United States Government Accountability Office

Report to the Committee on Armed Services, U.S. Senate

March 2018

MILITARY BASES

DOD Should Address Challenges with Communication and Mission Changes to Improve Future Base Realignment and Closure Rounds

Accessible Version

GAO-18-231

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GAO Highlights

Highlights of GAO-18-231, a report to the Committee on Armed Services, U.S. Senate

Why GAO Did This Study

The 2005 BRAC round was the costliest and most complex BRAC round ever. In contrast to prior rounds, which focused on the goal of reducing excess infrastructure, DOD's goals for BRAC 2005 also included transforming the military and fostering joint activities.

GAO was asked to review DOD's performance outcomes from BRAC 2005. This report examines the extent to which DOD has (1) measured the achievement of its goals for BRAC 2005 and (2) implemented prior GAO recommendations on BRAC 2005 and addressed any additional challenges to improve performance for any future BRAC round. GAO reviewed relevant documents and guidance; met with a nongeneralizable selection of 26 military organizations and 12 communities involved with BRAC 2005; and interviewed DOD officials.

What GAO Recommends

Congress should consider requiring DOD to identify and track appropriate measures of effectiveness in any future BRAC round. Also, GAO recommends that in any future BRAC round DOD (1) take steps to establish clear and consistent communications while collecting data and (2) provide specific guidance to the military departments to monitor and report on mission-related changes during implementation. GAO also continues to believe that DOD should fully implement GAO's prior recommendations on BRAC 2005. DOD objected to Congress requiring DOD to identify and track performance measures, but GAO continues to believe this to be an appropriate action for the reasons discussed in the report. Lastly, DOD concurred with the two recommendations.

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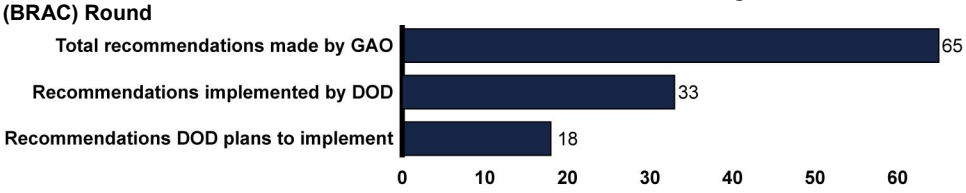
What GAO Found

The Department of Defense (DOD) components generally did not measure the achievement of goals—reducing excess infrastructure, transforming the military, and promoting joint activities among the military departments—for the 2005 Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) round. In March 2013, GAO recommended that, for any future BRAC round, DOD identify measures of effectiveness and develop a plan to demonstrate achieved results. DOD did not concur and stated that no action is expected. Without a requirement for DOD to identify measures of effectiveness and track achievement of its goals, Congress will not have full visibility over the expected outcomes or achievements of any future BRAC rounds.

Of the 65 recommendations GAO has made to help DOD address challenges it faced in BRAC 2005, as of October 2017 DOD had implemented 33 of them (with 18 pending DOD action).

DOD Actions on GAO Recommendations Related to the 2005 Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) Round



Source: GAO analysis of GAO and Department of Defense (DOD) information. | GAO-18-231

DOD has not addressed challenges associated with communication and monitoring mission-related changes. Specifically:

- Some military organizations stated that they could not communicate to BRAC decision makers information outside of the data-collection process because DOD did not establish clear and consistent communications. For example, Army officials at Fort Knox, Kentucky, stated that there was no way to communicate that excess facilities were ill-suited for relocating the Human Resources Command and moved forward without full consideration of alternatives for using better-suited excess space at other locations. As a result, DOD spent about $55 million more than estimated to construct a new building at Fort Knox.
- DOD implemented BRAC recommendations that affected units' ability to carry out their missions because DOD lacked specific guidance to monitor and report on mission-related changes. For example, DOD spent about $27.7 million on a landing field for a Marine Corps F-35 training squadron at Eglin Air Force Base, Florida, even though it had been previously decided to station the F-35 aircraft and personnel at another base.

By addressing its communication and monitoring challenges, DOD could better inform decision making, better ensure that its infrastructure meets the need of its force structure, and better position itself to achieve its goals in any future BRAC round.

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Abbreviations

ASD (EI&E)	Assistant Secretary of Defense for Energy, Installations, and Environment
BRAC	Base Realignment and Closure
DOD	Department of Defense

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March 30, 2018

The Honorable John McCain
Chairman
The Honorable Jack Reed
Ranking Member
Committee on Armed Services
United States Senate

The Department of Defense's (DOD) 2005 round of Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) was the largest, costliest, and most complex of the five BRAC rounds since 1988. In contrast to prior rounds, which focused on the goal of reducing excess infrastructure, DOD's goals for BRAC 2005 also included transforming the military and fostering joint activities across the military departments. In the department's BRAC 2005 report, the Secretary of Defense stated that BRAC 2005 provided DOD a unique opportunity to address new challenges posed by international terrorism, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, ungoverned areas, rogue states, and nonstate actors. By implementing the 198 recommendations approved by the 2005 BRAC Commission, DOD closed 23 major bases, realigned 24 major bases, combined 26 installations into 12 joint bases, and eliminated about 12,000 civilian positions.[1] After implementing these BRAC 2005 recommendations, in 2017 DOD estimated that it continued to have significant excess capacity remaining. To address remaining excess capacity, between 2013 and 2017 DOD requested additional BRAC rounds and, in February 2018, stated that it would work with Congress to find common areas where reforms and changes could be made. Congress has not authorized additional BRAC rounds to date.

Since 2005, we have issued more than 40 reports and testimonies on BRAC 2005 planning, implementation, costs, and savings; this work highlights information DOD can use to improve its process for developing and implementing BRAC recommendations. For example, in our March 2013 report on lessons learned from the BRAC 2005 round, we found that

[1]The BRAC statute establishes an independent commission to review the Secretary of Defense's realignment and closure recommendations, with the authority to change these recommendations in certain circumstances if it determines that the Secretary deviated substantially from the legally mandated selection criteria and a DOD force structure plan.

DOD's process for providing the BRAC Commission with cost and savings estimates was hindered by underestimating requirements.[2] Additionally, we found that DOD did not fully anticipate information technology requirements for many of the BRAC recommendations. Our report made several recommendations designed to improve any future BRAC rounds and suggested legislative changes that Congress should consider to enhance its oversight of any future BRAC rounds. Of the 10 recommendations in the March 2013 report, DOD generally concurred with 5. According to DOD officials, DOD has not taken any actions because these recommendations can only be implemented if another round of BRAC is conducted.[3]

Since 1997, we have designated DOD infrastructure as a high-risk area, noting that reducing the cost of DOD's excess infrastructure activities is critical to the department making use of scarce resources and maintaining high levels of military capabilities. In GAO's 2017 high-risk update, we reported on DOD's need for improvement in reducing excess infrastructure, which included disposing of and consolidating facilities under the BRAC process and improving how DOD uses its facilities.[4] We noted that DOD has demonstrated leadership by requesting more rounds of BRAC—its primary method for reducing excess infrastructure. However, we stated that DOD needs to take additional action on some of our recommendations related to implementing any future BRAC rounds, such as improving DOD's ability to estimate potential liabilities and savings to achieve desired outcomes. The Related GAO Products page at the end of this report provides a list of our BRAC reports and testimonies.

We were asked to review DOD's performance outcomes from BRAC 2005. In this report, we assess the extent that DOD (1) measured the achievement of its goals for reducing excess infrastructure, transforming the military, and promoting jointness for BRAC 2005 and (2) implemented prior GAO recommendations and addressed any additional challenges

[2]GAO, *Military Bases: Opportunities Exist to Improve Future Base Realignment Closure Rounds*, GAO-13-149 (Washington, D.C.: Mar. 7, 2013).

[3]DOD did not concur with 5 of the 10 recommendations and stated that no action is expected, in part because it stated that the intent of GAO's recommendations to establish targets and measures of effectiveness was to prioritize capacity reductions over military value, as discussed later in the report.

[4]GAO, *High-Risk Series: Progress on Many High-Risk Areas, While Substantial Efforts Needed on Others*, GAO-17-317 (Washington, D.C.: Feb. 15, 2017).

faced in BRAC 2005 to improve performance for any future BRAC round. In addition, we describe how current economic indicators for the communities surrounding the 23 closed bases in BRAC 2005 compare to national averages; we report on this issue in appendix I.

To conduct our work, we reviewed the 2005 BRAC Commission's September 2005 report to the President, policy memorandums and guidance on conducting BRAC 2005, and other relevant documentation such as supporting BRAC analyses prepared by the military services or other units related to the development of BRAC 2005 recommendations.[5] We interviewed officials with the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Energy, Installations, and Environment (ASD [EI&E])—the element within the Office of the Secretary of Defense that oversees BRAC; the Army; the Navy; the Air Force; the Marine Corps; the U.S. Army Reserve Command; and the National Guard Bureau. We also conducted site visits to Connecticut, Indiana, Kentucky, Massachusetts, North Carolina, Rhode Island, and South Carolina. We met with 26 military units or organizations, such as Air Force wings and Army and Navy installations' Departments of Public Works, and 12 communities involved with BRAC 2005 recommendations. These interviews provide examples of any challenges faced by each individual party, but information obtained is not generalizable to all parties involved in the BRAC process. We selected locations for site visits based on ensuring geographic diversity and a mix of types of BRAC recommendations (closures, transformation, or jointness), and having at least one installation from or community associated with each military department.

To assess the extent that DOD measured the achievement of goals for reducing excess infrastructure, transforming the military, and promoting jointness for BRAC 2005, we met with officials to discuss measurement of goals and requested any related documentation. We compared DOD's efforts to *Standards for Internal Control in the Federal Government*, which emphasizes that an agency's management should track major agency achievements and compare these to the agencies' plans, goals, and objectives.[6] To calculate the excess infrastructure disposed of as a result

[5]There are three military departments—Army, Navy, and Air Force. There are five military services—Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard. The Navy and the Marine Corps are part of the Department of the Navy. Because the Coast Guard was not part of the BRAC process, we did not include it in our review.

[6]GAO, *Standards for Internal Control in the Federal Government*, GAO-14-704G (Washington, D.C.: September 2014).

of BRAC 2005, we reviewed the square footage and plant replacement value data from DOD's Cost of Base Realignment Actions model. However, DOD's data were incomplete, and we determined they were not sufficiently reliable to conduct this calculation, as discussed later in this report.

To assess the extent that DOD implemented prior GAO recommendations on BRAC 2005 and addressed any additional challenges faced in BRAC 2005 to improve performance for any future BRAC round, we reviewed our prior reports and testimonies to identify recommendations made. We then identified whether DOD implemented recommendations we made by discussing the status of recommendations with agency officials and obtaining copies of agency documents supporting the recommendations' implementation. We also met with officials to identify what additional challenges they faced from BRAC 2005 and what opportunities exist to improve any future BRAC round. For the purposes of this report, we used DOD documentation and interviews to identify and divide our assessment of the BRAC 2005 process into three phases: the analysis phase from 2001 to 2005, the implementation phase from 2005 to 2011, and the disposal phase from 2005 to the present. For the analysis phase, we reviewed available military departments' lessons-learned documents. For the implementation phase, we reviewed business plans supporting the implementation of the BRAC 2005 recommendations and other applicable documentation, such as a workforce planning study and an environmental impact statement affecting the implementation of some recommendations. For the disposal phase, we analyzed DOD's caretaker costs for closed bases that it has not yet transferred. We compared information about challenges in the analysis, implementation, and disposal phases to criteria for communications, monitoring, and risk assessments in *Standards for Internal Control in the Federal Government*.[7]

To describe how current economic indicators for the communities surrounding the 23 closed bases in BRAC 2005 compare to national averages in appendix I, we collected and analyzed unemployment data and per capita income growth. Specifically, we collected and analyzed calendar year 2016 unemployment data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics and calendar year 2006 through 2016 per capita income growth data, along with data on inflation, from the U.S. Bureau of Economic

[7]GAO-14-704G.

Analysis, which we used to calculate annualized real per capita income growth rates. Calendar year 2016 was the most current year for which local area data were available from these databases. We assessed the reliability of these data by reviewing U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics and U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis documentation regarding the methods used by each agency in producing their data and found the data to be sufficiently reliable to report the 2016 annual unemployment rate and 2006 through 2016 real per capita income growth. Appendix II provides further information on our scope and methodology.

We conducted this performance audit from April 2017 to March 2018 in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain sufficient, appropriate evidence to provide a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives. We believe that the evidence obtained provides a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives.

Background

BRAC 2005 Goals

The Secretary of Defense established goals for BRAC 2005 in a November 2002 memorandum issuing initial guidance for BRAC 2005 and again in a March 2004 report to Congress certifying the need for a BRAC round. Specifically, the Secretary reported that the BRAC 2005 round would be used to (1) dispose of excess facilities, (2) promote force transformation, and (3) enhance jointness. Although DOD did not specifically define these three goals, we have generally described them in prior reports as follows.[8]

- Dispose of excess facilities: Eliminating unneeded infrastructure to achieve savings.
- Promote force transformation: Correlating base infrastructure to the force structure and defense strategy. In the late 1990s, DOD

[8]See, for example, GAO, *Military Bases: Analysis of DOD's 2005 Selection Process and Recommendations for Base Closures and Realignments*, GAO-05-785 (Washington, D.C.: July 1, 2005); GAO-13-149; and GAO, *Military Base Realignments and Closures: More Guidance and Information Needed to Take Advantage of Opportunities to Consolidate Training*, GAO-16-45 (Washington, D.C.: Feb. 18, 2016).

embarked on a major effort to transform its business processes, human capital, and military capabilities. Transformation is also seen as a process intended to provide continuous improvements to military capabilities. For example, the Army used the BRAC process to transform the Army's force structure from an organization based on divisions to more rapidly deployable, brigade-based units and to accommodate rebasing of overseas units.

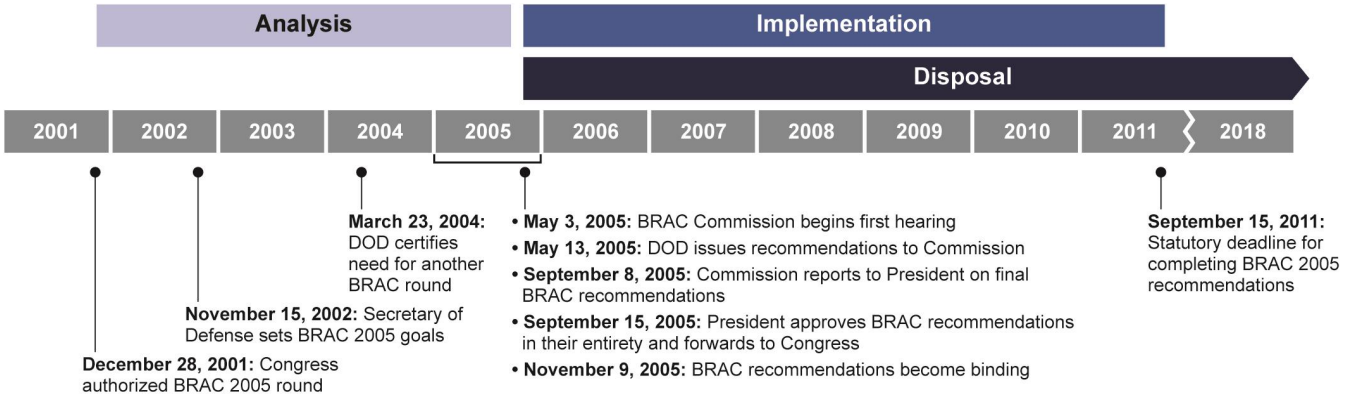
- Enhance jointness: Improving joint utilization to meet current and future threats. According to DOD, "joint" connotes activities, operations, and organizations, among others, in which elements of two or more military departments participate.

BRAC Phases

Congress established clear time frames in the BRAC statute for many of the milestones involved with base realignments and closures.[9] The BRAC 2005 process took 10 years from authorization through implementation. Congress authorized the BRAC 2005 round on December 28, 2001. The BRAC Commission submitted its recommendations to the President in 2005 and the round ended on September 15, 2011—6 years from the date the President submitted his certification of approval of the recommendations to Congress. The statute allows environmental cleanup and property caretaker and transfer actions associated with BRAC sites to exceed the 6-year time limit and does not set a deadline for the completion of these activities. Figure 1 displays the three phases of the BRAC 2005 round—analysis, implementation, and disposal—and key events involving Congress, DOD, and the BRAC Commission.

[9]Congress authorized BRAC 2005 with the passage of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2002, Pub. L. No. 107-107, Title XXX (2001). The law reauthorized the BRAC process by amending the authority used to carry out previous BRAC rounds, the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Act of 1990, Pub. L. No. 101-510, Title XXIX (codified as amended at 10 U.S.C. § 2687 note). Throughout this report, we will refer to the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Act of 1990, as amended, as "the BRAC statute."

Figure 1: Phases of the 2005 Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) Round



Source: GAO analysis of legislative, Department of Defense (DOD), and BRAC Commission information. | GAO-18-231

Analysis Phase

During the analysis phase, DOD developed selection criteria, created a force structure plan and infrastructure inventory, collected and analyzed data, and proposed recommendations for base realignments and closures.[10] The BRAC statute authorizing the BRAC 2005 round directed DOD to propose and adopt selection criteria to develop and evaluate candidate recommendations, with military value as the primary consideration.[11] The BRAC statute also required DOD to develop a force structure plan based on an assessment of probable threats to national security during a 20-year period beginning with fiscal year 2005. Based on the statute's requirements, the selection criteria were adopted as final in February 2004, and the force structure plan was provided to Congress in March 2004.

[10]Section 2914(a) of the BRAC statute required DOD to make its recommendations for closure or realignment on the basis of the force structure plan and infrastructure inventory prepared under section 2912, and the final selection criteria specified under section 2913.

[11]The statute authorizing BRAC 2005, Pub. L. No. 107-107, § 3002 (2001), amended the BRAC statute by inserting a new section, § 2913, which directed DOD to ensure that "military value" was the primary consideration for BRAC recommendations. Specifically, it described a number of considerations to be included at a minimum in the military value criteria, while also establishing four "special considerations" to be addressed in selection criteria outside of military value. Consistent with prior BRAC rounds, the law also required DOD to publish its proposed criteria in the Federal Register. DOD proposed its criteria at 68 Fed. Reg. 74221 (2003) and finalized its final criteria at 69 Fed. Reg. 6948 (2004).

To help inform its decision-making process during the analysis phase, the three military departments and the seven joint cross-service groups collected capacity and military value data that were certified as accurate by senior leaders.[12] In testimony before the BRAC Commission in May 2005, the Secretary of Defense said that DOD collected approximately 25 million pieces of data as part of the BRAC 2005 process. Given the extensive volume of requested data, we noted in July 2005 that the data-collection process was lengthy and required significant efforts to help ensure data accuracy, particularly from joint cross-service groups that were attempting to obtain common data across multiple military components.[13] We reported that, in some cases, coordinating data requests, clarifying questions and answers, controlling database entries, and other issues led to delays in the data-driven analysis DOD originally envisioned. As time progressed, however, these groups reported that they obtained the needed data, for the most part, to inform and support their scenarios. We ultimately reported that DOD's process for conducting its analysis was generally logical, reasoned, and well documented.

After taking these plans and accompanying analyses into consideration, the Secretary of Defense was then required to certify whether DOD should close or realign military installations. The BRAC Commission assessed DOD's closure and realignment recommendations for consistency with the eight selection criteria and DOD's Force Structure Plan. Ultimately, the BRAC Commission accepted over 86 percent of DOD's proposed internal recommendations; rejected, modified, or added additional recommendations; and adjusted some costs of BRAC recommendations.

Implementation Phase

After the BRAC Commission released its recommendations, and the recommendations became binding, the implementation phase started. During this phase, which started on November 9, 2005, and continued to September 15, 2011 (as required by the statute authorizing BRAC), DOD took steps to implement the BRAC Commission's 198 recommendations.

[12]The military departments—Army, Navy, and Air Force—developed service-specific installation realignment and closure options. In addition, the Office of the Secretary of Defense established seven joint cross-service groups to develop options across common business-oriented functions, such as medical services, supply and storage, and administrative activities.

[13]GAO-05-785.

Also during this phase, the military departments were responsible for completing environmental impact studies to determine how to enact the BRAC Commission's relevant recommendations. The military departments implemented their respective recommendations to close and realign installations, establish joint bases, and construct new facilities.

