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Fact Sheet for the Chairman,
Subcommittee on Military Construction,
Committee on Appropriations,
House of Representatives

August 1986

FORCE STRUCTURE

Information on Stationing Army's 6th Infantry Division



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National Security and
International Affairs Division

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August 6, 1986

The Honorable W.G. Hefner
Chairman, Subcommittee On Military Construction
Committee On Appropriations
House of Representatives

Dear Mr. Chairman:

This responds to your June 23, 1986, request that we review the Army's decision to station the 6th Infantry Division (Light) in Alaska. More specifically, you asked that we review (1) the division's mission, (2) the relative risk and priority of the military contingencies for which it is planning, (3) its estimated cost, and (4) the Army's rationale and additional cost resulting from the decision to station the division in two locations in Alaska. We subsequently received a request for the same information from the Chairman, Subcommittee on Defense, Senate Committee on Appropriations. A copy of this report is being provided to him.

In reviewing the division's mission and possible military contingencies, we interviewed Army officials and examined mission statements, operation plans, and threat information. We also reviewed stationing studies and other related studies which the Army conducted to guide its stationing decision. We analyzed the Army's cost estimates for the Alaskan division, which included estimates for military construction, operations and maintenance, family housing, and equipment. We did not, however, examine the underlying support for these estimates. Our work was conducted during June and July 1986 at Department of Army Headquarters, Washington, D.C.; Headquarters, U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command, Fort Monroe, Virginia; and Headquarters, U.S. Army Forces Command, Fort McPherson, Georgia. Results of our work are summarized below and are discussed in detail in appendix I.

The 6th Division, when fully formed in 1989, will have a division headquarters at Fort Wainwright, Alaska, two active component brigades (one at Fort Richardson, Alaska; the other at Fort Wainwright), and one reserve brigade (roundout) at Fort Snelling, Minnesota. Currently, the division consists of a division headquarters and one active component brigade at Fort Richardson and the Minnesota brigade. The active brigade was formed from the 172nd Separate Infantry Brigade, which had been and is currently assigned to Fort Richardson.

The Army considered numerous factors before deciding to station the division in Alaska. The stationing studies it conducted identified several advantages to stationing the division in Alaska, including existing facilities at Forts Richardson and Wainwright, deployment capability, and strategic mobility. Disadvantages identified included constraints on training (because of the terrain and climate), the relative high cost of construction, as well as expensive and limited off-post housing. The Secretary of the Army's record of decision for stationing the division cited Alaska's unique training environment and the opportunity to improve the Alaskan defense posture as advantages.

The mission of the 6th Division is the defense of Alaska and the initial defense of the Aleutian Islands. This is the same mission previously assigned the 172nd Separate Infantry Brigade and the reserve brigade at Fort Snelling, Minnesota. Army officials told us the 6th Division's additional active component brigade provides the potential for increasing the number of Alaskan targets which can be defended. According to threat information, the primary threat to Alaska is associated with global war, that is, a war with the Soviet Union. While the occurrence of global war is considered unlikely by the Army, it is still considered a high risk contingency because of the grave consequences for the nation.

Threat information indicates the Soviets have four major strategic options and several conventional options for an attack on the United States via Alaska. The 6th Division is expected to have a capability to counter one of the conventional options.

Unlike the previously existing 172nd Separate Infantry Brigade, the 6th Division is designed and will be equipped to deploy outside of Alaska. According to Army officials, deployment scenarios for the division will not be determined until its second active component brigade is fully formed in 1989.

The Army estimates that stationing the 6th Division in Alaska will cost \$1 billion by fiscal year 1992. The largest cost element is military construction, which is expected to total over \$400 million. The largest portion of these funds, about \$329 million, is programmed for facilities at Fort Wainwright. The Army did not consider either Fort Richardson or Fort Wainwright an economical option for stationing both active component brigades because it wanted to take advantage of existing facilities at both locations. Army officials told us they did not develop cost information for such an option; therefore, we were unable to compare the cost of stationing the division at two locations rather than one.

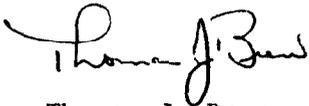
Subsequent to completing our work, your office requested we review the rationale for moving the division's headquarters from Fort Richardson to Fort Wainwright by 1989. We are beginning work on that question

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and will report our results under separate cover. As arranged with your office, unless you publicly announce its contents earlier, we plan no further distribution of this report until 7 days from the date of the report. At that time we will send copies to interested parties and make copies available to others upon request.

If we can be of further assistance, please let us know.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Thomas J. Brew".

