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Report to Congressional Committees

September 2014

DOD JOINT BASES

Implementation Challenges Demonstrate Need to Reevaluate the Program

GAO-14-577

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GAO Highlights

Highlights of GAO-14-577, a report to congressional committees

September 2014

DOD JOINT BASES

Implementation Challenges Demonstrate Need to Reevaluate the Program

Why GAO Did This Study

GAO designated DOD support infrastructure as a high-risk area to address efficiency challenges. In 2005, DOD recommended to the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) Commission combining 26 installations into 12 joint bases to generate efficiencies and cost savings, initially estimated to be $2.3 billion. In 2009, DOD reduced this estimate to $273 million. GAO was mandated to assess DOD's progress in consolidating common services across joint bases. This report addresses the extent to which officials reported consolidating installation-support functions, and meeting joint basing goals to achieve greater efficiencies and cost savings. GAO conducted a survey of 11 joint bases, and reviewed applicable guidance. GAO did not survey Joint Region Marianas because it was subject to different expectations.

What GAO Recommends

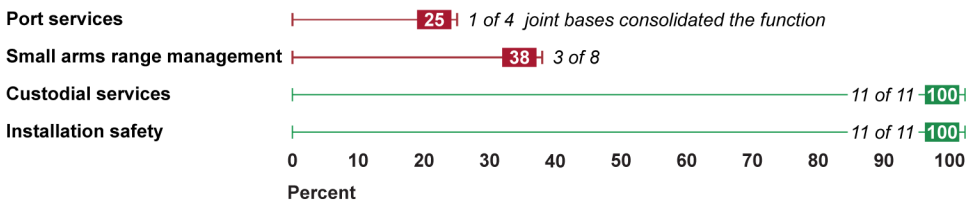
Congress should consider directing DOD to evaluate joint basing goals, provide direction on requirements to meet the goals, and determine next steps for joint basing. GAO included this matter because DOD did not concur with GAO's recommendations to conduct such an evaluation and provide direction, in part because DOD stated joint bases have achieved savings. GAO also recommended DOD evaluate which installation-support functions remain suitable for consolidation, with which DOD concurred, and take policy actions to address challenges, with which DOD partially concurred, noting its existing processes to address challenges. GAO continues to believe its findings and recommendations are valid as discussed in this report.

View GAO-14-577. For more information, contact Brian J. Lepore at (202) 512-4523 or leporeb@gao.gov

What GAO Found

Joint base officials reported varying progress in consolidating installation-support functions, and challenges resulting from consolidation efforts that created inefficiencies and inequities. Overall, the joint bases reported partially consolidating 80 percent of their installation-support functions, but the extent of consolidation varied across the bases and among the various functions. None of the joint bases have reported consolidating all functions. However, all 11 joint bases reported consolidating some portion of eight functions, such as custodial services and installation safety. The least consolidated functions were reported to be military service-specific or mission-specific, such as small-arms range management and port services. Also, joint base officials reported several challenges resulting from consolidation, such as multiple inspections and employees being potentially disadvantaged in competing for promotion opportunities due to military service-specific personnel policies. The Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) and military service officials have not evaluated which functions are still suitable for consolidation or taken policy actions to address any challenges resulting from consolidation. Without an evaluation of the suitability of installation-support functions for consolidation and without actions to address any negative consequences that emerged from consolidation, the Department of Defense (DOD) may continue to experience challenges in its efforts to consolidate these functions.

Variances in Installation-Support Functions Consolidated at 11 Joint Bases Surveyed



Source: GAO analysis of joint base survey responses and supporting documentation. | GAO-14-577

Note: Not all of the joint bases that GAO surveyed have small-arms range management or port services functions.

Joint base officials reported that consolidation of support functions has resulted in some progress toward achieving the goals of joint basing (achieving efficiencies and cost savings), by reducing redundant positions and finding contracting efficiencies. However, as GAO reported in November 2012, DOD does not have a method to collect cost savings information achieved specifically from joint basing. Thus, GAO recommended that DOD develop a plan for doing so. DOD disagreed and has not yet taken action. GAO continues to believe this recommendation has merit and should be addressed. Also, officials said they are uncertain of the extent to which the goals of joint basing are still appropriate, and to what extent they are required to take actions to pursue them. OSD has not collaborated with the military services to evaluate whether the goals of joint basing remain appropriate and has not provided direction to the joint bases on future priorities. Without a collaborative evaluation of the joint basing program by OSD and military service officials to determine if the goals remain appropriate—and without additional direction to help meet reporting requirements—it will be difficult for DOD to determine the extent to which the joint basing initiative is achieving its intended goals.

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Abbreviations

BRAC	Base Realignment and Closure
DOD	Department of Defense
MOA	Memorandum of Agreement
OMB	Office of Management and Budget
OSD	Office of the Secretary of Defense
RMD	Resource Management Decision

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U.S. GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY OFFICE
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September 19, 2014

Congressional Committees

In the 2005 Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) process, the Department of Defense (DOD) proposed a recommendation to the BRAC Commission to consolidate 26 service-specific stand-alone installations into 12 joint bases to take advantage of opportunities for efficiencies. In DOD's justification for its recommendation to the BRAC Commission, the Secretary of Defense noted, among other things, that because the installations either shared a common boundary or were in proximity to at least one other installation and performed common support functions, there was a significant opportunity to reduce duplication of similar support services, which could produce savings. DOD projected savings in various areas, such as by paring unnecessary management personnel, achieving greater efficiencies through economies of scale, and consolidating and optimizing existing and future service contract requirements. DOD and the BRAC Commission estimated that the creation of joint bases could save about $2.3 billion over a 20-year period in net present value terms.[1]

DOD's joint basing initiative—implemented in two phases, with five joint bases established in October 2009 and the remaining seven bases established in October 2010—created 12 joint bases from the 26 previously stand-alone installations that were originally operated by the Army, Navy, Air Force, or Marine Corps, combining installation-support services such as airfield operations, grounds maintenance, and custodial services. The 2005 BRAC recommendation on joint basing established which military bases would receive installation-management functions from one or more other bases in lieu of each base providing the same services. On the basis of these realignments, the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) designated the military service responsible for delivering installation support at each joint base as the lead service, and

[1]DOD, *Base Closure and Realignment Report, Volume I* (Washington, D.C.: May 2005). Net present value is a financial calculation that accounts for the time value of money by determining the present value of future savings minus up-front investment costs over a specific period of time. Determining net present value is important because it illustrates both the up-front investment costs and long-term savings in a single amount. Net present value is used in analyzing estimated costs and savings from BRAC recommendations.

in 2008 OSD issued further guidance for joint basing implementation.[2] According to this guidance, the lead service is referred to as the supporting component and the military services receiving installation support are referred to as the supported components.

We previously reported on DOD's implementation of its joint basing concept. In 2009, we found that DOD had made a comprehensive effort to ensure the consistent delivery of installation support at the joint bases, and that the cost of installation support was expected to rise because OSD increased the standards for installation support, which would require additional administrative costs, and because of the loss of some existing installation-support efficiencies.[3] As a result, in 2009 DOD significantly reduced its 20-year net present value cost savings projection from $2.3 billion to about $273 million. We recommended that DOD periodically review the installation-support standards and administrative costs at the joint bases, and report to Congress on estimated installation-support costs. DOD partially agreed with the recommendations, and did not agree to take steps to fully implement them. In June 2012, we reported that DOD's updated 20-year net present value savings estimate had fallen to $249 million.[4] In November 2012, we found that OSD did not have a fully developed method for accurately collecting information on costs, savings, and efficiencies achieved specifically from joint basing, and that OSD had not developed a plan to guide joint bases in achieving cost savings and efficiencies. We recommended, among other things, that DOD develop and implement a plan to guide joint bases in achieving anticipated cost savings and efficiencies goals.[5] DOD disagreed with this recommendation, stating that DOD should continue its approach of being patient with obtaining savings and efficiencies, maintaining that joint

[2]Deputy Secretary of Defense Memorandum, *Transforming Through Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) 2005-Joint Basing* (Jan. 22, 2008), and DOD, *Initial Guidance for BRAC 2005 Joint Basing Implementation* (Jan. 22, 2008).

[3]GAO, *Defense Infrastructure: DOD Needs to Periodically Review Support Standards and Costs at Joint Bases and Better Inform Congress of Facility Sustainment Funding Uses,* GAO-09-336 (Washington, D.C.: Mar. 30, 2009).

[4]GAO, *Military Base Realignments and Closures: Updated Costs and Savings Estimates from BRAC 2005*, GAO-12-709R (Washington, D.C.: June 29, 2012). These figures are expressed in 2005 dollars to facilitate comparison with the original 20-year savings estimates developed in 2005.

[5]GAO, *DOD Joint Bases: Management Improvements Needed to Achieve Greater Efficiencies,* GAO-13-134 (Washington, D.C.: Nov. 15, 2012).

basing was a relatively new initiative and implementation issues were still being resolved. We continue to believe that these recommendations are valid and should be implemented.

For almost two decades, we have designated DOD infrastructure as a high-risk area, citing that reducing the cost of excess infrastructure activities was critical to making use of scarce resources and maintaining high levels of military capabilities. During this time, we reported that DOD faced challenges in three areas: (1) reducing excess and obsolete infrastructure, (2) sustaining facilities, and (3) achieving cost savings and efficiencies in base-support services. After DOD made significant progress in addressing the issues regarding planning and funding to sustain facilities, in 2011 we narrowed this high-risk area to focus on the two remaining issues.[6] DOD has cited its joint basing initiative as the mechanism through which it could achieve greater economies of scale and savings by consolidating and eliminating duplicative installation-support services. In GAO's 2013 high-risk update, we reported that DOD had made little progress in realizing the anticipated cost savings and efficiencies from consolidations and from the elimination of duplicate base support at specific installations.[7]

The House Armed Services Committee, in its 2013 report accompanying a bill for the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2014, mandated that we assess the progress DOD has made in consolidating common services across the joint bases.[8] This report addresses the extent to which officials have reported (1) consolidating installation-support functions at the joint bases, and (2) meeting the goals of joint basing to achieve greater efficiencies and cost savings as stated in the 2005 BRAC recommendation.

To determine the extent to which officials have reported consolidating their installation-support functions, we reviewed DOD's 2008 Joint Basing Implementation Guidance to identify DOD's expectations for consolidation, and compared these with the results of our web-based

[6]GAO, High-Risk Series: An Update, GAO-11-278 (Washington, D.C.: Feb. 16, 2011); and High-Risk Series: Defense Infrastructure, GAO/HR-97-7 (Washington, D.C.: Feb. 1, 1997).

[7]GAO, *High-Risk Series: An Update,* GAO-13-283, (Washington, D.C.: Feb. 14, 2013).

[8]H.R. Rep. No. 113-102, at 320 (June 7, 2013).

survey of 11 of the 12 joint bases.[9] We also interviewed joint base officials from a nongeneralizable sample of four joint bases, and reviewed the joint bases' memorandums of agreement.[10] To determine why consolidation had or had not occurred as intended, to identify any factors that have hindered consolidation, and to identify any challenges that have resulted from consolidation efforts, we analyzed information obtained through our survey and interviewed joint base officials. We evaluated DOD's efforts to address reported hindrances to consolidation and challenges that have resulted from consolidation efforts and compared those efforts to key federal practices for consolidation.[11] We did not independently assess the extent to which consolidation occurred as identified by survey respondents and during interviews.

To determine the extent to which officials have reported meeting the goals of joint basing to achieve greater efficiencies and cost savings as stated in the 2005 BRAC recommendation, we reviewed documents and guidance from OSD, the military services, and individual joint bases. We reviewed survey results and information collected from interviews and compared them to key federal practices for consolidation of management functions and to key practices agencies can take to improve efficiency as

[9]We did not survey Joint Region Marianas, Guam, because it is a joint region rather than a joint base, and is subject to different expectations for the consolidation of installation support. Instead, we interviewed Joint Region Marianas officials.

[10]Each joint base or region has a formal, binding agreement that describes the organizational structure, resourcing, output levels, and dispute resolution processes (as well as other procedures) to be followed by the military services that are part of the base.

[11]GAO, *Streamlining Government, Questions to Consider When Evaluating Proposals to Consolidate Physical Infrastructure and Management Functions*, GAO-12-542 (Washington, D.C.: May 23, 2012). We developed key federal practices that agencies should consider when evaluating whether to consolidate physical Infrastructure and management functions through a review of our prior reports on specific consolidation initiatives that have been undertaken and through review of the relevant literature on public-sector consolidations produced by academic institutions, professional associations, and various other organizations.

identified in our prior work.[12] To understand the role of OSD and military service headquarters in overseeing joint bases, we interviewed OSD joint basing officials; members of the Joint Base Working Group that represents the Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marine Corps headquarters; and officials from the Army Installation Management Command, the Air Force Civil Engineering Command, and Navy Installations Command as they provide varying levels of funding for and oversight of installation support for their corresponding military services.[13] To understand the roles and responsibilities of the regional commands in managing joint bases, we interviewed regional officials with responsibility for joint bases, including officials from Army Installation Management Command as well as four Air Force major commands and two Navy regional commands. To collect information about specific initiatives undertaken by the joint bases and about the related outcomes, we drew from our survey and interviews. See appendix I for a detailed description of our overall scope and methodology, and appendix II for a copy of the survey questions.

We conducted this performance audit from July 2013 to September 2014 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.

[12]GAO, Streamlining Government: Key Practices from Select Efficiency Initiatives Should Be Shared Governmentwide, GAO-11-908 (Washington, D.C.: Sept. 30, 2011); and Results-Oriented Government: Practices That Can Help Enhance and Sustain Collaboration among Federal Agencies, GAO-06-15 (Washington, D.C.: Oct. 21, 2005). In our report on streamlining government, we identified key practices associated with efficiency initiatives that can be applied more broadly across the federal government, through a review of federal initiatives that were implemented department-wide, involved reexamination of federal programs and their related processes or structures or involved the streamlining or consolidation of existing processes to become more efficient; the practices were identified by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) or government management experts as having potentially promising practices, among other things. In reviewing results-oriented government, we identified effective practices to enhance and sustain interagency collaboration by interviewing experts in the area of collaboration and gathering information on select areas where federal agencies have developed substantial ongoing collaborations.

[13]The Joint Base Working Group consists of OSD joint basing and military service headquarters representatives, and is intended to incorporate functional expertise in developing guidance as well as provide support for knowledge sharing, arbitration, change management, public awareness planning, and strategic planning.

Background

Establishment of Joint Bases

DOD consolidated 26 service-specific stand-alone installations into 12 joint bases to take advantage of opportunities for efficiencies.[14] See table 1 for a list of joint bases, their locations, and the identification of which military service is the supporting component that delivers installation support.

Table 1: Joint Bases Established Since 2010

Name of joint base	Location	Installations consolidating into the joint base	Component delivering installation support
Joint Base Anacostia-Bolling	District of Columbia	Naval District Washington and Bolling Air Force Base	Navy
Joint Base Andrews-Naval Air Facility Washington	Maryland	Andrews Air Force Base and Naval Air Facility Washington	Air Force
Joint Base Charleston	South Carolina	Charleston Air Force Base and Naval Weapons Station Charleston	Air Force
Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson	Alaska	Elmendorf Air Force Base and Fort Richardson	Air Force
Joint Base Langley-Eustis	Virginia	Langley Air Force Base and Fort Eustis	Air Force
Joint Base Lewis-McChord	Washington	Fort Lewis and McChord Air Force Base	Army
Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst	New Jersey	McGuire Air Force Base, Fort Dix, and Naval Air Engineering Station Lakehurst	Air Force
Joint Base Myer-Henderson Hall	Virginia	Fort Myer and Henderson Hall	Army
Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam	Hawaii	Naval Station Pearl Harbor and Hickam Air Force Base	Navy
Joint Base San Antonio	Texas	Lackland Air Force Base, Fort Sam Houston, and Randolph Air Force Base	Air Force
Joint Expeditionary Base Little Creek-Fort Story	Virginia	Naval Expeditionary Base Little Creek and Fort Story	Navy
Joint Region Marianas	Guam	Naval Base Guam and Andersen Air Force Base	Navy

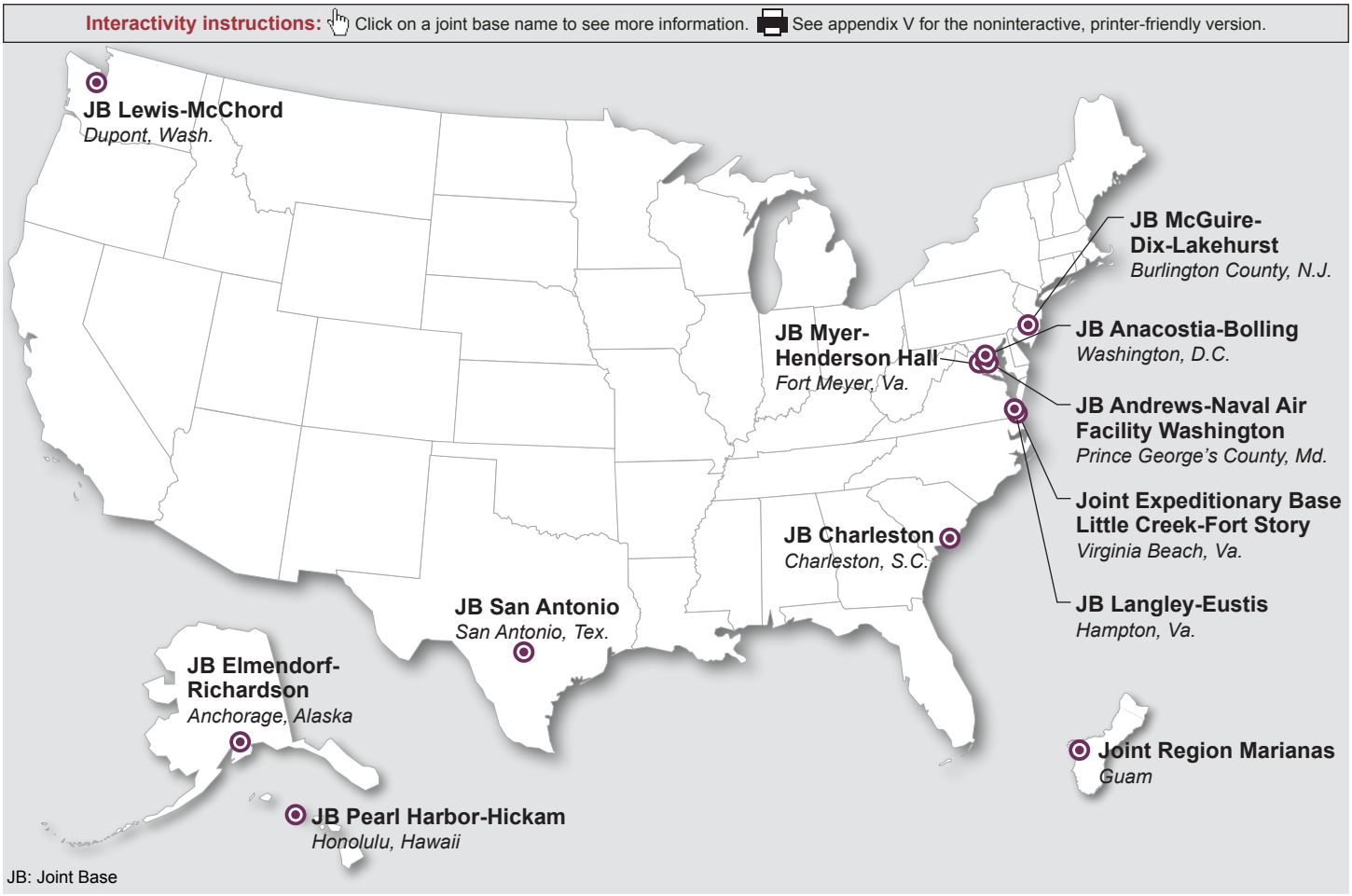
Source: GAO summary of Office of Secretary of Defense information. | GAO-14-577

Figure 1 is an interactive map that depicts the locations of the 11 joint bases and Joint Region Marianas. The map (see interactive instructions)

[14]The full text of the BRAC Commission's joint basing recommendation and the justification for DOD's recommendation to the commission (as reproduced in the commission's report) appear in appendix III of this report. The BRAC Commission assessed all of DOD's recommendations against eight statutory selection criteria and DOD's force-structure plan.

also features individual maps of each of the joint bases and joint region. See appendix V for the printed version of each map.