The large number and variety of BRAC actions resulted in DOD requiring BRAC oversight mechanisms to improve accountability for implementation. The BRAC 2005 round had more individual actions (813) than the four prior rounds combined (387). Thus, in the BRAC 2005 round, the Office of the Secretary of Defense for the first time required the military departments to develop business plans to better inform the Office of the Secretary of Defense of the status of implementation and financial details for each of the BRAC 2005 recommendations. These business plans included: (1) information such as a listing of all actions needed to implement each recommendation, (2) schedules for personnel relocations between installations, and (3) updated cost and savings estimates by DOD based on current information. This approach permitted senior-level intervention if warranted to ensure completion of the BRAC recommendations by the statutory completion date.

Disposal Phase

The disposal phase began soon after the BRAC recommendations became binding and has continued to today. During the disposal phase, DOD's policy was to act in an expeditious manner to dispose of closed properties. Such disposal actions included transferring the property to other DOD components and federal agencies, homeless-assistance providers, or local communities for the purposes of job generation, among other actions. In doing so, DOD has incurred caretaker and environmental cleanup costs.[14] For example, DOD reported to Congress that, as of September 2016, the military departments had spent $735 million on environmental cleanup associated with BRAC 2005 sites, and had $482 million left to spend on BRAC 2005 sites. Overall, the military departments reported that they had disposed of 59,499 acres and still

[14]According to Navy officials, caretaker costs consist of costs accrued from general building and grounds maintenance, providing utilities, and funding fire and police services, among other functions. DOD has incurred environmental restoration costs from addressing DOD contamination from hazardous substances, pollutants, and contaminants. According to DOD officials, while environmental cleanup of these contaminants has been an ongoing process on active military bases, the cleanups often receive greater attention once a base has been selected for closure.

needed to dispose of 30,239 acres from BRAC 2005 as of September 30, 2016.[15]

DOD Components Generally Did Not Measure the Achievement of BRAC 2005 Goals

ASD (EI&E), the military services, and 25 of the 26 military units or organizations we met with did not measure the achievement of the BRAC 2005 goals—reducing excess infrastructure, transforming the military, and promoting jointness. Specifically, a senior ASD (EI&E) official stated that no performance measures existed to evaluate the achievement of goals and the office did not create baselines to measure performance. Air Force officials stated that they did not measure the achievement of goals but that it would have been helpful to have metrics to measure success, especially as DOD had requested from Congress another BRAC round. Army officials similarly stated it did not measure the achievement of goals, noting that measuring excess capacity would have been important to help DOD get authorization for another BRAC round. Navy and Marine Corps officials said that they did not track performance measures or otherwise measure the achievement of the BRAC 2005 goals. Moreover, 25 of the 26 military units or organizations we met with stated that they did not measure the achievement of BRAC 2005 goals. The one exception in our selected sample was the command at Joint Base Charleston, which stated that it measured jointness through common output or performance-level standards for installation support, as required for installations affected by the BRAC 2005 recommendation on joint basing.[16] By measuring jointness, officials were able to identify that the base met 86 percent of its common output level standards in the second quarter of fiscal year 2017, and it has identified recommendations to improve on those standards not met.

[15]Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology and Logistics, *Department of Defense Assessment of the Efficiency of the Base Closure and Realignment Property Disposal Process* (Washington, D.C.: Aug. 31, 2017).

[16]Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology and Logistics, *Modification to the Joint Basing Implementation Guidance* (July 1, 2010). BRAC 2005 recommendation 146 created 12 joint bases, all of which were required to measure common output or performance-level standards for installation support. The standards cover a wide range of installation-support services, from establishing the acceptable waiting time for ensuring that 100 percent of eligible children are placed within the base-run child development program to conducting a minimum of two daily airfield checks. Joint Base Charleston was the only joint base we met with during our review.

Instead of measuring the achievement of BRAC 2005 goals, officials with ASD (EI&E) and the military departments stated that they tracked completion of the BRAC recommendations by the statutory deadline of September 2011 and measured the cost savings associated with the recommendations. Senior ASD (EI&E) officials stated that the primary measure of success was completing the recommendations as detailed by the implementation actions documented in the business plans. In addition, officials from the Army, Navy, and Air Force stated that they measured the savings produced as a result of BRAC 2005. For example, Army officials stated that closing bases in BRAC 2005 significantly reduced base operations support costs, such as by eliminating costs for trash collection, utilities, and information technology services. However, tracking completion of the recommendations and measuring savings did not enable the department to determine the success of the BRAC round in achieving its goals. For example, tracking completion of the recommendations establishing joint training centers did not give DOD insight into whether the military departments achieved the jointness goal by conducting more joint activities or operations.[17] Similarly, measuring savings did not allow DOD to know whether it achieved the goal of reducing excess infrastructure, and in reviewing DOD's data we found that the department ultimately did not have the needed data to calculate excess infrastructure disposed of during BRAC 2005. Key practices on monitoring performance and results highlight the importance of using performance measures to track an agency's progress and performance, and stress that performance measures should include a baseline and target; should be objective, measurable, and quantifiable; and should include a time frame.[18] The *Standards for Internal Control in the Federal Government* emphasizes that an agency's management should track

[17]We have previously reported on this issue. See GAO-16-45.

[18]GAO, *Military Transformation: Clear Leadership, Accountability, and Management Tools Are Needed to Enhance DOD's Efforts to Transform Military Capabilities*, GAO-05-70 (Washington, D.C.: Dec. 17, 2004). See also GAO, *Streamlining Government: Opportunities Exist to Strengthen OMB's Approach to Improving Efficiency*, GAO-10-394 (Washington, D.C.: May 7, 2010); *Managing for Results: Enhancing Agency Use of Performance Information for Management Decision Making*, GAO-05-927 (Washington, D.C.: Sept. 9, 2005); *Defense Management: Tools for Measuring and Managing Defense Agency Performance Could Be Strengthened*, GAO-04-919 (Washington, D.C.: Sept. 13, 2004); *High-Performing Organizations: Metrics, Means, and Mechanisms for Achieving High Performance in the 21st Century Public Management Environment*, GAO-04-343SP (Washington, D.C.: Feb. 13, 2004); and *Results-Oriented Cultures: Implementation Steps to Assist Mergers and Organizational Transformations*, GAO-03-669 (Washington, D.C.: July 2, 2003).

major agency achievements and compare these to the agencies' plans, goals, and objectives.[19]

During BRAC 2005, DOD was not required to identify appropriate measures of effectiveness and track achievement of its goals. As a result, in March 2013, we recommended that, in the event of any future BRAC round, DOD identify appropriate measures of effectiveness and develop a plan to demonstrate the extent to which the department achieved the results intended from the implementation of the BRAC round.[20] DOD did not concur with our recommendation, stating that military value should be the key driver for BRAC. However, we noted at the time that our recommendation does not undermine DOD's reliance on military value as the primary selection criteria for DOD's base realignment and closure candidate recommendations, and DOD can still prioritize military value while identifying measures that help determine whether DOD achieved the military value that it seeks. As of October 2017, DOD officials stated that no action to implement our recommendation is expected.

We continue to believe that, if any future BRAC round is authorized, the department would benefit from measuring its achievement of goals. Further, this information would assist Congress in assessing the outcomes of any future BRAC rounds. Given that DOD did not concur with our 2013 recommendation and does not plan to act upon it, DOD is not currently required to identify appropriate measures of effectiveness and track achievement of its BRAC goals in future rounds. Without a requirement to identify and measure the achievement of goals for a BRAC round, DOD cannot demonstrate to Congress whether the implementation of any future BRAC round will improve efficiency and effectiveness or otherwise have the effect that the department says its proposed recommendations will achieve. If Congress would like to increase its oversight for any future BRAC round, requiring DOD to identify appropriate measures of effectiveness and track achievement of its goals would provide it with improved visibility over the expected outcomes.

[19]GAO-14-704G.

[20]GAO-13-149.

DOD Has Addressed Many but Not All Prior GAO Recommendations on BRAC 2005 and Has Further Opportunities to Improve Communications and Monitoring in Any Future BRAC Round

DOD has implemented 33 of the 65 prior recommendations that we identified in our work since 2004, and it has the opportunity to address additional challenges regarding communications and monitoring to improve any future BRAC round. Specifically, for the BRAC analysis phase, DOD implemented 1 of 12 recommendations, and it has agreed to implement another 7 recommendations should Congress authorize any future BRAC round. Additionally, we found that DOD can improve its communications during the analysis phase. For the implementation phase, DOD implemented 28 of 39 recommendations, and it has agreed to implement another 3 recommendations. Further, we found it can improve monitoring of mission-related changes. For the disposal phase, DOD implemented 4 of 14 recommendations, and it has agreed to implement another 8 recommendations.

DOD Plans to Address Some Prior GAO Recommendations about BRAC's Analysis Phase, but Can Improve Communication during Data Collection

DOD Plans to Address Some Prior GAO Recommendations If Congress Authorizes a Future BRAC Round

Of the 12 recommendations we made from 2004 to 2016 to help DOD improve the BRAC analysis phase, DOD generally agreed with 6 of them and, as of October 2017, DOD had implemented 1. Specifically, DOD implemented our May 2004 recommendation to provide a more detailed discussion on assumptions used in its May 2005 report on BRAC recommendations.[21] In addition, DOD stated it would address seven recommendations—the other five recommendations it agreed with and two it had previously nonconcurred with—affecting BRAC's analysis

[21]GAO, *Military Base Closures: Assessment of DOD's 2004 Report on the Need for a Base Realignment and Closure Round*, GAO-04-760 (Washington, D.C.: May 17, 2004).

phase in the event of any future BRAC round. These recommendations included better estimating information technology costs and improving ways of describing and entering cost data.[22] DOD reported that the department is awaiting authorization of a future BRAC round prior to implementing these recommendations. Appendix III provides more information on our recommendations, DOD's response, and DOD's actions to date concerning the BRAC analysis phase.

DOD Officials Cited Challenges with Communications during Data Collection

DOD officials cited an additional challenge with communications during the BRAC 2005 analysis phase. Specifically, some military organizations we met with stated that they could not communicate to BRAC decision makers information outside of the data-collection process, which ultimately hindered analysis. For example:

- Officials from the Army Human Resources Command in Fort Knox, Kentucky, said that facilities data submitted during the data-collection process did not convey a complete picture of excess capacity at the installation, and officials at Fort Knox were unable to share the appropriate context or details because nondisclosure agreements prevented communication.[23] Specifically, they stated that the data showed an overall estimate of Fort Knox's excess capacity, but the data did not detail that the excess was not contiguous but rather based on space at 40 buildings spread throughout the installation. The officials stated that there was no way to communicate to decision makers during the data collection process that the facilities were ill-suited for relocating the Human Resources Command and would require significant renovation costs to host the command's information

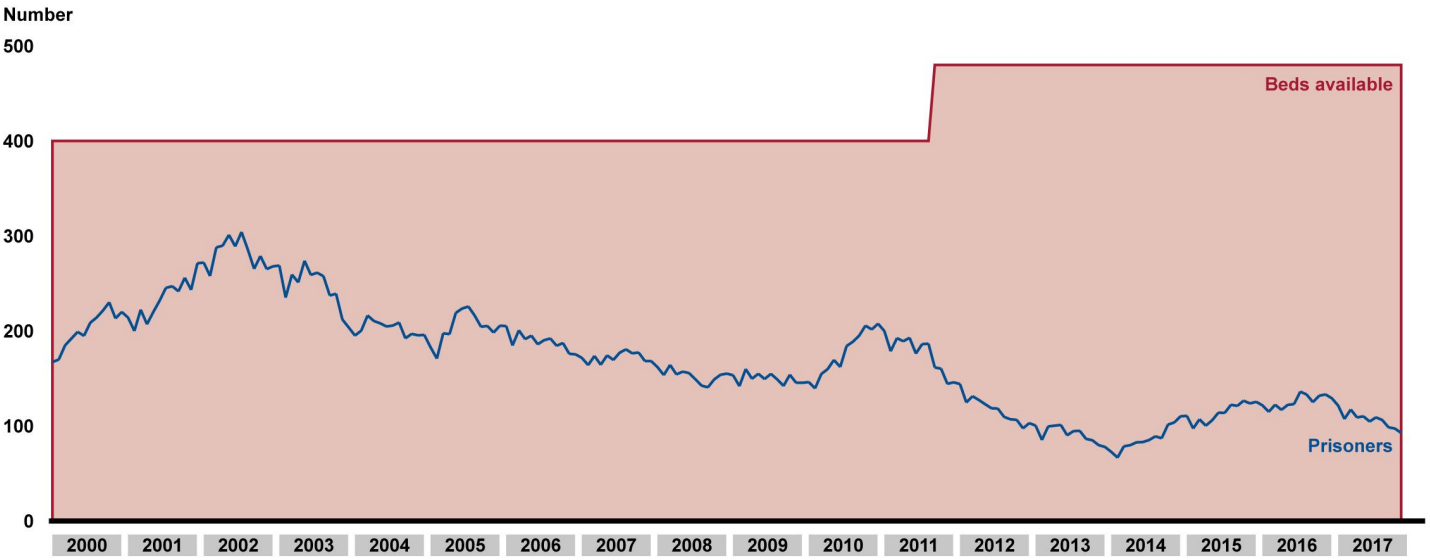
[22]GAO-13-149. DOD had nonconcurred with two recommendations to (1) identify recommendation-specific military construction requirements and (2) consider all anticipated BRAC implementation costs in the Cost of Base Realignment Actions model. Although DOD did not concur with these recommendations, in January 2017, DOD officials agreed to take addition actions.

[23]DOD required personnel involved in BRAC-related work to sign nondisclosure agreements, which limited the communication for analysis and decision making. The Office of the Secretary of Defense required these nondisclosure agreements to minimize the possibility of leaks to outside parties concerning which sites were under consideration for closure. *See* Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology and Logistics, *Transformation Through Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC 2005) Policy Memorandum One—Policy, Responsibilities, and Procedures* (Washington, D.C.: Apr. 16, 2003).

technology infrastructure. The officials said that, because the needed details on the facility data were not communicated, the relocation moved forward without full consideration of alternatives for using better-suited excess space at other locations that would not require significant costs to renovate. As a result, the Army ultimately constructed a new headquarters building for the Human Resources Command at Fort Knox and DOD spent approximately $55 million more than estimated to complete this action.

- Officials at the Naval Consolidated Brig Charleston, South Carolina, told us that the lack of communication outside of the data-collection process resulted in decision makers not taking into account declining numbers of prisoners, leading to the construction of a new, oversized building in which to house prisoners. The officials said that the decision makers analyzing the facilities data did not consider the current correctional population; rather, the decision makers considered a correctional model based on the type of military fielded in World War II and the Korean and Vietnam wars—a force comprised of conscripted personnel that served longer tours and had higher correctional needs. Further, the officials said the decision makers did not consider that, in the 2000 to 2005 period, DOD increased the use of administrative separations from military service rather than incarcerate service members convicted of offenses, such as drug-related crimes or unauthorized absence, further reducing correctional needs. The officials said they did not have a mechanism to communicate this information outside of the data-collection process when decision makers were analyzing the facilities data. As a result, the BRAC Commission recommendation added 680 beds throughout the corrections system, increasing the Navy's total confinement capacity to 1,200 posttrial beds. Specifically at Naval Consolidated Brig Charleston, the BRAC recommendation added 80 beds at a cost of approximately $10 million. However, the facility already had excess capacity prior to the 2005 BRAC recommendation, and its excess capacity further increased after adding 80 beds (see fig. 2).

Figure 2: Prisoner Population and Available Bed Capacity at Naval Consolidated Brig Charleston, South Carolina



Source: GAO analysis of Department of Defense data. | GAO-18-231

- Air National Guard officials said that the lack of communication outside of the data-collection process in the BRAC analysis phase meant that they could not identify the specific location of excess facilities. Specifically, they said the facilities data showed that Elmendorf Air Force Base, Alaska, had sufficient preexisting space to accept units relocating from Kulis Air Guard Station, Alaska, a base slated for closure.[24] However, without communicating with base officials, Air National Guard officials did not know that the space was not contiguous. As a result, officials stated that DOD ultimately needed to complete additional military construction to move the mission from Kulis Air Guard Station. The BRAC Commission increased the Air Force's initial cost estimate by approximately $66 million in additional funds to implement the BRAC recommendation.
- U.S. Army Central officials stated that there was no communication outside of the data-collection process to allow DOD to fully consider workforce recruitment-related issues in deciding to move the U.S. Army Central headquarters to Shaw Air Force Base, South Carolina. While other criteria, such as military value, enhancing jointness, and enabling business process transformation, were considered in developing the recommendation, the officials stated that they were

[24]Elmendorf Air Force Base is now part of Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, Alaska.

unable to communicate concerns regarding civilian hiring and military transfers. The officials said that since the headquarters' move to Shaw Air Force Base from Fort McPherson, Georgia, they have had difficulties recruiting civilian employees, such as information technology personnel, to their facility because of its location. They also said that it has been harder to encourage Army personnel to move to Shaw Air Force Base due to a perception that there is a lack of promotional opportunities at an Army organization on an Air Force base.[25] As a result, U.S. Army Central officials said morale surveys have indicated that these workforce issues have negatively affected mission accomplishment.

The military departments and organizations we met with said that these concerns regarding the BRAC 2005 analysis phase were because DOD did not establish clear and consistent communications throughout different levels of authority in the department during data collection. According to *Standards for Internal Control in the Federal Government*, management should use relevant data from reliable sources and process these data into quality information that is complete and accurate.[26] Further, management should communicate quality information down, across, up, and around reporting lines to all levels of the department.

Given the unclear and inconsistent communications in the department during data collection, DOD decision makers had data that may have been outdated or incomplete. Additionally, the outdated and incomplete data hindered the BRAC 2005 analysis and contributed to additional costs and recruitment problems at some locations affected by BRAC 2005, as previously discussed. Officials stated that clear and consistent communications would have improved the flow of information between on-the-ground personnel and decision makers and could have better informed the BRAC decision-making process. For example, Army officials said that nondisclosure agreements hindered their ability to call personnel at some installations to confirm details about buildings and facilities in question. The Air Force's Lessons Learned: BRAC 2005 report stated that site surveys could have communicated additional detail and generated more specific requirements than those generated in an automated software tool that the Air Force used for BRAC-related

[25]We have previously reported on this concern. See GAO, *DOD Joint Bases: Implementation Challenges Demonstrate Need to Reevaluate the Program*, GAO-14-577 (Washington, D.C.: Sept. 19, 2014).

[26]GAO-14-704G.

analysis.[27] Navy officials said that, with limited communication, there were shortfalls in the decision-making process. Overall, officials from ASD (EI&E) and the military departments agreed that communication could be improved in the analysis phase of any future BRAC round. They also cited improved technology, such as geographic information system software and a new base stationing tool, as well as an increase in the amount of data collected as factors that may mitigate any effects of reduced communication if Congress authorizes any future BRAC round. Without taking steps to establish clear and consistent communication throughout the department during data collection, DOD risks collecting outdated and incomplete data in any future BRAC rounds that may hinder its analysis and the achievement of its stated goals for BRAC.

DOD Has Addressed the Majority of Prior GAO Recommendations Affecting the BRAC Implementation Phase but Can Improve Monitoring

DOD Has Implemented 28 of 39 Recommendations to Address Challenges

To improve the implementation phase of the BRAC 2005 round, we made 39 recommendations between 2005 and 2016. DOD generally agreed with 32 and did not concur with 7 recommendations. As of October 2017, DOD had implemented 28 of these recommendations. DOD stated that it does not plan on implementing 8 of the recommendations, and action on 3 of the recommendations is pending.[28] Our previous recommendations relate to issues including providing guidance for consolidating training, refining cost and performance data, and periodic reviews of installation-support standards, among others. Appendix IV provides more information on our recommendations, DOD's response, and DOD's actions to date concerning the BRAC implementation phase.

[27]Department of Defense, Department of Defense Report on Defense Base Closure and Realignment, "Department of the Air Force Lessons Learned: BRAC 2005" (December 2005).

[28]Although DOD did not concur with or plan to implement seven recommendations, in further follow-up the department stated that it also does not plan on implementing a recommendation for which it had partially concurred. Specifically, DOD partially concurred with a 2009 recommendation to periodically review administrative costs as joint basing is implemented but later stated that action to implement the recommendation was not necessary. We closed the recommendation as not implemented.

