it may be that the unanimous bipartisan solidarity displayed by the California Congressional Delegation, Governor, State Legislature, local officials, and private sector allies from across the state had a substantially positive effect. Some areas of the state did suffer losses, but the statewide experience was relatively mild.

On the morning of Friday, May 13, 2005, Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld released a list of bases recommended for closure and realignment as part of the 2005 Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) round. Nationwide, the Pentagon recommends closing 33 major military installations, conducting the major realignment of 29 other bases, and altering more than 775 smaller installations. In total, the recommendations propose cutting 26,187 Department of Defense (DoD) personnel, including military and civilian jobs. Included in the recommendations is a line item designating 13,503 cuts from "Germany, Korea, and Undistributed –Undistributed or Overseas Reductions." If those non-domestic cuts are removed from the Secretary's recommendations, personnel reductions total 12,684 domestically. Overall, the cuts would reduce personnel by either 1.54 percent (including "Germany, Korea, and Undistributed") or by 0.75 percent (excluding "Germany, Korea, and Undistributed"). The closures and realignments figures are much less damaging than the Pentagon's initial estimate of reducing excess force structure capacity by 24 percent. Rather, the 2005 BRAC recommendations appear to only reduce the plant replacement value (a measure used by DoD to quantify the value of bases) of DoD holdings by five percent.

California escaped this first step of the BRAC process without suffering the disproportionate cuts that characterized its experiences in past BRAC rounds. Overall, the

Pentagon report reduces personnel in California by 2,018 jobs (785 military, 1,200 civilian, and 33 “mission contractors”). Depending on whether the non-“Germany, Korea, and Undistributed” personnel reductions are included in calculations, California would sustain 7.7 percent (included) or 15.9 percent (excluded) of the nation’s total personnel cuts. Whereas other states gained significantly in the recommendations, California’s result is relatively favorable. The personnel cuts would reduce the total military presence in the state by just over 1 percent, from 188,104 personnel to 186,086 personnel. In terms of net cuts, California had the 12<sup>th</sup> largest numeric reduction in personnel of the 50 states and the District of Columbia; as a percentage of its existing personnel (including both net losers and gainers), California’s job cuts ranked 25<sup>th</sup> out of the 50 states and the District of Columbia.

The Secretary identified 12 bases for closure in California. However, only two facilities would experience net reductions of more than 250 personnel -- Naval Support Activity in Corona (known as NORCO) would lose 892 jobs and Onizuka Air Force Station would lose 278 jobs. California had 12 bases designated for realignment, but only four of the realignments were categorized as major: Marine Corps Logistics Base Barstow (419 job losses), Marine Base Coronado (460), Naval Base Ventura City (1,534), and Naval Medical Center San Diego (1,630). A number of California bases also gained military personnel, led by Naval Air Weapons Station China Lake, which gained 2,469 personnel and Naval Station San Diego, which gained 1,170 personnel. Most of the bases considered “at-risk” for closure or realignment, particularly Los Angeles Air Force Base, the Naval Postgraduate School (Monterey), the Defense Language Institute (Monterey), and the Marine Corps Air Station Miramar were not included on the Secretary’s list. In fact Miramar gained 72 personnel. In terms of the overall employment impact on the state, the Pentagon estimates that the closing and realignment of bases within California will only indirectly reduce employment by 1,540 jobs, for a total reduction of employment of 3,558 (DoD personnel plus indirect employment). As such, the base closures and realignments would only reduce employment in California by 0.02 percent.

Within the state, regional experiences varied. The Los Angeles/Orange/Ventura region experienced the most significant decrease in personnel losing 1,765 jobs, with most of the eliminated jobs located at Naval Base Ventura City. The Inland Empire and the San Diego region would each lose more than 1,000 DoD jobs under the Secretary’s recommendations. Proposed effects were relatively small for the San Francisco Bay Area (-189), the Central Coast (+127), and the Central Valley (+52). Finally, bases in desert areas, driven by China Lake’s gain of nearly 2,500 personnel, stand to gain more than 2,100 net jobs for the region from the BRAC process.

Across the country, the Northeast suffered the brunt of personnel reductions, while the South gained the most from movement of troops between bases. Connecticut (-8,586), Maine (-6,938), the District of Columbia (-6,496), Alaska (-4,619) are the states recommended for the most dramatic cuts. The largest gainers include Maryland (+9,293), Georgia (+7,423), and Texas (+6,150)

With the release of the Secretary’s list of closures and realignments, jurisdiction for the BRAC process now transfers to the nine-member Base Realignment and Closure Commission, chaired by San Diego resident Anthony Principi. The Commission is charged with reviewing and revising the Secretary’s recommendation to ensure that they

strictly follow the legally established criteria for deciding which bases to close and realign. At least one Commission member will visit each base designated on the list for closure or realignment in order to provide the community with an opportunity to present its argument for remaining open. Whereas in the past, a majority of votes on the Commission could add a base, now seven of nine votes are required to add bases to list. A simple majority can remove a base from the list.

The Commission will have approximately four months, until September 8, 2005, to amend the list and present its revised recommendations to the President. By September 23, 2005, the President must approve, as a whole, the Commission's list of closures and realignments or disapprove and send it back to the Commission for further modification. If the President disapproves of the Commission's list, they have until October 20, 2005 to revise and resubmit it. The President must transmit the closure and realignment list to Congress by November 7, 2005, or the BRAC process dies. Finally, by December 22, 2005, Congress must approve or disapprove of the list transmitted to them by the President. If they disapprove, the BRAC process dies; if they approve the list, the closures and realignments assume the power of law and bases will begin to close.

In sum, notwithstanding the prospective harm to certain communities within the state and whatever changes might result from the BRAC Commission's adjustments, this closure round appears to be starting on a high note for California.

For more information on the BRAC process, see a recently published California Institute report entitled *California Past Base Closure Experiences and the 2005 BRAC Round* that can be viewed at <http://www.calinst.org/defense/base1a.htm> . In addition, the California Institute has established a page on its website dedicated to BRAC and defense industry issues, which can be reached at <http://www.calinst.org/defense.htm> . A pdf version of the full list of proposed closures from DoD is mirrored on our website, at <http://www.calinst.org/defense/braclist2005.pdf> . Finally, in April, the California Council on Base Support and Retention released a report on California's military strength that can be viewed at <http://www.omas.ca.gov/Retention/pdf/report.pdf> .

Tables associated with this report are available on the California Institute website. Tables associated with this report are available on the California Institute website at <http://www.calinst.org/defense/BRACstat.pdf> . These include tables entitled *Proposed BRAC Changes Announced 5/13/2005 -- California Installations, DoD Military and Civilian Personnel by State Before and After 2005 BRAC Round* (which compares proposed BRAC list changes with DoD's Base Structure Report count of personnel for 9/30/2005), and *BRAC 2005 Closure and Realignment Impacts by Economic Area*. These tables are available at <http://www.calinst.org/defense.htm> in either pdf or xls format.