Figure 1: Locations of Joint Bases



Source: GAO analysis of Department of Defense (DOD) data. | GAO-14-577

Implementation of Joint Basing

In January 2008, OSD issued guidance to implement the joint basing initiative.[15] The guidance established a comprehensive framework to consolidate installation-support functions while meeting mission requirements. It also created a Joint Management Oversight Structure to establish the lines of authority for handling disputes and directed the transfer of installation-support authority and real property to the supporting component.[16] Further, the guidance requires that the military services at each joint base enter into a memorandum of agreement to define the relationships between the components; to detail the transfer of real property and funding to the supporting component; and to require the establishment of the Joint Base Partnership Council, which is a group consisting of representation from the major supported component(s) and the tenants on the base. The council's role includes helping at the joint base level to resolve any disputes that arise between the supporting and supported components.[17] The agreements generally require the Joint Base Partnership Council to annually review any financial effects from the agreements, and to triennially review each agreement.

OSD guidance requires that each joint base have a Joint Base Commander from the supporting component, and a Deputy Joint Base Commander who is generally from the supported component.[18] The Joint

[15]Deputy Secretary of Defense Memorandum, *Transforming Through Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) 2005-Joint Basing*; and DOD, *Initial Guidance for BRAC 2005 Joint Basing Implementation*.

[16]The Joint Management Oversight Structure was established as a mechanism to provide for various levels of performance review and dispute resolution as part of managing joint base implementation. The structure established that issues raised at the joint bases are to be addressed first locally at the installation. The next step of involvement is to include military service installation commands such as Commander, Navy Installations Command, and the Army Chief of Staff Installation Management Command. If the issues remain unresolved, the next step is to involve the military service Vice Chiefs of Staff and finally OSD.

[17]The Joint Base Commander is chair of the Joint Base Partnership Council.

[18]In the case of Joint Region Marianas, the requirement was for a Navy-appointed Joint Regional Commander, and a Deputy Regional Commander to be determined by the supporting and supported components. For Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, which includes three military services, the Joint Base Commander was to be an Air Force officer (from the supporting component), and the two Deputy Joint Base Commanders were to be from the supported components—one from the Navy and one from the Army. In the case of Joint Base Andrews-Naval Air Facility Washington, the Joint Base Commander and the Deputy Joint Base Commander were to be from the Air Force, which is the supporting component.

Base Commander has the authority and responsibility for effectively using available resources for planning, organizing, directing, coordinating, and controlling the delivery of installation support as detailed in each joint base's memorandum of agreement.

Additionally, OSD guidance required that all civilian authorizations providing installation support from the supported component will become part of the supporting component, under the supporting components' civilian personnel management system. Some joint bases incorporated military positions from the supported component into the joint base structure. These positions generally were identified in the agreements for each joint base and now perform installation-support duties for the Joint Base Commander.

Installation-Support Functions

DOD's 2008 guidance originally identified and defined 47 common installation-support functions to be aligned under the authority of the Joint Base Commander, subject to certain exceptions. According to OSD officials, individual installation-support functions have been reviewed on a case-by-case basis and removed from the list. We reviewed 42 installation-support functions as part of our survey; see table 2 for a list of those functions.[19]

Table 2: List of 42 Installation-Support Functions Included in Our Survey

1. Airfield operations	22. Information technology and services management
2. Advisory services	23. Laundry and dry cleaning
3. Base support vehicles and equipment	24. Law enforcement services
4. Chaplain ministries	25. Legal services
5. Child and youth services	26. Lodging
6. Command management	27. Management analysis
7. Custodial services	28. Military and family support
8. Emergency management	29. Military personnel services
9. Environmental	30. Morale, welfare, and recreation

[19]DOD currently requires 44 installation-support functions to be consolidated at the joint bases. See appendix I for an explanation of how we determined which installation-support functions to include in our survey.

10. Facilities demolition	31. Pavement clearance
11. Facilities restoration and modernization	32. Pest control
12. Facility sustainment	33. Physical security
13. Family housing	34. Port services
14. Financial management	35. Procurement operations
15. Fire and emergency services	36. Public affairs
16. Food and dining	37. Real property management and engineer services
17. Honors and protocols	38. Refuse collection
18. Inspector general and internal review	39. Small-arms range management
19. Grounds maintenance and landscaping	40. Supply, storage, and distribution non-munitions
20. Installation movement	41. Unaccompanied housing
21. Installation safety	42. Utilities

Source: GAO analysis of DOD data. | GAO-14-577

Joint Base Officials Have Reported Varying Levels of Progress in Consolidating Functions, but Cited Limited Opportunities and Challenges from Consolidation Efforts

Joint base officials reported varying levels of progress in consolidating installation-support functions, several limitations that inhibited consolidation, and challenges resulting from consolidation efforts that created inefficiencies and inequities. DOD guidance outlined more than 40 specific, common installation-support functions at joint bases to be aligned under the authority of the Joint Base Commander, unless the relevant memorandums of agreement provide otherwise.[20] According to key federal practices for consolidation, federal agencies need to plan to monitor and to evaluate their efforts to identify areas for improvement. Overall, we found that the 11 joint bases had reported partially consolidating 80 percent of the functions for which the joint base commander had some responsibility, but the extent of consolidation varied from one joint base to another and among the various installation-support functions. Our analysis of information gathered from the survey and interviews showed that the joint bases reported having limited opportunities to consolidate some functions, such as those unique to a single military service's mission (e.g. airfield operations and port services) and those managed by a military service's headquarters such as legal-support services. Furthermore, joint base officials reported several

[20] These memorandums of agreement can contain variances or other agreements to diverge from the organizational structure as outlined in DOD's implementation guidance. These variances and other agreements document specific installation-support functions that are not consolidated at a given joint base or region.

challenges resulting from consolidation, such as multiple military service inspections and employees being disadvantaged in competing for promotion opportunities, resulting from service-specific personnel policies. DOD has not comprehensively evaluated installation-support functions to determine whether they are all still appropriate for consolidation. Also, DOD has not taken steps to address any inefficiencies and inequities arising from consolidation, or assessed any actions that can be taken to facilitate consolidation and address any negative effects in these circumstances. Without a comprehensive evaluation of the suitability of installation-support functions for consolidation—and without guidance to address any negative consequences that emerge from consolidation—individual joint bases will still be expected to merge support functions, which may result in ongoing inefficiencies and inequities.

Joint Base Officials Reported Varying Levels of Progress in Consolidating Installation-Support Functions

Joint base officials whom we surveyed and interviewed reported variations in the extent to which installation-support functions were consolidated. None of the 11 joint bases we surveyed or the Joint Region Marianas reported that they have consolidated all installation support functions identified in DOD's 2008 Joint Basing Implementation Guidance.[21] DOD's guidance identified and defined more than 40 specific installation-support functions to be aligned under the authority of the Joint Base Commander, unless the relevant agreement provides otherwise. In written comments to our 2012 report on joint basing and during the course of this review, OSD reaffirmed its expectations that Joint Base Commanders are to merge their management structures, operating procedures, financial systems, and staffs to consolidate installation-support functions.[22]

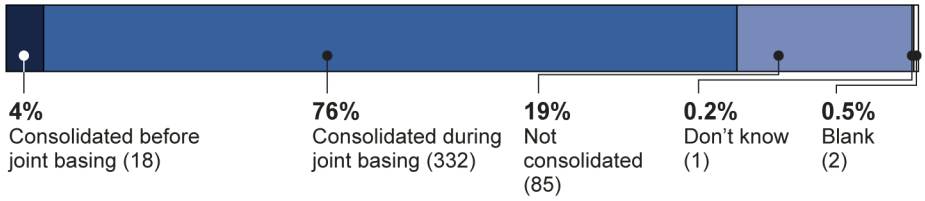
For the 11 joint bases that we surveyed, our analysis indicated that of the potential 462 installation-support functional areas (42 common functions at each of the 11 joint bases) to be transferred to the supporting component, Joint Base Commanders had some responsibility for 438, or about 95 percent, of those support functions. Our analysis showed that the joint bases reported that they have at least partially consolidated 350 (about 80 percent) of the 438 installation-support functional areas for

[21]DOD, *Initial Guidance for BRAC 2005 Joint Basing Implementation*.

[22]GAO-13-134.

which the joint base commander had some responsibility. About 4 percent of the installation-support functions that are included in the 80 percent were consolidated prior to joint basing via agreements between the military services. According to our analysis, most instances of consolidation prior to joint basing (16 out of 18) occurred at Joint Base Andrews-Naval Air Facility Washington. Figure 2 illustrates the status of consolidation based on our analysis of survey responses and other supporting documentation.

Figure 2: Status of Consolidation of Installation-Support Functions



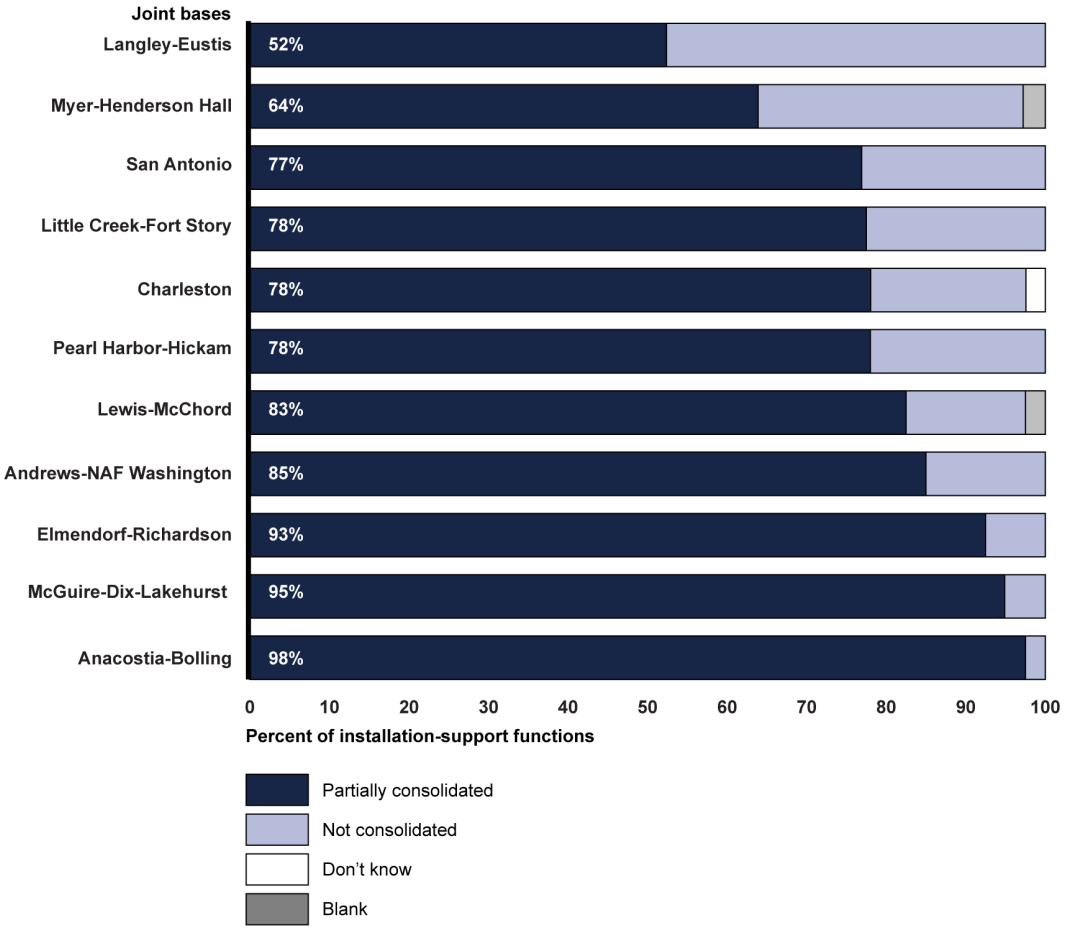
Source: GAO analysis of joint base survey responses and supporting documentation. | GAO-14-577

Note: Percents are based on the installation-support functions for which the Joint Base Commanders had some responsibility at the time of our review. Percents do not add to 100 percent because of rounding.

Consolidation varied greatly by location among the 11 joint bases.[23] For example, our analysis of survey responses and other supporting documentation showed that Joint Base Langley-Eustis had reported some level of consolidation in 52 percent of its functions, whereas three other joint bases had some consolidation in approximately 90 percent or more of the functions. Figure 3 illustrates the status of consolidation for each installation based on our analysis of survey responses and other supporting documentation.

[23]Joint Region Marianas officials whom we interviewed reported that they had also achieved consolidation of installation-support functions, but had not consolidated all functions as required in the agreement establishing the joint region.

Figure 3: Percent of 42 Installation-Support Functions That Officials Reported Were Partially Consolidated by Each of the 11 Joint Bases



Source: GAO analysis of joint base survey responses and supporting documentation. | GAO-14-577

Note: Joint base percents are based on the support functions for which the Joint Base Commanders had some responsibility at the time of our review.

Additionally, our analysis of joint base officials' responses and other supporting documentation found wide variances—25 to 100 percent—in the extent that they consolidated some level of specific installation-support functions at their installations. Our survey question allowed respondents to identify installation-support functions as either consolidated or not. If actions had been taken to consolidate any portion of the consolidation, respondents were allowed to count the support function as consolidated. Figure 4 illustrates the number of joint bases that reported consolidation of each of the support functions according to our definition of consolidated. In addition, appendix IV identifies which

installation-support functions have been consolidated for each of the 11 joint bases in our survey.

Figure 4: Percent of the 11 Joint Bases That Reported at Least Partially Consolidating Each Installation Support Function

Source: GAO analysis of joint base survey responses and supporting documentation. | GAO-14-577

Note: Joint base percents are based on the support functions for which the Joint Base Commanders had some responsibility at the time of our review.

All 11 joint bases reported that they had consolidated at least some portion of eight installation-support functions primarily related to installation facilities and infrastructure, such as custodial services, facilities demolitions and installation safety. The support functions reported to be consolidated at the fewest joint bases tended to have military service-specific or mission-specific characteristics, such as military personnel services, port services, small-arms range management, and airfield operations.

Joint Base Officials Reported Limited Opportunities to Consolidate Some Support Functions and Workforces

Joint base officials reported that there were limited opportunities to consolidate some installation-support functions, and that the workforces used by the military services to provide support services—as well as geography—can affect consolidation efforts. The officials stated that they may not be able to fully consolidate some functions because these functions are unique to one military service's mission or the function is mainly managed by a military service's headquarters. Also, joint base officials stated that limited opportunities exist to consolidate workforces because of the differences in the original types of workforces—military, civilian, and contractor—that were in place prior to joint basing. As part of our review, we are reporting our analyses of responses to our survey questions and examples provided during interviews with joint base and military service officials. We did not independently assess the extent to which consolidation occurred as identified by survey respondents and by officials during interviews.

Our survey and interview data showed the support functions that provided the least amount of opportunity for consolidation generally are unique to a single military service's mission, or are mainly managed by a military service headquarters, including those that have the need to follow military service-specific requirements and procedures.

Support functions unique to military service mission. Our analysis of survey results and other supporting documentation, as illustrated in figure 4, showed that installation-support functions reported to be consolidated at the fewest joint bases tended to have military service-specific or mission-specific characteristics. According to officials, these functions offered limited opportunities to consolidate because they were unique to the missions of the individual military services. In most instances, these functions either did not transfer to the supporting component as part of joint basing because the function was considered to be mission-related rather than part of installation support or did not have a counterpart in the other military service. For example:

- Port services. We found that one, or 25 percent, of the four joint bases that have a port and included port services as part of the joint base commander's responsibility had reported consolidating this function. The one base that did consolidate was a location where the Navy was a supported component and did not have an operational mission. The three bases that did not consolidate were locations where there was only one service with the function (so there was not a need to consolidate).[24]
- Small-arms range management. We found that three, or 38 percent, of the eight joint bases where the joint base commander had responsibility for small-arms range management had reported consolidating this function. For all three of the joint bases that had consolidated this function, this function tended to be installation support rather than directly tied to a mission requirement. Officials for the other five joint bases that did not consolidate this function reported that they had not done so because the Army was exempt at four of the bases from consolidating this function and there was only one service with this function at the other base (so there was not a need to consolidate).[25]
- Airfield operations. We found that four, or 44 percent, of the nine joint bases where the joint base commander had some responsibility for airfield operations had reported consolidating this function. The Air Force was the supporting component for three of the joint bases while the Navy was supporting for the other one. Officials for the other five joint bases reported that they had not consolidated this function because the Air Force had variances to consolidating the function at two of the bases and there was only one service with this function at the other three bases (so there was not a need to consolidate).[26]

Support functions managed by military service headquarters. Our analyses of survey results and other supporting documentation found

[24]The remaining seven joint bases do not have ports and thus do not need port services. Joint Region Marianas has a port, but we did not send our survey questions to officials at the joint region.

[25]DOD's Joint Base Implementation Guidance provides the Army an exemption from transferring authority for small-arms range management to the joint base because this function is considered mission support for the Army.

[26]DOD's Joint Base Implementation Guidance for Memorandum of Agreement templates state that at locations where the Air Force is the supporting component, airfield operations will be performed by the Air Force Mission Commander, rather than the Joint Base Commander.

some functions were limited in the amount of overlapping activities that could be consolidated because the functions remained largely managed by a military service headquarters, or officials executing these functions were required to follow specific military service requirements or procedures. In our survey, 45 percent of 438 joint base officials reported that their consolidation efforts had been hindered by military service-specific requirements, practices, or policies. For example:

- Information technology system management. Joint base officials reported that opportunities to merge or consolidate information technology systems were limited since the military services operate separate information technology systems with distinct email and operational requirements, as well as maintain service-specific databases. According to our analysis, 34 percent of 438 functional area respondents stated that they had not merged or consolidated information technology systems.[27] DOD has two department-wide initiatives underway to standardize some information technology and services, called the Joint Information Environment and Enterprise Email service.[28] As DOD implements these initiatives, opportunities for further consolidation may emerge.
- Advisory services. Joint base officials reported that Equal Opportunity Employment services offered limited opportunities for consolidation beyond the intake of complaints. According to officials whom we interviewed, equal opportunity complaints are filed against specific military department Secretaries, and the formal grievance of any complaint must follow the procedures of the particular military department where the individual filing the complaint either works or serves. For instance, these officials told us that an employee of the supported component, such as a service member or civilian (a position that did not transfer to the supporting component as part of the installation-support workforce), would submit a complaint through the local equal opportunity office, which is part of the supporting component. However, these officials also indicated that the grievance would then transfer back to the supported component since it must

[27]Hereafter we will refer to "functional area respondents" as respondents.

[28]The DOD Joint Information Environment is an initiative within the department to establish a secure, joint information environment consisting of shared information technology infrastructure and services. The DOD Enterprise Email service is an initiative to create a common email platform for DOD to ensure that DOD components can easily and effectively share information.

follow that service's procedures. Therefore, in the officials' opinions, responsibility for equal opportunity may not have been suitable for transfer in joint basing.

- Legal support services. Joint base officials indicated that the level of consolidation for this installation-support function is very limited, even though nine of the 11 joint bases reported consolidating some portion of the function. Joint base officials reported that each service must adhere to the Uniform Code of Military Justice for courts-martial and nonjudicial punishment, but the ways in which each service carries out military justice are substantially different. For example, according to these officials, it would be very difficult for Air Force personnel to conduct an Army court-martial or nonjudicial punishment and vice versa. As a result, in the opinion of these officials, this aspect of the legal support services cannot be further consolidated at the joint bases.