DOD Officials Cited Challenges with Monitoring Mission-Related Changes during Implementation

DOD officials identified challenges related to monitoring mission-related changes during the implementation of the BRAC 2005 recommendations, specifically when unforeseen circumstances developed that affected units' ability to carry out their missions following implementation or added difficulties to fulfilling the intent of the recommendation. For example:

- During the implementation process, a final environmental impact statement at Eglin Air Force Base, Florida, contributed to the decision that only a portion of the initial proposed aircraft and operations would be established to fulfill the Joint Strike Fighter Initial Joint Training Site recommendation. Marine Corps officials stated that as a result of this environmental impact statement and the subsequent limitations, the Marine Corps decided to eventually move its training from Eglin Air Force Base to Marine Corps Air Station Beaufort, South Carolina. Despite these limitations, the Air Force constructed infrastructure for the Marine Corps' use at Eglin Air Force Base in order to fulfill the minimum legal requirements of the recommendation. Specifically, the BRAC 2005 recommendation realigned the Air Force, Navy, and Marine Corps portions of the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter Initial Joint Training Site to Eglin Air Force Base. The Air Force's goal and the initial proposal for the Joint Strike Fighter Initial Joint Training Site at Eglin Air Force Base was to accommodate 107 F-35 aircraft, with three Air Force squadrons of 24 F-35 aircraft each, one Navy squadron with 15 F-35 aircraft, and one Marine Corps squadron of 20 F-35 aircraft. In 2008, after the implementation phase began, DOD completed an environmental impact statement for the proposed implementation of the BRAC recommendations at Eglin Air Force Base.[29] Based on the environmental impact statement and other factors, a final decision was issued in February 2009, stating that the Air Force would only implement a portion of the proposed actions for the recommendation, with a limit of 59 F-35 aircraft and reduced planned flight operations due to potential noise impacts, among other

[29]Although the decision to close or realign installations is not subject to the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, DOD is required to follow the National Environmental Policy Act's requirements during the process of property disposal and during the process of relocating functions from a military installation being closed or realigned to another military installation after the receiving installation has been selected but before the functions are relocated. See section 2905(c) of the BRAC statute.

factors.[30] This decision stated that the subsequent operational limitations would not be practical for use on a long-term basis but would remain in place until a supplemental environmental impact statement could be completed. After the final supplemental environmental impact statement was released, in June 2014 DOD decided to continue the limited operations established in the February 2009 decision.

Marine Corps officials stated that, as a result of the February 2009 decision, the Marine Corps decided that it would eventually move its F-35 aircraft from Eglin Air Force Base to Marine Corps Air Station Beaufort.[31] According to Marine Corps officials, by September 2009 the Marine Corps had developed a concept to prepare Marine Corps Air Station Beaufort to host its F-35 aircraft. A September 2010 draft supplemental environmental impact statement included updated operational data and found that the Marine Corps total airfield operations at Eglin Air Force Base would be reduced by 30.7 percent from the proposals first assessed in the 2008 final environmental impact statement. However, to abide by the BRAC recommendation, Marine Corps officials stated that the Marine Corps temporarily established an F-35 training squadron at Eglin Air Force Base in April 2010. Using fiscal year 2010 military construction funding, DOD spent approximately $27.7 million to create a landing field for use by the new Marine Corps F-35 training squadron mission at Eglin Air Force Base. Marine Corps officials stated that this construction occurred during the same period as the decision to relocate the F-35 training squadron to Marine Corps Air Station Beaufort.[32] However, ASD (EI&E) officials stated that they did not know about this mission-related change, adding that they expected any change to be reported

[30]Department of Defense, *Record of Decision—Implementation of Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC)2005 Decisions for the Joint Strike Fighter (JSF) Initial Joint Training Site (IJTS) Eglin AFB, Florida,* Final BRAC 2005-JSF IJTS ROD (Feb. 5, 2009).

[31]The Marine Corps' F-35 training squadron located at Marine Corps Air Station Beaufort refers to the F-35B variant, one of three variants in the F-35 family. Marine Corps officials stated that some Marine Corps pilots also train with the Navy's F-35C variant at Eglin Air Force Base.

[32]Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Air Force, Installations, Environment and Energy, BRAC Program Management Office, *Air Force BRAC Business Plan—Comm #125 / E&T 052—Joint Strike Fighter Initial Joint Training Site* (Washington, D.C.: Jan. 31, 2011). The construction at Eglin Air Force Base for use by the Marine Corps F-35 squadron included components such as a simulated ship deck, two short takeoff and vertical landing pads, the installation of airfield lighting, electrical upgrades, and a Landing Safety Officer Tower.

from the units to the responsible military department through the chain of command. However, the military departments did not have guidance to report in the business plans to ASD (EI&E) these mission-related changes during implementation; without this guidance, the changes related to the Marine Corps F-35 mission were not relayed to ASD (EI&E) through the Air Force. Officials from the Joint Strike Fighter training program at Eglin Air Force Base stated that this construction was finished in June 2012 and that it was never used by the Marine Corps. In February 2014, the Marine Corps F-35 training squadron left Eglin Air Force Base and was established at Marine Corps Air Station Beaufort. The Marine Corps does not plan on returning any F-35 aircraft from Marine Corps Air Station Beaufort to Eglin Air Force Base for joint training activities.[33]

- Additionally, officials from the Armed Forces Chaplaincy Center stated that studies undertaken during the implementation phase determined that it would be difficult to fulfill the intent of a recommendation creating a joint center for religious training and education, yet the recommendation was implemented and included new construction with significantly greater costs than initial estimates. The BRAC 2005 recommendation consolidated Army, Navy, and Air Force religious training and education at Fort Jackson, South Carolina, establishing a Joint Center of Excellence for Religious Training and Education. Prior to the construction of facilities to accommodate this recommendation, the Interservice Training Review Organization conducted a study published in November 2006 that assessed the resource requirements and costs of consolidating and colocating the joint chaplaincy training at Fort Jackson. This study identified limitations in the feasibility of consolidating a joint training mission for the chaplains, including differences within the services' training schedules and the limited availability of specific administrative requirements for each service, as well as limited instructors and curriculum development personnel.[34] Despite the results of this study, in 2008 an approximately $11.5 million construction project began to build facilities for the Joint Center of Excellence for Religious Training and

[33]Marine Corps officials stated that some Marine Corps personnel remain at Eglin Air Force Base to participate in the Navy F-35C squadron and maintainers' training.

[34]Interservice Training Review Organization, *Resource Requirements Analysis (RRA) Report for Consolidation and Collocation of Chaplaincy Training* (Fort Jackson, S.C.: Nov. 16, 2006).

Education.[35] However, ASD (EI&E) officials stated that they did not know about the results of the study. The military departments did not have guidance to report these mission-related changes, which ultimately were not relayed from the units to ASD (EI&E). Officials from the Armed Forces Chaplaincy Center stated that following the start of construction to accommodate the recommendation, the services completed additional studies in 2008 and 2011 that further identified limitations to the feasibility of joint training for the services' chaplains. Overall, the services discovered that 95 percent of the religious training could not be conducted jointly. Moreover, the military departments have faced additional impediments to their respective missions for religious training and education. For example, the Army stated it could not house its junior soldiers alongside the senior Air Force chaplaincy students, and both the Navy and Air Force had to transport their chaplains to other nearby bases to receive service-specific training. Due to these challenges, officials from the Armed Forces Chaplaincy Center stated that the Air Force chaplains left Fort Jackson and returned to Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama, in 2017, and the Navy has also discussed leaving Fort Jackson and returning to Naval Station Newport, Rhode Island.[36]

Standards for Internal Control in the Federal Government emphasizes the importance of monitoring the changes an entity faces so that the entity's internal controls can remain aligned with changing objectives, environment, laws, resources, and risks.[37] During the implementation phase of BRAC 2005, DOD did not have specific guidance for the military services to monitor mission-related changes that added difficulties to fulfilling the intent of BRAC recommendations. The Office of the Secretary of Defense required BRAC recommendation business plans to be submitted every 6 months and include information such as a listing of all actions needed to implement each recommendation, schedules for personnel movements between installations, updated cost and savings estimates based on better and updated information, and implementation completion time frames. In addition, in November 2008, the Deputy Under Secretary of Defense (Installations and Environment) issued a memorandum requiring the military departments and certain defense agencies to present periodic status briefings to the Office of the Secretary

[35]Construction of facilities for the Joint Center of Excellence for Religious Training and Education was completed in August 2010.

[36]For more information, see GAO-16-45.

[37]GAO-14-704G.

of Defense on implementation progress and to identify any significant issues impacting the ability to implement BRAC recommendations by the September 15, 2011, statutory deadline.[38] The 6-month business plan updates and the memorandum on periodic briefings focused primarily on changes affecting the ability to fully implement the BRAC recommendations and on meeting the statutory deadline, but they did not provide specific guidance to inform ASD (EI&E) of mission-related changes that arose from unforeseen challenges during the implementation phase.

According to a senior official with ASD (EI&E), if the organization responsible for a business plan identified a need to change the plan to fulfill the legal obligation of the recommendation by the statutory deadline, ASD (EI&E) reviewed any proposed changes through meetings with stakeholders involved in implementation. According to this official, the office typically only got involved with the implementation if the business plan was substantively out of line with the intent of the recommendation or if there was a dispute between two DOD organizations, such as two military departments. The official stated that any installation-level concerns had to be raised to the attention of ASD (EI&E) through the responsible military department's chain of command. If a mission-related change was not raised through the military department's chain of command, then ASD (EI&E) officials were not always aware of the details of such changes. ASD (EI&E) officials acknowledged that they did not know about all mission-related changes during implementation, such as with the Joint Strike Fighter recommendations, and they stated that there was no explicit guidance informing the military departments to report challenges and mission-related changes to ASD (EI&E). Senior officials from ASD (EI&E) stated that additional guidance would be appropriate in the event of any future BRAC round. This lack of specific guidance to monitor and report mission-related changes that arose during BRAC 2005 implementation ultimately resulted in inefficient use of space and extra costs for DOD. Without providing specific guidance to monitor and report mission-related changes that require significant changes to the recommendation business plans, DOD will not be able to effectively monitor the efficient use of space and the costs associated with implementing any future BRAC recommendations. Furthermore, DOD

[38]Department of Defense, Deputy Under Secretary of Defense (Installations and Environment), memorandum, *Status of Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) 2005 Implementation* (Nov. 21, 2008).

may not be able to effectively make adjustments in its plans to ensure that the department achieves its overall goals in any future BRAC rounds.

DOD Has Addressed Some Prior Recommendations Related to the BRAC Disposal Phase and Plans to Address More Recommendations If Congress Authorizes a Future BRAC Round

Of the 14 recommendations we made from 2007 to 2017 to help DOD address challenges affecting BRAC's disposal phase, DOD generally agreed with 12 of them. As of October 2017, DOD had implemented 4 of the recommendations, with actions on 8 others pending. Our previous recommendations relate to three primary issues: guidance for communities managing the effects of the reduction or growth of DOD installations, the environmental cleanup process for closed properties, and the process for reusing closed properties for homeless assistance. Appendix V provides more information on our recommendations, DOD's response, and DOD's actions to date concerning the BRAC disposal phase.

During our review, we identified an additional example of challenges in the disposal phase related to the environmental cleanup process. Specifically, officials representing Portsmouth, Rhode Island, stated that the city had issues with the environmental cleanup process resulting from BRAC 2005 changes at Naval Station Newport, Rhode Island. According to the site's environmental impact statement, the land Portsmouth is to receive is contaminated and requires cleanup prior to transfer, and officials from the community stated that the Navy has not provided them with a clear understanding of a time frame for the environmental cleanup process needed to transfer the property. However, a senior official from the Navy stated that uncertainties in available funds and unforeseen environmental obstacles are common and prevent the Navy from projecting specific estimates for environmental cleanup time frames. The officials representing Portsmouth stated that, due to the lack of information from the Navy on a projected time frame for cleaning and transferring the property, representatives in the community have begun to discuss not wanting to take over the land and letting the Navy hold a public sale. We had previously recommended in January 2017 that DOD create a repository or method to record and share lessons learned about

how various locations have successfully addressed environmental cleanup challenges. DOD concurred and actions are pending.[39]

Moreover, during our review we identified additional examples of challenges in the disposal phase related to the homeless assistance program. For example, officials representing the community of Wilmington, North Carolina, stated that they had issues with the homeless-assistance process regarding a closed Armed Forces Reserve Center. According to the officials, they did not know that there were legal alternatives to providing on-base property for homeless assistance. Wilmington officials stated that the city would have been willing to construct a homeless-assistance facility in a nonbase location, and use the closed property for a different purpose, which would have expedited the overall redevelopment process. According to the officials, the organization that took over the property for homeless-assistance purposes lacks the financial means to complete the entire project plan, and as of July 2017 it remains unfinished. We had previously recommended that DOD and the Department of Housing and Urban Development—which, with DOD, develops the implementing regulations for the BRAC homeless-assistance process—include information on legal alternatives to providing on-base property to expedite the redevelopment process, but DOD did not concur and stated no action is expected.[40] Additionally, officials from New Haven, Connecticut, stated that the process of finding land suitable for a homeless assistance provider and converting an Army Reserve Center into a police academy took an undesirably long amount of time to complete. The officials stated that the process of preparing its redevelopment plan and transferring the property from DOD to the community lasted roughly 5 years from 2008 to 2013, and they suggested streamlining or expediting this process.

As a result of these types of delays, many properties have not yet been transferred from DOD to the communities, and undisposed properties continue to increase caretaker costs. As of September 30, 2016, DOD had received approximately $172 million in payments for transfers, and it had spent approximately $275 million for caretaker costs of buildings and

[39]GAO, *Military Base Realignments and Closures: DOD Has Improved Environmental Cleanup Reporting but Should Obtain and Share More Information*, GAO-17-151 (Washington, D.C.: Jan. 19, 2017).

[40]GAO, *Military Base Realignments and Closures: Process for Reusing Property for Homeless Assistance Needs Improvements*, GAO-15-274 (Washington, D.C.: Mar. 16, 2015).

land prior to transferring property on closed installations during BRAC 2005. Implementing our prior recommendations related to the BRAC environmental cleanup and homeless-assistance process could help DOD expedite the disposal of unneeded and costly BRAC property, reduce its continuing fiscal exposure stemming from continuing to hold these properties, and ultimately improve the effectiveness of the disposal phase.

Conclusions

DOD has long faced challenges in reducing unneeded infrastructure, and on five different occasions DOD has used the BRAC process to reduce excess capacity and better match needed infrastructure to the force structure and to support military missions. In addition to using BRAC to reduce excess capacity, DOD also sought to promote jointness across the military departments and realign installations in the 2005 round, making the round the biggest, costliest, and most complex ever. While DOD finished its implementation of BRAC 2005 in September 2011 and continues to prepare some remaining sites for disposal, it did not measure whether and to what extent it achieved the round's goals of reducing excess infrastructure, transforming the military, and promoting jointness. Because it did not measure whether the BRAC actions achieved these goals, DOD cannot demonstrate whether the military departments have improved their efficiency or effectiveness as a result of the BRAC 2005 actions. In October 2017, DOD officials stated the department does not plan to take action on our March 2013 recommendation to measure goals for any future BRAC round. Congress can take steps to improve its oversight of any future BRAC round, specifically by requiring DOD to identify and track appropriate measures of effectiveness. Congress would have enhanced information to make decisions about approving any future BRAC rounds, while DOD would be in a stronger position to demonstrate the benefits it achieves relative to the up-front implementation costs incurred for holding any future BRAC rounds.

In addition, challenges in the analysis, implementation, and disposal phases of BRAC 2005 led to unintended consequences, such as increases in costs, workforce recruitment issues, and delayed disposal of closed properties. Limited or restricted communications throughout different levels of authority in the department during data collection hampered the ability of decision makers to receive as much relevant information as possible during BRAC 2005. If Congress authorizes any

future BRAC round, ASD (EI&E) can encourage clear and consistent communication throughout DOD during the analysis phase, thereby helping personnel to address any potential problems that may arise. In addition, without specific guidance to monitor mission-related changes during the BRAC implementation phase, DOD did not fulfill the intent of some recommendations and spent millions of dollars to build infrastructure that was ultimately unused or underutilized. This lack of specific guidance meant that ASD (EI&E) was not aware of all mission-related changes. By instituting improvements to the analysis, implementation, and disposal phases in any future BRAC round, DOD could better inform decision making, better ensure that its infrastructure meets the needs of its force structure, and better position itself to gain congressional approval for additional rounds of BRAC in the future.

Matter for Congressional Consideration

Congress should consider, in any future BRAC authorization, a requirement for DOD to identify appropriate measures of effectiveness and to track the achievement of its goals. (Matter for Consideration 1)

Recommendations for Executive Action

We are making the following two recommendations to the Secretary of Defense.

In the event of any future BRAC round, the Secretary of Defense should ensure that ASD (EI&E) and the military departments take steps to establish clear and consistent communications throughout the department during data collection. (Recommendation 1)

In the event of any future BRAC round, the Secretary of Defense should ensure that ASD (EI&E) provides specific guidance for the military departments to monitor and report on mission-related changes that require significant changes to the recommendation business plans. (Recommendation 2)

Agency Comments and Our Evaluation

We provided a draft of this report for review and comment to DOD. In written comments, DOD objected to our matter for congressional

consideration and concurred with both recommendations. DOD's comments are summarized below and reprinted in their entirety in appendix VI. DOD also provided technical comments, which we incorporated as appropriate.

DOD objected to our matter for congressional consideration that Congress should consider, in any future BRAC authorization, a requirement for DOD to identify appropriate measures of effectiveness and to track the achievement of its goals. DOD stated that, as advised by BRAC counsel, it believes this requirement would subvert the statutory requirement that military value be the priority consideration. However, as we noted when we originally directed this recommendation to the department in March 2013, our recommendation does not undermine DOD's reliance on military value as the primary selection criteria for DOD's BRAC candidate recommendations, and DOD can still prioritize military value while identifying measures that help determine whether DOD achieved the military value that it seeks. Congress enacting a requirement for DOD to identify appropriate measures of effectiveness and to track the achievement of its goals, alongside the requirement to prioritize military value, would address DOD's concern about subverting a statutory requirement related to military value. Moreover, the department will likely have a better understanding of whether it achieved its intended results while still continuing to enhance military value.

DOD concurred with our first recommendation that, in the event of any future BRAC round, the Secretary of Defense should ensure that ASD (EI&E) and the military departments take steps to establish clear and consistent communications throughout the department during data collection. In its letter, however, DOD stated it did not agree with our assertion that the perceptions of lower-level personnel are necessarily indicative of the process as a whole. We disagree with DOD's statement that we relied on the perceptions of lower-level personnel. We obtained perceptions from senior personnel in the various military organizations deemed by DOD leadership to be the most knowledgeable. We then corroborated these perceptions with those from senior officials from the military departments, along with evidence obtained from the Air Force and Army lessons-learned reports. Moreover, DOD stated that the ability to gather data was not limited by the nondisclosure agreements or an inability to communicate with those participating in the BRAC process. While DOD concurred with our recommendation, we continue to believe it should consider the perceptions obtained from knowledgeable personnel that data gathering was limited by nondisclosure agreements or an

inability to communicate throughout different levels of authority in the department during data collection.

DOD also concurred with our second recommendation that, in the event of any future BRAC round, the Secretary of Defense should ensure that ASD (EI&E) provides specific guidance for the military departments to monitor and report on mission-related changes that require significant changes to the recommendation business plans. In its letter, DOD stated it would continue to provide guidance, as it did in the 2005 BRAC round, to encourage resolution at the lowest possible level, with Office of the Secretary of Defense involvement limited to review and approval of any necessary changes to the business plans. However, as we reported, if a mission-related change was not raised through the military department's chain of command, ASD (EI&E) officials stated that they were not always aware of the details of such changes, hence the need for our recommendation. By providing specific guidance to monitor and report mission-related changes that require significant changes to the recommendation business plans, DOD may be able to more effectively make adjustments in its plans to ensure that the department achieves its overall goals in any future BRAC rounds.

As agreed with your office, unless you publicly announce the contents of this report earlier, we plan no further distribution until 15 days from the report date. At that time, we will send copies to the appropriate congressional committees; the Secretary of Defense; the Secretaries of the Army, Navy, and Air Force; and the Commandant of the Marine Corps. In addition, the report will be available at no charge on the GAO website at http://www.gao.gov.

If you or your staff have any questions about this report, please contact me at (202) 512-4523 or leporeb@gao.gov. Contact points for our Offices of Congressional Relations and Public Affairs may be found on the last page of this report. GAO staff who made key contributions to this report are listed in appendix VII.