Thomas J. Brew
Associate Director

INFORMATION ON STATIONING
ARMY'S 6TH INFANTRY DIVISION

BACKGROUND

In March 1986, the Army activated the 6th Infantry Division (Light) in Alaska. This division, the Army's eighteenth active division, is a part of the Army's efforts to restructure and modernize its forces to achieve greater strategic utility across the spectrum of conflict. The Army considers light infantry divisions to be well suited for quick reaction, low intensity combat operations. These divisions are generally designed to be rapidly deployable and are globally oriented. When augmented with resources such as additional engineers, artillery, and antitank and transport units, the Army believes light infantry divisions can also be employed in mid- to high-intensity contingencies.

The 6th Division is part of the Alaskan Command, which also includes components of the Air Force. When it is fully manned in 1989, the 6th Division will consist of approximately 10,700 soldiers. It will have a division headquarters at Fort Wainwright, Alaska; two active component brigades (one at Fort Richardson, Alaska; the other at Fort Wainwright); and one reserve brigade (the 205th Separate Infantry Brigade), Fort Snelling, Minnesota. Currently, the division consists of a division headquarters and one active component brigade at Fort Richardson and the Minnesota brigade. The active component brigade was formed from the available assets of the 172nd Separate Infantry Brigade already assigned to Fort Richardson.

The Army plans to move the division headquarters to Fort Wainwright by 1989, following the formation of the active brigade there. Army officials told us the move is desirable because most of the division's training will be conducted at Fort Wainwright. Increments of the approximately 3,500 soldiers needed to form the rest of the division are scheduled to arrive at a rate of about 1,100 soldiers annually beginning in fiscal year 1987 through fiscal year 1989.

FACTORS CONSIDERED IN
ARMY'S STATIONING STUDY

In February 1984, the Army initiated a series of studies to guide decisions regarding where to station the second of its new light infantry divisions, i.e., the 10th Mountain Division. These studies also provided information relevant to deciding the stationing of the 6th Division.

The stationing studies, conducted by the U.S. Army Forces Command (FORSCOM), initially considered nine installations for stationing light infantry divisions. It concluded that seven installations and nine alternatives were feasible. The seven installations were Forts Lewis, Ord, Benning, Campbell, Drum, Wainwright, and Richardson. Only Forts Benning and Drum were considered possible sites for an entire division. The other alternatives consisted of various combinations of installations such as Forts Lewis and Ord or Forts Drum and Campbell. Three of the alternatives involved installations in Alaska.

Stationing criteria used to evaluate the alternatives were adopted from the "Review of Division and Brigade Stationing," published by the Office, Chief of Engineers, Engineer Studies Group in 1977. Six different categories were assessed--training, support facilities, community support, environment, mission, and a catch-all "other" category. The study cited suitability of the training area as the most important criterion, and stated this factor should be given more weight in comparative analyses.

Each category comprised more than one factor, with a total of 37 factors for all six categories. The Forts Richardson and Wainwright alternative rated satisfactory or better in 23 factors and unsatisfactory or marginal in the remaining 14.

Some of the advantages and disadvantages FORSCOM identified for the selected Alaskan alternative were the following:

Advantages

- Quality of life facilities (post exchange, commissary, medical, etc.) are fully developed.
- Excellent deployment from Elmendorf Air Force Base, contiguous to Fort Richardson, and Elison Air Force Base, contiguous to Fort Wainwright.
- Strategic mobility is outstanding because of the division's proximity to the NATO theater.
- Housing, administrative, and mess facilities are available with rehabilitation.

Disadvantages

- Training is constrained to arctic training for 7 months of the year.
- Terrain is good for northern warfare training only.

- Energy consumption is highest of all alternatives.
- Off-post housing is limited and expensive.
- Maintenance shops and warehouse storage facilities are insufficient.
- Cost per square foot for construction and utilities is the highest of all alternatives.
- Division deployment would leave Alaska without a dedicated active component for land defense.
- Active elements of the division may be placed over 350 miles from the division headquarters.

Although the FORSCOM study included training factors among the disadvantages of the Alaskan location, the Secretary of the Army, in a November 1984 "Record of Decision," considered Alaska's training facilities and unique training environment advantageous, along with the improvement the division could bring to the Alaskan defense posture.

MISSION AND MILITARY CONTINGENCIES

The mission of the 6th Division is the defense of Alaska and the initial defense of the Aleutian Islands. This is the same mission previously assigned the 172nd Infantry Brigade and the reserve brigade at Fort Snelling, Minnesota. According to Army officials, the 6th Division improves the Army's capability to perform this mission.

According to information provided by a Joint Chiefs of Staff official, the threat to Alaska is associated with global war. Global war is defined as a war with the Soviet Union. While the occurrence of global war is considered unlikely by the Army, it is still a high risk contingency because of its possible grave consequences for the nation. According to Army officials, the Soviet threat to Alaska has not changed in recent years.

