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DEFENSE INFRASTRUCTURE

High-Level Leadership Needed to Help Communities Address Challenges Caused by DOD-Related Growth





Highlights of [GAO-08-665](#), a report to congressional committees

Why GAO Did This Study

Due to several simultaneous Department of Defense (DOD) force structure and basing initiatives, 20 installations are expecting a combined net growth of over 173,000 military and civilian personnel, not including family members and all contractors, over fiscal years 2006-2012. Although communities surrounding these installations can expect to realize economic benefits in the long term, DOD has identified these 20 to be substantially and seriously impacted in terms of being able to provide infrastructure to accommodate the growth.

In response to the House report to the fiscal year 2007 defense appropriations bill, GAO (1) examined the extent to which communities affected by DOD's actions have identified their infrastructure needs, and (2) assessed DOD's efforts and those of other agencies to assist affected communities. GAO reviewed applicable directives and executive orders, surveyed the 20 growth communities, and met with community and agency officials to discuss growth issues.

What GAO Recommends

GAO is making recommendations to improve the military personnel relocation data provided to affected communities and to facilitate more effective interagency and intergovernmental coordination and assistance efforts. DOD agreed with our recommendations.

To view the full product, including the scope and methodology, click on [GAO-08-665](#). For more information, contact Brian J. Lepore at (202) 512-4523 or leporeb@gao.gov.

DEFENSE INFRASTRUCTURE

High-Level Leadership Needed to Help Communities Address Challenges Caused by DOD-Related Growth

What GAO Found

Communities surrounding DOD growth installations have begun to identify infrastructure needs to help support expected personnel growth in general terms, but planning efforts have been hampered by a lack of consistent and detailed information about anticipated DOD personnel movements. When asked to identify their top infrastructure challenges, 16 of the 20 communities identified by DOD as substantially and seriously impacted cited transportation, 11 named school capacity, and 6 said affordable housing. However, communities lack the detailed planning information, such as the growth population demographics, necessary to effectively plan and obtain financing for infrastructure projects. A DOD directive requires the military services to develop guidance for providing planning information to installations, communities, and DOD's Office of Economic Adjustment (OEA), but GAO found that none had done so. While the consistency of the personnel relocation data DOD provides has improved, over half of the communities we surveyed expressed concerns about the completeness of the personnel data they receive and the lack of detailed demographic data, such as the number and ages of dependent children expected to accompany incoming service members and attend school. Until the military departments begin to disseminate consistent and more detailed information about planned defense personnel moves, it will be difficult for community, state, and federal officials to effectively plan for and provide necessary infrastructure to accommodate DOD personnel and their families relocating to growth-impacted communities.

OEA, other DOD agencies, and some state, local, and federal agencies have provided grants and technical assistance to DOD growth communities, but the Office of the Secretary of Defense has not provided the high-level leadership critical to achieving effective interagency and intergovernmental coordination. To ensure that DOD-impacted communities receive assistance, the 22-agency Economic Adjustment Committee (EAC) was created by executive order over 30 years ago and amended as recently as 2005. The Secretary of Defense, or his designee, chairs the committee that is required to lead efforts to assist communities most affected by its activities and serve as a clearinghouse for sharing information about expected DOD impacts on the communities surrounding military growth installations, as well as information regarding possible government resources that could mitigate some of those impacts. As chair of the EAC, DOD could regularly convene full committee meetings and exercise the high-level leadership needed to help ensure that federal agencies are affording certain priority considerations to defense-affected communities. However, the full committee has not met since November 2006. Instead, DOD has left the workings of the EAC to OEA, which has been proactive in assisting impacted communities but can not guide interagency operations at a high enough level to promote effective interagency cooperation. Consequently, in the absence of high-level DOD leadership, the committee has not developed a clearinghouse for information sharing which could more effectively match government resources with the needs of DOD-impacted communities.

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Abbreviations

BRAC	base realignment and closure
DOD	Department of Defense
EAC	Economic Adjustment Committee
OEA	Office of Economic Adjustment

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United States Government Accountability Office
Washington, DC 20548

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Congressional Committees

The Department of Defense (DOD) is currently in the process of implementing several major initiatives that are not only changing the size and shape of its domestic installation infrastructure but are also affecting the communities within their vicinity. Collectively, the simultaneous implementation of recommendations from the 2005 base realignment and closure (BRAC) round, the redeployment of U.S. forces in overseas locations back to the United States under the Global Defense Posture Realignment, a major Army reorganization known as force modularity, and force structure increases for the Army and the Marine Corps under the Grow the Force initiative are generating large personnel increases at many military installation locations within the United States. Twenty of these installations are expecting a combined net growth of over 173,000 military and civilian personnel, mostly within the Army, over fiscal years 2006-2012, not counting family members and all contractors who are also expected to relocate to the surrounding communities. Although available studies indicate that the communities surrounding these growth locations can expect to realize economic benefits in the long term, many communities will face growth-impact challenges in the short term, including challenges to identify and provide additional infrastructure—such as schools, roads, housing, and other services—to support the expected population growth.