Brian J. Lepore
Director, Defense Capabilities and Management

Appendix I: Selected Local Economic Data for Communities Affected by the 2005 BRAC Round Closures

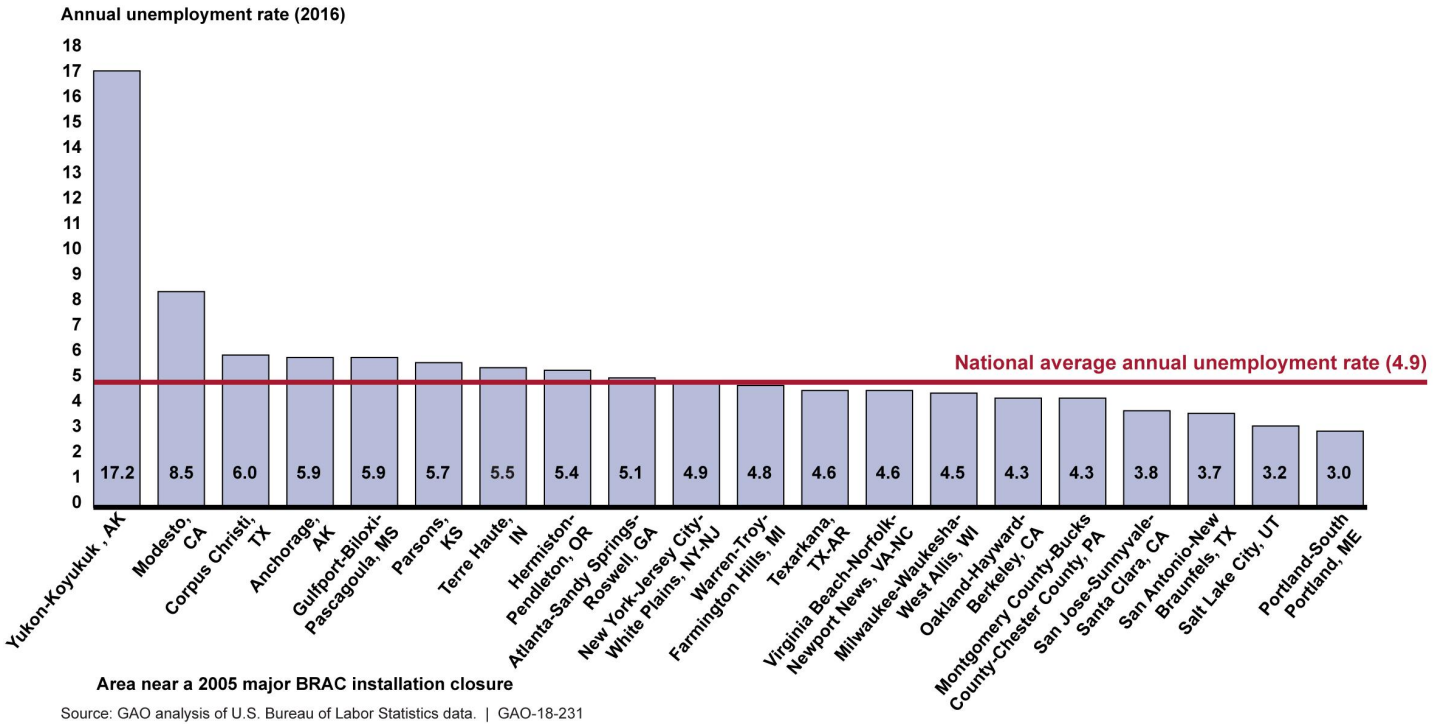
Selected economic indicators for the 20 communities surrounding the 23 Department of Defense (DOD) installations closed in the 2005 Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) round vary compared to national averages.[1] In our analysis, we used annual unemployment and real per capita income growth rates compiled by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics and the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis as broad indicators of the economic health of those communities where installation closures occurred.[2] Our analyses of the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics annual unemployment data for 2016, the most recent data available, showed that 11 of the 20 closure communities had unemployment rates at or below the national average of 4.9 percent for the period from January through December 2016. Another seven communities had unemployment rates that were higher than the national average but at or below 6.0 percent. Only two communities had unemployment rates above 8.0 percent (see fig. 3). Of the 20 closure communities, Portland-South Portland, Maine (Naval Air Station Brunswick) had the lowest unemployment rate at 3.0

[1]In this section, the term "community" refers to the statistical area, as defined by the Office of Management and Budget, that the community surrounding an installation is located in. (Some locations fall within metropolitan statistical areas that are further subdivided into areas called metropolitan divisions. In those cases, the metropolitan division is treated as the relevant statistical area for our purposes.) Therefore, the 23 DOD installations closed in BRAC 2005 are represented by only 20 communities because Fort Gillem, Fort McPherson, and Naval Air Station Atlanta are located in the same statistical area and Mississippi Army Ammunition Plant and Naval Station Pascagoula are also located in the same statistical area. Also, economic data in this report are for the statistical area within which an installation is or was located. See app. II—Objectives, Scope, and Methodology—for a list of the major DOD installations closed in BRAC 2005 and their corresponding economic areas.

[2]We compared the national averages for unemployment and real per capita income to assess the economic status of the communities using the most current economic data available. This comparison does not isolate the economic effects of a base closure from other factors affecting the economy of a particular region.

percent and Yukon-Koyukuk, Alaska (Galena Forward Operating Location) had the highest rate at 17.2 percent.

Figure 3: Comparison of 2016 Unemployment Rates of Major 2005 Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) Installation Closure Locations to the U.S. Rate

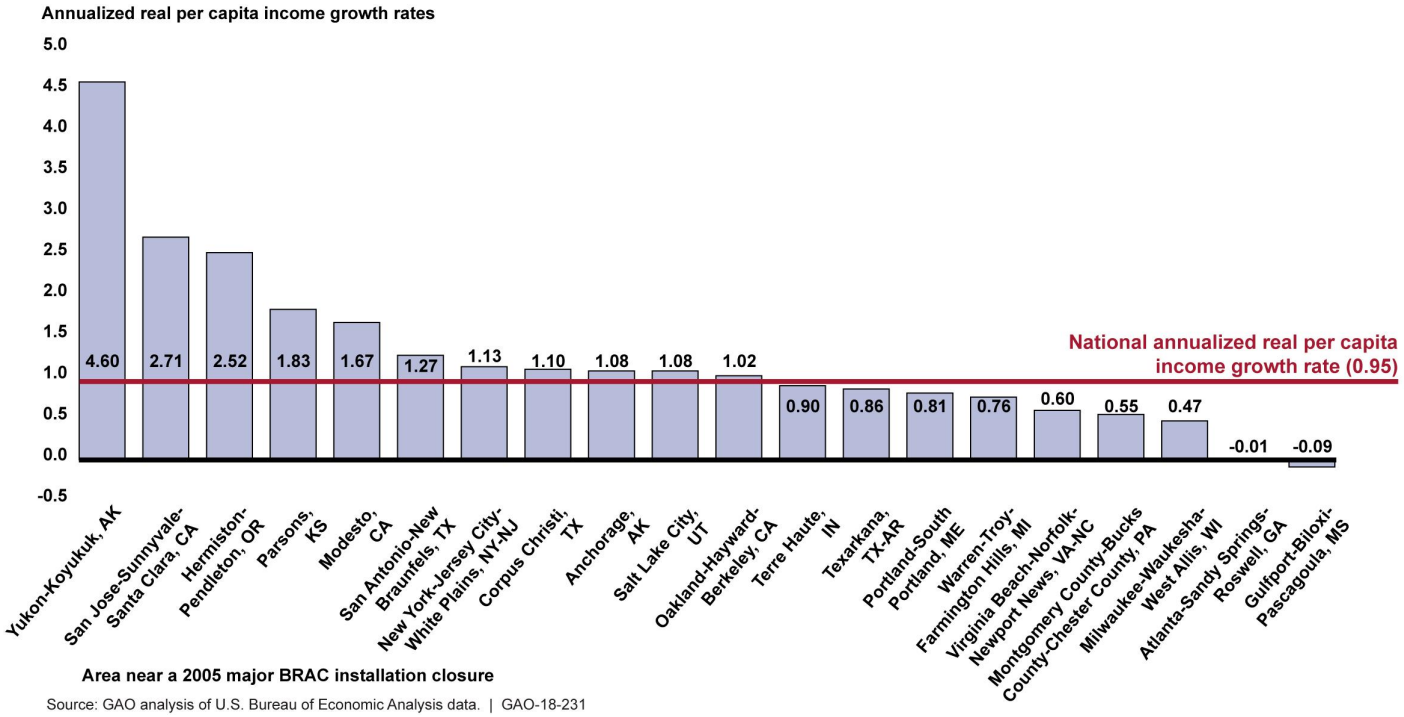


Source: GAO analysis of U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics data. | GAO-18-231

Note: Installation localities listed in this figure are from the Census Bureau statistical area within which an installation is or was located and do not represent the town or city by the same name. The data reported are for the entire Census Bureau statistical area, not only for the town or city used as the locality name.

We also used per capita income data from the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis between 2006 and 2016 to calculate annualized growth rates and found that 11 of the 20 closure communities had annualized real per capita income growth rates that were higher than the national average of 1.0 percent (see fig. 4). The other 9 communities had rates that were below the national average. Of the 20 communities affected, Yukon-Koyukuk, Alaska (Galena Forward Operating Location) had the highest annualized growth rate at 4.6 percent and Gulfport-Biloxi-Pascagoula, Mississippi (Mississippi Army Ammunition Plant and Naval Station Pascagoula) had the lowest rate at -0.1 percent.

Figure 4: Comparison of 2006–2016 Annualized Real Per Capita Income Growth Rates of Major 2005 Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) Installation Closure Locations to the U.S. Rate



Source: GAO analysis of U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis data. | GAO-18-231

Note: Installation localities listed in this figure are from the Census Bureau statistical area within which an installation is or was located and do not represent the town or city by the same name. The data reported are for the entire Census Bureau statistical area, not only for the town or city used as the locality name.

Appendix II: Objectives, Scope, and Methodology

The objectives of our review were to assess the extent that the Department of Defense (DOD) (1) measured the achievement of goals for reducing excess infrastructure, transforming the military, and promoting jointness for the 2005 Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) round and (2) implemented prior GAO recommendations and addressed any additional challenges faced in BRAC 2005 to improve performance for any future BRAC round. In addition, we describe how current economic indicators for the communities surrounding the 23 closed bases in BRAC 2005 compare to national averages.

For all objectives, we reviewed the 2005 BRAC Commission's September 2005 report to the President, policy memorandums, and guidance on conducting BRAC 2005. We also reviewed other relevant documentation such as supporting BRAC analyses prepared by the military services or units related to the development of BRAC 2005 recommendations. We interviewed officials with the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Energy, Installations, and Environment; the Army; the Navy; the Air Force; the Marine Corps; the U.S. Army Reserve Command; and the National Guard Bureau. We also conducted site visits to Connecticut, Indiana, Kentucky, Massachusetts, North Carolina, Rhode Island, and South Carolina. We met with 26 military units or organizations, such as Air Force wings and Army and Navy installations' Departments of Public Works, and 12 communities involved with BRAC 2005 recommendations. These interviews provide examples of any challenges faced by each individual party, but information obtained is not generalizable to all parties involved in the BRAC process. We selected locations for site visits based on ensuring geographic diversity and a mix of types of BRAC recommendations (closures, transformation, or jointness), and having at least one installation from or community associated with each military department.

To assess the extent that DOD measured the achievement of goals for reducing excess infrastructure, transforming the military, and promoting jointness for BRAC 2005, we met with officials to discuss measurement of goals and requested any related documentation. We compared DOD's efforts to *Standards for Internal Control in the Federal Government*, which

emphasizes that an agency's management should track major agency achievements and compare these to the agencies' plans, goals, and objectives.[1] We also tried to calculate the excess infrastructure disposed of during BRAC 2005; however, DOD's data were incomplete. Specifically, in reviewing the square footage and plant replacement value data from DOD's Cost of Base Realignment Actions model, we found that data from several bases were not included. Additionally, a senior official with the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Energy, Installations, and Environment stated the data provided were not the most current data used during BRAC 2005 and the office did not have access to the complete data. We also tried to corroborate the square footage and plant replacement value data from the Cost of Base Realignment Actions model to DOD's 2005 Base Structure Report, but we found the data to be incomparable. As such, we determined that the incomplete and outdated data were not sufficiently reliable to calculate the excess infrastructure disposed of during BRAC 2005.

To assess the extent that DOD implemented prior GAO recommendations on BRAC 2005 and addressed any additional challenges faced in BRAC 2005 to improve performance for any future BRAC round, we reviewed our prior reports and testimonies on BRAC 2005 to identify recommendations made and determined whether those recommendations applied to the analysis, implementation, or disposal phase of BRAC 2005. We then identified whether DOD implemented recommendations we made by discussing the status of recommendations with agency officials and obtaining copies of agency documents supporting the recommendations' implementation. We also met with officials to identify what challenges, if any, continue to be faced and what opportunities exist to improve the analysis, implementation, and disposal phases for any future BRAC round. For the analysis phase, we reviewed military service lessons-learned documents. For the implementation phase, we reviewed business plans supporting the implementation of the BRAC 2005 recommendations and other applicable documentation, such as a workforce planning study and an environmental impact statement affecting the implementation of some recommendations. For the disposal phase, we analyzed DOD's caretaker costs for closed bases that it has not yet transferred. We compared information about challenges in the analysis, implementation, and disposal phases to criteria for

[1]GAO, *Standards for Internal Control in the Federal Government*, GAO-14-704G (Washington, D.C.: September 2014).

communications, monitoring, and risk assessments in *Standards for Internal Control in the Federal Government*.[2]

To describe how current economic indicators for the communities surrounding the 23 closed bases in BRAC 2005 compare to national averages, we collected economic indicator data on the communities surrounding closed bases from the Bureau of Labor Statistics and the Bureau of Economic Analysis in order to compare them with national averages. To identify the communities surrounding closed bases, we focused our review on the 23 major DOD installations closed in the BRAC 2005 round and their surrounding communities. For BRAC 2005, DOD defined major installation closures as those that had a plant replacement value exceeding $100 million. We used information from our 2013 report, which identified the major closure installations.[3] We then defined the "community" surrounding each major installation by (1) identifying the economic area in DOD's Base Closure and Realignment Report,[4] which linked a metropolitan statistical area, a metropolitan division, or a micropolitan statistical area to each installation, and then (2) updating those economic areas based on the most current statistical areas or divisions, as appropriate.[5] Because DOD's BRAC report did not identify the census area for the Galena Forward Operating Location in Alaska or the Naval Weapons Station Seal Beach Detachment in Concord, California, we identified the town of Galena as within the Yukon-Koyukuk Census Area and the city of Concord in the Oakland-Hayward-Berkeley, CA Metropolitan Division, and our analyses used the economic data for

[2]GAO-14-704G.

[3]GAO, *Military Bases: Opportunities Exist to Improve Future Base Realignment and Closure* Rounds, GAO-13-149 (Washington, D.C.: Mar. 7, 2013).

[4]Department of Defense, *Base Closure and Realignment Report*, *Volume I, Part 1 of 2: Results and Process* (May 2005).

[5]Metropolitan and micropolitan statistical areas (metro and micro areas) are geographic entities delineated by the Office of Management and Budget for use by federal statistical agencies in collecting, tabulating, and publishing federal statistics. A metro area contains a core urban area of 50,000 or more people, and a micro area contains an urban core of at least 10,000 (but less than 50,000) people. Each metro or micro area consists of one or more counties and includes the counties containing the core urban area, as well as any adjacent counties that have a high degree of social and economic integration (as measured by commuting to work) with the urban core. A metropolitan division is used to refer to a county or group of counties within a metropolitan statistical area that has a population core of at least 2.5 million. There are 11 metropolitan statistical areas deemed large enough to be subdivided into metropolitan divisions.

these areas. See table 1 for a list of the major DOD installations closed in BRAC 2005 and their corresponding economic areas.

Table 1: Major Department of Defense (DOD) Installations Closed in the 2005 Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) Round and Their Corresponding Economic Areas

DOD department	Closure installation	Locality	Economic area
Army	Deseret Chemical Depot	Tooele, UT	Salt Lake City, UT Metropolitan Statistical Area
Army	Fort Gillem	Forest Park, GA	Atlanta-Sandy Springs-Roswell, GA Metropolitan Statistical Area
Army	Fort McPherson	Atlanta, GA	Atlanta-Sandy Springs-Roswell, GA Metropolitan Statistical Area
Army	Fort Monmouth	Eatontown, NJ	New York-Jersey City-White Plains, NY-NJ Metropolitan Division
Army	Fort Monroe	Hampton, VA	Virginia Beach-Norfolk-Newport News, VA-NC Metropolitan Statistical Area
Army	Kansas Army Ammunition Plant	Parsons, KS	Parsons, KS Metropolitan Statistical Area
Army	Lone Star Army Ammunition Plant	Texarkana, TX	Texarkana, TX-AR Metropolitan Statistical Area
Army	Mississippi Army Ammunition Plant	Hancock County, MS	Gulfport-Biloxi-Pascagoula, MS Metropolitan Statistical Area
Army	Newport Chemical Depot	Newport, IN	Terre Haute, IN Metropolitan Statistical Area
Army	Riverbank Army Ammunition Plant	Riverbank, CA	Modesto, CA Metropolitan Statistical Area
Army	Selfridge Army Activity	Chesterfield Township, MI	Warren-Troy-Farmington Hills, MI Metropolitan Division
Army	Umatilla Chemical Depot	Hermiston, OR	Hermiston-Pendleton, OR Metropolitan Statistical Area
Navy	Naval Air Station Atlanta	Marietta, GA	Atlanta-Sandy Springs-Roswell, GA Metropolitan Statistical Area
Navy	Naval Air Station Brunswick	Brunswick, ME	Portland-South Portland, ME Metropolitan Statistical Area

DOD department	Closure installation	Locality	Economic area
Navy	Naval Air Station Willow Grove	Horsham, PA	Montgomery County-Bucks County-Chester County, PA Metropolitan Division
Navy	Naval Station Ingleside	Ingleside, TX	Corpus Christi, TX Metropolitan Statistical Area
Navy	Naval Station Pascagoula	Pascagoula, MS	Gulfport-Biloxi-Pascagoula, MS Metropolitan Statistical Area
Navy	Naval Weapons Station Seal Beach Concord Detachment	Concord, CA	Oakland-Hayward-Berkeley, CA Metropolitan Division
Air Force	Brooks City-Base	San Antonio, TX	San Antonio-New Braunfels, TX Metropolitan Statistical Area
Air Force	Galena Forward Operating Location	Galena, AK	Yukon-Koyukuk Census Area
Air Force	General Mitchell Air Reserve Station	Milwaukee, WI	Milwaukee-Waukesha-West Allis, WI Metropolitan Statistical Area
Air Force	Kulis Air Guard Station	Anchorage, AK	Anchorage, AK Metropolitan Statistical Area
Air Force	Onizuka Air Force Station	Sunnyvale, CA	San Jose-Sunnyvale-Santa Clara, CA Metropolitan Statistical Area

Source: DOD and community data. | GAO-18-231

Note: We identified the economic area using DOD's Base Closure and Realignment Report which linked a metropolitan statistical area, a metropolitan division, or a micropolitan statistical area to each installation. Because DOD's BRAC report did not identify the census area for the Galena Forward Operating Location in Alaska or the Naval Weapons Station Seal Beach Detachment in Concord, California, we identified the town of Galena as within the Yukon-Koyukuk Census Area and the city of Concord in the Oakland-Hayward-Berkeley, CA Metropolitan Division and our analyses used the economic data for these areas.

To compare the economic indicator data of the communities surrounding the 23 major DOD installations closed in the BRAC 2005 round to U.S. national averages, we collected and analyzed calendar year 2016 unemployment data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics and calendar year 2006 through 2016 per capita income growth data, along with data on inflation, from the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis which we used to calculate annualized real per capita income growth rates.[6]

[6]Data were last updated by the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analyses on November 16, 2017.

Calendar year 2016 was the most current year for which local area data were available from these databases. We assessed the reliability of these data by reviewing U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics and U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis documentation regarding the methods used by each agency in producing their data and found the data to be sufficiently reliable to report 2016 annual unemployment rates and 2006 through 2016 real per capita income growth. We used unemployment and annualized real per capita income growth rates as key performance indicators because (1) DOD used these measures in its community economic impact analysis during the BRAC location selection process and (2) economists commonly use these measures in assessing the economic health of an area over time. While our assessment provides an overall picture of how these communities compare with the national averages, it does not isolate the condition, or the changes in that condition, that may be attributed to a specific BRAC action.

