

Commission Recommendation

The Commission finds the Secretary of Defense did not deviate substantially from the force-structure plan and final criteria. Therefore, the Commission recommends the following: realign Fort Lee, by reducing Kenner Army Community Hospital to a clinic. Eliminate inpatient services.

Fort Pickett, Virginia

Category: Major Training Areas

Mission: Regional training center that supports active Army and Reserve

Components and other DoD activities

One-time Cost: \$25.3 million

Savings: 1996-2001: \$46.7 million

Annual: \$21.8 million

Return on Investment: 1999 (Immediate)

FINAL ACTION: Close

Secretary of Defense Recommendation

Close Fort Pickett, except minimum essential training areas and facilities as an enclave for the Reserve Components. Relocate the Petroleum Training Facility to Fort Dix, NJ.

Secretary of Defense Justification

In the past ten years, the Army has reduced its active and reserve forces considerably. The Army must reduce excess infrastructure to meet the needs of the future.

Fort Pickett is very low in military value compared to other major training area installations. It has virtually no Active Component tenants. Annual training for reserve units that now use Fort Pickett can be conducted easily at other installations in the region, including Fort Bragg, Fort A.P. Hill and Camp Dawson. The Army intends to license required facilities and training areas to the Army National Guard.

Community Concerns

Members of the rural community strongly support keeping Fort Pickett open, stressing what they believe is its high military value and the employment opportunities it provides. Residents of the town of Blackstone and employees on the installation have both stressed the long-term, outstanding military-community relations that exist, and cited the lack of environmental impediments to training that exist at other military bases. Community groups believe the Army's analysis was flawed, and failed to take into account the training con-

ducted at Fort Pickett by the other services' active and reserve components, as well as increased active duty Marine and Army training occurring there due to training congestion at installations such as Camp Lejeune and Fort Bragg, North Carolina.

Commission Findings

The Commission found the Army evaluated all its major training area installations equally. The Commission also found the Army's process of integrating a quantitative installation assessment with a qualitative operational blueprint, based upon operational and stationing requirements of the Army Stationing Strategy, is a sound approach to develop a military value assessment (MVA) for each installation in this category.

The Commission examined all of the issues presented by the local community and elected officials, especially with regard to the military value of Fort Pickett as a major training area. The Commission found members of all components from all the armed forces train at Fort Pickett. In evaluating the future access to the training facilities and training area of the installation, especially by members of the Reserve Component (RC), the Commission was satisfied that such access can continue. The Commission found adequate training locations existed in the region to handle additional RC annual training requirements, without Fort Pickett, but scheduling of such training would be more difficult, especially during peak training load periods. The Commission also found the National Guard and other RC units required continued access to Fort Pickett for both individual and annual training.

Finally, the Commission found closing Fort Pickett, and preserving an enclave for training for the Reserve Components, would reduce excess infrastructure and generate substantial savings.

Commission Recommendation

The Commission finds the Secretary of Defense deviated substantially from the force-structure plan and final criteria 1 and 2. Therefore, the Commission recommends the following: close Fort Pickett, except minimum essential ranges, facilities, and training areas as a Reserve Component training enclave to permit the conduct of individual and annual training. The Commission finds this recommendation is consistent with the force-structure plan and final criteria.