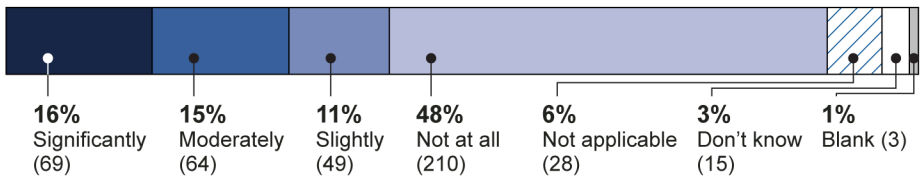
Officials from Joint Region Marianas were not part of our survey, but we interviewed them to discuss their efforts to consolidate support services. Officials indicated that some functions were easier to consolidate than others, and they stated that they have made some progress. However, the officials reported that at times conflicting service practices have also hindered their efforts. For example, the officials stated that they have not been able to fully consolidate the chaplain services function because of differences in how religious programs are managed by the Navy and Air Force. The Navy requires that tithes and offerings be sent to charitable organizations, whereas the Air Force allows tithes and offerings to be reinvested in chapel facilities.

Our survey also showed that 59 of 438 respondents (13 percent)—in comments about functions for which the joint base commander had some responsibility—reported that there were additional opportunities to consolidate installation-support functions that have not been pursued. The respondents who reported additional opportunities to consolidate provided a varied range of response details. Of those respondents who provided detailed responses, we found the following examples. Officials from one joint base stated that additional consolidation could occur in the pest-control function by expanding in-house capabilities and eliminating contract services, but did not elaborate as to why further consolidation had not been pursued at the time of the survey. In another example, officials from a different joint base stated that additional consolidation could occur in the pavement-clearance function by analyzing the function and selecting the most cost-effective method between in-house and contract work, as it would allow for completely centralized management of resources. Furthermore, we asked survey respondents if they had any

additional comments pertaining to the consolidation of their installation-support functions. Our survey results showed that 70 out of 438 respondents (16 percent) provided comments. Generally, the comments mirrored the issues raised throughout this report. For example, some reported that certain support functions offered limited opportunities for consolidation because of geography and others cited differences in military service policies and procedures that hindered consolidation efforts.

We also found that, according to survey responses, in some instances workforces used by the military services to provide installation-support services prior to joint basing limited opportunities to consolidate some installation-support functions. The military services can differ in which workforce—military, civilian, or contractor—they employ to provide installation support. In our survey, we asked to what extent, if any, differences in installation-support workforces caused hindrances to consolidation. In our survey results, 182 of 438 respondents (approximately 42 percent) reported that differences in workforces used by the individual military services hindered their ability to consolidate installation-support functions. Figure 5 illustrates the percent of functions in which officials reported hindrances in consolidating due to differences in workforces.

Figure 5: Percent of Functions in Which Officials Reported Hindrances in Consolidating Because of Differences in Workforces



Source: GAO analysis of joint base survey responses and supporting documentation. | GAO-14-577

Note: Percents are based on the support functions for which the Joint Base Commanders had some responsibility at the time of our review.

The seven joint bases with the highest percent of functions reporting significant or moderate consolidation hindrances because of differences in workforces are listed in table 3.

Table 3: Joint Bases with the Highest Percent of Functions in Which Officials Reported Significant or Moderate Hindrances in Consolidating Because of Differences in Workforces

Joint Base	Percent reporting significant or moderate hindrances	Percent reporting slight hindrances	Percent reporting no hindrances
Charleston	48.8%	12.2%	31.7%
Pearl Harbor-Hickam	46.3	7.3	39.0
McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst	46.2	12.8	36.0
Elmendorf-Richardson	45.0	7.5	42.5
San Antonio	35.9	15.4	43.6
Lewis-McChord	35.0	20.0	35.0
Langley-Eustis	31.0	11.9	50.0

Source: GAO analysis of joint base survey responses. | GAO-14-577

Notes: Totals may not add to 100 percent because of "don't know," "not applicable," and blank responses. Percents are based on the support functions for which the Joint Base Commanders had some responsibility at the time of our review.

In interviews and written responses to our survey, Air Force officials stated that they may use a mix of military and civilian personnel to provide a specific installation-support function, whereas the Army may have outsourced the provision of the same support function to contractors. Also, we found in interviews and in written responses to our survey that the Navy at times, used a regionalized civilian workforce to provide some installation-support services for stand-alone Navy bases in the region. In the survey's written responses, we also found examples in which respondents stated that some consolidation efforts were hindered by the types of workforces used. For example,

- Officials at Air Force-led Joint Base Charleston reported that consolidation efforts have been limited by personnel shortfalls in the procurement services function. Prior to joint basing, the Navy provided much of the procurement services for Naval Weapons Station Charleston, through regional service centers rather than at the installation. For this reason, according to these officials, no local civilian workforce transferred to the Air Force. The joint base received approval to hire more Air Force civilians to carry out the function. However, many of the approved positions were eventually cut in 2012

as part of the military departments' response to the DOD effort to cap the number of civilian positions department-wide.[29]

- Officials at Air Force-led Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson reported that they have not been able to consolidate the facility-sustainment function because of how the Army and Air Force provided installation support prior to joint basing. The Army outsourced delivery of this function to contractors at Fort Richardson, whereas the Air Force provided this function in-house at Elmendorf Air Force Base. According to the officials, the Air Force will likely maintain the contracts for the Richardson side of the base because of insufficient military and civilian manpower available to insource the function. These officials reported that, at the same time, the Air Force will continue to provide the function in-house for the Elmendorf side of the base as there is currently no authorization to conduct public-private competitions, which are required before contracting out for functions currently performed by DOD civilians.[30]
- Officials at Air Force-led Joint Base Langley-Eustis reported that they had not been able to consolidate the utilities function because of privatization of some support services. The Army privatized water, wastewater, electricity, and natural gas on the Fort Eustis side of the base. These officials stated that because of privatization, when responsibility for the utilities function transferred to the joint base, the joint base officials could not consolidate the Fort Eustis side with the in-house provision of utility services that occurred on the Langley Air Force Base side of the base.

[29]In this context, respondents to our survey referred to Resource Management Decision (RMD) 703, which was a budget decision document issued during the joint review of military service budget submissions by OSD and OMB that extended the civilian workforce cap to the military services for fiscal years 2012 and 2013, and provided for departmentwide exceptions for certain critical capabilities. We previously reported on the progress made by the military services in meeting adjusted civilian workforce cap targets for fiscal year 2012 and associated savings as well as the steps DOD has taken to help ensure that, in implementing the cap, it has maintained critical skills and competencies for its civilian workforce. See GAO, *Human Capital: Critical Skills and Competency Assessments Should Help Guide DOD Civilian Workforce Decisions,* GAO-13-188 (Washington, D.C.: Jan. 17, 2013).

[30]OMB Circular A-76 establishes federal policy and procedures for determining whether commercial activities currently performed by the federal government should be performed in-house, by another federal agency, or by the private sector. In 2008, Congress enacted legislation placing a moratorium on DOD public-private competitions for functions currently performed by DOD civilians, which, as amended by subsequent legislation, remains in effect.

In our survey, we also asked joint base officials about other hindrances to consolidation. Our content analysis of survey data showed that the most-often cited hindrance was geography, with 111 out of 438 respondents (25 percent) citing geography as a hindrance. The five joint bases with the highest percent of functions in which officials that cited geography as a hindrance are listed in table 4.

Table 4: Joint Bases with the Highest Percent of Functions That Cited Geography as a Hindrance to Consolidation

Joint base	Percent
Langley-Eustis	76%
McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst	46
San Antonio	44
Charleston	42
Lewis-McChord	30

Source: GAO analysis of joint base survey responses. | GAO-14-577

Note: Percents are based on the support functions for which the Joint Base Commanders had some responsibility at the time of our review.

According to respondents from Joint Base Langley-Eustis, opportunities to consolidate support functions, such as information technology services management, real property management and engineering services functions are limited because of the geographical separation between Langley Air Force Base and Fort Eustis—approximately 18 miles. In addition, some bases that may share some common fence line can also be hindered by geography. For example, officials at Joint Base Lewis-McChord stated that Fort Lewis and McChord Air Force Base entrances are separated by about 5 miles of interstate highway. Having to navigate the interstate to travel between the two entrances can be a problem because of traffic according to officials at both locations. The Army has proposed constructing a gate on the joint base between the two locations, but has not completed this action. In addition, McChord Airfield is separated from the rest of the joint base by a public road, making it necessary to clear security a second time when traveling from the base to the airfield.

Although cited to a much lesser extent than geography, 28 of the 438 respondents reported that personnel shortages (6 percent) and 19 of the 438 respondents reported budget or funding limitations (4 percent) hindered consolidation efforts. For example, officials from Joint Base Charleston reported that the base does not have enough personnel to

adequately provide services in the pest-control function, and that a workforce study is needed to determine the appropriate size of the function. In another example, officials from Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst reported that current fiscal limitations as well as a hiring freeze have, in part, hindered the base's ability to consolidate the real property management and engineering services function.

OSD officials stated that there is currently not a process to evaluate installation-support functions on a regular basis (annually or otherwise) and that they have not systematically identified common limitations to consolidation and what actions, if any, can be taken to address such limitations. We found DOD has eliminated—on a case-by-case basis—three installation-support functions from consolidation from the original list of 47, but has not similarly comprehensively evaluated whether the remaining functions are still suitable for consolidation. As noted above, joint base officials have identified limited opportunities to consolidate some areas of installation support. Furthermore, DOD has not systematically identified how consolidation can be limited by, for example, different types of workforces used to provide installation-support services or geography, and what actions, if any, could potentially help facilitate consolidation in these situations or any others that may be identified. Our prior work on federal agency consolidation efforts found that consolidation initiatives can be immensely complex, politically charged, and costly and are not quick, easy, or automatic ways of producing desired change.[31] In addition, key federal practices for consolidation state that federal agencies need to plan to evaluate and monitor efforts to identify areas for improvement. Further, reporting on consolidation activities can help key decision makers within the agencies to obtain feedback for improving both policy and operational effectiveness.[32] OSD and military service officials discussed that their approach to date has been to give the program time to mature but said they now believe a review would be beneficial because some functions may not easily be consolidated and there may be common limitations to consolidation that can be addressed through policy improvements. However, they did not elaborate as to when they would conduct such a review or provide specifics on how they planned to do so. Without comprehensively evaluating whether installation-support functions are still suitable for consolidation and

[31]GAO-12-542.

[32]GAO-12-542.

without identifying and addressing limitations reported by the joint bases, such as those related to workforces and geography, DOD may not be able to fully consolidate all installation-support functions.

Officials Reported Challenges in Consolidation Efforts That Resulted in Inefficiencies or Inequities

Joint base officials whom we surveyed and interviewed reported that at times consolidation of installation-support functions created challenges resulting in unintentional inefficiencies or inequities. According to key federal practices for consolidation, federal agencies need to evaluate their efforts to identify areas for improvement, and obtain feedback for improving both policy and operational effectiveness.[33]

Our analysis identified that of the 350 out of 438 responses about functions that were partially consolidated, 224 officials (64 percent) reported challenges resulting from consolidation. See figure 6 for a breakout of the responses of the functions in which officials reported some challenges with consolidation.

Figure 6: Percent of Functions in Which Officials Reported Some Challenges Resulting from Consolidation

Source: GAO analysis of joint base survey responses and supporting documentation. | GAO-14-577

Note: Percents are based on the support functions that were at least partially consolidated at the time of our review and includes functions that were reported to be consolidated prior to joint basing.

Our analyses of interview and written survey responses found instances in which respondents stated that some challenges resulting from consolidation resulted in inefficiencies. For example:

- *Multiple inspections.* Officials whom we interviewed as well as those who provided written survey responses reported that some functions were subject to multiple inspections. For example, officials at Navy-led Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam reported that Air Force officials

[33]GAO-12-542.

continue to inspect emergency management exercises although the Navy, as the lead component, is responsible for emergency management on the base and carries out similar inspections. In addition, officials at Army-led Joint Base Lewis-McChord reported confusion among Air Force military units about whether they had to follow Air Force or Army environmental requirements, practices, and policies while conducting inspections. Furthermore, officials whom we interviewed at Joint Base Lewis-McChord stated that both the Army and the Air Force are inspecting the joint base's child development centers, though the Army, as the lead component, is responsible for managing the centers, including inspections. However, Air Force officials stated they are also conducting their own inspections because of their concern that the centers meet Air Force standards of service for providing child care, even though joint bases have agreed to provide a common level of service for installation-support functions.[34]

- *Multiple Data Requirements.* Officials at Air Force-led Joint Base Langley-Eustis reported that staff from the physical-security function must use two distinct systems for processing personnel-security investigations—one for Army personnel and one for Air Force personnel—because of differences in the systems. In another example, Army-led Joint Base Lewis-McChord reported that the lack of transferring personnel files locally between the Army and Air Force has caused the Army to rebuild employee files and submit criminal background checks more than once for staff in the children and youth-services function, potentially wasting funds by recreating what already exists.

Our analysis of interview information found instances in which respondents stated that challenges resulting from consolidation also resulted in inequities. For example:

- *Limited promotion opportunities.* According to joint base officials, in some instances the transfer of civilian personnel from one military service to another may have created inequities, in that civilians transferring from another military department may have lost some

[34]Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics, Modification to the Joint Basing Implementation Guidance (July 1, 2010). According to OSD guidance, DOD developed standards to provide common output or performance-level standards for installation support, and to establish a common language for each base support function on the joint bases.

benefits of seniority, which may have disadvantaged them in competing for promotion opportunities. For example, former Army civilian employees at the Air Force-led Joint Base San Antonio reported limited career opportunities because their total service time as DOD employees was not recognized by the Air Force, and their job classifications, in some cases, were downgraded when their positions were transferred to the joint base. The former Army employees reported that the military departments do not credit years of employment from another department. As a result, they cannot compete for promotions or other Air Force positions that may require a minimum number of years of service as eligibility criteria for promotion. In addition, joint base officials whom we interviewed commented that they believe military service practices of preferentially hiring internal applicants in response to DOD's civilian hiring freeze have prevented these former Army employees from qualifying or being competitive for vacant Army positions because they are now Air Force employees.

- *Limited training opportunities.* According to joint base officials, consolidation has resulted in differences in training for some installation-support personnel. For example, Air Force officials at the Army-led Joint Base Lewis-McChord reported that consolidation has eliminated some training opportunities for uniformed airmen, and expressed concern that airmen at Joint Base Lewis-McChord are not receiving training comparable to that which they would receive if they were stationed at a stand-alone Air Force installation.[35] This situation is primarily because of the consolidation of installation-support functions under Army processes—which are largely civilian and contractor driven—whereas at a stand-alone Air Force base many installation-support functions are performed by airmen.

We found that neither OSD nor the military services have addressed these consolidation challenges that may have resulted in inefficiencies and inequities. Specifically, feedback on inefficiencies and inequities have not been incorporated into policy improvements, such as additional guidance, to help the joint bases resolve confusion about which service-specific guidance should be followed to avoid challenges such as multiple inspections, multiple data requirements, and concerns about limited

[35]The Air Force officials said their military service transferred billets for uniformed airmen and some of the airmen to assist the Army—which is the supporting component at this joint base—as part of the memorandum of agreement to help provide installation support. The Air Force traditionally uses military personnel to provide installation support.

promotion and training opportunities. Our survey results identified that about 59 percent of respondents stated that they did not think additional guidance from OSD or the military services would improve the level of consolidation of their installation-support functions. However, officials from the joint bases, military service headquarters, and OSD stated in interviews that additional guidance is necessary to address consolidation challenges.

OSD and military service officials stated that they have not comprehensively identified the extent to which the joint bases have consolidated installation-support functions, including any common challenges associated with consolidation that may have resulted in negative consequences as described above. OSD and military service officials stated that their approach to date has been to give the program time to mature but said they now believe policy actions may be needed to help address challenges resulting from consolidation. Without having comprehensively identified any common challenges associated with consolidation, OSD is unlikely to develop policy solutions, such as guidance, to assist the joint bases in addressing them. In one instance in which joint base officials identified a common challenge associated with consolidation—multiple inspections related to installation support—OSD officials acknowledged the issue and stated that they were taking action to address it. Joint base officials stated in interviews that they have raised concerns at OSD's annual joint base program-management meetings about which service-specific guidance to follow when conducting inspections of installation-support functions on joint bases. OSD officials told us that while a policy solution is not currently available to resolve this issue, they are working to update a DOD instruction for inspections that will address the issue at joint bases. However, in the absence of policy solutions, such as additional guidance to mitigate other common challenges resulting from consolidation efforts, including multiple data requirements for installation-support functions and concerns about limited promotion and training opportunities for installation-support staff, joint bases may be unable to avoid or reduce any inefficiencies and inequities resulting from consolidating installation-support functions.

Joint Basing Has Produced Some Benefits, but Officials Reported They Are Unable to Achieve Greater Efficiencies and Potential Cost Savings without Additional Direction

Joint base officials have reported that consolidation of support functions has resulted in some progress toward achieving greater efficiencies and cost savings as well as produced some benefits, but stated that they need further clarification and guidance to take additional actions to achieve consolidation goals. Military service and joint base officials indicated that they are unclear to what extent the stated goals of joint basing are still appropriate and to what extent they are required to take actions to pursue them. OSD has not collaborated with the military services to reevaluate whether the goals of joint basing are still appropriate and has not provided additional direction to help the joint bases achieve the program's goals of achieving greater efficiencies and generating cost savings. We previously reported that the cost of installation support was expected to rise because OSD increased the installation-support standards for joint bases, which would require additional administrative costs.[36] In a November 2012 report, we also found that OSD did not have a fully developed method for accurately collecting information on costs, savings, and efficiencies achieved specifically from joint basing, and had not developed a plan to guide joint bases in achieving cost savings and efficiencies.[37] We found during this review that the extent to which joint bases pursued initiatives to reduce duplication and achieve greater efficiencies and cost savings in providing installation support depended on the discretion of joint base commanders. Joint base and military officials indicated the degree to which joint bases looked for such opportunities depended on the commitment of the individuals involved, and the level of support they received from their parent service headquarters. According to key federal practices, when federal organizations collaborate they can define common outcomes, establish strategies, and develop mechanisms to monitor, evaluate and report the

[36]GAO-09-336. In this report we recommended that DOD periodically review installation-support standards and administrative costs at joint bases, and report to Congress on estimated installation-support costs. DOD partially agreed with our recommendations, but did not state that it would take steps to fully implement them.

[37]GAO-13-134. In this report we recommended that DOD 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 did not concur with this recommendation and noted that it should be patient with obtaining savings and efficiencies as joint basing was a relatively new initiative and implementation issues were being resolved. The officials said this is the approach they were taking during the course of our review. We continue to believe that these recommendations are valid and should be implemented.

results of their collaborative efforts.[38] Further, key federal practices state that agencies can improve efficiency by reexamining programs and related processes or organizational structures to determine whether they effectively and efficiently achieve the mission.[39] Without a collaborative evaluation of the joint basing program to determine if the stated goals of the program are still appropriate and subsequent direction to include the monitoring and evaluation of the achievement of program goals, it will be difficult for DOD to determine the extent to which the joint basing initiative is achieving its intended goals.

Joint Bases Have Reported Some Progress and Benefits in Addressing Joint Basing Goals

Joint base officials reported that they have made some progress in achieving greater efficiencies and cost savings, which are the goals of the joint base program, as well as attained additional benefits. In our November 2012 report, we found that DOD does not have a fully developed method for accurately collecting information on cost savings and efficiencies achieved specifically as a result of joint basing.[40] As a result, to gain insight into the degree to which DOD has gained efficiencies and cost savings, our survey asked respondents to identify the extent to which they have (1) reduced redundant funded positions; (2) reduced redundant contracts or increased contract efficiencies; and (3) merged or consolidated redundant procedures.