We conducted this performance audit from April 2017 to March 2018 in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain sufficient, appropriate evidence to provide a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives. We believe that the evidence obtained provides a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives.

Appendix III: GAO Reviews Related to the BRAC 2005 Analysis Phase, Related Recommendations, and DOD Actions

To improve the analysis phase of the 2005 Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) round, we made 12 recommendations between 2004 and 2016. The Department of Defense (DOD) fully concurred with 4, partially concurred with 2, and did not concur with 6 recommendations. It implemented 1 of the 12 recommendations (see table 2).[1] According to DOD officials, DOD will be unable to take actions on 7 recommendations unless Congress authorizes any future BRAC round.

Table 2: GAO Recommendations Related to the Analysis Phase of the 2005 Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) Round and Department of Defense (DOD) Actions to Date

GAO product information	GAO recommendation	DOD response	DOD actions

[1]We categorize DOD actions as pending if DOD had described actions under way that had not been completed or DOD had not yet identified action it would take in response to a recommendation that it concurred or partially concurred with.

GAO product information	GAO recommendation	DOD response	DOD actions
GAO-16-45—Military Base Realignments and Closures: More Guidance and Information Needed to Take Advantage of Opportunities to Consolidate Training (Feb. 18, 2016).	Direct the military departments to develop baseline cost data.	**Nonconcur**. DOD stated that data calls for BRAC must ensure that the questions asked do not provide the personnel answering the questions insight into the various scenarios being considered and that all installations must be treated equally. Moreover, DOD stated that this is critical to maintaining the fairness and objectivity of the analysis by preventing the supplied data from being influenced by gaining and losing locations. However, during BRAC 2005, DOD estimated that it had collected over 25 million pieces of data from hundreds of defense installations and presumably was able to do so in a way that maintained fairness and objectivity without inappropriately disclosing to personnel providing the information something to which they should not be privy. DOD further stated that collecting baseline cost data for training activities in advance of an authorized BRAC process is not effective because the department will not be able to use previously supplied uncertified data. However, nothing in our recommendation requires DOD to collect data prior to the implementation of a future, authorized BRAC round. Finally, DOD stated that it is not clear that a future BRAC round would include joint training. However, we continue to believe that baseline cost data is needed for measuring either increased costs or savings for changes to any program, not just joint training.	**None planned.** As of October 2017, DOD has not completed any actions to implement this recommendation.
GAO-13-149—Military Bases: Opportunities Exist to Improve Future Base Realignment and Closure Rounds (Mar. 7, 2013).	Work with the military services, defense agencies, and other appropriate stakeholders to improve the process for fully identifying recommendation-specific military construction requirements and ensuring that those requirements are entered into the Cost of Base Realignment Actions model and not understated in implementation costs estimates prior to submitting recommendations to the BRAC Commission.	**Nonconcur.** DOD stated that the primary advantage of the Cost of Base Realignment Actions model is to provide real-time comparison of scenarios to aid analysis and decision making, not to develop budget-quality estimates. We recognize that the Cost of Base Realignment Actions model is not intended to provide budget-quality estimates, but that does not preclude the possibility of improvements to the Cost of Base Realignment Actions model. We continue to believe that, if DOD were to implement our recommendation, the result would be more accurate initial cost estimates that DOD submits to the BRAC Commission for review.	**Pending.** Although DOD did not concur with our recommendation, in January 2017 DOD officials agreed to take additional action to better forecast the initial costs inputted into the Cost of Base Realignment Actions model that are related to military construction.

GAO product information	GAO recommendation	DOD response	DOD actions
GAO-13-149—Military Bases: Opportunities Exist to Improve Future Base Realignment and Closure Rounds (Mar. 7, 2013).	Establish a process for ensuring that information technology requirements associated with candidate recommendations that are heavily reliant on such technology have been identified to the extent required to accomplish the associated mission, before recommendations and cost estimates are submitted to the BRAC Commission.	**Partial concur.** DOD acknowledged that information technology costs should be better estimated but added that a separate process is not necessary and stated that it can improve cost estimating by reevaluating the standard factors used in the Cost of Base Realignment Actions model and by providing additional guidance as appropriate. Our intent was to provide DOD flexibility in deciding how to implement our recommendation, so we did not recommend a separate process specifically, just one that improves the accuracy of cost estimating for information technology requirements.	**Pending.** As of October 2017, DOD stated that action on this recommendation is awaiting authorization of a future BRAC round, and Congress has not authorized another round of BRAC.
GAO-13-149—Military Bases: Opportunities Exist to Improve Future Base Realignment and Closure Rounds (Mar. 7, 2013).	Ensure that, during the development and comparison of BRAC scenarios, all anticipated BRAC implementation costs—such as relocating personnel and equipment—are considered and included in the Cost of Base Realignment Actions model when comparing alternatives and generating cost estimates.	**Nonconcur.** DOD reiterated that the Cost of Base Realignment Actions model is not designed to develop budget-quality estimates, nor can it reflect future implementation investment decisions made after BRAC recommendations become binding legal obligations for DOD. We acknowledge that the Cost of Base Realignment Actions model cannot predict future decisions but we still believe that including likely BRAC recommendation implementation costs will produce a more reliable initial cost estimate, and therefore a better basis for scenario comparisons.	**Pending.** Although DOD did not concur with our recommendation, in January 2017 DOD officials agreed to take additional action to better forecast the initial costs inputted into the Cost of Base Realignment Actions model that are related to relocating military personnel positions and equipment.
GAO-13-149—Military Bases: Opportunities Exist to Improve Future Base Realignment and Closure Rounds (Mar. 7, 2013).	Take steps to ensure that the Cost of Base Realignment Actions model's standard factor for information technology is updated and based on technological developments since the most recent Cost of Base Realignment Actions model update.	**Concur.**	**Pending.** As of October 2017, DOD stated that action on this recommendation is awaiting authorization of a future BRAC round, and Congress has not authorized another round of BRAC.
GAO-13-149—Military Bases: Opportunities Exist to Improve Future Base Realignment and Closure Rounds (Mar. 7, 2013).	Update the Cost of Base Realignment Actions model guidance to require users to provide a narrative explaining the process, sources, and methods used to develop the data entered into the Cost of Base Realignment Actions model to develop military personnel position-elimination savings.	**Concur.**	**Pending.** As of October 2017, DOD stated that action on this recommendation is awaiting authorization of a future BRAC round, and Congress has not authorized another round of BRAC.

GAO product information	GAO recommendation	DOD response	DOD actions
GAO-13-149—Military Bases: Opportunities Exist to Improve Future Base Realignment and Closure Rounds (Mar. 7, 2013).	Identify appropriate measures of effectiveness and develop a plan to demonstrate the extent to which the department achieved the results intended from the implementation of the BRAC round.	**Nonconcur.** DOD stated that military value based on force structure and mission needs should continue to be the key driver for BRAC. However, nothing in our recommendation undermines DOD's reliance on military value as the primary selection criteria for DOD's base closure and realignment candidate recommendations. DOD also stated that its business plan process is the best way to measure effectiveness. We acknowledge the benefits of business plans; however, these business plans address implementation of individual BRAC recommendations and not the effectiveness of the BRAC process as a whole. Hence, we continue to believe that there is need for our recommendation.	**None planned.** As of October 2017, DOD stated that no action is expected.
GAO-13-149—Military Bases: Opportunities Exist to Improve Future Base Realignment and Closure Rounds (Mar. 7, 2013).	Establish a target for eliminating excess capacity in its initiating guidance to high-level department-wide leadership, consistent with the BRAC selection criteria chosen for a future BRAC round.	**Nonconcur.** DOD stated that goals or overarching capacity targets would subvert the intent of the BRAC statute to develop recommendations based on military value and would preclude examination of a full array of closure and realignment options. Our recommendation specifies that targets should be consistent with the BRAC selection criteria, which does not interfere with DOD's reliance on military value as the primary criteria for making recommendations. We continue to believe that the setting of targets is a means to identify the magnitude of needed reductions while the military value selection criteria can remain the primary consideration in making recommendations for closure and realignment. Consequently, if DOD still believes it has excess capacity and requests authorization for BRAC rounds on that basis, then our recommendation can enhance DOD's ability to achieve its goal.	**None planned.** As of October 2017, DOD stated that no action is expected.

GAO product information	GAO recommendation	DOD response	DOD actions
GAO-13-149—Military Bases: Opportunities Exist to Improve Future Base Realignment and Closure Rounds (Mar. 7, 2013).	Limit the practice of bundling many potential stand-alone realignments or closures into single recommendations.	**Nonconcur.** DOD does not believe bundling is problematic and stated that the examples we cited were bundled since they shared a common mission and purpose, and bundling maximized military value. The practice of bundling can limit visibility into the estimated costs and savings for individual closures or realignments that are elements of the bundle and can make the commission's review more difficult, although DOD disputed this latter point. The 2005 BRAC Commission's executive staff told us that bundling made their review more difficult because of the need to deconstruct the bundle to assess whether any changes were necessary. In some cases bundling is warranted, and it is for this reason we recommended limiting the practice, not prohibiting it.	**None planned.** As of October 2017, DOD stated that no action is expected.
GAO-13-149—Military Bases: Opportunities Exist to Improve Future Base Realignment and Closure Rounds (Mar. 7, 2013).	If DOD determines that bundling multiple realignments or closures into one recommendation is appropriate, itemize the costs and savings associated with each major discrete action in its report to the BRAC Commission.	**Partial concur.** DOD stated that where appropriate, the department could highlight cost and savings associated with major actions, and that action would meet the intent of our recommendation.	**Pending.** As of October 2017, DOD stated that action on this recommendation is awaiting authorization of a future BRAC round, and Congress has not authorized another round of BRAC.
GAO-13-149—Military Bases: Opportunities Exist to Improve Future Base Realignment and Closure Rounds (Mar. 7, 2013).	Develop a process to ensure that any data-security issues are resolved in time to provide all information to the BRAC Commission in a timely manner by conducting a security review of all BRAC data during DOD's recommendation development process, to include a review of the aggregation of unclassified data for potential security concerns and possible classification if necessary.	**Concur.**	**Pending.** As of October 2017, DOD stated that action on this recommendation is awaiting authorization of a future BRAC round, and Congress has not authorized another round of BRAC.

GAO product information	GAO recommendation	DOD response	DOD actions
GAO-04-760—Military Base Closures: Assessment of DOD's 2004 Report on the Need for a Base Realignment and Closure Round (May 17, 2004).	Include in the Secretary of Defense's May 2005 report on recommendations for base closures and realignments a full discussion of relevant assumptions and allowances made for potential future force structure requirements and changes, including the potential for future surge requirements.	**Concur.**	**Implemented.** The Secretary of Defense's May 2005 report to the BRAC Commission addressed several of these factors. For example, the report contained a discussion about current and future national security threats the department considered during its deliberations. In addition, the report included a copy of the Secretary of Defense's January 2005 "Policy Memorandum Seven - Surge" which outlined five steps DOD would take to meet the statutory requirements to consider surge in the development of BRAC recommendations. Further, some of the military departments and joint cross-service groups discussed the steps they took to incorporate the possibility of future surge requirements during their analyses.

Source: GAO summary of GAO and DOD information. | GAO-18-231

Appendix IV: GAO Reviews Related to the BRAC 2005 Implementation Phase, Related Recommendations, and DOD Actions

To improve the implementation phase of the 2005 Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) round, we made 39 recommendations between 2005 and 2016. The Department of Defense (DOD) fully concurred with 17, partially concurred with 15, and did not concur with 7 recommendations. DOD implemented 28 of them (see table 3).[1]

Table 3: GAO Recommendations Related to the Implementation Phase of the 2005 Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) Round and Department of Defense (DOD) Actions to Date

GAO product information	GAO recommendation	DOD response	DOD actions
GAO-16-45—Military Base Realignments and Closures: More Guidance and Information Needed to Take Advantage of Opportunities to Consolidate Training (Feb. 18, 2016)	Develop and provide specific guidance for the military departments to use in implementing recommendations designed to consolidate training to increase jointness.	**Nonconcur.** DOD stated that while consultation with the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Energy, Installations, and Environment would be required within a future BRAC round, the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness already has the authority to develop this guidance. We recognize that the Under Secretary has the authority, but as our report points out the office has not exercised it in this instance, and that guidance is needed to ensure that DOD takes advantage of the opportunities provided by BRAC.	**None planned.** As of October 2017, DOD has not completed any actions to implement this recommendation.

[1]We categorize DOD actions as pending if DOD had described actions under way that had not been completed or DOD had not yet identified action it would take in response to a recommendation that it concurred or partially concurred with.

GAO product information	GAO recommendation	DOD response	DOD actions
GAO-16-45—Military Base Realignments and Closures: More Guidance and Information Needed to Take Advantage of Opportunities to Consolidate Training (Feb. 18, 2016)	Provide guidance to the program managers on consolidating training, if DOD decides that taking advantage of an opportunity to increase jointness is still appropriate.	**Nonconcur.** In its response, DOD stated that our report misunderstands the definition of joint training and that DOD and the services are constantly seeking ways to improve training opportunities by either consolidating or colocating individual skills training. DOD further stated that the Interservice Training Review Organization would be the proper entity to address the issues identified in our report. In our report, we noted that the training functions were reviewed and these reviews did not find much overlap in training between services. Several of these reviews were conducted by the Interservice Training Review Organization. Further, one of the purposes of several of these transformational recommendations was to create opportunities to enhance jointness, as stated by DOD in proposing them to the commission. We continue to believe that enhancing jointness would be going a step further than colocating services and aspiring to consolidate common training. DOD also stated in its comments on the report that the Interservice Training Review Organization was involved in implementing the Chaplain recommendation. Still, we found that, even with this involvement, DOD did not take advantage of opportunities to consolidate training to increase jointness in the Chaplain recommendation. We also noted that, in the absence of guidance from DOD, four of the training functions in our review did not make any further effort to consolidate training.	**None planned.** As of October 2017, DOD has not completed any actions to implement this recommendation.

GAO product information	GAO recommendation	DOD response	DOD actions
GAO-16-45—Military Base Realignments and Closures: More Guidance and Information Needed to Take Advantage of Opportunities to Consolidate Training (Feb. 18, 2016)	Issue guidance clarifying what costs should be included in final BRAC accounting.	**Partial concur.** DOD stated that micromanaging every cost decision across such a vast program would have been unreasonable and that, ultimately, whether or not to fund various requirements from the BRAC account was a judgment call made by military headquarters officials. However, DOD agreed that it would be reasonable to consider placing additional emphasis on accounting for BRAC costs. We agree that managing a program as large as BRAC is difficult and that guidance on what costs should be included in the final BRAC accounting would help DOD to more accurately report the costs of implementing BRAC.	**Pending.** As of October 2017, DOD has not completed any actions to implement this recommendation.
GAO-14-577—DOD Joint Bases: Implementation Challenges Demonstrate Need to Reevaluate the Program (Sept. 19, 2014).	Evaluate the 44 support functions identified in DOD's guidance for joint base implementation to determine which functions are still suitable for consolidation. Subsequently, identify and make any changes that are appropriate to address limitations reported by the joint bases in consolidating installation-support functions, such as limitations related to workforces and geography.	**Concur.** DOD stated that it had already removed some installation-support functions from joint basing because they were not compelled for inclusion as part of the BRAC recommendation, and otherwise did not offer opportunities for savings or consolidation. It further stated that, in April 2014, the Senior Joint Base Working Group principals tasked their staffs to identify which installation-support functions and performance standards were not providing value to the joint bases' various military missions, and to explore whether these functions and standards should continue to be included in joint basing.	**Implemented.** In 2015 DOD evaluated the possibility of an additional joint base and identified six support functions that it eliminated from consideration in this analysis. In December 2015 to March 2016 DOD also evaluated whether to continue including Equal Opportunity / Equal Employment Opportunity programs as part of its joint basing consolidation, and decided in March 2016 to keep these programs in joint basing. In addition, as part of its regular annual review of joint base standards, DOD continues to evaluate which standards are suitable for consolidation. Together these actions address the intent of our recommendation.

GAO product information	GAO recommendation	DOD response	DOD actions
GAO-14-577—DOD Joint Bases: Implementation Challenges Demonstrate Need to Reevaluate the Program (Sept. 19, 2014).	Take policy actions, as appropriate—such as issuing additional guidance—to address any challenges resulting in inefficiencies and inequities regarding efforts to consolidate installation-support functions including, at a minimum, those identified in this report.	**Partial concur.** DOD stated that it is mindful of challenges in implementing and operating joint bases, and agreed that policy actions can address some challenges. However, DOD stated that it does not agree that these challenges require Office of the Secretary of Defense–level policies, citing instead the existing responsibilities and authorities already assigned to the military departments and the Joint Management Oversight Structure.	**Implemented.** In May 2015 DOD issued guidance in the form of a handbook for joint base personnel, in part to address inconsistent military service–level guidance on joint basing. In addition, in March 2015 DOD began quarterly meetings of a joint basing senior installation management group to mitigate conflicts stemming from service policies, whereas it previously only met as needed. As a result, joint basing personnel have more consistent guidance on how support services are managed at joint bases and joint base managers have a more regular forum for addressing conflicts between service policies. Together these actions address the intent of our recommendation to address challenges resulting in inefficiencies and inequities at joint bases resulting from consolidation of support functions.
GAO-14-577—DOD Joint Bases: Implementation Challenges Demonstrate Need to Reevaluate the Program (Sept. 19, 2014).	Evaluate the purpose of the program and determine whether DOD's current goals of achieving greater efficiencies and generating cost savings for the joint basing program, as stated in the 2005 BRAC Commission recommendation, are still appropriate or whether goals should be revised, and communicate these goals to the military services and joint bases and then adjust program activities accordingly.	**Nonconcur.** DOD stated that the goal of joint basing remains to increase the efficiency of delivering installation support at the 12 joint bases as described in the BRAC Commission's recommendation number 146. However, as noted in the report, the Office of the Secretary of Defense has not evaluated the joint basing program to determine this or whether the goals are appropriate for the program today and looking forward. We continue to believe that the confusion at the joint bases over the goals of the program, as well as cost-savings estimates that reflect uncertainty as to the extent consolidation of installation-support functions drives savings as compared to simply cutting the budget, indicate a continuing need to review the goals of the program and communicate them to the military services and joint bases, as recommended.	**None planned.** As of October 2017, DOD has not planned any actions to address the recommendation.

GAO product information	GAO recommendation	DOD response	DOD actions
GAO-14-577—DOD Joint Bases: Implementation Challenges Demonstrate Need to Reevaluate the Program (Sept. 19, 2014).	Subsequent to the evaluation above, provide direction to joint bases on their requirements for meeting the joint base program's goals. DOD's leadership should work with the military services to determine what reporting requirements and milestones should be put in place to increase support and commitment for the program's goals.	**Nonconcur.** DOD stated that the joint bases have been fully operational since October 2010 and have proven they can deliver measurable and tangible savings across the installation-support portfolio. Hence, DOD stated that it does not believe the Office of the Secretary of Defense should establish program milestones. However, DOD's assertion that the joint bases have proven they can deliver tangible savings is based on a method of calculating savings that cannot distinguish savings attributable to consolidation of installation-support functions at the joint bases from savings attributable to other factors, including sequestration-driven budget cuts.	**None planned.** As of October 2017, DOD has not planned any actions to address the recommendation.

GAO product information	GAO recommendation	DOD response	DOD actions
GAO-13-134—DOD Joint Bases: Management Improvements Needed to Achieve Greater Efficiencies (Nov. 15, 2012).	Develop and implement a plan that provides measurable goals linked to achieving savings and efficiencies at the joint bases and provide guidance to the joint bases that directs them to identify opportunities for cost savings and efficiencies. DOD should at a minimum consider the items identified in its recommendation to the 2005 BRAC Commission as areas for possible savings and efficiencies, including: • paring unnecessary management personnel, • consolidating and optimizing contract requirements, • establishing a single space-management authority to achieve greater utilization of facilities, and • reducing the number of base support vehicles and equipment.	**Nonconcur.** DOD said such targets would burden and restrict the authority of local commanders to manage the merger of the formerly stand-alone bases into joint bases while implementing new organizational structures, which would unnecessarily risk negative impacts to mission support when operational effectiveness of the bases is paramount. DOD stated that the department should continue its patient approach to obtaining savings and efficiencies at joint bases because it is working. We acknowledge that establishing joint basing is a complex undertaking, but DOD's position of taking a patient approach and deliberately deferring near-term savings contradicts the position it took when requesting the BRAC Commission to approve its joint basing recommendation. DOD also stated that all of the Air Force–led joint bases reduced civilian positions, and the Navy chose to not fill all of its civilian vacancies. However, these cuts were not the result of a purposeful effort to pare unnecessary management personnel due to the implementation of joint basing, but rather any reductions in civilian positions at the joint bases through attrition or leaving unfilled positions open are attributable to general service-wide initiatives and reductions and not joint basing efficiencies. We continue to believe that DOD's justification for joint basing—the realization of savings—is attainable by developing guidance and encouraging appropriate practices, goals, and time frames. Therefore, we continue to believe our recommendation is warranted.	**None planned.** As of October 2017, an Office of the Secretary of Defense basing official stated that there has been no change to DOD's responses and that no further actions have been taken toward implementation.

