

DDC Commander's Column

By Brigadier General Michael J. Lally, United States Army

The big news this summer is Base Realignment and Closure . . . commonly called BRAC. DLA recently hosted a two-day conference about the 2005 BRAC recommendations. I attended along with all DLA Commanders, several of the Commanders of the affected distribution centers, and other key DDC staff. It is vitally important that DLA and DDC position ourselves to come through this BRAC process successfully.

The DLA Director, VADM Keith W. Lippert, SC, USN, chaired the group that authored the recommendations that are most important to DDC, the Supply and Storage Joint Cross Service Group (S&S JCSG). This group included the head logisticians for Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marine Corps and they developed the BRAC recommendations that were provided to the Secretary of Defense.

The BRAC Commission is now looking at the Department of Defense (DoD) recommendations to determine what should be forwarded to the President. They will investigate which recommendations should be kept, which should be changed, and which should be rejected. In past rounds of BRAC, about 85 percent of the original recommendations became law. Once the President is satisfied with the recommendations, he will forward them to Congress. Congress will have 45 days to vote up or down on the entire list.

Other significant BRAC dates:

No later than Sept. 23, 2005: The President will provide his approval or disapproval of the BRAC Commission's recommendations.

No later than Oct. 20, 2005: In the event that the President disapproves the BRAC Commission's initial recommendations, the Commission must submit revised recommendations.

No later than Nov. 7, 2005: The President must provide his approval or disapproval of the revised recommendations or the process ends.

The overarching construct that the S&S JCSG used to guide their recommendations was, "Pursue those logistics economies and efficiencies that enhance the effectiveness of operational forces as traditional forces and logistics processes transition to more joint and more expeditionary aspects."

Historically, the U.S. has had large groups of military forces and their families stationed overseas. That is changing. In the next decade, those forces will be stationed in the U.S. and the military members will go overseas only when there is a contingency or rotations for training exercises.

When the S&S JCSG looked at distribution specifically, VADM Lippert said their goal was to transform wholesale and retail storage and distribution by reconfiguring support around four regional Strategic Distribution Platforms (SDPs) and realign the remaining distribution centers as Forward Distribution Points (FDPs). This will reduce duplicate inventory between wholesale and retail repair depot and shipyard activities through a realignment of functions.

This will be a significant change to how we run our distribution business. VADM Lippert said that just

getting agreement with the services on what to do was hard. How we will achieve these changes has not been determined.

The changes proposed to DoD Supply, Storage, and Distribution account for the largest single savings of any BRAC savings. It will mean changes to how DDC operates.

First, DDC will move from two hubs, Susquehanna, and San Joaquin, to four hubs by adding SDPs to our distribution centers at Oklahoma City, OK, and Warner Robins, GA. This proposed change is a result of lessons learned from OPERATIONS ENDURING and IRAQI FREEDOM (OEF/OIF). When OEF/OIF started, it took Susquehanna a long time to ramp up to the new workload. We first thought overtime could handle it, but after three months, that wasn't working.

No one in DoD wants to go through that again. DoD wants more capacity to handle contingencies and more redundancy. Therefore, the recommendation is to stand up two more SDPs.

If the recommendations are approved, we will have to start in 2006 and have all four established by 2007.

How do we establish an SDP? How do you start a Containerization, Consolidation Point (CCP)? How much work should each SDP do? They must be fully prepared to surge, but how much is right for day-to-day operations? What organization is needed for Oklahoma and Warner Robbins? All tough questions that we will need to answer.

BRAC implementation will start in 2006 and DLA must be finished by 2009. These are incredibly fast timelines for us to accomplish all required work.

Second, DDC will also be taking over some distribution work currently being done by the services and the people doing the distribution work will come to DDC.

Which locations? How do we do that?

Who are the people? What are the facilities like? What should the facilities be like? We don't have the answers yet—DDC must build a strong, smart and creative team to develop an implementation plan and execute it.

VADM Lippert is putting together a steering group to work closely with the services to help answer these and other BRAC questions.

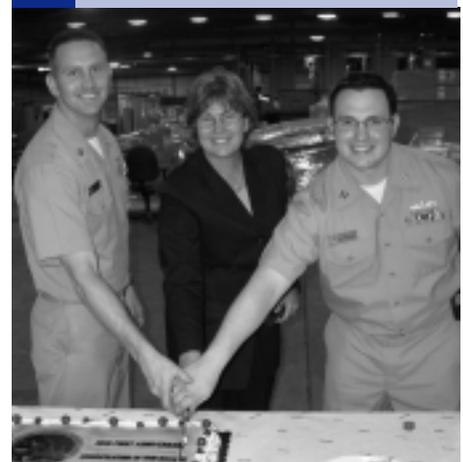
Third, the recommendations include closing our distribution centers at Columbus and Red River: this means that people who have served DDC well for years will be losing their jobs. I take this very seriously, and DLA and DDC will do everything we can to support our employees affected by closures.

BRAC 2005 provides opportunity and risk. This is a tremendous opportunity to redesign the distribution network and improve our ability to support the Department of Defense. Moreover, it firmly establishes DLA as DoD's preeminent logistics provider . . . but it also dramatically increases the complexity of executing our work.

I know you are up to the challenges posed by BRAC 2005. I know you will help DDC and our customers come out stronger. Thank you for your continued timely and quality support to our Warfighters!



33 DDPH Ironwoman



10 DDSI Anniversary



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