Reduced Redundant Funded Positions

Our analysis of survey responses and other supporting documentation showed that 53 of 438 respondents (12 percent) stated that they were

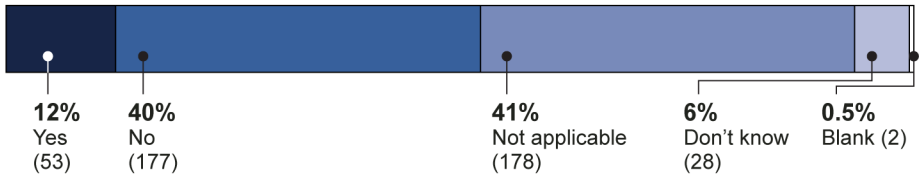
[38] GAO-06-15.

[39] GAO-11-908.

[40] GAO-13-134. We found that OSD developed a data-collection tool, called the Cost and Performance Visibility Framework, through which the joint bases report installation-support performance data, including annually reporting on funds obligated to provide base-support services, and officials involved in management and oversight of the joint bases can use this information to improve joint base-management. OSD can measure these data against the level of funding that the military services expect they would have had to obligate for installation support on the joint bases if no savings resulted from joint basing—what DOD refers to as the Cost and Performance Visibility Framework baseline. However, in our November 2012 report, we found that due to inconsistencies in the way the joint bases reported data through the framework, and because the data reported through the framework do not exclude costs and savings that are not specific to joint basing, OSD is not able to accurately isolate the effects of joint basing on the cost of providing support services.

able to reduce redundant funded positions (excluding contractors) related to joint basing. Figure 7 illustrates our analysis.

Figure 7: Percent of Functions in Which Respondents Reported Reductions in Redundant Funded Positions Related to Joint Basing



Source: GAO analysis of joint base survey responses and supporting documentation. | GAO-14-577

Notes: Percents are based on the support functions for which the Joint Base Commanders had some responsibility at the time of our review. Not applicable applies to functions without redundancy, not consolidated, or consolidated prior to joint basing.

Our analysis of survey data indicated that joint bases experienced reductions in funded positions, which respondents attributed to efforts to reduce redundancy. For example, officials from Joint Base Little Creek-Fort Story reported that the base was able to reduce four staff positions in the morale, welfare, and recreation function because they were redundant. In another example, officials from Joint Base Anacostia-Bolling reported that base was able to reduce two positions in the physical security function. In other instances, the respondents did not attribute reductions to joint basing, but rather attributed them to other reasons, such as service-level programmatic decisions. For instance, officials from Joint Base Charleston noted that a housing manager retired shortly after the joint base's establishment, and the Air Force abolished the position because of personnel cuts unrelated to joint basing.

Many of the respondents who reported no reductions did not provide detailed explanations. Of those who provided a reason for no reduction, many reported there were no redundancies in installation-support positions or there was an increased workload requiring extra positions. For instance, officials from Joint Base Andrews-Naval Air Facility Washington reported that the refuse collection and disposal function was consolidated prior to joint basing, so no positions were available to consolidate. In another example, officials from Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst reported an increased workload in the facilities sustainment function because of aging facilities and a lack of funding, making consolidation unlikely to result in fewer personnel. Also, officials from Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson reported that no redundant positions

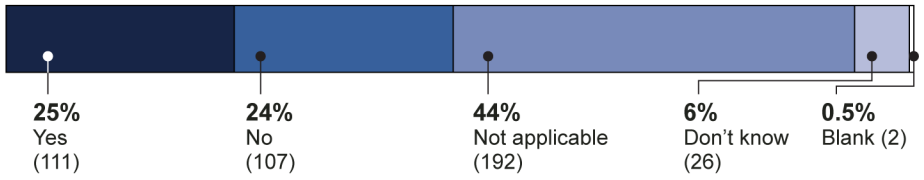
were reduced in the physical security function because of no decrease in workload following consolidation.

Joint base officials whom we interviewed provided some reasons for why the reduction of redundant funded positions was limited. For example, officials from Joint Base Langley-Eustis told us that it would have been difficult to consolidate the functions of the two former bases because of differences in the mix of personnel who provided installation support. They said that at Fort Eustis the Army had transitioned almost entirely to private contracts for installation support, and had eliminated most of its related civilian workforce. Therefore, in their view, there were no opportunities to reduce redundant funded positions. In another example, officials from Joint Base Lewis-McChord said the Air Force transferred few civilian positions to the Army, the supporting component, because prior to joint basing the Air Force used uniformed airmen to provide installation-support services at McChord Air Force Base.

Reduced Redundant Contracts or Increased Contract Efficiencies

Our analysis of survey responses and other supporting documentation showed that 111 of 438 respondents (25 percent) stated that they had a reduction of redundant contracts or increased contract efficiencies related to joint basing. Figure 8 illustrates our analysis.

Figure 8: Percent of Functions in Which Respondents Reported a Reduction of Redundant Contracts or an Increase in Contract Efficiencies Related to Joint Basing



Source: GAO analysis of joint base survey responses and supporting documentation. | GAO-14-577

Note: Percents are based on the support functions for which the Joint Base Commanders had some responsibility at the time of our review.

Officials from Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst reported that they were able to consolidate eight separate telephone contracts in the information technology services management function into a single contract for the joint base, which they reported saved about $650,000. In another example, officials from Joint Base Charleston reported that two custodial contracts existed—one for the Air Force and one for the Navy—and that these contracts have been combined into a single joint base contract, which according to the officials, resulted in efficiencies in contract

administration by eliminating the need for multiple contract administrators. In a third example, officials from Joint Base Myer-Henderson Hall reported the consolidation of contracts for facility fire and alarm inspection and maintenance in the fire and emergency services function—from three to one. In another example, officials from Joint Base Anacostia-Bolling reported that they were able to eliminate a contract in the public affairs function that was used to provide the supported component's base newspaper prior to joint basing.

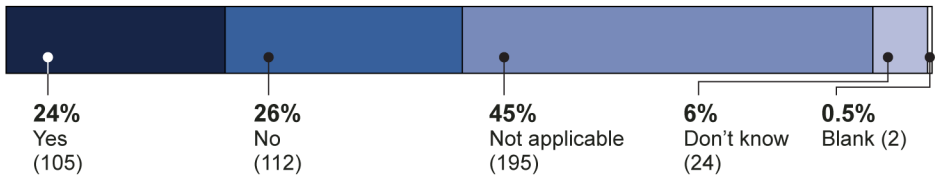
Many of the respondents who reported no reductions or no increased efficiencies did not provide a detailed explanation. Of those who provided a reason for no reduction or increased efficiencies, the reasons included simply that there were no redundant contracts. In other instances an installation-support function was not provided via contract, so consolidation was not applicable. For example, officials from Joint Base Andrews-Naval Air Facility Washington reported there were no reductions in the small-arms range management function because there were no contracts were in place for the function— it is handled by military and civilian personnel.

Joint base officials whom we interviewed provided some reasons for why reduction of redundant contracts or achieving greater contract efficiencies was limited. For example, officials from Joint Base San Antonio stated that federal contracting preferences complicate the task of consolidating all custodial services under a single contract. Officials from Joint Base Langley Eustis cited geography as a factor affecting the bases' ability to reduce redundant contracts. They told us the distance between Langley Air Force Base and Fort Eustis is approximately 18 miles, and thereby would likely increase a contract's cost because of a wider area of required service.

Merged or Consolidated Redundant Procedures

Our analysis of survey responses and other supporting documentation showed that 105 out of 438 respondents (24 percent) stated they were able to merge or consolidate redundant procedures related to joint basing. Figure 9 illustrates our analysis.

Figure 9: Percent of Functions in Which Respondents Reported a Merger or Consolidation of Redundant Procedures Related to Joint Basing



Source: GAO analysis of joint base survey responses and supporting documentation. | GAO-14-577

Note: Percents are based on the support functions for which the Joint Base Commanders had some responsibility at the time of our review.

Officials from Joint Base Charleston reported that the base reduced the work of two newspapers and separate news coverage into one newspaper and website. In another example, officials from Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam reported that the base eliminated Air Force procedures for grounds maintenance, which is part of the grounds maintenance and landscaping function, in favor of standardizing the procedures under the Navy, the supporting component. In another example, officials from Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst reported that requirements processing for base telephone services under the information technology services management function were consolidated from three offices into one.

Of those respondents who provided a reason for no merger or consolidation of redundant procedures, a frequently cited reason was that there were no redundant procedures to merge or consolidate. For example, officials from Joint Base Anacostia-Bolling reported that there were no redundant procedures in the custodial services, emergency management, and facility sustainment functions. In another instance, officials from Joint Base Andrews-Naval Air Facility Washington reported no redundant procedures in the emergency management function because the Navy did not have an emergency management function prior to consolidation. In another example, officials from Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst reported no merger or consolidation of redundant procedures in the emergency management function because there was not an emergency management function at Fort Dix or Naval Engineering Station Lakehurst.

Additional Consolidation Benefits

In our analysis of 350 of 438 survey responses in which officials stated they had consolidated functions, 213 of 350 respondents (61 percent) reported benefits from consolidation of support functions. Figure 10 illustrates our analysis.

Figure 10: Percent of Functions with Some Consolidation in Which Officials Reported Benefits Resulting from Consolidation

Source: GAO analysis of joint base survey responses and supporting documentation. | GAO-14-577

Note: Percents are based on the support functions that were at least partially consolidated at the time of our review and includes functions that were reported to be consolidated prior to joint basing.

Our analysis of survey data found that benefits included improvements in the delivery of installation-support services and the sharing of information and practices across military services. Respondents reported that as a result of some of these improvements, they believe customer satisfaction increased. Also, in many instances functional area officials reported increased efficiencies, but did not elaborate as to what the efficiencies were or how they were achieved. The following examples are specific to joint bases, and illustrate that, according to base officials, DOD's current approach to joint basing has produced some benefits.

- *Improved service delivery.* Officials from Air Force-led Joint Base Langley-Eustis reported that the fire chiefs at Fort Eustis are satisfied with the increased performance of maintenance services on firefighting vehicles as the Air Force maintains vehicles at a much higher level than the levels provided by the Army prior to joint basing. In another example, officials from Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam reported that the base's intramural sports program is larger, providing more games and better competition, which service members enjoy.
- *Improved information sharing.* Officials from Joint Base Charleston reported that a primary benefit in the family housing function is the ability to share best practices between two privatization deals—one used by the Air Force and one used by the Navy prior to joint basing—to better service the local community. In another example, officials from Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson reported that consolidation has provided soldiers and airmen with the opportunity to work and operate in a nondeployed joint environment as part of the

law enforcement patrols function, which has allowed for a better understanding of each military service's mission. In a third example, officials from Joint Base Myer-Henderson Hall reported that consolidation of the physical security function helped increase awareness of activities affecting the base's control point because of access and information that was not previously available to the individual bases prior to joint basing.

Joint base officials whom we interviewed also reported some benefits from consolidating installation-support functions and additional benefits from working closely with other military services. For example, Air Force officials at the Army-led Joint Base Lewis-McChord told us they were able to save approximately $280,000 per month in training fees by leveraging their joint base relationship with the Army to use local Army facilities in Washington State for Air Force training flights. Prior to the establishment of the joint base, the Air Force used its own facilities farther away in Arizona for these flights. In an additional example, Army officials at the Air Force-led Joint Base San Antonio said the Air Force adopted the Army Family Action Plan, which the Army operated for soldiers and their families at Fort Sam Houston, to expand the process, which allows service members to submit concerns about quality of life issues to the base command staff to all service members residing in the joint base area.[41] In another example from Joint Base San Antonio, an Air Force official stated that the base was able to take advantage of in-house Air Force welding expertise to repair damage to the main gate of the Fort Sam Houston area of Joint Base San Antonio rather than contract for the maintenance, which would have been done prior to joint basing and this resulted in quicker repairs and avoidance of contract fees.

In our interviews with officials from Joint Region Marianas, officials indicated that they had been able to take some actions to gain efficiencies, such as reducing from five to one the number of cell-phone contracts used to provide cell phones to military and civilian personnel.

[41]The Army Family Action Plan/Armed Forces Action Plan is a year-round grassroots process to identify and elevate the most significant quality-of-life issues impacting military service members (active, reserve and National Guard), retirees, and DOD civilians and their families. It alerts commanders and leadership to areas of concern in their communities that need attention. The year-round process begins at the installation or unit level. An Armed Forces Action Plan Conference is held annually. With the completion of joint basing, the 2011 Fort Sam Houston Conference became the Joint Base San Antonio Armed Forces Action Plan Conference, inclusive of delegates and issues from all service branches.

They also pointed out that they are in the process of evaluating approaches to consolidate housing to provide better visibility to service members on Guam regarding available housing options on the island. According to the officials, this effort will result in reducing the need for duplicative housing managers.

Lack of Direction Has Hindered Joint Base Progress in Achieving Goals

Joint base and military service officials whom we interviewed said OSD has not provided them with direction on how to achieve greater efficiencies and cost savings as the goals of joint basing, including reporting requirements and milestones. OSD officials told us that they have not collaborated with the military services to evaluate whether the goals of achieving greater efficiencies and generating cost savings are still appropriate. According to key federal practices, when federal organizations collaborate they can define common outcomes, establish strategies, and develop mechanisms to monitor, evaluate and report the results of their collaborative efforts.[42] Moreover, key change management practices state that it is essential that top government and agency leaders are committed to consolidation and play a lead role in executing it by setting the direction, pace, and tone as well as providing a clear, consistent rationale for doing so. These practices also state that establishing implementation goals and milestone dates, and tracking progress toward those goals helps agency officials pinpoint performance shortfalls and suggest midcourse corrections, including any needed adjustments to the organization's future goals and milestones.[43] Further, key federal practices state that agencies can improve efficiency by reexamining programs and related processes or organizational structures to determine whether they effectively and efficiently achieve the mission.[44]

OSD officials whom we interviewed indicated that they have not evaluated the joint basing program to determine whether it is meeting the goals of the 2005 BRAC Commission recommendation or if the goals of achieving greater efficiencies and generating cost savings are still appropriate for the program today and looking forward. In written

[42]GAO-06-15.

[43]GAO-12-542.

[44]GAO-11-908.

comments to our 2012 report on joint basing, OSD stated that DOD's approach to joint basing was to be patient with obtaining savings and efficiencies, maintaining that joint basing was a relatively new initiative and implementation issues were still being resolved. The officials reaffirmed they were taking this approach during the course of our review. According to the Secretary of Defense's justification for joint basing reproduced in the 2005 BRAC Commission Report, joint basing would allow DOD to take advantage of opportunities to reduce duplication of efforts. DOD stated that the resulting reduction of overall manpower and facilities requirements would help generate savings by paring unnecessary management personnel and achieving greater efficiencies through economies of scale. However, as we found in prior work, OSD did not have a developed method for accurately collecting information on costs, savings, and efficiencies achieved specifically from joint basing, and had not developed a plan to guide joint bases in achieving cost savings and efficiencies.[45] Therefore, it is difficult to ascertain the progress that joint bases have made in achieving the goals for joint basing.

When asked about any challenges associated with consolidation of installation-support functions, some survey respondents reported that consolidation increased the need for additional resources in their functional area. For example, Joint Base Charleston officials reported that the size of the joint base and the diversity of missions have greatly increased the need for additional resources for restoration and modernization of facilities and has also resulted in decreased customer satisfaction. In another example, Joint Base Little Creek-Fort Story officials reported that an increase of unaccompanied housing facilities was not met with a staff increase to help support the additional facilities. Also, Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam officials reported that the requirements for the physical security function increased following the joint base's establishment, but no additional personnel were gained, thus increasing staff workload. However, OSD officials whom we interviewed told us respondents may have attributed the consolidation of functions as driving an increased need for resources, when other factors may have been the reason. For instance, the OSD officials stated that higher performance standards for installation support at joint bases may have caused an increase in workload. Although OSD has provided joint bases

[45]GAO-13-134.

with a memo that acknowledges a reduced funding environment and encourages Joint Base Commanders to ensure that mission partners continue to collaboratively determine priorities for applying resources, OSD officials told us that they have not modified the goals for the joint base program in light of the current fiscal environment.[46] They stated that joint bases have been designed to look for efficiencies and cost savings in providing installation support, and are therefore better positioned than other installations to withstand budget cuts and operate with lower budgeted resources.

Our survey data showed that some progress had been made in the joint bases' ability to reduce redundant funded positions; reduce redundant contracts or find contract efficiencies; and merge or consolidate redundant procedures to gain efficiencies and produce cost savings. According to joint base and military service officials whom we interviewed, the joint bases would benefit from more direction on how to pursue initiatives in a systematic way to achieve these goals or to report on the achievement of these goals. The officials said OSD has left it up to individual joint base leadership to determine how to manage and operate the joint bases, including the extent to which they pursue efficiencies. As a result, joint base and military service headquarters officials whom we interviewed stated that in an environment when priority is placed on getting the mission done with fewer resources, the investment of resources to pursue initiatives or conduct studies to determine the feasibility of efforts to cut redundancies and gain efficiencies has not always been a priority. The officials said that without more direction, the extent to which joint basing commanders pursued these types of initiatives was left to their discretion. Furthermore, the officials noted the degree to which joint bases looked for opportunities to gain efficiencies and cost savings depended on the commitment of the officials involved as well as the level of support and commitment they received from their service headquarters, rather than guided by overarching goals, plans, milestones, and reporting requirements.

OSD officials stated that they had not conducted a mid-program review for joint basing and believe this type of review is a good management practice and may be beneficial at this stage in the joint basing program, in

[46]DOD, Deputy Secretary of Defense Memorandum, *Operating Joint Bases in a Reduced Environment* (Washington, D.C.: Jan. 4, 2013).

part because of concerns about the lack of understanding regarding the goals for the program as well as direction on how to achieve such goals. However, the officials noted that they do not yet have detailed plans for such a review. Without a collaborative evaluation of the joint basing program by OSD and the military services to determine if the stated goals of the program are still appropriate and continue to be priorities for DOD—and without clear communication on any revised goals and additional direction on how to achieve such goals, including reporting requirements and milestones—it will be difficult for DOD to demonstrate that the joint basing program has effectively and efficiently achieved its goals.

Conclusions

DOD's 11 joint bases and one joint region have been fully operational since 2010, yet progress to consolidate installation-support functions at the 11 we surveyed varied by location as well as support function. According to survey respondents, some functions offer limited, if any, opportunities for consolidation, including those that are primarily military service, mission-specific—such as managing a small-arms range—and those that must adhere to military service-specific policy and procedures such as legal support services. DOD has eliminated some functions from consolidation on a case-by-case basis, but has not comprehensively reviewed the entire list of functions to determine whether additional functions should be removed from consolidation. Moreover, joint base officials have reported challenges from consolidation of installation-support functions, such as multiple inspections and limited civilian personnel promotion opportunities. OSD has not taken steps to address the challenges that, according to joint base officials, have resulted in inefficiencies and inequities. Without a comprehensive evaluation of the suitability of installation-support functions for consolidation and guidance to address any identified challenges that emerged from consolidation, individual joint bases may experience inefficiencies and inequities in consolidating these functions.

Furthermore, DOD has not yet demonstrated that merging 26 bases to consolidate installation-support functions into 12 joint bases has yielded the results it forecast when it proposed this initiative to the 2005 BRAC Commission as a means to reduce duplication of efforts that would in turn generate cost savings and increase efficiencies. The joint base officials, in their responses to survey questions and during interviews, did not report significant achievements in reaching these goals. DOD has data that indicate the joint bases are obligating less funding than they would have obligated as stand-alone bases, but it is not clear to what extent

these savings are attributable to the consolidation of installation support functions. Furthermore, it is not clear to what extent savings and efficiencies are still the goals of this program. Joint base officials indicated that they are unclear to what extent these goals are still appropriate and to what extent they are required to pursue additional opportunities to meet these goals. DOD has not collaborated with the military services to reevaluate whether the goals of joint basing are still appropriate or provided direction to the joint bases for meeting program goals, including milestones and reporting requirements for the achievement of these goals. As a result, joint base commanders are responsible for determining to what extent they will pursue initiatives to reduce redundancy and achieve potential cost savings or efficiencies, and the extent to which such initiatives have been pursued varies by joint base. Key practices from efficiency initiatives state that a primary approach an agency can take to determine whether a program is effectively and efficiently achieving its goals is to periodically reexamine it. Furthermore, key change management practices state that it is essential for top leadership to set the direction, pace, and tone of organizational change. Until DOD evaluates its current approach to joint basing and determines whether the stated goals of the program are still appropriate and continue to be priorities—and without direction provided to the joint bases to pursue the goals and report on the ability to meet these goals—it will be difficult for DOD to determine whether the joint basing program is meeting its purpose.