GAO product information	GAO recommendation	DOD response	DOD actions
GAO-13-134—DOD Joint Bases: Management Improvements Needed to Achieve Greater Efficiencies (Nov. 15, 2012).	Continue to develop and refine the Cost Performance and Visibility Framework in order to • eliminate data reliability problems, • facilitate comparisons of joint basing costs with the cost of operating the separate installations prior to implementing joint basing, and • identify and isolate the costs and savings resulting from actions and initiatives specifically resulting from joint basing and excluding DOD- or service-wide actions and initiatives.	**Partial concur.** DOD stated that its Cost Performance and Visibility Framework already provides a method to collect quarterly data on performance towards the Common Output Level Standards, annual data on personnel assigned, and funds obligated for each joint base. However, DOD is addressing inconsistencies in the current data captured in the framework and is improving its data reliability with considerable investment and the expectation to begin assessing joint base efficiencies by the end of fiscal year 2012. DOD stated it would be able to make several comparisons, such as the current fiscal year financial and performance data to the baseline and previous year's obligations; and the joint base's baseline data with the costs of operating the separate installations prior to implementing joint basing. DOD acknowledged that the comparison of the costs of operating separate installations would not identify cost savings resulting solely from joint basing and asserted the impracticality of isolating and distinguishing joint basing cost savings from the savings that result from DOD- or service-wide actions using the data contained in its framework. Further, DOD pointed out that it did not believe that accounting systems are designed to track savings, rather they are designed to track expenses and disbursements.	**Implemented.** DOD provided guidance to the joint bases which resulted in improved quality of the data obtained for fiscal year 2012. Subsequently, DOD performed an analysis comparing this improved operating cost data with what it projected would be the costs of operating the separate installations if the joint bases had not been created. This analysis showed that the joint bases were saving money relative to the costs of operating the separate installations. Together these actions met the intent of our recommendation, and provide DOD with an improved picture of the cost of operating the joint bases as well as a comparison of the cost of operating the joint bases with the cost of operating the separate installations.

GAO product information	GAO recommendation	DOD response	DOD actions
GAO-13-134—DOD Joint Bases: Management Improvements Needed to Achieve Greater Efficiencies (Nov. 15, 2012).	Direct the joint bases to compile a list of those common standards in all functional areas needing clarification and the reasons why they need to be clarified, including those standards still being provided or reported on according to service-specific standards rather than the common standard.	**Partial concur.** DOD stated that a quarterly feedback process on the joint base common standards and an annual review process that incorporates input from the joint bases already exist. Further, standards may need changing as priorities change and missions evolve, but the current process strikes an appropriate balance between the analytical burden of repeated reviews with the need for clarity and refinement. DOD also stated that it believes that reviewing all the standards simultaneously does not allow for the depth of analysis required to make sound decisions. While we agree with DOD that the standards need to be continually reviewed and adjusted as priorities and missions change, we found ample evidence that the individuals who report on the joint bases' ability to meet the current standards believe some of the standards need clarification now, and that in many instances these officials believe it is unclear what some of the standards are measuring. It is important to note that nothing in our recommendation requires DOD to review all the standards simultaneously. DOD also suggested that GAO conduct a qualitative assessment of the standards because the findings appear to be based on an anecdotal assessment. We disagree. We conducted a comprehensive qualitative review of over 59,359 comments entered into the Cost Performance and Visibility Framework from fiscal years 2009 through 2011 and categorized them into broad themes of issues raised by the bases in reference to the Common Output Level Standards.	**Pending.** As of October 2017, an Office of the Secretary of Defense basing official stated that no actions have been taken yet toward implementation.

GAO product information	GAO recommendation	DOD response	DOD actions
GAO-13-134—DOD Joint Bases: Management Improvements Needed to Achieve Greater Efficiencies (Nov. 15, 2012).	Amend the Office of the Secretary of Defense joint standards review process to prioritize review and revision of those standards most in need of clarification within this list.	**Partial concur.** DOD stated that a quarterly feedback process on the joint base common standards and an annual review process that incorporates input from the joint bases already exist. Further, standards may need changing as priorities change and missions evolve, but the current process strikes an appropriate balance between the analytical burden of repeated reviews with the need for clarity and refinement. DOD also stated that it believes that reviewing all the standards simultaneously does not allow for the depth of analysis required to make sound decisions. While we agree with DOD that the standards need to be continually reviewed and adjusted as priorities and missions change, we found ample evidence that the individuals who report on the joint bases' ability to meet the current standards believe some of the standards need clarification now, and that in many instances these officials believe it is unclear what some of the standards are measuring. It is important to note that nothing in our recommendation requires DOD to review all the standards simultaneously. DOD also suggested that GAO conduct a qualitative assessment of the standards because the findings appear to be based on an anecdotal assessment. We disagree. We conducted a comprehensive qualitative review of over 59,359 comments entered into the Cost Performance and Visibility Framework from fiscal years 2009 through 2011 and categorized them into broad themes of issues raised by the bases in reference to the Common Output Level Standards.	**Pending.** As of October 2017, an Office of the Secretary of Defense basing official stated that no actions have been taken yet toward implementation.

GAO product information	GAO recommendation	DOD response	DOD actions
GAO-13-134—DOD Joint Bases: Management Improvements Needed to Achieve Greater Efficiencies (Nov. 15, 2012).	Develop a common strategy to expand routine communication between the joint bases, and between the joint bases and the Office of the Secretary of Defense, to encourage joint resolution of common challenges and sharing of best practices and lessons learned.	**Partial concur.** DOD stated that it believed there are already mechanisms in place to facilitate routine communication between the joint bases, as well as between the Office of the Secretary of Defense and the joint bases, and that it is increasing those opportunities. DOD listed the various opportunities it has for sharing joint basing information, including yearly joint base site visits and an annual management review meeting with the joint base commanders.	**Implemented.** DOD added an annual meeting beginning in February 2013 for joint base commanders to discuss issues the bases are facing, and in August 2013 distributed contact information for all joint base commanders and deputy joint base commanders to each of the joint bases. As a result, joint bases have had expanded opportunities to share information on best practices and lessons learned, and to resolve common challenges. In part because the annual joint base commanders' meeting takes place as part of an annual program review meeting with the Office of the Secretary of Defense, together these actions address the intent of this recommendation.
GAO-13-134—DOD Joint Bases: Management Improvements Needed to Achieve Greater Efficiencies (Nov. 15, 2012).	Develop guidance to ensure all the joint bases develop and provide training materials to incoming personnel on how installation services are provided on joint bases.	**Partial concur.** DOD stated that it will ensure each of the services is providing training materials to incoming personnel; however, joint base commanders need flexibility to tailor training to the needs of their installation.	**Implemented.** In May 2015, DOD issued a handbook to provide basic information and clarify processes and procedures for the joint bases. The document is intended to serve as a first point of reference for information about the joint bases and the unique policies and guidance that govern them. This handbook, which covers how joint bases differ from other military installations, among other relevant issues, can better inform incoming servicemembers about the particular characteristics of joint bases, as well as reduce duplication or inconsistency in how the joint bases train incoming servicemembers, and therefore meets the intent of our recommendation.

GAO product information	GAO recommendation	DOD response	DOD actions
GAO-10-725R—Military Base Realignments and Closures: DOD Is Taking Steps to Mitigate Challenges but Is Not Fully Reporting Some Additional Costs (July 21, 2010).	Take steps to capture and appropriately report to Congress any BRAC-related implementation costs that are funded from outside the BRAC process.	**Concur.** DOD noted that it is in the process of drafting new BRAC guidance that, among other items, will direct the services and defense agencies to provide a final accounting for all BRAC costs (both inside and outside of the account).	**Implemented.** August 5, 2010, the Deputy Under Secretary of Defense (Installations and Environment) issued a guidance memo to the military services and DOD agencies requiring all BRAC business plan managers to fully capture the costs and savings of BRAC 2005 by submitting a final BRAC financial display that captures all BRAC-related expenditures (both inside and outside the BRAC account). As a result, Congress will have more visibility over all BRAC implementation costs.
GAO-09-703—Military Base Realignments and Closures: DOD Needs to Update Savings Estimates and Continue to Address Challenges in Consolidating Supply-Related Functions at Depot Maintenance Locations (July 9, 2009).	Remove savings estimates that are not clearly the direct result of 2005 BRAC actions (including savings sometimes referred to as “BRAC enabled”).	**Concur.** DOD stated that such savings will be removed from savings estimates reported in the August 2009 business plan submission.	**Implemented.** In DOD’s 2009 biannual Business Plan, the Defense Logistics Agency had removed those savings from its estimates.
GAO-09-703—Military Base Realignments and Closures: DOD Needs to Update Savings Estimates and Continue to Address Challenges in Consolidating Supply-Related Functions at Depot Maintenance Locations (July 9, 2009).	Update its 4-year-old data to reflect the most recent estimate of inventory levels available for consolidation.	**Concur.** DOD stated that it will use the most recent estimate of inventory levels available and update the savings calculations for inventory reductions in its August 2009 business plan.	**Implemented.** In DOD’s 2009 biannual Business Plan, the Defense Logistics Agency used updated inventory levels in its current estimate for savings related to this BRAC recommendation.

GAO product information	GAO recommendation	DOD response	DOD actions
GAO-09-703—Military Base Realignments and Closures: DOD Needs to Update Savings Estimates and Continue to Address Challenges in Consolidating Supply-Related Functions at Depot Maintenance Locations (July 9, 2009).	Apply current information on the timing of inventory consolidations (specifically, when they will begin and how long they will take) and exclude projected savings for consolidating Army and Marine Corps inventories with the Defense Logistics Agency.	**Concur.** DOD stated that savings calculations for projected inventory reductions will reflect the current schedule of consolidating materiel and will be updated in the August 2009 business plan. Moreover, DOD stated that the update will show that no Army or Marine Corps inventory is available for consolidation.	**Implemented.** In DOD's August 2009 biannual Business Plan, the Defense Logistics Agency used current information regarding a later timetable for inventory consolidations and eliminated any savings from the Army and Marine Corps inventories since there will not be any available to consolidate. The resulting savings estimate will provide better information for congressional oversight and help maintain public confidence in the BRAC process.
GAO-09-703—Military Base Realignments and Closures: DOD Needs to Update Savings Estimates and Continue to Address Challenges in Consolidating Supply-Related Functions at Depot Maintenance Locations (July 9, 2009).	Revise and finalize an approved methodology that implements these steps and can be consistently followed by all the services and the Defense Logistics Agency over time.	**Concur.** DOD stated that the new calculations will be documented in the August 2009 business plan and that updates and revisions will be incorporated and staffed by the end of calendar year 2009.	**Implemented.** According to DOD, in 2010 and 2011, the department documented updates and revisions to the methodologies for projecting or tracking, or both, BRAC savings associated with the supply, storage, and distribution functions and inventories in the Cost and Savings Tracking Plan, which was in its second coordination cycle.
GAO-09-336—Defense Infrastructure: DOD Needs to Periodically Review Support Standards and Costs at Joint Bases and Better Inform Congress of Facility Sustainment Funding Uses (Mar. 30, 2009).	Periodically review the installation-support standards as experience is gained with delivering installation support at the joint bases and make adjustments, if needed, to ensure that each standard reflects the level of service necessary to meet installation requirements as economically as possible.	**Partial concur.** DOD stated that further action to implement the recommendation was not necessary because the joint base memorandum of agreement template already requires periodic reviews to ensure that installation support is delivered in accordance with appropriate, common, output level standards.	**Implemented.** In January 2011, DOD stated that the department now reviews the standards annually on a regular schedule for appropriateness, applicability, and performance. In addition to the annual review, the department implemented a cost and performance visibility framework under which the joint bases report how well the standards are being met. DOD stated that the reported information can assist in determining whether any adjustments need to be made to the standards.

GAO product information	GAO recommendation	DOD response	DOD actions
GAO-09-336—Defense Infrastructure: DOD Needs to Periodically Review Support Standards and Costs at Joint Bases and Better Inform Congress of Facility Sustainment Funding Uses (Mar. 30, 2009).	Periodically review administrative costs as joint basing is implemented to minimize any additional costs and prevent the loss of existing installation-support efficiencies.	**Partial concur.** DOD stated that further action to implement the recommendation was not necessary because it had already established a process to periodically review joint basing costs as part of DOD's planning, program, budget, and execution system and that the joint base memorandum of agreement template requires periodic reviews of mission and resource impacts. DOD's response to our recommendation describes the processes DOD intends to use to review costs after the joint bases have been implemented. However, our recommendation calls for reviewing costs during the joint base implementation process—not only after implementation has been completed.	**None planned.** DOD plans no further action on this recommendation.
GAO-09-336—Defense Infrastructure: DOD Needs to Periodically Review Support Standards and Costs at Joint Bases and Better Inform Congress of Facility Sustainment Funding Uses (Mar. 30, 2009).	Complete a detailed analysis of the estimated installation-support costs from the initial joint bases and report the results of the analysis to Congress in the department's documents supporting the administration's annual budget submission or another document deemed appropriate.	**Partial concur.** DOD stated that it is collecting estimated installation-support cost information at the joint bases and that the information will be provided if Congress requests it.	**Implemented.** In July 2011, DOD stated that it had established procedures for collecting installation-support costs at the 12 joint bases and, by using a cost and performance visibility framework, the joint bases report cost and manpower annually 6 weeks after the end of the fiscal year. According to DOD, the information is analyzed in conjunction with performance data reported quarterly, to get an overall assessment of how well the standards for installation support are being met and the costs associated with those standards. DOD stated that it will continue to respond to requests for information from Congress with regard to the joint basing initiative.

GAO product information	GAO recommendation	DOD response	DOD actions
GAO-09-336—Defense Infrastructure: DOD Needs to Periodically Review Support Standards and Costs at Joint Bases and Better Inform Congress of Facility Sustainment Funding Uses (Mar. 30, 2009).	Increase the attention given to facility sustainment spending by summarizing and reporting to Congress the amount of budgeted sustainment funds spent on other purposes in the department's documents supporting the administration's annual budget submission or another document deemed appropriate.	**Partial concur.** DOD stated that it will collect and summarize the amount of budgeted sustainment funds spent on other purposes and that the information will be provided if Congress requests it.	**Implemented.** In July 2011, DOD stated that the department was monitoring the budgeting and execution of facilities sustainment in order to determine how much of the funding budgeted for sustainment is diverted to other purposes. DOD also stated that the department was currently collecting information on the sustainment tasks that are deferred in a given year at a sampling of installations across DOD and that the information would help inform decision making with regard to facilities sustainment funding. Finally, DOD previously stated that it would provide Congress with information on the amount of budgeted sustainment funds spent on other purposes if Congress requests it.
GAO-09-217—Military Base Realignments and Closures: DOD Faces Challenges in Implementing Recommendations on Time and Is Not Consistently Updating Savings Estimates (Jan. 30, 2009).	Modify the recently issued guidance on the status of BRAC implementation to establish a briefing schedule with briefings as frequently as the Office of the Secretary of Defense deems necessary to manage the risk that a particular recommendation may not meet the statutory deadline, but at a minimum, at 6-month intervals, through the rest of the BRAC 2005 implementation period, a schedule that would enable DOD to continually assess and respond to the challenges identified by the services and defense agencies that could preclude recommendation completion by September 15, 2011.	**Concur.** DOD noted that BRAC business managers have and will continue to provide briefings on the status of implementation actions associated with recommendations exceeding $100 million, and that these briefings provide a forum for BRAC business managers to explain their actions to mitigate challenges.	**Implemented.** The Deputy Under Secretary of Defense (Installations and Environment) issued a memo in November 2008 requiring the military services and defense agencies to provide the Office of the Secretary of Defense BRAC Office status briefings. According to the Office of the Secretary of Defense, the briefings were needed to ensure senior leadership was apprised of significant issues affecting BRAC implementation by the statutory deadline. The first round of status briefings took place in December 2008.

GAO product information	GAO recommendation	DOD response	DOD actions
GAO-09-217—Military Base Realignments and Closures: DOD Faces Challenges in Implementing Recommendations on Time and Is Not Consistently Updating Savings Estimates (Jan. 30, 2009).	Modify the recently issued guidance on the status of BRAC implementation to require the services and defense agencies to provide information on possible mitigation measures to reduce the effects of those challenges.	**Concur.** DOD noted that BRAC business managers have and will continue to provide briefings on the status of implementation actions associated with recommendations exceeding $100 million, and that these briefings provide a forum for BRAC business managers to explain their actions to mitigate challenges.	**Implemented.** According to DOD, in 2009 and 2010, the department required business managers to identify specific mitigation measures for BRAC recommendations that have construction projects that are scheduled to complete within 3 months of the statutory deadline. The purpose of these mitigation measures is to reduce the risk of not completing implementation of a recommendation by the BRAC deadline. These mitigation measures are identified and monitored in a tracking tool to help ensure they are implemented and the risk is reduced. As appropriate, the DOD basing office conducts additional follow-up meetings with business managers for specific issues or follows up via other contacts that occur between the routine 6 month briefing intervals. This helps to ensure DOD is making progress and implementation of recommendations is on track. As part of this process, six recommendations were identified as having particular risk. DOD briefed these six recommendations to key Senate and House staff in March 2010.
GAO-09-217—Military Base Realignments and Closures: DOD Faces Challenges in Implementing Recommendations on Time and Is Not Consistently Updating Savings Estimates (Jan. 30, 2009).	Take steps to improve compliance with DOD's regulation requiring updated BRAC savings estimates.	**Concur.** The department stated that it is emphasizing savings updates during its briefings and in all future business plan approval documentation.	**Implemented.** On August 5, 2010, the Deputy Under Secretary of Defense (Installations and Environment) issued a guidance memo to the military services and DOD agencies regarding BRAC 2005 Final Business Plans, and Other Reporting Requirements. Among other things, this guidance emphasized to the military services and defense agencies that is it imperative that the final financial displays for BRAC 2005 contain updated projections of recurring savings.

GAO product information	GAO recommendation	DOD response	DOD actions
GAO-08-315—Military Base Realignments and Closures: Higher Costs and Lower Savings Projected for Implementing Two Key Supply-Related BRAC Recommendations (Mar. 5, 2008).	Revise its business plans to exclude all expected savings that are not the direct result of BRAC actions.	**Nonconcur.** DOD stated that while the $172 million in potential savings for implementing the supply, storage, and distribution recommendation and the $71 million in potential savings for implementing the depot-level reparable recommendation were not directly the result of BRAC actions, the estimated savings were enabled by BRAC actions and should be attributable to the recommendations. According to DOD, enabled savings are savings initiatives that were enhanced in some way by the BRAC implementation actions (e.g., increased scope, more aggressively pursued, or moved in new directions). We disagree and continue to believe that the $243 million in expected savings resulting from the services' inventory reduction initiatives should not be counted as BRAC savings. While these initiatives are inventory-related and may produce savings, we believe that they are not the direct result of BRAC actions and therefore are not BRAC savings.	**None planned.**

GAO product information	GAO recommendation	DOD response	DOD actions
GAO-08-315—Military Base Realignments and Closures: Higher Costs and Lower Savings Projected for Implementing Two Key Supply-Related BRAC Recommendations (Mar. 5, 2008).	Implement methodologies for periodically monitoring and updating net savings for the supply, storage, and distribution and depot-level reparable recommendations throughout the implementation period. Such methodologies, at a minimum, should include: • clear metrics for measuring the magnitude of actual costs and savings, • a comparison of the actual costs and savings to the prior estimates to coincide with the required semiannual business plan updates, and • explanations for actual cost and savings variances from estimates presented in the business plans.	**Concur.**	**Implemented.** According to DOD, in 2009, the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense (Acquisition, Technology and Logistics) established a standard DOD format for measuring the magnitude of actual costs and savings, and required DOD components to submit business plans in February and August that compared current costs and savings with prior estimates and justify any changes by funding category. The Defense Logistics Agency has since updated cost and savings for BRAC recommendations on a semiannual basis synchronized with the programming and budget cycles and compared actual costs and savings to prior year estimates. The magnitude of actual costs and savings are collected in a relational data base developed to compare actual costs and savings to prior year estimates. The database has data on BRAC recommendation 176, Depot Level Reparable Management, and BRAC Recommendation 177, Supply, Storage, and Distribution Reconfiguration. For example, in the February 2009 business plans for BRAC recommendation 176 and BRAC recommendation 177, the Defense Logistics Agency compared costs and savings to prior estimates for each funding category and when there was a variance in a funding category, it included an explanation for the change in cost and savings.