The threat consists of the Soviets' capability to launch both nuclear and conventional strikes against Alaska. Because an attack on Alaska would be an attack on the United States, it is believed that such strikes would be part of a larger series of military operations against North America. In this contingency, the Army's 6th Division would be one of many forces the United States could use to counter an attack.

Threat information indicates the Soviets have four major strategic options and several conventional options for an attack

on the United States via Alaska. Army officials advised us that the 6th Division is expected to have a capability to counter one of the conventional options.

The objective of the Soviets' strategic options would be to neutralize the U.S. detection and early warning systems and to eliminate command, control, and communications. The four strategic options are

- intercontinental ballistic missiles that are also capable of reaching the rest of North America,
- ballistic missiles launched by submarines from patrol areas off the West Coast of the continental United States,
- intermediate range ballistic missiles that could be used against Alaskan and Pacific targets, and
- strategic bombers with air launched cruise missiles.

Threat information describes Soviet conventional options as consisting of (1) strategic air forces using conventional weapons and (2) small special forces teams infiltrating by air and sea. The 6th Division would be employed against these small infiltration teams. Likely Soviet targets include civil and military communication lines, early warning sites, airfields, and power generation facilities. To defend numerous sites against such an attack, the 6th Division would fight as brigade size or smaller units. Army officials told us small unit tactical missions in defense of critical targets in Alaska would be similar to tactics employed by light infantry divisions in areas such as Southwest Asia and Central America. Army officials said the division's additional active brigade improves response time and increases the number of targets which can be defended.

Unlike the 172nd Infantry Brigade which, according to Army officials, was to be employed only in Alaska, the 6th Division is designed and will be equipped to deploy outside of Alaska. However, according to Army officials, deployment scenarios for the division will not be determined until the second active component brigade is formed in 1989.

ESTIMATED STATIONING COSTS

As of July 1986, according to data provided by the Army, stationing the 6th Division in Alaska will cost approximately \$1 billion by fiscal year 1992. The expected additional costs related to the division's activation by fiscal year are shown in table I.1.

Table I.1: Annual Estimated Stationing Costs

Item	Fiscal year							Total
	85/86	87	88	89	90	91	92	
Military Construction	\$ 7	\$138	\$ 72	\$ 70	\$ 13	\$42	\$ 73	\$ 414 ^a
Operations & Maintenance	14	45	44	42	43	43	44	275
Housing		43	53	45	48	15	15	217 ^a
Equipment			94					94
Total	<u>\$21</u>	<u>\$226</u>	<u>\$263</u>	<u>\$156^a</u>	<u>\$104</u>	<u>\$99^a</u>	<u>\$132</u>	<u>\$1,001^a</u>

^aTotals do not add due to rounding.

Military construction costs consist of funds used for acquiring land, modifying and constructing facilities, and purchasing and installing facility-related equipment. The largest portion of these funds, about \$329 million, is programmed for facilities at Fort Wainwright. Projects include modification and construction of barracks, medical, dental and outpatient clinics, training facilities, a post exchange, commissary, and recreation facilities. Also included is an estimated \$18 million to relocate the division headquarters from Fort Richardson to Fort Wainwright.

Estimated military construction costs for Fort Richardson are \$74 million. This includes projects for the modification and construction of barracks, training, recreation, and dining facilities. Construction costs for Fort Greely (a training base near Fort Wainwright) are \$10.5 million for barracks.

Operations and maintenance funds are used to finance the operations and maintenance of Army installations and units. The amounts shown in table I.1 are the expected additional costs related to the activation of the 6th Division, including a one-time cost of \$1.1 million in fiscal year 1990 for the Minnesota reserve brigade.

The housing costs shown in table I.1 are for the construction, operation, and lease of family housing facilities at Fort Wainwright. Included is about \$141 million for the construction of about 650 units through fiscal year 1992 and \$30 million for operating and maintaining these units. The Army also plans to lease 400 units beginning in fiscal year 1987 at a cost of \$7.7 million per year (\$46.2 million through fiscal year 1992). The term of the lease is 20 years.

The \$94 million shown in table I.1 for equipment will be used to purchase environment unique equipment needed by the division, such as small-tracked snow vehicles, sleds, camouflage screens, and heaters.

FEASIBILITY OF STATIONING DIVISION
AT ONE ALASKAN LOCATION

According to Army officials, placing both active brigades at either Fort Richardson or Fort Wainwright was initially considered but ruled out because of the desire to take advantage of existing facilities at both locations. Neither Fort Richardson nor Fort Wainwright was considered a feasible location for both brigades because of the extensive construction that would be required and the probable limited funds available for military construction. Army officials told us they did not develop cost information for placing the full division at either of the two locations. Therefore, we were unable to compare the cost of stationing the division at two locations rather than one.

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