Matter for Congressional Consideration

To help ensure DOD's approach to joint basing achieves the goals as outlined by DOD in its justification for the 2005 BRAC recommendation and leverages additional opportunities to reduce duplication of effort that could in turn generate cost savings and increased efficiencies, Congress should consider directing the Deputy Under Secretary of Defense (Installations and Environment), in collaboration with the military services and joint bases, to evaluate the purpose of the program and determine whether the current goals, as stated in the 2005 BRAC Commission recommendation, are still appropriate, or whether goals should be revised; communicate these goals to the military services and joint bases, and adjust program activities accordingly; provide direction to the joint bases on requirements for meeting program goals, including determining reporting requirements and milestones; and determine any next steps for joint basing, including whether to expand it to other installations.

Recommendations for Executive Action

To assist the joint bases in achieving additional opportunities to consolidate installation-support functions, we recommend that the Secretary of Defense direct the Deputy Under Secretary of Defense (Installations and Environment), in coordination with the military services and joint bases, to take the following two actions:

- 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.
- 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.

To ensure DOD's approach to joint basing aligns with the intent of the 2005 BRAC recommendation and DOD's current position on the intent of joint basing, we recommend that the Secretary of Defense direct the Deputy Under Secretary of Defense (Installations and Environment), in collaboration with the military services and joint bases, to take the following two actions:

- 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.
- 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.

Agency Comments and Our Evaluation

We provided a draft of this report to DOD for review and comment. In its written comments, DOD concurred with one of the four recommendations, partially concurred with one, and did not concur with two. Given DOD's disagreement with the two recommendations, we have added a matter for congressional consideration to this report. Further details are discussed below. DOD's comments are summarized below and reprinted in their

entirety in appendix VI. In addition, DOD provided technical comments that have been incorporated as appropriate.

In its comments, DOD stated that the department and GAO have fundamentally different approaches in viewing how DOD should manage the 12 joint bases, and noted that the report's recommendations imply that the joint bases are OSD-run entities that should be addressed through new DOD policies. DOD stated that it believes that although joint bases involve added complexities from crossing traditional service lines, they are ultimately service-run bases similar to all other installations. Additionally, DOD noted that the military departments already have the responsibility, as well as sufficient authority and incentives, to deliver effective and efficient installation support across all their installations, including joint bases. We believe that the report reflects an understanding that the joint base management structure consists of shared responsibility and authority between OSD and the military departments to manage the joint base program. This point is highlighted by the fact that we designed our audit work, including our survey and interviews, to focus on the perspectives of joint base and military service officials. Nonetheless, the Joint Basing Implementation Guidance assigns responsibilities to the Undersecretary of Defense for Acquisitions, Technology, and Logistics to establish overarching guidance, procedures, and policy, in coordination with appropriate OSD organizations, and to mediate any support agreement disputes between the components that are not resolved by the Joint Management Oversight Structure.[47] We also cited an example in the report where OSD indicated that it was working to issue policy to resolve military service inconsistencies, identifying that OSD is providing such oversight. Furthermore, DOD provided an example of OSD's involvement in the management and oversight of the joint bases in its written comments on the report, citing a Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Installation and Environment policy memo on the subject of joint bases and the supply, storage, and distribution of munitions. As a result, we continue to view the management of the joint bases as a shared responsibility between OSD and the services, and believe the recommendations directed to both are appropriate.

DOD concurred with the first recommendation to evaluate the 44 installation-support functions identified in DOD's guidance for joint base

[47] *Initial Guidance for BRAC 2005 Joint Basing Implementation*.

implementation to determine which functions are still suitable for consolidation, and to subsequently identify and make any changes that are appropriate to address limitations, such as workforce policies and geography, reported by the joint bases in consolidating the support functions. DOD also 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. We acknowledge in the report that OSD has reviewed individual installation-support functions on a case-by-case basis, and has removed three from the original list of 47 functions to be consolidated. However, during the course of our review, and as stated in the report, OSD officials told us that there was no process in place to evaluate the remaining 44 installation-support functions on a regular basis. We discussed this with military service and OSD officials in early April 2014. In its letter, DOD 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. DOD did not provide time frames for completing such actions. If implemented as intended, these actions should meet the intent of the recommendation.

DOD partially concurred with the second recommendation to take policy actions, as appropriate, such as issuing additional guidance, to address challenges resulting in inefficiencies and inequities in consolidating installation-support functions. 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 OSD-level policies, citing instead the existing responsibilities and authorities already assigned to the military departments and the Joint Management Oversight Structure. We recognize the responsibilities and authorities of the military departments. Accordingly, the recommendation is for OSD, in coordination with the military services and joint bases, to take policy actions to help address any challenges resulting in efficiencies and inequities from consolidation of installation-support functions at the joint bases. As stated in the report, and noted above, the Joint Basing Implementation Guidance assigns responsibilities to OSD to mediate any support agreement disputes between the components that are not resolved by the Joint Management Oversight Structure. We also describe the responses of joint base officials to our survey questions about any need for additional guidance from OSD and the military services, as well as the interview statements from joint

base, military service headquarters, and OSD officials, who all stated that there is a need for such guidance. The report also includes an example of a challenge that required action from OSD to help resolve: OSD issued guidance in May 2014 that was based on a concern raised more than 2 years earlier in February 2012 to resolve contradictions in military service-level guidance, which had created certain duplicative service-level inspections on joint bases. DOD also stated in its letter that its Joint Management Oversight Structure is the process by which the military departments can formally request OSD assistance to change joint or DOD policies. However, joint base officials expressed frustration about the lack of progress and slowness of OSD and the Joint Management Oversight Structure process to address challenges resulting from consolidation, particularly regarding issues where the military departments are unable to identify solutions on their own. Further, some survey respondents and officials we interviewed at the joint bases and military service headquarters stated that they wanted additional guidance from OSD or the military services, or both, to resolve contradictions between service-level policy where needed or, in some cases, to provide clearer direction. As a result, we continue to believe that the recommendation is valid and should be implemented.

DOD did not concur with the third recommendation that OSD, in collaboration with the military services, 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 should be revised, and to communicate these goals to the military services and joint bases and then to adjust program activities accordingly. DOD stated in its comments 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, OSD has not evaluated the joint basing program to determine this or whether the goals are appropriate for the program today and looking forward.

Further, DOD stated in its written comments that the 12 joint bases have generated savings. Specifically, DOD stated that the joint bases had obligated $255 million less in fiscal year 2012 compared to what these previously stand-alone bases would have obligated, and did so with 1,600 fewer personnel. While we agree that DOD's estimates show that the joint bases are obligating less, these reductions in obligations cannot be attributed solely to the consolidation of installation-support functions at the joint bases, as OSD acknowledges. We discussed these estimates

with OSD officials in July 2014 after we received their agency comments on a draft of this report where these numbers were included. OSD officials explained that their methodology for calculating savings from joint bases consists of comparing the joint bases' current fiscal year obligations with a baseline amount—the cost to provide installation support at the 26 previously stand-alone installations that constitute the joint bases—which is updated every fiscal year to reflect changes in mission requirements and inflation, among other factors. However, this approach is unable to distinguish savings from efficiencies obtained through consolidation of installation-support services at the joint bases or from other factors that also contributed to lower obligations. For instance, OSD officials said fiscal year 2012 savings were also attributable to factors such as the military departments' response to DOD's efforts to cap the number of civilian positions. In addition, DOD stated in its letter that the joint bases' fiscal year 2013 obligations were $830 million less than if they were still separate installations. DOD stated that this was a combination of savings and reduced expenditures caused by the Budget Control Act and fiscal year 2013's sequestration actions, as well as from joint basing. However, OSD cannot determine how much of the $830 million in reduced obligations in fiscal year 2013 is attributable to budget cuts or efficiencies gained through the consolidation of installation support functions at the joint bases. Further, OSD cannot explain how sequestration-driven budget cuts have led to joint basing efficiencies.

Also, as stated in the report, joint base officials told us they are unclear to what extent achieving greater efficiencies and cost savings are still appropriate for the goals of joint basing, and to what extent they are required to pursue additional opportunities beyond the consolidation of installation-support functions in the joint base memorandums of agreement to achieve these goals. Joint base and military service headquarters officials said that in an environment when priority is placed on getting the mission done with fewer resources, the investment of resources to pursue initiatives or conduct studies to determine the feasibility of efforts to cut redundancies and gain efficiencies has not always been a priority. We believe that the continued 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.

DOD did not concur with the fourth recommendation that OSD, in collaboration with the military services, provide direction to joint bases on their requirements for meeting the joint base program's goals and work with the military services to determine reporting requirements and milestones to be put in place to increase support and commitment for the program's goals. In its comments, 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. As such, DOD stated that it does not believe OSD 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, as noted above.

DOD further stated that it does not agree OSD should provide additional direction towards meeting the program's goals because the joint base commanders and military departments are in the best position to balance efficiency with effectiveness and that directing additional consolidations circumvents their ability to make these decisions. In addition, DOD stated that establishing milestones implies joint bases are still in an implementation phase, and noted that OSD has transitioned from managing joint base implementation to a steady-state oversight role.

The report does not call for OSD to make additional consolidations; rather, the recommendation states that OSD, in collaboration with the military services, should provide additional direction to the joint bases on how to achieve the goals of the program. Moreover, we agree that the military services are in the best position to balance efficiency with effectiveness when managing and operating installations, which is one reason we sent our survey to the joint bases to solicit their views. However, as stated in the report and noted above, joint base and military service headquarters officials told us that in an environment when priority is placed on getting the mission done with fewer resources, the investment of resources to pursue initiatives or conduct studies to determine the feasibility of efforts to cut redundancies and gain efficiencies has not always been a priority. As such, the officials indicated that the degree to which joint bases looked for opportunities to gain efficiencies and cost savings depended on the commitment of the officials involved as well as the level of support and commitment they received from their service headquarters, because overarching goals, plans, milestones, and reporting requirements have not been established.

Without OSD establishing goals and milestones to be achieved across the joint bases, there is a risk that emphasis or priority will not be given to this pursuit.

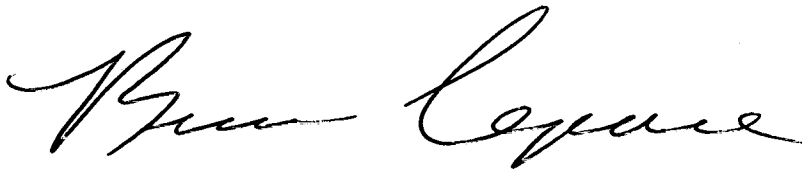
Furthermore, DOD stated that it advocates treating joint bases no differently than other Army, Navy, and Air Force installations, and noted the only unique quality of joint bases is the sizeable joint presence they support. Although DOD indicated that joint bases are similar to all other installations, as stated in the report, 64 percent of survey respondents reported challenges stemming from consolidation of installation-support functions—consolidations unlikely to occur on stand-alone installations. Moreover, joint bases are required to meet certain different installation-support standards that are, at times, higher than those on a stand-alone installation. Meeting these standards can require additional resources or prioritization that other installations may not face. DOD did not explain how joint bases can have support standards and challenges that are unique to joint basing while still being considered the same as all other installations. Given (1) that joint bases face unique challenges, and (2) that joint base and military service officials said it is unclear as to the extent initial joint basing goals are still appropriate as well as the extent they are required to pursue cost savings and efficiencies, additional direction would help joint bases better understand the current and ongoing goals of joint basing. Therefore, we believe the recommendation is still warranted.

For the reasons cited above, we continue to believe that OSD should collaborate with the military services, especially in light of OSD's assertions that joint bases have generated savings, to (1) evaluate the purpose of the program and determine whether the current goals, as stated in the 2005 BRAC Commission recommendation, are still appropriate; (2) communicate the goals to the military services and joint bases, and then adjust program activities accordingly; (3) provide direction to the joint bases on requirements for meeting program goals, including reporting requirements and milestones; and (4) determine any next steps for joint basing, including whether to expand it to other installations. If joint basing may result in savings, particularly at the level that OSD asserts, then DOD may want to consider expanding joint basing to other installations. Further, key change management practices state that it is essential that top government and agency leaders are committed to consolidation and play a lead role in executing it by setting the direction, pace, and tone as well as providing a clear and consistent rationale for doing so. These practices also state that establishing implementation goals and milestone dates, and tracking progress toward

those goals, helps agency officials pinpoint performance shortfalls and suggest midcourse corrections, including any needed adjustments to the organization's future goals and milestones.[48] Consequently, and given DOD's disagreement with our recommendations that OSD collaborate with the military services and joint bases to 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 are still appropriate and subsequently provide direction to joint bases on their requirements for meeting the joint base program's goals, we have added a matter for congressional consideration to this report. Our intent is to help ensure DOD's approach to joint basing achieves the goals as outlined by DOD in its justification for the 2005 BRAC recommendation and leverages additional opportunities to reduce duplication of effort that could in turn generate cost savings and increase efficiencies.

We will send copies to the appropriate congressional committees, the Secretary of Defense, the Secretaries of the Army, Navy, and Air Force, and Commandant of the Marine Corps; and the Office of Management and Budget; and appropriate congressional committees. 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

[48]GAO-12-542.

List of Committees

The Honorable Carl Levin
Chairman
The Honorable James Inhofe
Ranking Member
Committee on Armed Services
United States Senate

The Honorable Richard J. Durbin
Chairman
The Honorable Thad Cochran
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Defense
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate

The Honorable Tim Johnson
Chairman
The Honorable Mark Kirk
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Military Construction, Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate

The Honorable Howard P. “Buck” McKeon
Chairman
The Honorable Adam Smith
Ranking Member
Committee on Armed Services
House of Representatives

The Honorable Rodney Frelinghuysen
Chairman
The Honorable Pete Visclosky
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Defense
Committee on Appropriations
House of Representatives

The Honorable John Abney Culberson
Chairman
The Honorable Sanford Bishop, Jr.
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Military Construction, Veterans Affairs,
and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
House of Representatives

Appendix I: Scope and Methodology

For this review, we conducted site visits at a nongeneralizable sample of four joint bases: one Navy led, one Army led, and two Air Force led.[1] We selected these bases to ensure representation from each of the military services, and to include bases that share and do not share a physical boundary. Information collected during these site visits provided insight about initiatives undertaken and outcomes experienced at these locations. We also obtained and analyzed documents and conducted interviews, as described later in this section. Furthermore, we conducted a web-based survey of 11 of the 12 joint bases. Our web-based survey did not include Joint Region Marianas because it is a joint region rather than a joint base, and is subject to different expectations for the consolidation of installation-support, but we interviewed officials from Joint Region Marianas. Those surveyed at the 11 joint bases included representatives affiliated with 462 installation-support functional areas (42 each at each of the joint bases) as well as the 11 Joint Base Commanders (or their designated representative), and we obtained a response rate of 100 percent.

To conduct our web-based survey, we sent to each joint base the electronic links to 43 questionnaires, one questionnaire for each of the 42 installation-support functions identified for consolidation per the Department of Defense's (DOD) Joint Base Implementation Guidance and one questionnaire asking a single open-ended question to capture additional comments from each Joint Base Commander. In consultation with DOD we excluded two installation-support functions from the survey (facilities new footprint and real property leases) because DOD officials indicated that they did not have performance management data and survey participants may not be able to fully respond to the questions. For the list of installation-support functions that we included in our survey, see table 5 below. The survey contained 16 main questions and several follow-up questions. It was designed to obtain information, using closed- and open-ended responses, about progress in consolidating functions, factors that hinder consolidation, and outcomes from consolidation such as any benefits, challenges, or reductions in duplication (defined as reductions in redundancy) in three areas—personnel other than contractors, base operating contracts, and procedures and policies. The

[1]We visited Joint Expeditionary Base Little Creek-Fort Story, Virginia (Navy supporting, Army supported); Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Washington (Army supporting, Air Force supported); Joint Base Langley-Eustis, Virginia (Air Force supporting, Army supported); and Joint Base San Antonio, Texas (Air Force supporting, Army supported).

survey also asked about the need for additional or modified guidance from one or more of the military services or Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) and if there were any additional opportunities to consolidate that had not yet been implemented. See appendix II for a copy of the survey questions.

Table 5: List of 42 Installation-Support Functions Included in Our Survey

1. Airfield operations	22. Information technology and services management
2. Advisory services[a]	23. Laundry and dry cleaning
3. Base support vehicles and equipment	24. Law enforcement services
4. Chaplain ministries	25. Legal services
5. Child and youth services	26. Lodging
6. Command management	27. Management analysis
7. Custodial services	28. Military and family support
8. Emergency management	29. Military personnel services
9. Environmental[b]	30. Morale, welfare, and recreation
10. Facilities demolition	31. Pavement clearance
11. Facilities restoration and modernization	32. Pest control
12. Facility sustainment	33. Physical security
13. Family housing	34. Port services
14. Financial management	35. Procurement operations
15. Fire and emergency services	36. Public affairs
16. Food and dining	37. Real property management and engineer services
17. Honors and protocols[a]	38. Refuse collection
18. Inspector general and internal review[a]	39. Small-arms range management
19. Grounds maintenance and landscaping	40. Supply, storage, and distribution non-munitions
20. Installation movement	41. Unaccompanied housing
21. Installation safety	42. Utilities

Source: GAO analysis of DOD data. | GAO-14-577

[a]The command-management function consists of seven subfunctions. In consultation with OSD, we broke out three of these subfunctions (1) honors and protocol; (2) advisory services; and (3) inspector general and internal review because the responses would be suitably unique for each and may not be collectively reflected in responses for the single command-management function.

[b]The environmental function listed in our survey includes four installation-support functions: (1) environmental compliance; (2) environmental conservation; (3) environmental pollution; and (4) environmental restoration. In consultation with OSD, we collapsed this group into one function to reduce duplication of effort since the responses to each would be answered by the same individual and would be quite similar in content.

To administer the survey, we provided unique survey log-in information for each function to the Joint Base Commander's office. That office was then responsible for disseminating the information to the appropriate lead service component's subject-matter expert for each of the functional areas. While the survey was provided to the lead component's subject-matter expert, each base had the opportunity to incorporate views and comments from the supported component(s). For joint bases that did not have a given function (e.g., port operations), the joint base representative simply indicated that the function did not exist and no further questions were asked or answered.

Our analysis of the survey responses included descriptive statistics from closed-ended responses and content analysis of open-ended responses. We reviewed the closed-ended responses to ensure accuracy of information for six key survey questions: (Q2) "Is any part of this support function currently the responsibility of the Joint Base Commander?", and (Q3) "Since your joint base established the terms of the Joint Base Memorandum of Agreement (MOA), has any part of this support function been consolidated?", and questions 9 through 12 (see Appendix II for the complete wording of these questions). For these questions, we compared the closed-ended response to the open-ended elaborations to ensure that the closed-ended response accurately represented the respondent's meaning. When there was a mismatch we also checked the base's MOA and supplemental Joint Base Implementation Guidance, if applicable. In some cases, we modified the closed-ended response to match the response in the open-ended elaboration or the MOA (e.g., if a respondent answered "yes" to the closed-ended question about the function being consolidated but then clearly indicated in the elaboration space "this function has not been consolidated"). For example, these cases related to changing: (1) "no" responses to "not applicable" when a function was not present at the joint base; (2) "not applicable" responses to "no" when the Joint Base Implementation Guidance excepted the installation-support function in some instances from being transferred to the Joint Base Commander; and (3) "no" responses to "yes" when the installation-support function had been consolidated prior to joint basing. Inconsistent responses were identified through a content analysis of the open-ended survey questions, in which two GAO analysts independently reviewed the responses and coded them into several categories, such as "consolidated prior to joint basing", "reports no reduction", and "reductions but not directly related to joint basing."