GAO product information	GAO recommendation	DOD response	DOD actions
GAO-08-315—Military Base Realignments and Closures: Higher Costs and Lower Savings Projected for Implementing Two Key Supply-Related BRAC Recommendations (Mar. 5, 2008).	Ensure that necessary funding to meet implementation milestones is reflected in all respective service and Defense Logistics Agency budget submissions for the remainder of the implementation period ending in fiscal year 2011.	**Concur.**	**Implemented.** According to DOD, the BRAC decision memorandums provide the resources to fully fund implementation during the 6-year BRAC implementation statutory period. Annually the DOD BRAC office goes through an extensive analysis to compare each business plan requirement to program funding (Program Review). If funding shortfalls are identified, the components are directed via a Program Decision Memorandum to fully fund requirements. The office of the Under Secretary of Defense (Acquisition, Technology and Logistics) issued a June 22, 2007, memorandum directing DOD components to fully fund BRAC implementation during the 6-year statutory period.
GAO-08-159—Military Base Realignments and Closures: Cost Estimates Have Increased and Are Likely to Continue to Evolve (Dec. 11, 2007).	Explain, in DOD's BRAC budget submission to Congress, the difference between annual recurring savings attributable to military personnel entitlements and annual recurring savings that will readily result in funds available for other defense priorities.	**Concur.** DOD noted that military personnel reductions attributable to a BRAC recommendation as savings are as real as savings generated through end-strength reductions. DOD also stated that while it may not reduce overall end strength, its reductions in military personnel for each recommendation at a specific location are real and these personnel reductions allow the department to reapply these military personnel to support new capabilities and improve operational efficiencies.	**Implemented.** The fiscal year 2009 DOD budget estimates for BRAC 2005 included language that stated, "To the extent that savings generated from military personnel reductions at closing or realigning installations are immediately used to fund military personnel priorities, these resources are not available to fund other Defense priorities." Such language was not included in the prior year (fiscal year 2008) budget submittal to Congress. The Office of the Secretary of Defense stated that the insertion of this language would provide a better explanation of its BRAC estimated annual recurring savings to Congress.

GAO product information	GAO recommendation	DOD response	DOD actions
GAO-08-20—Military Base Realignments and Closures: Impact of Terminating, Relocating, or Outsourcing the Services of the Armed Forces Institute of Pathology (Nov. 9, 2007).	Include in the December 2007 plan to Congress implementation strategies for how DOD will use existing in-house pathology expertise available within military treatment facilities, identify and obtain needed consultation services from subspecialty pathologists with appropriate expertise through the Program Management Office in a timely manner, and solidify the source and organization of funds to be used for outsourced consultation services.	**Concur.**	**Implemented.** The National Defense Authorization Act of 2008 directed DOD to establish a federal Joint Pathology Center in DOD that would provide diagnostic pathology consultations to DOD and other federal agencies. DOD's Initial Operating Capability for the Joint Pathology Center was October 1, 2010. Formal full operating capability for the Joint Pathology Center was expected to be September 15, 2011. The Joint Pathology Center's Diagnostic Consultative Service, which will include the Program Management Office, has been fully operational since April 1, 2011, and the Armed Forces Institute of Pathology's Diagnostic Consultative Service ended on April 15, 2011.
GAO-08-20—Military Base Realignments and Closures: Impact of Terminating, Relocating, or Outsourcing the Services of the Armed Forces Institute of Pathology (Nov. 9, 2007).	Within 6 months of completion of DOD's study regarding the usefulness of the pathology material in the repository that is to be finished in October 2008, the Secretary should require the Uniformed Services University of Health Sciences to provide Congress with information on the status of the repository's assets and their potential for research use.	**Partial concur.** DOD indicated that the Uniformed Services University of Health Sciences would not be in a position to report its strategies on managing the repository until further work was completed. As a result, we modified our recommendation to limit the reporting requirement to information on the viability of material in the repository and its usefulness for research.	**Implemented.** On August 2008, DOD reported that the Uniformed Services University of Health Sciences had commissioned a study to evaluate the assets of the Armed Forces Institute of Pathology Tissue Repository and that the contract period was through Sept. 31, 2008. On February 2009, DOD reported that it had received the contractor's final report on December 31, 2008, and that the Uniformed Services University of Health Sciences was reviewing the results of the study, and planned to submit a report to Congress by the summer of 2009 that would provide an evaluation of the status of the Tissue Repository's clinical data and pathology specimens. In a memo dated February 26, 2010, to the Acting Chief Financial Officer, the Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Clinical and Program Policy stated that this recommendation is complete. DOD's records show it as being completed on April 20, 2010.

GAO product information	GAO recommendation	DOD response	DOD actions
GAO-08-20—Military Base Realignments and Closures: Impact of Terminating, Relocating, or Outsourcing the Services of the Armed Forces Institute of Pathology (Nov. 9, 2007).	Prior to the Uniformed Services University of Health Sciences assuming responsibility for the repository, provide a report to Congress on its implementation strategies for how it will populate, manage, and use the repository in the future. The implementation strategies should include information on how the Uniformed Services University of Health Sciences intends to use pathology expertise to manage the material, obtain pathology material from a wide variety of individuals, maximize availability of the repository for research through cooperative ventures with other academic institutions, and assist interested groups—if any—in supporting the continuation of educational services, such as the Radiologic-Pathologic Correlation course.	**Concur.**	**Implemented.** On August 2008, DOD noted that the strategic plan for the Joint Pathology Center had been developed and, in accordance with statutory guidance, would provide for the maintenance and modernization of the Tissue Repository. In September 2012, the Institute of Medicine issued a report on its review of the appropriate use of the Armed Forces Institute of Pathology's Tissue Repository following its transfer to the Joint Pathology Center. The report, titled "Future Uses of the Department of Defense Joint Pathology Center Biorepository," provides detail on how the assets can be populated, managed, and used in the future.

GAO product information	GAO recommendation	DOD response	DOD actions
GAO-07-1040—Military Base Realignments and Closures: Plan Needed to Monitor Challenges for Completing More Than 100 Armed Forces Reserve Centers (Sept. 13, 2007).	Develop a plan for routinely bringing together the various stakeholders as a group, to include the state Army National Guard when appropriate, to monitor for and develop steps to mitigate implementation challenges should they occur. These steps should include ways to monitor and mitigate the effects of potential challenges on BRAC completion time frames, project cost and scope, construction quality, and capacity of the facility to meet changing mission requirements.	**Partial concur.** DOD believes that GAO overlooked the various groups, forums, or plans that the Army has in place to assist with BRAC execution and management. DOD stated that the Army already has a plan in place to bring the various stakeholders together; however, Army BRAC headquarters officials acknowledged that they could be more proactive in outreaching and communicating with the stakeholders on how to deal with and mitigate particular challenges associated with constructing 125 Armed Forces Reserve Centers. DOD also stated that the Army BRAC office will begin quarterly BRAC program reviews with the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Installations and Environment, which will further provide a forum for discussing and vetting issues affecting the BRAC program.	**Implemented.** The Army BRAC Office has taken several steps to implement the recommendation over the last several years. In March 2009, the Army BRAC Office provided a BRAC 2005 program update to the Army Vice Chief of Staff with representation from the Army National Guard and Reserves. In addition, the Army BRAC Division Reserve Component Branch, the Army Reserve Division, and the full-time Army National Guard and Army Reserve liaisons assigned to the Army BRAC Office have collaborated at BRAC summits in October 2009 and April 2010 where issues affecting U.S. Army Reserve Command were discussed with Army National Guard and Army Reserve Command presenting their concerns.
GAO-07-641—Military Base Closures: Management Strategy Needed to Mitigate Challenges and Improve Communication to Help Ensure Timely Implementation of Air National Guard Recommendations (May 16, 2007).	Develop a mitigation strategy to be shared with key stakeholders that anticipates, identifies, and addresses related implementation challenges. At a minimum, this strategy should include time frames for actions and responsibilities for each challenge, and facilitate the ability of Air National Guard headquarters officials to act to mitigate potential delays in interim milestones.	**Partial concur.** DOD suggested a modification to the recommendation to clarify that the Director, Air National Guard, is normally tasked by the Chief, National Guard Bureau. DOD also stated that mitigation plans cannot be released until they have been thoroughly vetted with all of the key stakeholders.	**Implemented.** The National Guard Bureau implemented a Strategic Communication Plan that provides affected units with the information they need to successfully complete BRAC actions and develop opportunities for follow-on missions at BRAC-affected locations. The Air National Guard Strategic Planning process, which is based on state involvement at all levels of the planning process, is the cornerstone and allows states to provide input to the Air National Guard Strategic Plan and ensures that states have the necessary information to implement those plans. The National Guard Bureau Strategic Communication Plan also incorporates Air Force communications.

GAO product information	GAO recommendation	DOD response	DOD actions
GAO-07-641—Military Base Closures: Management Strategy Needed to Mitigate Challenges and Improve Communication to Help Ensure Timely Implementation of Air National Guard Recommendations (May 16, 2007). GAO 07 641—Military Base Closures: Management Strategy Needed to Mitigate Challenges and Improve Communication to Help Ensure Timely Implementation of Air National Guard Recommendations (May 16, 2007).	Expand the Strategic Communication Plan to include how the Air National Guard headquarters will provide the affected Air National Guard units with the information needed to implement the BRAC-related actions.	**Partial concur.** DOD stated it is incumbent upon the Air National Guard and all affected units to maximize established chains of leadership and communication to effectively manage and execute BRAC actions. The Director, Air National Guard, acknowledges that there are challenges in communicating with the units and that some unit commanders may not have the information that they feel they need to implement the BRAC recommendation and their new missions.	**Implemented.** The National Guard Bureau, an oversight organization over the Air National Guard, is now providing key stakeholders with access to detailed BRAC implementation action timelines and programming plans, including BRAC contacts at each Air National Guard -affected base. Further, the Air National Guard Strategic Communication Playbook, which was updated in 2009, now focuses leadership attention on various strategic priorities including the implementation of Air National Guard BRAC recommendations. In addition, the Air National Guard Strategic Planning Process now includes both Air Force–level and National Guard Bureau–level communication with various state-level Adjutants General about BRAC implementation. Accordingly, the Air Force Chief of Staff and Air National Guard Director have hosted a meeting for all state-level Adjutants General to discuss BRAC actions. As a result of implementing our recommendation, Air National Guard headquarters' ability to identify strategies and determine resources needed to effectively meet BRAC goals has improved.
GAO-07-641—Military Base Closures: Management Strategy Needed to Mitigate Challenges and Improve Communication to Help Ensure Timely Implementation of Air National Guard Recommendations (May 16, 2007).	Report in the Air Force annual BRAC budget submission the costs and source of funding required to establish replacement missions for the Air National Guard units that will lose their flying missions as a result of BRAC 2005.	**Nonconcur.** DOD does not believe these costs are BRAC-related because establishment of replacement missions was not part of the recommendations. DOD stated that BRAC funds cannot be used to establish these missions and that the costs in question have been appropriately programmed and budgeted in the Air Force's regular military construction account. We continue to believe that the annual BRAC budget documentation would be the most complete and transparent place for DOD to report the costs to establish replacement missions because this documentation is used in evaluating BRAC implementation costs.	**None planned.**

GAO product information	GAO recommendation	DOD response	DOD actions
GAO-07-304—Military Base Closures: Projected Savings from Fleet Readiness Centers Are Likely Overstated and Actions Needed to Track Actual Savings and Overcome Certain Challenges (June 29, 2007)	Update the business plan for the Fleet Readiness Centers (1) to reflect only savings that are directly related to implementing the recommendation, and (2) update projected onetime savings when data are available.	**Concur.** DOD stated it considers military personnel reductions attributable to BRAC recommendations as savings that are just as real as savings generated through end-strength reductions. While the department may not reduce overall end-strength, the reductions in military personnel for each recommendation at a specific location are real.	**Implemented.** The Commander, Fleet Readiness Centers, updated the business plan in August 2009 to reflect savings directly related to the BRAC action to establish fleet readiness centers. The Navy updated projected savings directly related to implementing the recommendation, showing that overall savings projections of $1.151 billion from the August 2007 version of the business plan should not change since changes to projected savings targets in some of the six Fleet Readiness Center locations that exceeded savings targets in some years were offset by the inability to meet savings targets at other locations or in other years. The Navy updated projected onetime savings when data became available by changing some savings projected in the 2009 version of the business plan (from a GAO recommendation to recategorize approximately $25 million per year from recurring savings) to onetime savings.

GAO product information	GAO recommendation	DOD response	DOD actions
GAO-07-304—Military Base Closures: Projected Savings from Fleet Readiness Centers Are Likely Overstated and Actions Needed to Track Actual Savings and Overcome Certain Challenges (June 29, 2007)	Monitor implementation of the recommendation to determine the extent that savings already taken from the Navy budget are actually achieved.	**Concur.**	**Implemented.** The Navy has demonstrated sustained leadership devoted to implementing the BRAC recommendation for establishing Fleet Readiness Centers as evidenced by successive leaders who have developed implementation plans and completed each phase of implementation over time. In addition, the Navy's implementation guidance for Fleet Readiness Centers specifies that key measures include, in part, achieving savings targets. Accordingly, the Navy's monthly report to the Fleet Readiness Center Commanders includes an analysis of the variance between savings projected and those actually achieved at the six Fleet Readiness Centers. These reports provide objective, outcome-oriented metrics for improving readiness and for detailing six separate savings categories. Commanding officers or officers-in-charge of specific centers are evaluated for their results and held accountable for achieving savings targets. Management tools developed by the implementation team for Fleet Readiness Centers have supported the identification of additional opportunities to realize savings. Continuing efforts to monitor implementation and develop mechanisms to improve performance and accountability have allowed the Navy to determine the extent to which savings already taken from the Navy budget for aircraft maintenance are actually achieved.

GAO product information	GAO recommendation	DOD response	DOD actions
GAO-05-785—Military Bases: Analysis of DOD's 2005 Selection Process and Recommendations for Base Closures and Realignments (July 1, 2005)	Establish mechanisms for tracking and periodically updating savings estimates in implementing individual recommendations, with emphasis both on savings related to the more traditional realignment and closure actions as well as those related more to business process reengineering.	**Concur.**	**Implemented.** The Joint Action Scenario Team, a joint team DOD set up to develop and propose various joint reserve component recommended actions, incorporated GAO's suggestions of specific information in its summary reports and supporting documentation in order to withstand scrutiny and provide a clear understanding to outside parties, including GAO and the military service audit agencies, of the process leading to the ultimate decisions regarding recommended BRAC actions.

Source: GAO summary of GAO and DOD information. | GAO-18-231

Appendix V: GAO Reviews Related to the BRAC 2005 Disposal Phase, Related Recommendations, and DOD Actions

To improve the disposal phase of the 2005 Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) round, we made 14 recommendations between 2007 and 2017. The Department of Defense (DOD) fully concurred with 7, partially concurred with 5, and did not concur with 2 recommendations. DOD implemented 4 of them with 8 recommendations pending further action (see table 4).[1] According to DOD officials, DOD will be unable to take actions on 5 of the 8 pending recommendations until another BRAC round is authorized.

Table 4: GAO Recommendations Related to the Disposal Phase of the 2005 Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) Round and Department of Defense (DOD) Actions to Date

GAO product information	GAO recommendation	DOD response	DOD actions
GAO-17-151—Military Base Realignments and Closures: DOD Has Improved Environmental Cleanup Reporting but Should Obtain and Share More Information (Jan. 19, 2017).	Include in future annual reports to Congress that environmental cleanup costs will increase due to the cleanup of perfluorinated compounds and other emerging contaminants, and to include best estimates of these costs as additional information becomes available.	**Concur.**	**Pending.** In November 2017, DOD told us that the Defense Environmental Restoration Programs Annual Report to Congress for Fiscal Year 2016 will include language related to the possible increase in cost estimates due to emerging contaminants like perfluorooctane sulfonate and perfluorooctanoic acid.

[1]We categorize DOD actions as pending if DOD had described actions under way that had not been completed or DOD had not yet identified action it would take in response to a recommendation that it concurred or partially concurred with.

GAO product information	GAO recommendation	DOD response	DOD actions
GAO-17-151—Military Base Realignments and Closures: DOD Has Improved Environmental Cleanup Reporting but Should Obtain and Share More Information (Jan. 19, 2017).	Direct the Secretaries of the military departments to create a repository or method to record and share lessons learned about how various locations have successfully addressed cleanup challenges.	**Concur.**	**Pending.** In November 2017, DOD stated that it was collecting lessons learned on BRAC sites as part of its fiscal year 2017 information collection process.

GAO product information	GAO recommendation	DOD response	DOD actions
GAO-15-274—Military Base Realignments and Closures: Process for Reusing Property for Homeless Assistance Needs Improvements (Mar. 16, 2015).	Update the BRAC homeless-assistance regulations to require that conveyance statuses be tracked. These regulatory updates could include requiring DOD to track and share disposal actions with the Department of Housing and Urban Development and requiring the Department of Housing and Urban Development to track the status following disposal, such as type of assistance received by providers and potential withdrawals by providers.	**Partial Concur.** DOD stated that while it concurs with the value of tracking homeless assistance and other conveyances, it can do so without any change to existing regulations. DOD did not identify any actions it will take on how to track the homeless-assistance conveyances in the absence of a regulatory update, and also did not indicate that it would work with the Department of Housing and Urban Development to update the regulations. Moreover, DOD did not explain how program staff would know to track the conveyance status in the absence of guidance requiring them to do so. We believe DOD is in the best position to know the status of the conveyances prior to the property disposal, and DOD officials told us they saw value in tracking the conveyance statuses. We continue to believe that updating the BRAC homeless-assistance regulations to require the tracking of conveyances of property for homeless assistance will provide the Department of Housing and Urban Development and DOD with better insight into the effectiveness of the BRAC homeless-assistance program and help identify adjustments that may be needed to improve program processes or procedures to be used in any future BRAC rounds.	**Pending.** As of October 2017, DOD officials stated that actions are pending based on the authorization of a future BRAC round.

GAO product information	GAO recommendation	DOD response	DOD actions
GAO-15-274—Military Base Realignments and Closures: Process for Reusing Property for Homeless Assistance Needs Improvements (Mar. 16, 2015).	Update the BRAC homeless-assistance regulations; establish information-sharing mechanisms, such as a website or informational pamphlets; or develop templates to include • specific guidance that clearly identifies the information that should be provided to homeless-assistance providers during tours of on-base property, such as the condition of the property;	**Partial concur.** DOD stated that while it already provides generic information about the property, the Local Redevelopment Authorities and interested homeless-assistance providers can undertake facility assessments following the tours. As we stated in the report, we found that the level of detail and property access that local redevelopment authorities granted to providers varied. We continue to believe that specific guidance is needed to help ensure that information regarding tours of on-base property—such as property condition or, in the case that the information is not available prior to the tours, details on when information about property condition might be available—is provided to homeless-assistance providers, thus helping to ensure they have the knowledge necessary to make an informed decision about the BRAC homeless-assistance process, including the time frame and feasibility of the proposed homeless assistance.	**Pending.** As of October 2017, DOD officials stated that DOD actions are pending based on the authorization of a future BRAC round.

GAO product information	GAO recommendation	DOD response	DOD actions
GAO-15-274—Military Base Realignments and Closures: Process for Reusing Property for Homeless Assistance Needs Improvements (Mar. 16, 2015).	• information for homeless-assistance providers to use for preparing their notices of interest;	**Nonconcur.** DOD stated that the existing regulatory guidance is adequate for providers' expressions of interest, given that these expressions evolve as the redevelopment planning effort proceeds and they learn more about the property. However, while the regulations provide general information about what should be included in homeless-assistance providers' notices of interest, not all participants in the BRAC process were aware of the regulations. We continue to believe that DOD should work with the Department of Housing and Urban Development to implement the joint recommendation.	**None planned.** As of December 2017, DOD officials stated that they will not take action because they believe this is a community-driven action.