When the coding was completed, both analysts reviewed every code made by the other analyst and indicated whether they agreed or

disagreed with the code. Then, the analysts met to discuss their coding determinations and reached agreement on any differences. Because we made changes to the closed-ended survey responses for the key questions above based on our analysis of the open-ended responses and the base MOAs, the results for those questions are not the raw survey responses; they are the combined result of the original survey responses and our analyses of those survey responses.[2] We have worded the results in our report carefully to accurately represent that fact. Additionally, two analysts independently summarized the responses to open-ended questions that were not elaborations of closed-ended questions (e.g., Question 6 regarding other factors that might have hindered the ability of the base to consolidate a function) through the same content analysis process described above. We believe the data analyzed are sufficiently reliable for the purposes of this report.

We sent e-mail notifications to base points of contact beginning on January 13, 2014. We then sent a cover e-mail with the log-in information for the questionnaire beginning on January 14, 2014, and asked the bases to complete the questionnaire within one month. To encourage respondents to complete the questionnaire, we sent e-mail message reminders and log-in information approximately two weeks, three weeks, and five weeks after the initial questionnaire was sent; we also extended the deadline for completion. We also sent customized emails and made follow-up phone calls to the base points of contact to maximize the response rate from all functions and to clarify responses for key individual questions. We closed the survey on March 19, 2014. We achieved a 100 percent response rate from all base functions and commanders.

To minimize errors that might occur from respondents interpreting our questions differently than we intended, we pretested the questionnaire with knowledgeable representatives from four joint bases.[3] During these pretests, we asked the officials to complete the questionnaire as we observed the process and noted potential problems (two sessions were conducted in-person and by phone, two were conducted only by phone).

[2]The percent of responses that changed were: Question 2, 5 percent; Question 3, 10 percent; Question 9, 40 percent; Question 10, 30 percent; Question 11, 25 percent, and Question 12, 41 percent.

[3]We pretested the survey with officials from Joint Base Langley-Eustis, Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Joint Base Little Creek-Fort Story, and Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst.

We then discussed the questions and instructions with the officials to check whether (1) the questions and instructions were clear and unambiguous, (2) the terms used were accurate, (3) the questionnaire was unbiased, (4) the questionnaire did not place an undue burden on the officials completing it, and (5) to identify potential solutions to any problems identified. We also submitted the questionnaire for review by an independent GAO survey specialist, OSD officials, and senior staff from one additional joint base. We modified the questionnaire based on feedback from the pretests and reviews, as appropriate.

Because we collected data from every joint base rather than a sample of bases, there was no sampling error. However, the practical difficulties of conducting any survey may introduce errors, commonly referred to as nonsampling errors. For example, differences in how a particular question is interpreted, the sources of information available to respondents, how the responses were processed and analyzed, or the types of people who do not respond can influence the accuracy of the survey results. We took steps in the development of the survey, the data collection, and the data analysis to minimize these nonsampling errors and to help ensure the accuracy of the answers that were obtained. For example, a social science survey specialist designed the questionnaire, in collaboration with GAO staff with subject-matter expertise. Then, as noted earlier, the draft questionnaire was pretested to ensure that questions were relevant, clearly stated, and easy to comprehend. The questionnaire was also reviewed by external experts and an additional GAO survey specialist. From these pretests and reviews, we made revisions as necessary to reduce the likelihood of nonresponse and reporting errors on our questions. Our analysts answered respondent questions and resolved difficulties that respondents had in answering our questions. We examined the survey results and performed computer analyses to identify inconsistencies and other indications of error and addressed such issues. A second, independent analyst checked the accuracy of all computer analyses to minimize the likelihood of errors in data processing. To obtain additional narrative and supporting context, survey respondents were given multiple opportunities to provide additional open-ended comments throughout our survey. Data were electronically exported from the web survey software into a statistical program for analyses. No manual data entry was performed, thereby removing an additional potential source of error. We examined the survey results and performed computer analyses to identify inconsistencies and other indications of error (e.g., open-ended responses conflicting with closed-ended responses), and addressed such issues as necessary.

To determine the extent to which officials have reported consolidating their installation-support functions, we reviewed DOD's 2008 Joint Basing Implementation Guidance to identify DOD's expectations for consolidation. Next, we analyzed data obtained through the survey and information from interviews with officials from the Joint Region Marianas and the joint bases and compared the results of our analysis to DOD's expectations for consolidation. To determine why consolidation had or had not occurred as intended and to identify any reported factors that have hindered consolidation and challenges that have resulted from consolidation efforts, we analyzed information obtained through our survey and interviewed joint base officials. We evaluated DOD's efforts to address reported hindrances to consolidation and challenges that have resulted from consolidation efforts with key federal practices for consolidation identified in our prior work on federal agency consolidation efforts.[4] We did not independently assess the extent to which consolidation occurred as identified by survey respondents and by officials during interviews.

To determine the extent to which officials have reported meeting the goals of joint basing to achieve greater efficiencies and cost savings as stated in the 2005 BRAC recommendation, we reviewed documents and guidance from OSD, the military services, and individual joint bases. We reviewed survey results and information collected from interviews and compared them to key federal practices for consolidation of management functions and to key practices agencies can take to improve efficiency as identified in our prior work.[5] Additionally, our past work identified key federal practices for consolidation, such as establishing implementation goals and milestone dates, and tracking progress toward those goals.[6]

Our interviews of officials from the joint base service components included the Joint Base Commanders, Deputy Joint Base Commanders, and installation-support functional area specialists, as well as officials from units who were receiving support from the Joint Base Commander's office at each installation. In addition, we interviewed a nongeneralizable sample of key joint basing stakeholders including OSD joint basing

[4]GAO-12-542.

[5]GAO-06-15 and GAO-11-908.

[6]GAO-12-542.

officials; members of the Joint Base Working Group that represents the Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marine Corps headquarters; as well as officials from the Army Installation Management Command, the Air Force Civil Engineer Center, and the Naval Installations Command. We also interviewed officials at the following locations:

- Air Force Air Education and Training Command, Texas
- Air Force Air Mobility Command, Illinois
- Joint Base Anacostia-Bolling, Washington, District of Columbia
- Joint Base Langley-Eustis, Virginia
- Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Washington
- Joint Base San Antonio, Texas
- Joint Expeditionary Base Little Creek-Fort Story, Virginia
- Joint Region Marianas, Guam
- Navy Region Naval District Washington; Washington, District of Columbia
- Navy Region Hawaii U.S. Pacific Air Forces, Hawaii

We conducted this performance audit from July 2013 to September 2014 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 II: Survey on Consolidation of Joint Base Operations

The questions that we asked in our survey on consolidation of joint base operations are shown below. The percents in parentheses[1] indicate the percent of the functional area respondents who chose that particular answer or that our analysis of open-ended responses and other supporting documentation for the joint bases indicated were the correct answers. The number in parentheses next to a closed-ended question (e.g., "N=462") indicates the number of respondents who were eligible to answer that question and is the denominator of the percents reported for that question. See Appendix I for details of the analyses that led to the results reported here.

SECTION 1: Functional Area

1. **Functional Area**[2]

[When a respondent for a specific functional area logged on, the name of the functional area was displayed along with the definition of the function taken from the May 2013 Cost and Performance Visibility Framework Handbook. When the Joint Base Commander's office logged on, the following question was displayed.]

If the Joint Base Commander or his/her representative has any comments about this questionnaire or about your joint base's consolidation of installation-support functions, please type them in the box below.

[OPEN ENDED]

SECTION 2: Function Responsibility

2. Is ANY part of this support function currently the responsibility of the Joint Base Commander (JBC)? *Check only one answer. (N=462)*

Yes (94.8%)
No (1.9%)
N/A - this base does not have this function (3.2%)

[1]Percents may total more than 100 percent because of rounding.

[2]See Table 5 in Appendix I for the list of support functions addressed in our survey.

Optional for "Yes" and "Not applicable" responses: If you would like to elaborate on your answer above, please type your comments in the box below:

[OPEN ENDED]

For "No" responses: **Please elaborate on your answer above. Please type your comments in the box below:**

[OPEN ENDED]

SECTION 3: Consolidation of Installation-Support Function

3. **Since your joint base established the terms of the Joint Base Memorandum of Agreement (MOA), has ANY part of this support function been consolidated?** *Check only one answer. (N=438)*

Yes (75.8%)
No (19.4%)
Not applicable (4.1%)
Don't know (.2%)
Blank (.5%)

Please explain your answer in the box below.

[OPEN ENDED]

4. **How much, if at all, did the preexisting model of providing this support function (e.g., military personnel, civilian personnel, contract personnel) hinder the ability of your joint base to consolidate this support function?** Check only one answer. (N=438)

Significantly (15.8%)
Moderately (14.6%)
Slightly (11.2%)
Not at all (47.9%)
Not applicable (6.4%)
Don't know (3.4%)
Blank (.7%)

Please explain your answer in the box below.

[OPEN ENDED]

Please explain your answer in the box below.

[OPEN ENDED]

5. **How much, if at all, do military service-specific requirements, practices, or policies hinder the ability to consolidate this support function? Check only one answer.** (N=438)

   Significantly (17.8%)
   Moderately (11.9%)
   Slightly (15.5 %)
   Not at all (46.1 %)
   Not applicable (6.4%)
   Don't know (1.6 %)
   Blank responses (.7%)

6. **What other factors, if any, have hindered the ability of your joint base to consolidate this support function (e.g., geography, use of contractors, impact to mission, etc.)?**

   [OPEN ENDED]

7. **Have there been any benefits resulting from the consolidation of this support function (e.g., adoption of streamlined practices, increased efficiency, increased customer satisfaction, etc.)?** *Check only one answer. (N=350)*

   Yes (60.9%)
   No (34.0%)
   Don't know (4.9%)
   Blank (.3%)

Please describe the benefit(s) in the box below.

[OPEN ENDED]

8. **Have there been any challenges resulting from the consolidation of this support function (e.g., increased burden on staff, decreased efficiency, decreased customer satisfaction, etc.)?** *Check only one answer. (N=350)*

   Yes (64.0%)
   No (33.1%)
   Don't know (2.9%)

Please describe the challenge(s) in the box below.

[OPEN ENDED]

9. **Since your joint base established the terms of the Joint Base MOA, has there been ANY reduction of redundant funded positions—excluding contractors—(i.e., authorized positions that were determined to be duplicative or unnecessary after transfer of total obligation authority, because they included the similar roles and responsibilities) required to perform this support function?** *Check only one answer. (N=438)*

   Yes (12.1%)
   No (40.4%)
   Not applicable (40.6%)
   Don't know (6.4%)
   Blank (.5%)

   9.a. Please describe the reduction(s) and the reason for the reduction(s) in the box below.

   [OPEN ENDED]

   9.b. How many redundant authorized positions have been eliminated?

   [OPEN ENDED]

   9.c. Please explain in the box below.

   [OPEN ENDED]

10. **Since your joint base established the terms of the Joint Base MOA, has there been ANY reduction of redundant contracts or any increased contract efficiencies (i.e., contracts for the provision of the same support service that were determined to be duplicative, or where consolidation of the contract resulted in improvements, for example, leveraging economies of scale) used to perform this support function?** *Check only one answer. (N=438)*

    Yes (25.3%)
    No (24.4%)
    Not applicable (43.8%)

Don't know (5.9%)
Blank (.5%)

10.a. Please describe the reduction(s) or efficiencies in the box below.

[OPEN ENDED]

10.b. How many redundant contracts, if any, have been eliminated?

[OPEN ENDED]

10.c. Please explain in the box below.

[OPEN ENDED]

11. **Since your joint base established the terms of the Joint Base MOA, has there been ANY merger or consolidation of Information Technology (IT) systems related to performing this support function (e.g., networks, databases, etc.)?** *Check only one answer. (N=438)*

Yes (25.3%)
No (34.2%)
Not applicable (32.4%)
Don't know (7.5%)
Blank (.5%)

11.a. ***Please describe the merger/consolidation(s) in the box below.***

[OPEN ENDED]

11.b. Please explain in the box below.

[OPEN ENDED]

12. **Since your joint base established the terms of the Joint Base MOA, has there been ANY merger or consolidation of redundant procedures (i.e., procedures that were determined to be duplicative or unnecessary) used to perform this support function?** *Check only one answer. (N=438)*

Yes (24.0%)
No (25.6%)
Not applicable (44.5%)
Don't know (5.5%)
Blank (.5%)

12.a. Please describe the merger/consolidation(s) in the box below.

[OPEN ENDED]

12.b. Please explain in the box below.

[OPEN ENDED]

13. **Are there specific areas where additional or modified guidance from one or more of the military services would improve the consolidation of this function?** *Check only one answer. (N=438)*

Yes (26.3%)
No (60.3%)
Don't know or no opinion (12.8%)
Blank (.7%)

Please describe the change(s) in the box below.

[OPEN ENDED]

14. Are there specific areas where additional or modified guidance from the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) would improve the consolidation of this function? Check only one answer. (N=438)

Yes (26.7%)
No (58.2%)
Don't know or no opinion (14.2%)
Blank (.9%)

Please describe the change(s) in the box below.

[OPEN ENDED]

15. If there are any additional opportunities to consolidate this installation-support function that have not yet been implemented, please describe them in the box below.

[OPEN ENDED]

16. If you have any additional comments related to the consolidation of this support function since your joint base established the terms of the Joint Base MOA, please type them in the box below.

[OPEN ENDED]

Appendix III: BRAC Commission Recommendation on Joint Basing (Including Elements of DOD's Recommendation to the Commission)

JOINT BASING

RECOMMENDATION # 146 (H&SA 41)

ONE-TIME COST:	$50.6M
ANNUAL RECURRING COSTS/(SAVINGS):	($183.8M)
20-YEAR NET PRESENT VALUE:	($2,342.5M)
PAYBACK PERIOD:	IMMEDIATE

SECRETARY OF DEFENSE RECOMMENDATION

Realign McChord Air Force Base (AFB), WA, by relocating the installation management functions to Fort Lewis, WA, establishing Joint Base Lewis-McChord.

Realign Fort Dix, NJ, and Naval Air Engineering Station Lakehurst, NJ, by relocating the installation management functions to McGuire AFB, NJ, establishing Joint Base McGuire-Dix- Lakehurst.

Realign Naval Air Facility Washington, MD, by relocating the installation management functions to Andrews AFB, MD, establishing Joint Base Andrews-Naval Air Facility Washington, MD.

Realign Bolling AFB, Washington, DC, by relocating the installation management functions to Naval District Washington at the Washington Navy Yard, Washington, DC, establishing Joint Base Anacostia-Bolling-Naval Research Laboratory (NRL), Washington, DC.

Realign Henderson Hall, VA, by relocating the installation management functions to Fort Myer, VA, establishing Joint Base Myer-Henderson Hall, VA.

Realign Fort Richardson, AK, by relocating the installation management functions to Elmendorf AFB, AK, establishing Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, AK.

Realign Hickam AFB, HI, by relocating the installation management functions to Naval Station Pearl Harbor, HI, establishing Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, HI.

Realign Fort Sam Houston, TX, and Randolph AFB, TX, by relocating the installation management functions to Lackland AFB, TX.

Realign Naval Weapons Station Charleston, SC, by relocating the installation management functions to Charleston AFB, SC.

Realign Fort Eustis, VA, by relocating the installation management functions to Langley AFB, VA.

Realign Fort Story, VA, by relocating the installation management functions to Commander Naval Mid-Atlantic Region at Naval Station Norfolk, VA.

Realign Andersen AFB, Guam, by relocating the installation management functions to Commander, US Naval Forces, Marianas Islands, Guam.

Secretary of Defense Justification

All installations employ military, civilian, and contractor personnel to perform common functions in support of installation facilities and personnel. All installations execute these functions using similar or near similar processes. Because these installations share a common boundary with minimal distance between the major facilities or are in near proximity, there is significant opportunity to reduce duplication of efforts with resulting reduction of overall manpower and facilities requirements capable of generating savings, which will be realized by paring unnecessary management personnel and achieving greater efficiencies through economies of scale. Intangible savings are expected to result from opportunities to consolidate and optimize existing and future service contract requirements. Additional opportunities for savings are also expected to result from establishment of a single space management authority capable of generating greater overall utilization of facilities and infrastructure. Further savings are expected to result from opportunities to reduce and correctly size both owned and contracted commercial fleets of base support vehicles and equipment consistent with the size of the combined facilities and supported populations. Regional efficiencies achieved as a result of Service regionalization of installation management will provide additional opportunities for overall savings as the designated installations are consolidated under regional management structures.

Specific exceptions not included in the functions to relocate are Health and Military Personnel Services. In general, the Department anticipates transferring responsibility for all other Base Operating Support (BOS) functions and the Operations and Maintenance (O&M) portion of Sustainment, Restoration and Modernization (SRM), to the designated receiving location.

However, because of the variety of circumstances at each location, the Department requires flexibility to tailor implementation to the unique requirements at each location.

In all but three realignments, discussed below, the quantitative military value score validated by military judgment was the primary basis for determining which installation was designated as the receiving location.

McGuire's quantitative military value compared to the Fort Dix quantitative military value score was too close to be the sole factor for determining the receiving installation for installation management functions. Military judgment favored McGuire AFB as the receiving installation for the installation management functions because its mission supports operational forces, in contrast to Fort Dix, which has a primary mission of support for Reserve Component training.

As an installation accustomed to supporting operational forces, it was the military judgment of the JCSG that McGuire was better able to perform those functions for both locations.

Similarly, the quantitative military value score of Charleston AFB compared to that of Naval Weapons Station Charleston was too close to be the sole factor for determining the receiving installation for installation management functions. Military judgment favored Charleston AFB as the receiving installation for the installation management functions because of its mission in support of operational forces compared to Naval Weapons Station Charleston, which has a primary mission to support training and industrial activities. It was the military judgment of the JCSG that Charleston AFB, as an installation accustomed to supporting operational forces , was better able to perform those functions for both locations.

Langley AFB's quantitative military value score compared to the Fort Eustis quantitative military value score was a clear margin for Fort Eustis. However, pending changes to Fort Eustis resulting from other BRAC recommendations causes military judgment to favor Langley AFB as the receiving installation for the installation management functions. Relocations of organizations currently based at Fort Eustis will cause a significant population decline and overall reduction in the scope of the installation's supporting mission. Based on these changes, it was the military judgment of the JCSG that Langley AFB was better able to perform these functions for both locations.

Community Concerns

Although affected communities supported the concept of Joint Basing, several communities expressed concerns about the effect of personnel cuts on the mission, questioned DoD's process used to determine the proposed number of personnel

cuts, and expressed concern over the overall health and welfare of the bases involved. Additionally, communities argued that the "clash of cultures" and service-specific interests would impair installation management by a different service. To avoid this likely problem, some community advocates argued DoD would need to develop a common installation management approach by establishing a joint basing office in DoD to implement the new Joint Bases so that individual military services did not issue conflicting guidance and procedures. Finally, there was concern expressed that non-appropriated fund employees were not addressed specifically in the DoD recommendation.

Commission Findings

While the Commission supports the concept of Joint Basing strongly, it is concerned, as is GAO, that DoD must assess and remedy several issues before implementation will be successful. For instance, common terminology is lacking to define Base Operating Support (BOS) functions among the military services and OSD. The Commission concurs with the Government Accountability Office (GAO) that DoD needs an analytic process for developing BOS requirements. Also, while each military service has standards, there are no DoD-wide standards for common support functions.

Additionally, the Commission learned that DoD determined the manpower reductions through application of a formula and not deliberations among commanders of the affected installations. In other words, the manpower savings were directed rather than derived from functional analyses and manpower studies.

Finally, the Commission found that currently Naval District Washington provides non-mission related services to the Naval Research Laboratory because the Navy has centralized its installation management functions. Naval Research Laboratory (NRL) is a Secretary of the Navy Working Capital Fund Activity, so it must maintain control of laboratory buildings, structures, and other physical assets that are essential to the NRL research mission.

Commission Recommendations

The Commission found that the Secretary of Defense deviated substantially from final selection criteria 1 and 4 and from the Force Structure Plan. Therefore, the Commission recommends the following:

Realign McChord Air Force Base (AFB), WA, by relocating the installation management functions to Fort Lewis, WA, establishing Joint Base Lewis-McChord, WA.

Realign Fort Dix, NJ, and Naval Air Engineering Station Lakehurst, NJ, by relocating the installation management functions to McGuire AFB, NJ, establishing Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, NJ.

Realign Naval Air Facility Washington, MD, by relocating the installation management functions to Andrews AFB, MD, establishing Joint Base Andrews-Naval Air Facility Washington, MD.

Realign Bolling AFB, DC, by relocating the installation management functions to Naval District Washington at the Washington Navy Yard, DC, establishing Joint Base Anacostia-Bolling, DC.

Realign Henderson Hall, VA, by relocating the installation management functions to Fort Myer, VA, establishing Joint Base Myer-Henderson Hall, VA.

Realign Fort Richardson, AK, by relocating the installation management functions to Elmendorf AFB, AK, establishing Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, AK.

Realign Hickam AFB, HI, by relocating the installation management functions to Naval Station Pearl Harbor, HI, establishing Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, HI.

Realign Fort Sam Houston, TX, and Randolph AFB, TX, by relocating the installation management functions to Lackland AFB, TX.

Realign Naval Weapons Station Charleston, SC, by relocating the installation management functions to Charleston AFB, SC.

Realign Fort Eustis, VA, by relocating the installation management functions to Langley AFB, VA.

Realign Fort Story, VA, by relocating the installation management functions to Commander Naval Mid-Atlantic Region at Naval Station Norfolk, VA.

Realign Andersen AFB, Guam, by relocating the installation management functions to Commander, US Naval Forces, Marianas Islands, Guam.

The Commission found this change and the recommendation as amended are consistent with the final selection criteria and the Force Structure Plan. The full text of this and all Commission recommendations can be found in Appendix Q.

Appendix IV: Status of Reported Consolidation at Each of the 11 Joint Bases

Table 6: Status of Reported Consolidation at Each of the 11 Joint Bases by Installation-Support Function (Part 1 of 2)

	Joint Base										
Installation-support function	Anacostia-Bolling	Andrews-NAF Washington	Charleston	Elmendorf-Richardson	Langley-Eustis	Lewis-McChord	Little Creek-Fort Story	McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst	Myer-Henderson Hall	Pearl Harbor-Hickam	San Antonio
Advisory services	●	○	○	●	○	●	●	○	●	●	●
Airfield operations	●	●	○	○	●	○	n/a	●	n/a	○	○
Base support vehicles and equipment	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	○	○	●
Chaplain ministry	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Children and youth services	●	●	●	●	○	●	○	●	○	●	○
Command management	●	●	●	●	○	[a]	●	●	○	○	●
Custodial services	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Emergency management	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	[a]	●	●
Environmental	●	●	●	●	○	●	●	●	●	●	●
Facilities demolition	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Facilities restoration and modernization	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Facility sustainment	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	○	●
Family housing	●	●	●	●	○	●	●	●	○	●	●
Financial management	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	○	●	●	●
Fire and emergency services	●	●	●	●	○	●	●	●	○	●	●
Food and dining	●	●	○	●	○	●	●	n/a	●	●	●
Grounds maintenance and landscaping	●	●	●	●	●	○	●	●	●	●	●
Honors and protocols	●	●	●	n/a	○	●	○	●	●	○	●
Information technology services management	●	○	●	●	●	●	○	●	n/a	●	●
Inspector general and internal review	●	●	[a]	●	○	○	●	●	○	●	●
Installation movement	●	●	●	●	●	○	●	●	n/a	○	●
Installation safety	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Laundry and dry cleaning	n/a	n/a	n/a	○	○	●	n/a	●	○	●	n/a

	Joint Base										
Installation-support function	Anacostia-Bolling	Andrews-NAF Washington	Charleston	Elmendorf-Richardson	Langley-Eustis	Lewis-McChord	Little Creek-Fort Story	McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst	Myer-Henderson Hall	Pearl Harbor-Hickam	San Antonio
Law enforcement patrols	●	●	●	●	○	●	●	●	●	●	○
Legal services	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	○	●	○
Lodging	●	●	●	●	●	n/a	○	●	n/a	●	○
Management analysis	●	○	●	●	○	●	●	●	●	○	n/a
Military and family support services	●	●	●	●	○	●	○	●	○	●	●
Military personnel services	○	○	○	●	○	●	○	●	○	●	●
Morale, welfare, and recreation	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	○	●	●
Pavement clearance	●	●	○	●	●	●	●	●	●	○	○
Pest control	●	●	○	●	○	○	●	●	●	●	○
Physical security	●	●	○	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	○
Port services	n/a	n/a	●	n/a	○	n/a	○	n/a	n/a	○	n/a
Procurement operations	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Public affairs	●	○	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Real property management and engineering services	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Refuse collection and disposal	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Small-arms range management	●	○	●	○	○	○	●	n/a	n/a	n/a	○
Supply, storage, and distribution non-munitions	●	●	●	●	○	●	○	●	○	●	●
Unaccompanied housing	●	●	●	●	○	●	●	●	●	●	●
Utilities	●	●	○	●	○	●	○	●	●	●	●

Legend: ● = Some part of the function is consolidated; ○ = no part of the function is consolidated; n/a = Joint base does not have the function or the function was not the joint base commander's responsibility.

Source: GAO analysis of joint base survey responses and supporting documentation. | GAO-14-577

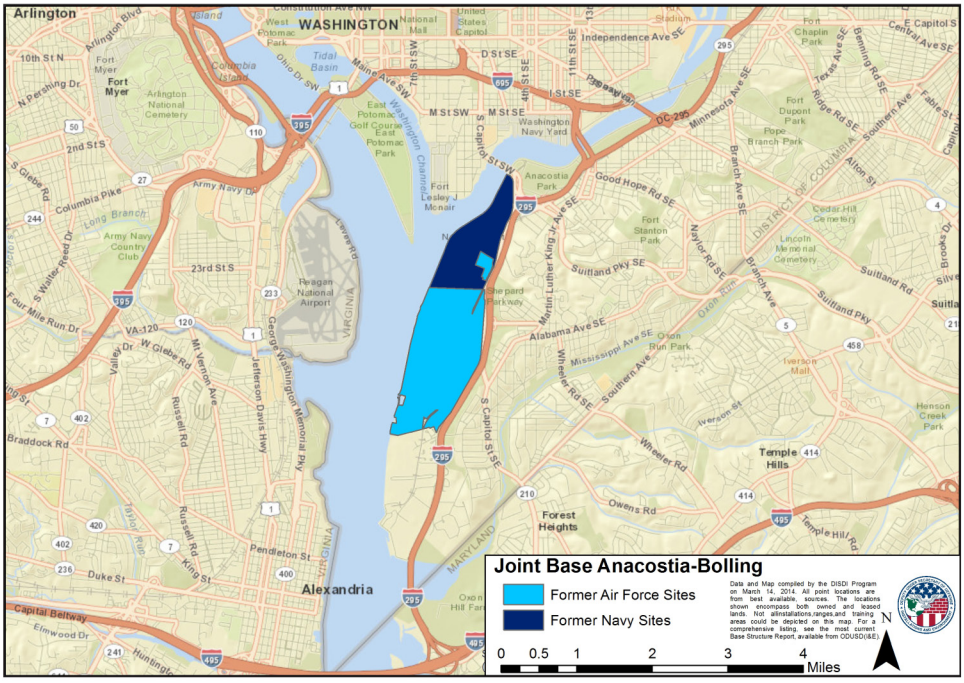
Note: The support functions included were those for which the Joint Base Commanders had some responsibility at the time of our review.

[a]Missing or unknown data.

Appendix V: Locations of Joint Bases

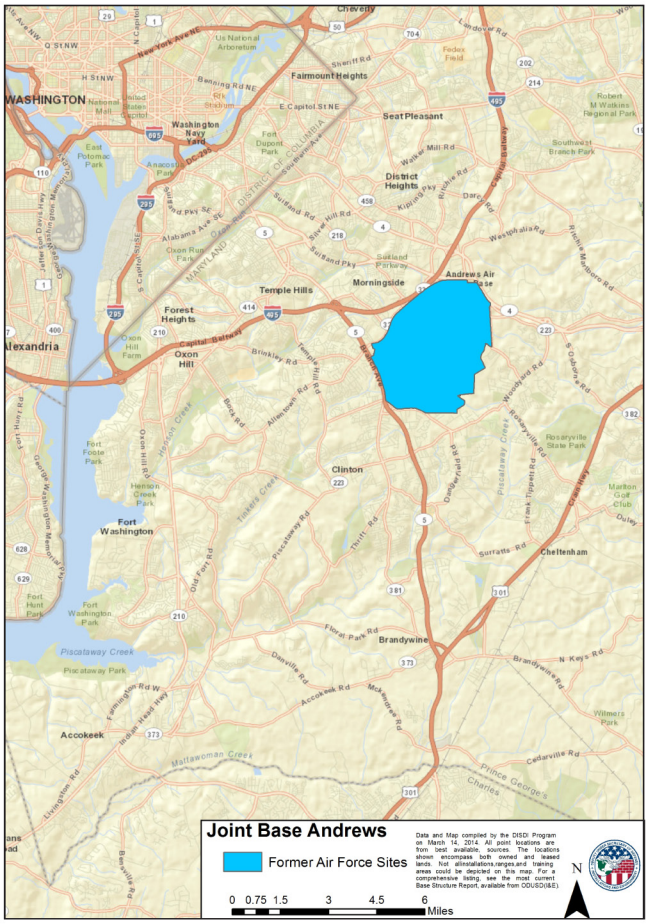
This appendix contains information presented in figure 1 in a noninteractive format.

Figure 11: Joint Base Anacostia-Bolling



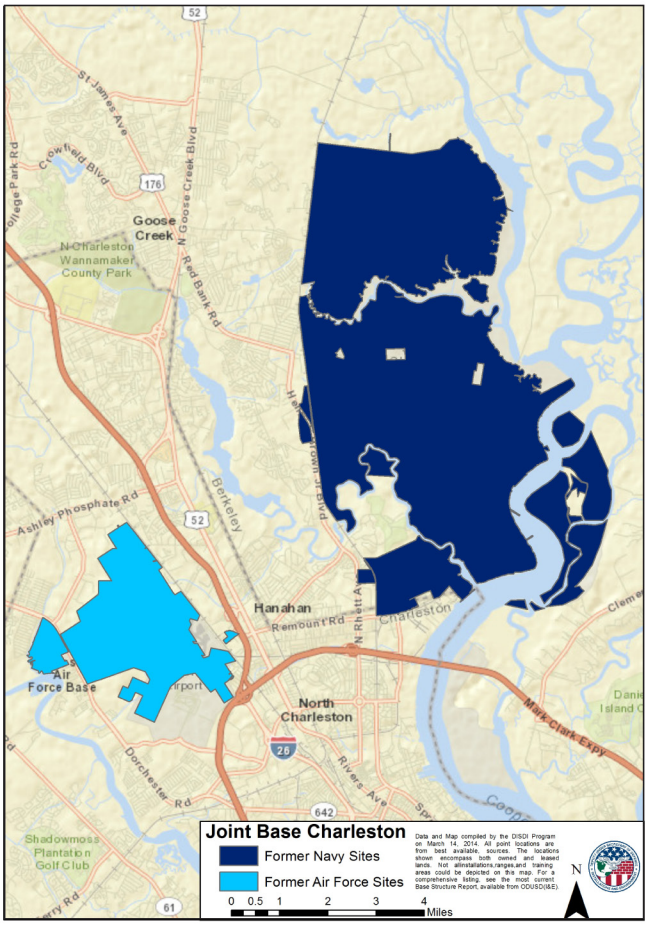
Source: Department of Defense (DOD). | GAO-14-577

Figure 12: Joint Base Andrews



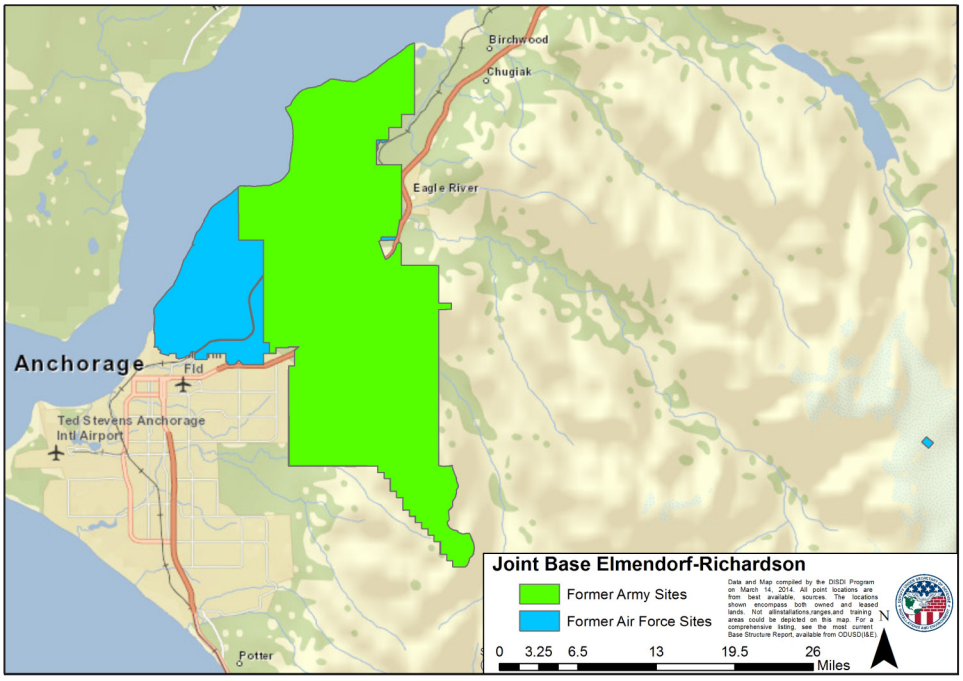
Source: Department of Defense (DOD). | GAO-14-577

Figure 13: Joint Base Charleston



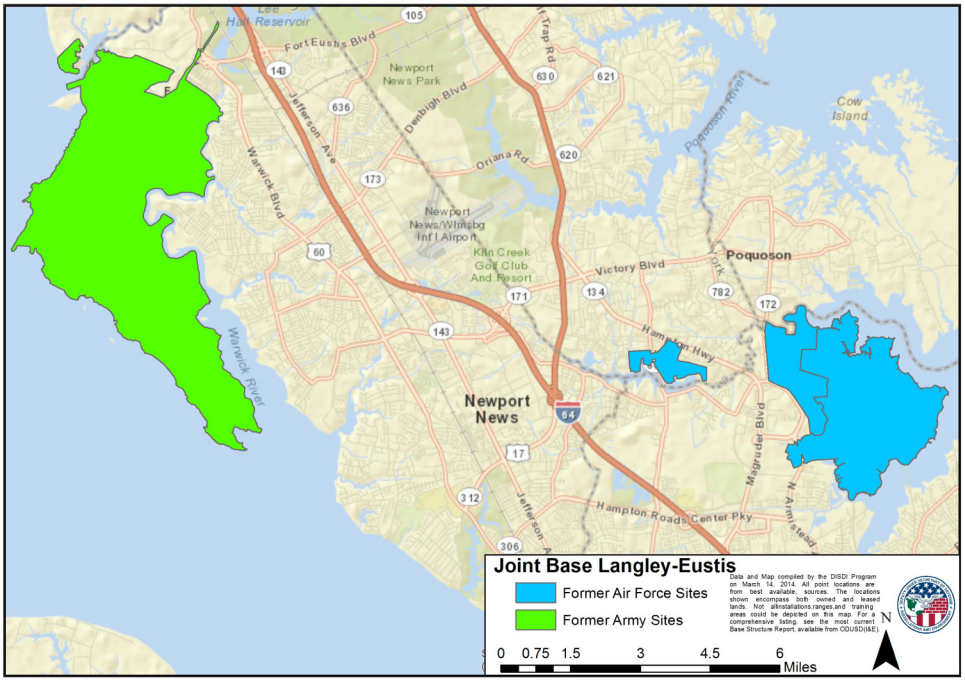
Source: Department of Defense (DOD). | GAO-14-577

Figure 14: Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson



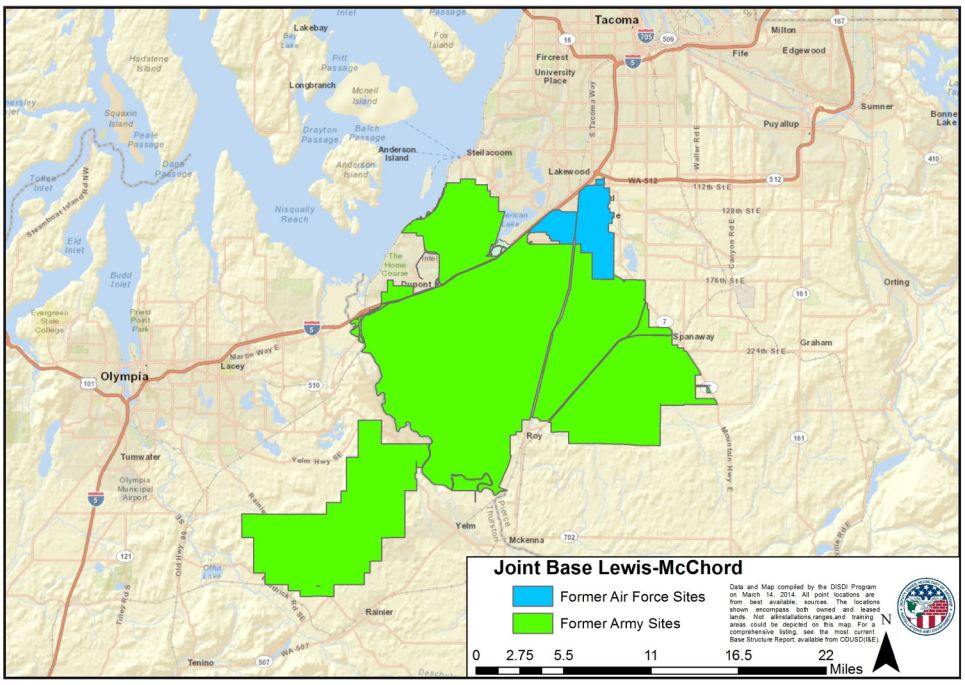
Source: Department of Defense (DOD). | GAO-14-577

Figure 15: Joint Base Langley-Eustis



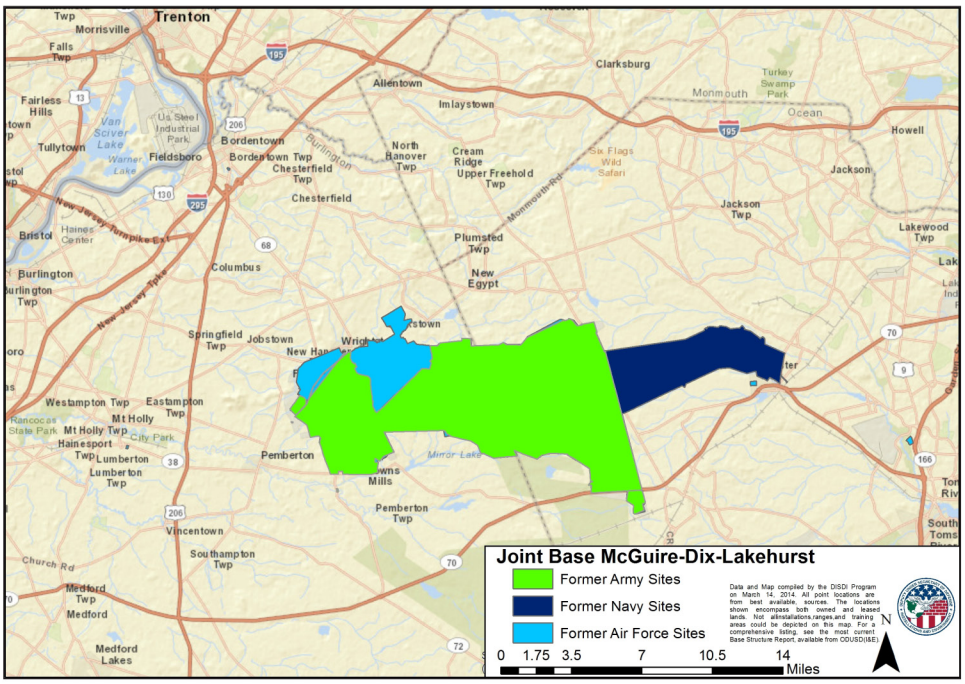
Source: Department of Defense (DOD). | GAO-14-577