GAO product information	GAO recommendation	DOD response	DOD actions
GAO-15-274—Military Base Realignments and Closures: Process for Reusing Property for Homeless Assistance Needs Improvements (Mar. 16, 2015).	• guidance for legally binding agreements and clarification on the implications of unsigned agreements; and	**Partial concur.** DOD did not commit to taking any actions to provide this information and instead noted that any action should ensure that a legally binding agreement does not bind DOD to disposal actions it is unable to carry out. However, nothing in the recommendation requires DOD to sign an agreement it cannot carry out. DOD further noted that the purpose of the legally binding agreement is to provide remedies and recourse for the local redevelopment authority and provider in carrying out an accommodation following property disposal. We agree that legally binding agreements can provide recourse, but we found that some agreements were being approved prior to being signed and that providers did not know that unsigned agreements would limit their recourse in the process.	**Pending.** As of October 2017, DOD officials stated that DOD actions are pending based on the authorization of a future BRAC round.

GAO product information	GAO recommendation	DOD response	DOD actions
GAO-15-274—Military Base Realignments and Closures: Process for Reusing Property for Homeless Assistance Needs Improvements (Mar. 16, 2015).	• specific information on legal alternatives to providing on-base property, including acceptable alternative options such as financial assistance or off-base property in lieu of on-base property, information about rules of sale for on-base property conveyed to homeless-assistance providers, and under what circumstances it is permissible to sell property for affordable housing alongside the no-cost homeless-assistance conveyance.	**Nonconcur.** DOD stated that providers may be only considered through specific expressions of interest in surplus BRAC property, and these suggested alternatives may only be considered within the context of what is legally permissible given the specific circumstances at each installation. Nothing in the recommendation suggests that DOD identify alternatives that are not legally permissible or indicates that all alternatives should be offered in every circumstance; rather, we found that when alternatives were being considered, all parties lacked information about which types of information were legally permissible. We continue to believe that implementing this recommendation may provide local redevelopment authorities and homeless-assistance providers with additional feasible options for homeless assistance through the BRAC process.	**None planned.** As of December 2017, DOD officials stated that they will not take action because they believe this is a community-driven action.
GAO-13-436—Defense Infrastructure: Communities Need Additional Guidance and Information to Improve Their Ability to Adjust to DOD Installation Closure or Growth (May 14, 2013).	Direct the Secretary of the Army to issue, consistent with DOD guidance, guidance on specific levels of maintenance to be followed in the event of a base closure based on the probable reuse of the facilities.	**Concur.** DOD stated that the Army agrees to publish property maintenance guidance prior to closing installations in the event of future base closures.	**Pending.** In September 2017, DOD stated that the Army will publish guidance once Congress enacts legislation authorizing a round of BRAC.

GAO product information	GAO recommendation	DOD response	DOD actions
GAO-13-436—Defense Infrastructure: Communities Need Additional Guidance and Information to Improve Their Ability to Adjust to DOD Installation Closure or Growth (May 14, 2013).	Direct the Secretaries of the Army, the Navy, and the Air Force to consider developing a procedure for collecting service members' physical addresses while stationed at an installation, annually updating this information, and sharing aggregate information with community representatives relevant for local planning decisions, such as additional population per zip code, consistent with privacy and force protection concerns.	**Partial concur.** DOD stated that it agrees that information pertaining to the physical location of installation personnel helps affected communities plan for housing, schools, transportation and other off-post requirements and that existing policy requires the military departments to share planning information, including base personnel, with states and communities. DOD also stated that in the event of future basing decisions affecting local communities, it will work with the military departments to assess and determine the best means to obtain, aggregate, and distribute this information to help ensure that adequate planning information is made available.	**Pending.** In September 2017, DOD stated that it has identified corrective actions to fully implement this recommendation. First, DOD is working to identify policies for collecting such information. This action is estimated to be completed in December 2017. However, collection of the information will not take place until Congress authorizes an additional BRAC round.
GAO-13-436—Defense Infrastructure: Communities Need Additional Guidance and Information to Improve Their Ability to Adjust to DOD Installation Closure or Growth (May 14, 2013).	Direct the Secretaries of the Army and the Air Force to consider creating or designating a civilian position at the installation level to be the focal point and provide continuity for community interaction for future growth installations and to consider expanding this position to all installations.	**Partial concur.** DOD stated that it agrees with the need for a designated position at the installation level and will ensure that each military department is meeting this need through current practices. DOD also stated that many growth installation officials already serve as "ex officio members" of the community's growth management organizations and community officials agree that this has been quite valuable for both the department and affected growth communities.	**Pending.** In September 2017, DOD stated that the military services have existing guidance that allow for interaction with the community. However, civilian positions have not yet been created or designated.

GAO product information	GAO recommendation	DOD response	DOD actions
GAO-08-665—Defense Infrastructure: High-Level Leadership Needed to Help Communities Address Challenges Caused by DOD-Related Growth (June 17, 2008)	Develop and implement guidance, no later than the end of fiscal year 2008, that is consistent with DOD Directive 5410.12 for the timely, complete, and consistent dissemination of DOD planning information such as estimated timelines and numbers of personnel relocating, as well as demographic data such as numbers of school-aged children, and to update this information quarterly.	**Concur.** DOD indicated it would continue to work with the cognizant DOD components to ensure compliance with the directive.	**Implemented.** DOD action complete. From January through March 2011, the military services and the head of the Defense Logistics Agency issued guidance for the timely, complete, and consistent dissemination of DOD planning information such as military and civilian personnel changes and school-age children increases and decreases in accordance with DOD Directive 5410.12. Issuing this guidance facilitates the preparation of effective plans to minimize the economic impacts on communities resulting from changes in defense programs.
GAO-08-665—Defense Infrastructure: High-Level Leadership Needed to Help Communities Address Challenges Caused by DOD-Related Growth (June 17, 2008)	Implement Executive Order 12788 by holding regular meetings of the full executive-level Economic Adjustment Committee and by serving as a clearinghouse of information for identifying expected community impacts and problems as well as identifying existing resources for providing economic assistance to communities affected by DOD activities. In addition, this information should be updated at least quarterly and made easily available to all interested stakeholders at the local, state, and federal levels.	**Concur.** DOD stated that it will develop an information clearinghouse that will identify federal programs and resources to affected communities, present successful state and local responses, and provide the Economic Adjustment Committee members with a basis to resource their assistance programs.	**Implemented.** DOD regularly reconvened the full executive-level Economic Adjustment Committee meetings from February 25, 2009 to September 2, 2010, and completed actions that met the intent of our recommendation by establishing a clearinghouse website in December 2009 to support states and communities undertaking local economic adjustment activity and federal agencies working to support efforts. By reconvening the full executive-level Economic Adjustment Committee and setting up the clearinghouse website, DOD increased its ability to engage other federal agencies at a high level to promote interagency and intergovernmental cooperation and share information on a continual basis. DOD activated a publicly accessible website in December 2008 (www.eaclearinghouse.gov), managed by the Office of Economic Adjustment, containing information such as service migration information, federal agency assistance programs, community profiles, and community redevelopment plans.

GAO product information	GAO recommendation	DOD response	DOD actions
GAO-07-166—Military Base Closures: Opportunities Exist to Improve Environmental Cleanup Cost Reporting and to Expedite Transfer of Unneeded Property (Jan. 30, 2007).	Report all costs (Defense Environmental Restoration Program and non–Defense Environmental Restoration Program)—past and future—required to complete environmental cleanup at each BRAC installation and to fully explain the scope and limitations of all the environmental cleanup costs DOD reports to Congress. We suggest including this information in the annual BRAC budget justification documentation since it would accompany information Congress considers when making resource allocation decisions.	**Concur.**	**Implemented.** DOD stated that in October 2008 the Assistant Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for the Environment, Safety, and Occupational Health determined that the annual report to Congress is the appropriate and best format to provide Congress with cleanup information on the DOD BRAC environmental programs. The annual report data is updated annually, via the electronic reporting system from the DOD components to the Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Installations and Environment. The 2007 annual report provided BRAC site cost data through fiscal year 2007 and the estimated cost to complete for fiscal year 2008. The annual report is a comprehensive document designed to answer the many stakeholder questions that have developed over the many years of executing BRAC cleanup. The cost and budget data that appear in the annual report are also in the annual budget justification submitted to Congress in support of the President's Budget Request.
GAO-07-166—Military Base Closures: Opportunities Exist to Improve Environmental Cleanup Cost Reporting and to Expedite Transfer of Unneeded Property (Jan. 30, 2007).	Require that the military services periodically report to the Office of the Secretary of Defense on the status and proposed strategy for transferring unneeded BRAC properties and include an assessment of the usefulness of all tools at their disposal. We suggest placing this information in an easily shared location, such as a website, so that each service, and even the local communities and private sector, can share and benefit from lessons learned.	**Concur.**	**Implemented.** According to DOD, military departments are required to now report on the status of all excess real property to include the available acreages, and under which authority the land was transferred, conveyed, or otherwise disposed of. In June of 2011, we contacted the responsible Office of the Secretary of Defense office and were provided sufficient evidence that all four of the military services are now (within the last 2 years) reporting the status of excess real property to the Office of the Secretary of Defense. In addition, the DOD Inspector General's written response of February 25, 2011, when the office closed out the GAO recommendation stated that the Deputy Under Secretary of Defense (Installations and Environment) continually reviews the need for new authorities and changes to existing authorities.

Source: GAO summary of GAO and DOD information. | GAO-18-231

Appendix VI: Comments from the Department of Defense

ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
3400 DEFENSE PENTAGON
WASHINGTON, DC 20301-3400

ENERGY, INSTALLATIONS AND ENVIRONMENT

MAR 1 2 2018

Mr. Brian Lepore
Director, Defense Capabilities and Management
U.S. Government Accountability Office
441 G Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20548

Dear Mr. Lepore:

This is the Department of Defense (DoD) response to the Government Accountability Office (GAO) Draft Report, GAO-18-231, "MILITARY BASES: DOD Should Address Challenges with Communication and Mission Changes to Improve Future Base Realignment and Closure Rounds" dated February 8, 2018 (GAO Code 101964). Detailed comments on the report recommendations are enclosed.

The Department appreciates GAO's continued evaluation of BRAC 2005 in an effort to improve various aspects of the process for any potential future BRAC round. We have reviewed the two recommendations proposed in the draft report and agree that, as it did in the 2005 round, for any future BRAC the Department will take steps to establish clear and consistent guidance and communication processes. We note, however, that although we concur with GAO's recommendations for the Department, we take issue with GAO's assertion that the perceptions of lower level personnel are necessarily indicative of the process as a whole - especially one of this magnitude and in which both the GAO itself and the independent Base Realignment and Closure Commission played a major role in the evaluation of each recommendation.

Additionally, we reiterate our objection to GAO's matter for congressional consideration that suggests adding a requirement to BRAC authorization that DoD identify measures of effectiveness to track goals. The Department continues to object to this idea because we believe, as advised by BRAC counsel, this requirement would subvert the statutory requirement that military value be the priority consideration.

Overall, BRAC 2005 was the largest and most complex round to date. The Department conducted a rigorous analysis and comprehensive process, collected and evaluated millions of data elements, developed hundreds of scenarios for decision makers, and then implemented almost 200 approved recommendations. While there is room for improvement in the event of a future BRAC round, we contend the Department's implementation of BRAC 2005 was fundamentally sound.

We look forward to continuing to work with the GAO on these important issues.

Lucian Niemeyer

Enclosure: As stated

GAO Draft Report Dated February 8, 2018
GAO-18-231 (GAO CODE 101964)

"MILITARY BASES: DOD SHOULD ADDRESS CHALLENGES WITH COMMUNICATION AND MISSION CHANGES TO IMPROVE FUTURE BASE REALIGNMENT AND CLOSURE ROUNDS"

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE COMMENTS TO THE GAO RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATION 1: In the event of any future BRAC round, the Secretary of Defense should ensure that ASD(EI&E) and the military departments take steps to establish clear and consistent communications throughout the Department during data collection.

DoD RESPONSE: CONCUR. In the event Congress authorizes a BRAC round, the Department, as it did in the 2005 round, will take steps to establish clear and consistent communications during the data collection phase while continuing to preserve the confidentiality and integrity of the process. The Department does not, however, agree with GAO's assertion that the perceptions of lower level personnel are necessarily indicative of the process as a whole - especially one of this magnitude and in which both the GAO itself and the independent Base Realignment and Closure Commission played a major role in the evaluation of each recommendation. Specifically, the ability to gather data was not limited by non-disclosure agreements or an inability to communicate with those participating in the BRAC process.

RECOMMENDATION 2: In the event of any future BRAC round, the Secretary of Defense should ensure that ASD(EI&E) provides specific guidance for the military departments to monitor and report on mission-related changes that require significant changes to the recommendation business plans.

DoD RESPONSE: CONCUR. In the event Congress authorizes a BRAC Round, the Department, as it did in the 2005 round, will provide specific guidance regarding the process for monitoring and accounting for mission-related changes that require revisions to the approved business plans. Such guidance will continue to encourage issue resolution at the lowest possible level, with OSD involvement limited to review and approval of any necessary changes to the business plans.

Appendix VII: GAO Contact and Staff Acknowledgments

GAO Contact

Brian J. Lepore, (202) 512-4523 or leporeb@gao.gov

Staff Acknowledgments

In addition to the contact named above, Gina Hoffman (Assistant Director), Tracy Barnes, Irina Bukharin, Timothy Carr, Amie Lesser, John Mingus, Kevin Newak, Carol Petersen, Richard Powelson, Clarice Ransom, Jodie Sandel, Eric Schwab, Michael Silver, and Ardith Spence made key contributions to this report.

Appendix VIII: Accessible Data

Data Tables

Accessible Data for DOD Actions on GAO Recommendations Related to the 2005 Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) Round

Recommendation category	Recommendation category total
Total recommendations made by GAO	65
Recommendations implemented by DOD	33
Recommendations DOD plans to implement	18

Accessible Data for Figure 3: Comparison of 2016 Unemployment Rates of Major 2005 Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) Installation Closure Locations to the U.S. Rate

BRAC installation closure locations	2016 Annual unemployment rate (percentage)	National average annual unemployment rate (percentage)
Yukon-Koyokuk, Alaska	17.2	4.9
Modesto, Calif.	8.5	4.9
Corpus Christi, Tex.	6	4.9
Anchorage, Alaska	5.9	4.9
Gulfport-Biloxi-Pascagoula, MS	5.9	4.9
Parsons, Kans.	5.7	4.9
Terre Haute, Ind.	5.5	4.9
Hermiston-Pendleton, OR	5.4	4.9
Atlanta-Sandy Springs-Roswell, GA	5.1	4.9
New York-Jersey City-White Plains, NY-NJ	4.9	4.9
Warren-Troy-Farmington Hills, MI	4.8	4.9
Texarkana, Tex.	4.6	4.9
Virginia Beach-Norfolk-Newport News, VA-NC	4.6	4.9
Milwaukee-Waukesha-West Allis, WI	4.5	4.9
Oakland-Hayward-Berkeley, CA	4.3	4.9

BRAC installation closure locations	2016 Annual unemployment rate (percentage)	National average annual unemployment rate (percentage)
Montgomery County-Bucks County-Chester County, PA	4.3	4.9
San Jose-Sunnyvale-Santa Clara, CA	3.8	4.9
San Antonio-New Braunfels, TX	3.7	4.9
Salt Lake City, UT	3.2	4.9
Portland-South Portland, ME	3	4.9

Accessible Data for Figure 4: Comparison of 2006–2016 Annualized Real Per Capita Income Growth Rates of Major 2005 Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) Installation Closure Locations to the U.S. Rate

(BRAC) installation closure locations	Annualized real per capita income growth rate	National annualized real per capita income growth rate
Yukon-Koyokuk, Alaska	4.6	0.95
San Jose-Sunnyvale-Santa Clara, CA	2.71	0.95
Hermiston-Pendleton, OR	2.52	0.95
Parsons, Kans.	1.83	0.95
Modesto, Calif.	1.67	0.95
San Antonio-New Braunfels, TX	1.27	0.95
New York-Jersey City-White Plains, NY-NJ	1.13	0.95
Corpus Christi, Tex.	1.1	0.95
Anchorage, Alaska	1.08	0.95
Salt Lake City, UT	1.08	0.95
Oakland-Hayward-Berkeley, CA	1.02	0.95
Terre Haute, Ind.	0.9	0.95
Texarkana, Tex.	0.86	0.95
Portland-South Portland, ME	0.81	0.95
Warren-Troy-Farmington Hills, MI	0.76	0.95
Virginia Beach-Norfolk-Newport News, VA-NC	0.6	0.95
Montgomery County-Bucks County-Chester County, PA	0.55	0.95
Milwaukee-Waukesha-West Allis, WI	0.47	0.95
Atlanta-Sandy Springs-Roswell, GA	-0.01	0.95
Gulfport-Biloxi-Pascagoula, MS	-0.09	0.95

Agency Comment Letter

Accessible Text for Appendix VI: Comments from the Department of Defense

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ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

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WASHINGTON, DC 20301-3400

ENERGY, INSTALLATIONS

AND ENVIRONMENT

MAR 12 2018

Mr. Brian Lepore:

Director, Defense Capabilities and Management

U.S. Government Accountability Office

441 G Street, N.W.

Washington, DC 20548

Dear Mr. Lepore:

This is the Department of Defense (DoD) response to the Government Accountability Office (GAO) Draft Report, GAO-18-231, ”MILITARY BASES: DOD Should Address Challenges with Communication and Mission Changes to Improve Future Base Realignment and Closure Rounds” dated February 8, 2018 (GAO Code 101964). Detailed comments on the report recommendations are enclosed.

The Department appreciates GAO's continued evaluation of BRAC 2005 in an effort to improve various aspects of the process for any potential future BRAC round. We have reviewed the two recommendations proposed in the draft report and agree that, as it did in the 2005 round, for any future BRAC the Department will take steps to establish clear and consistent guidance and communication processes. We note, however, that although we concur with GAO's recommendations for the Department, we take issue with GAO's assertion that the perceptions of lower level personnel are necessarily indicative of the process as a whole - especially one of this magnitude and in which both the GAO itself and the independent Base Realignment and Closure Commission played a major role in the evaluation of each recommendation.

Additionally, we reiterate our objection to GAO's matter for congressional consideration that suggests adding a requirement to BRAC authorization that DoD identify measures of effectiveness to track goals. The Department continues to object to this idea because we believe, as advised by BRAC counsel, this requirement would subvert the statutory requirement that military value be the priority consideration.

Overall, BRAC 2005 was the largest and most complex round to date. The Department conducted a rigorous analysis and comprehensive process, collected and evaluated millions of data elements, developed hundreds of scenarios for decision makers, and then implemented almost 200 approved recommendations. While there is room for improvement in the event of a future BRAC round, we contend the Department's implementation BRAC 2005 was fundamentally sound.

We look forward to continuing to work GAO on these important issues.

Lucian Niemeyer

Enclosure: As stated

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GAO Draft Report Dated February 8, 2018

GAO-18-231 (GAO CODE 101964)

"MILITARY BASES: DOD SHOULD ADDRESS CHALLENGES WITH COMMUNICATION AND MISSION CHANGES TO IMPROVE FUTURE BASE REALIGNMENT AND CLOSURE ROUNDS"

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE COMMENTS TO THE GAO RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATION 1: In the event of any future BRAC round, the Secretary of Defense should ensure that ASD(EI&E) and the military departments take steps to establish clear and consistent communications throughout the Department during data collection.

DoD RESPONSE: CONCUR. In the event Congress authorizes a BRAC round, the Department, as it did in the 2005 round, will take steps to establish clear and consistent communications during the data collection phase while continuing to preserve the confidentiality and integrity of the process. The Department does not, however, agree with GAO's assertion that the perceptions of lower level personnel are necessarily indicative of the process as a whole - especially one of this magnitude and in which both the GAO itself and the independent Base Realignment and Closure Commission played a major role in the evaluation of each recommendation. Specifically, the ability to gather data was not limited by non-disclosure agreements or an inability to communicate with those participating in the BRAC process.

RECOMMENDATION 2: In the event of any future BRAC round, the Secretary of Defense should ensure that ASD(EI&E) provides specific guidance for the military departments to monitor and report on mission-related changes that require significant changes to the recommendation business plans.

DoD RESPONSE: CONCUR. In the event Congress authorizes a BRAC Round, the Department, as it did in the 2005 round, will provide specific guidance regarding the process for monitoring and accounting for mission-related changes that require revisions to the approved business plans. Such guidance will continue to encourage issue resolution at the lowest possible level, with OSD involvement limited to review and approval of any necessary changes to the business plans.

Related GAO Products

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