Figure 16: Joint Base Lewis-McChord



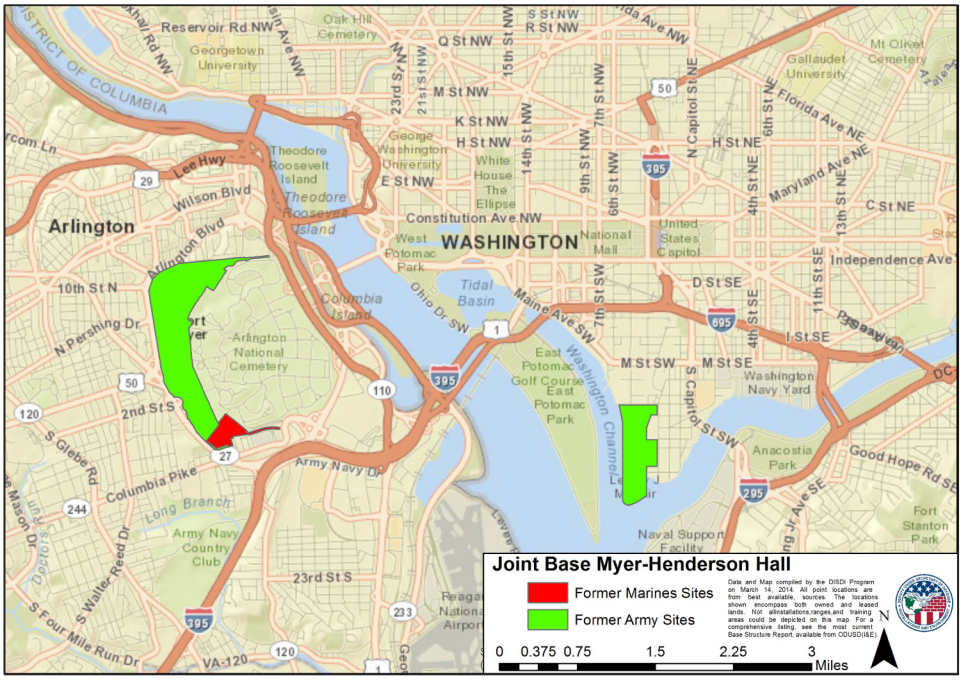
Source: Department of Defense (DOD). | GAO-14-577

Figure 17: Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst



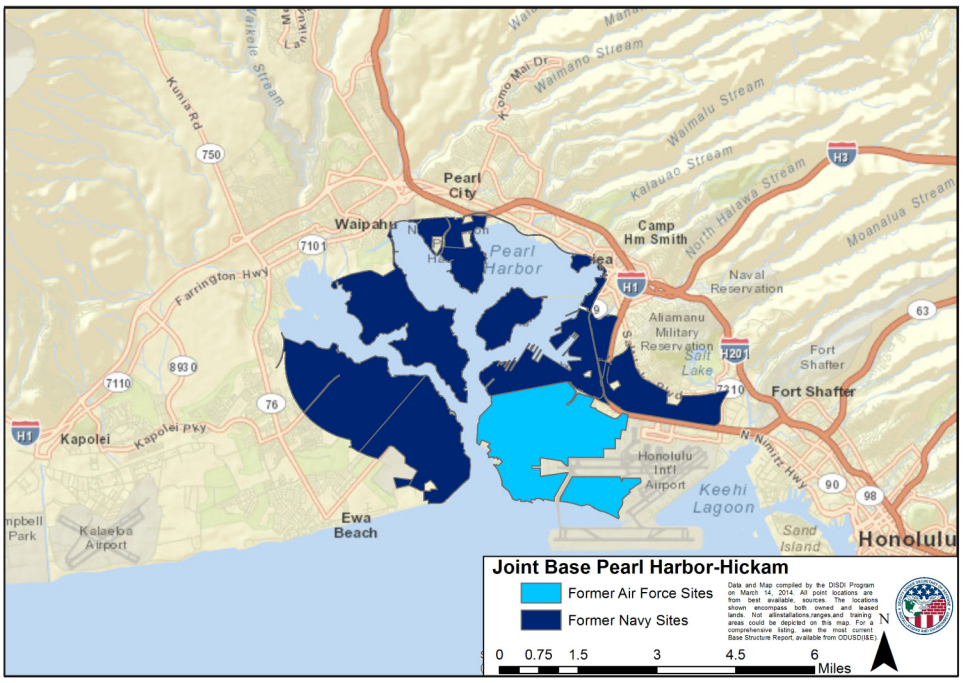
Source: Department of Defense (DOD). | GAO-14-577

Figure 18: Joint Base Myer-Henderson Hall



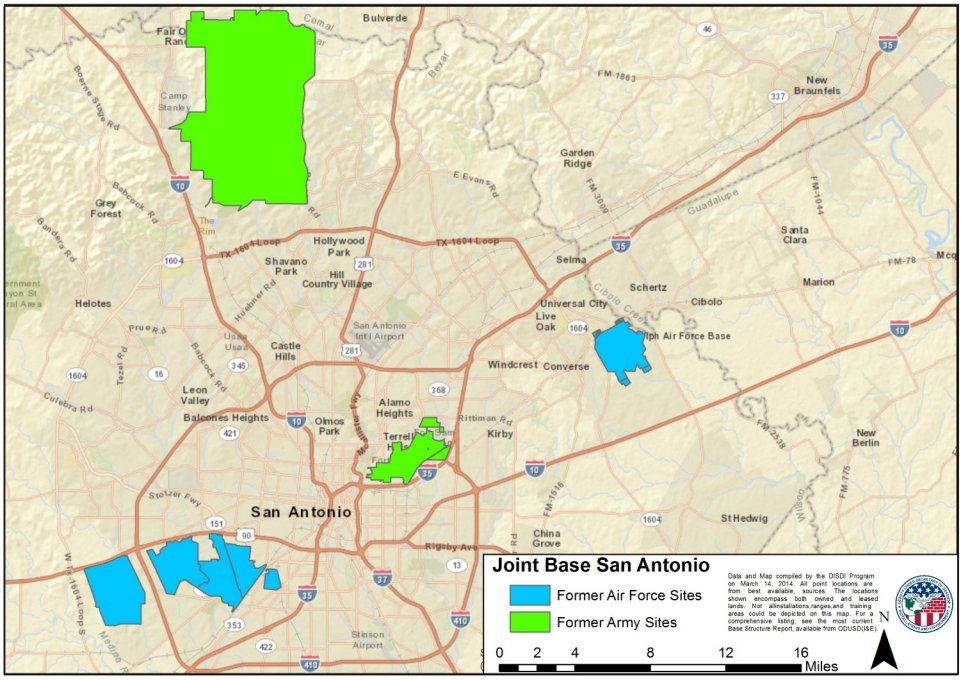
Source: Department of Defense (DOD). | GAO-14-577

Figure 19: Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam



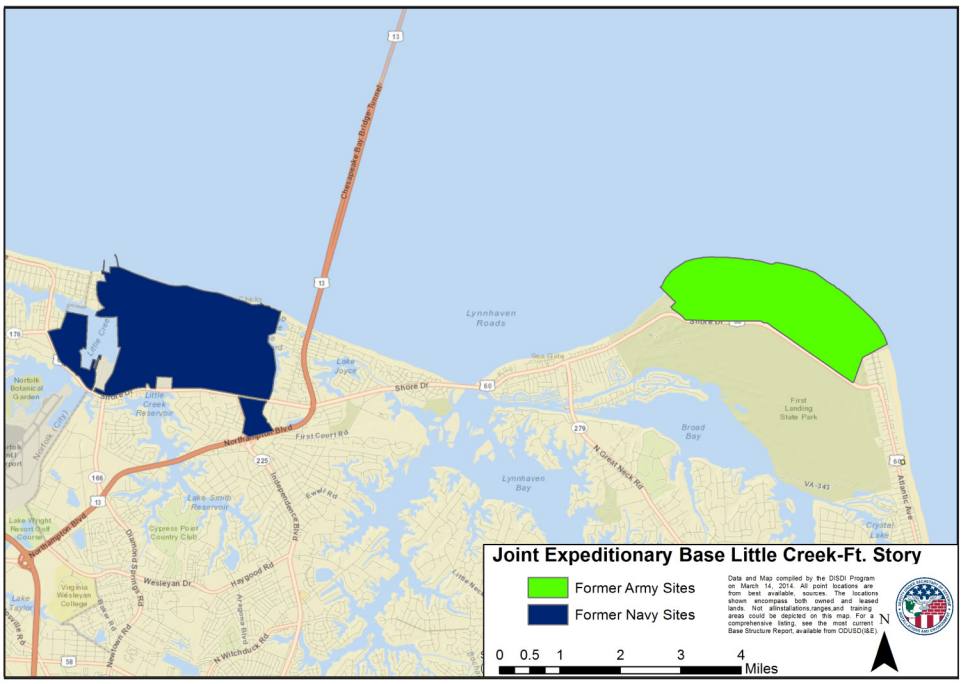
Source: Department of Defense (DOD). | GAO-14-577

Figure 20: Joint Base San Antonio



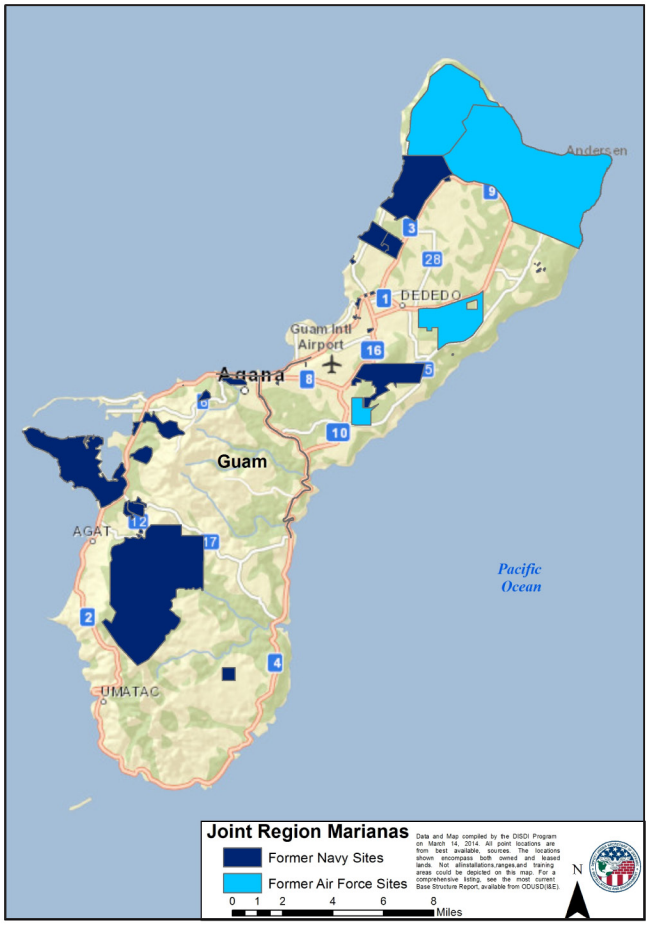
Source: Department of Defense (DOD). | GAO-14-577

Figure 21: Joint Expeditionary Base Little Creek-Fort Story



Source: Department of Defense (DOD). | GAO-14-577

Figure 22: Joint Region Marianas



Source: Department of Defense (DOD). | GAO-14-577

Appendix VI: Comments from the Department of Defense

ACQUISITION, TECHNOLOGY AND LOGISTICS

OFFICE OF THE UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
3000 DEFENSE PENTAGON
WASHINGTON, DC 20301-3000

JUL 17 2014

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 GAO Draft Report, GAO-14-577, "DOD JOINT BASES: Implementation Challenges Demonstrate Need to Reevaluate the Program," dated June 6, 2014 (GAO Code 351842). Detailed comments on the report recommendations are enclosed.

The Department appreciates GAO's ongoing effort to evaluate the progress made by our Joint Bases, but we continue to see that we and the GAO have fundamentally different approaches to managing these twelve installations. The recommendations in the draft report imply that the Joint Bases are OSD-run entities that should be addressed through new DoD policies. On the contrary, we believe the Joint Bases, although they involve added complexities from crossing traditional service lines, are ultimately Service-run bases similar to all other installations. The Military Departments already have the responsibility, as well as sufficient authority and incentives, to deliver effective and efficient installation support across all their installations, including their Joint Bases.

As the Joint Bases complete their fourth year of operations we can review what the Military Departments have accomplished through Joint Basing. As a frame of reference, the BRAC 2005 Commission's recommendation #146 estimated Joint Basing would generate $183M in recurring annual savings. In FY 2012, the twelve Joint Bases exceeded this by saving $255M. We expect there are still some additional consolidation opportunities within these installations, but we have transitioned from the implementation to the operational phase in which the Military Departments exercise their existing authorities to find the proper balance of savings and mission support, just as at every other base.

We look forward to continuing to work with the GAO as it examines our ability to deliver efficient and effective installation support across the entire DoD enterprise.

Sincerely,

John Conger
Acting Deputy Under Secretary of Defense
(Installations and Environment)

Enclosure: As stated

GAO Draft Report Dated June 6, 2014
GAO-14-577 (GAO CODE 351842)

"DOD JOINT BASES: IMPLEMENTATION CHALLENGES DEMONSTRATE NEED TO REEVALUATE THE PROGRAM"

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE COMMENTS TO THE GAO RECOMMENDATION

RECOMMENDATION 1: The GAO recommends that the Secretary of Defense direct the Deputy Under Secretary of Defense (Installations and Environment), in coordination with the military services and Joint Bases, to 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.

DoD RESPONSE: Concur. We agree that some of Joint Basing's 44 functions did not provide as many consolidation opportunities as others. The DoD has, in fact, already removed some 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 (see DUSD(I&E) policy memo, *Variance to the DoD Initial Guidance for Base Realignment and Closure 2005 Joint Implementation Definition for Supply, Storage, and Distribution of Munitions*, March 16, 2009). The Senior Joint Base Working Group principals recognize there may still be more functions like this, and in April 2014 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.

RECOMMENDATION 2: The GAO recommends that the Secretary of Defense direct the Deputy Under Secretary of Defense (Installations and Environment), in coordination with the military services and Joint Bases, to 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.

DoD RESPONSE: Partially Concur. We are mindful of the challenges in implementing and operating Joint Bases, and agree that policy actions can address some of these challenges. However, we do not agree that these challenges require OSD-level policies to bring about the desired changes. Instead we look to the existing responsibilities and authorities that are already assigned to the Military Departments and the Joint Management Oversight System (JMOS).

1

The Joint Basing Implementation Guidance (JBIG) assigns the Supporting Component with the responsibility to deliver consistent and effective installation support. The Military Departments have the authority to establish policy to fulfill this responsibility, as already assigned in statute and policy, at their Joint Bases and across all of their other installations. For matters unique to Joint Bases, the JMOS is the forum for stakeholders to discuss local challenges and raise issues, to higher headquarters for resolution, as needed.

The JMOS is also the process by which the Military Departments can, when needed, formally request OSD assistance in changing joint or DoD policies. The draft report contains a good example of this process when it discusses the challenge of multiple compliance inspections, raised through the JMOS is 2012. As a result, the Department updated DoD Directive 5106.04, *Defense Inspectors General* on May 22, 2014 with a new section specifying ways for the Military Departments to conduct compliance inspections on the Joint Bases' installation support activities. We stand ready to support future requests that are formally raised in a similar fashion through the JMOS process.

RECOMMENDATION 3: The GAO recommends that the Secretary of Defense direct the Deputy Under Secretary of Defense (Installations and Environment), in collaboration with the military services and Joint Bases, to 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.

DoD RESPONSE: Non-Concur. The goal of the Joint Basing initiative, as described in the BRAC 2005 Commission's recommendation #146, was to increase the efficiency of delivering installation support at these 12 locations. This is still the Department's goal for Joint Bases, consistent with our fundamental expectation for the DoD's entire installation support portfolio. Joint Basing is just one of several tools the Military Departments use to improve operational efficiency. Therefore, our goals for Joint Basing remain unchanged.

BRAC Recommendation #146 estimated that Joint Basing would generate $183.8M in annual savings. While this figure was not a goal, it was generated using savings modeled from notional consolidation opportunities and is a reasonable benchmark by which to measure the Joint Bases' overall performance. In FY12 our cost accounting system reported that the twelve Joint Bases had exceeded this estimate by obligating $255M less (and using 1,600 fewer personnel) than they would have if they were still operating as 26 separate installations. In fact, the Joint Bases actually obligated $505M less than projected in FY 12, but we use the more conservative $255M figure because the Services estimate it cost $250M to meet the Joint Base Common Output Level Standards. Using a similar calculation, the Joint Bases' FY13 obligations were an impressive $830M less than if they were still separate installations – an amount that is the combination of consolidation savings and the reduced expenditures caused by the Budget Control Act and FY13's sequestration actions. We also found the Joint Bases had consistently improved their performance against Joint Base Common Output Level Standards over FY11 and FY12. This

cost and performance data, taken together, leads us to conclude the Military Departments have been successful in exceeding the estimates of BRAC Recommendation #146.

RECOMMENDATION 4: The GAO recommends that the Secretary of Defense direct the Deputy Under Secretary of Defense (Installations and Environment), in collaboration with the military services and Joint Bases, to provide direction to the 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.

DoD RESPONSE: Non-concur. The Joint Bases have been fully operational since October 2010 and have since proven they can deliver measurable and tangible savings across the installation support portfolio. In fact, the Joint Bases' performance reporting system (the Cost and Performance Visibility Framework) is an extensive reporting system that is fully implemented. But, while the savings are important, the operational effectiveness of our bases is paramount. We do not agree that OSD should provide additional direction towards meeting the program's goals because the Joint Base Commander and the Military Departments are in the best position to balance efficiency with effectiveness, and that directing additional consolidations circumvents their ability to make these decisions.

We also do not agree that OSD should establish program milestones because that implies the Joint Bases are still in an implementation phase. I want to reiterate that we have transitioned from managing the Joint Bases' implementation to a steady-state oversight role. These installations have already saved more than projected by the BRAC 2005 Commission – by consolidating 80% of their installation support functions in the first four years of operations – in spite of the complexity and cultural differences involved. We see less opportunity to realize additional consolidations among the remaining functions. As such, we see the focus should shift to fiscal and performance oversight, reinforcing good practices, and arbitrating the occasional inter-service dispute.

We also advocate treating Joint Bases no differently than other Army, Navy, and Air Force installations, with their only unique quality being the sizeable joint presence they support. This approach is more sustainable over the long-term and is consistent with how other organizational mergers are managed. A similar instance occurred in 1990 when the Deputy Secretary of Defense issued Defense Management Review Decision 902, which consolidated the Military Departments' network of distribution depots under the Defense Logistics Agency (DLA) to reduce overhead and costs. While this realignment to DLA initially required significant oversight, we no longer treat commodity centers as special entities within DLA or the DoD. We should strive towards a similar approach with the Joint Bases. Instead of an OSD effort specifically focused on these 12 bases, we better serve the DoD by monitoring efficiency and effectiveness across all installations. By evaluating Joint Base performance against that of all other installations, their savings and efficiencies will become more apparent to the Military Departments – thus increasing institutional support and commitment to Joint Basing.

3

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, Laura Durland, Assistant Director; Chaneé Gaskin, Susan Langley, Amanda Manning, Joshua Margraf, Stephanie Moriarty, Richard Powelson, Tida Reveley, Michael Silver, Amie Steele, Sarah Veale, and Michael Willems made key contributions to this report.

Related GAO Products

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