As specified in the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2006, it is the sense of Congress that the Secretary of Defense should seek to ensure that the permanent facilities and infrastructure necessary to support the mission of the Armed Forces and the quality-of-life needs of members of the Armed Forces and their families are ready for use at receiving locations before units are transferred to such locations.¹ Because communities surrounding these locations also play a vital role in providing support to the military, it has been long-standing DOD policy that DOD should take the leadership role within the federal government in helping communities adapt to the effects of various defense program activities. DOD chairs the President's Economic Adjustment Committee (EAC),

¹Pub. L. No. 109-163, § 2836(b) (2006).

which consists of 22 federal agencies and is charged with ensuring that communities that are substantially and seriously impacted by DOD actions are aware of available federal economic adjustment programs. The EAC is also responsible for identifying problems that states and communities face as a result of defense actions; assuring interagency and intergovernmental coordination and adjustment assistance; and serving as a clearinghouse to exchange information among federal, state, regional, and community officials in the resolution of community economic problems. Within DOD, the Office of Economic Adjustment (OEA), a field activity under the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisitions, Technology, and Logistics, provides administrative support for the EAC in addition to its duties to provide technical and planning assistance to affected communities.

This report is one in a series of GAO products that addresses emerging issues associated with the implementation of the BRAC 2005 round recommendations, overseas rebasing, Army force modularity, and force structure initiatives. In September 2007, we reported that several complex implementation challenges arising from these initiatives raised questions about the Army's ability to provide needed infrastructure to support incoming personnel at its growth bases and that some nearby communities had found it difficult to fully identify needed infrastructure and associated costs due to the evolving nature of the Army's plans.² Because of the unparalleled level of DOD-related growth and its potential impact on domestic communities, we prepared this report in response to the House Report³ accompanying the fiscal year 2007 defense appropriations bill, which directed us to review the impacts on communities surrounding growth installations. Specifically, our objectives were to (1) examine the extent to which communities affected by DOD's actions have identified necessary infrastructure requirements to meet anticipated growth projections due to DOD initiatives, and (2) assess DOD's efforts, along with those of other governmental agencies, to provide resources and other assistance to affected communities.

To address the first objective, we focused our efforts on the 20 growth communities that OEA had identified, as of January 2008, to be

²GAO, *Defense Infrastructure: Challenges Increase Risks for Providing Timely Infrastructure Support for Army Installations Expecting Substantial Personnel Growth*, [GAO-07-1007](#) (Washington, D.C.: Sept. 13, 2007).

³H.R. Rep. No. 109-504, at 46 (2006).

substantially and seriously impacted. In order to present the most current information regarding the numbers of DOD-related personnel expected to move to these communities, including their families, we analyzed the Army's centralized personnel database and prepared a consistent format for the Air Force and Navy to complete for their installations because they do not maintain centralized databases for this information. We contacted OEA-designated points of contact at each of the 20 growth communities requesting that they complete a questionnaire which included, among other things, questions dealing with the communities' progress in identifying infrastructure needs and what assistance local, state, and federal agencies had provided them. We received responses from all 20 communities. We also conducted follow-up telephone interviews with each community representative to discuss their responses to our questionnaire in depth and to update information on financial assistance, and the level of detail and consistency of personnel planning information provided by the military services. We visited 3 of these locations and interviewed cognizant installation and local community officials regarding the communities' planning issues and analyzed impact and planning data from these locations as well as from 7 other locations we had visited as part of our September 2007 review of Army growth installations.⁴ We also interviewed officials from several nonfederal organizations such as the Association of Defense Communities and the National Governors Association, both of which are familiar with the issues facing military growth communities.

To address the second objective, we reviewed applicable DOD directives and presidential executive orders to determine the roles that DOD and other federal agencies play in assisting affected communities, and discussed impact issues with various officials within DOD. We further collected data on DOD-provided financial assistance to impacted communities. In order to determine the level of assistance provided by non-DOD federal agencies, we asked OEA to identify the federal agencies that may have the most helpful programs for growth communities. OEA identified seven agencies.⁵ Using structured interview questions, we

⁴The 10 combined installation and surrounding community site visits included Eglin Air Force Base, Florida; Fort Belvoir, Virginia; Fort Bliss, Texas; Fort Benning, Georgia; Fort Carson, Colorado; Fort Lee, Virginia; Fort Meade, Maryland; Fort Riley, Kansas; Fort Sam Houston, Texas; and Fort Sill, Oklahoma.

⁵These seven agencies included the Department of Transportation, the Department of Education, the Department of Labor, the Department of Commerce, the Small Business Administration, the Department of Agriculture, and the Department of Housing and Urban Development.

collected information from all seven agencies regarding their programs and any possible assistance they have provided to the growth communities. We followed up with some of the seven agencies to clarify their answers. We also attended selected community-oriented conferences and workshops sponsored by federal and local agencies which explored growth issues and potential solutions.

We conducted our work from February 2007 through May 2008 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, which we have done. Although we present expected personnel growth numbers at the 20 communities we surveyed, we have concerns about the completeness and consistency of these data, as discussed later in this report. We present these numbers to give a sense of the relative magnitude of growth the communities can expect. Overall, we believe that the evidence obtained for this report provides a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives. Additional information regarding our scope and methodology is included in appendix I.

Results in Brief

Communities surrounding DOD growth installations have begun to identify infrastructure needs in general terms, but precise planning efforts have been hampered by a lack of consistent and detailed information about anticipated DOD personnel movements. According to the communities surrounding the 20 growth locations OEA expects will be substantially and seriously affected by DOD-related growth, 18 have established planning processes to engage local stakeholders to consider potential community impacts, determine priorities, and ultimately develop an action plan. When asked to report their top infrastructure challenges, 16 of the 20 communities cited transportation—principally roads—while 11 cited insufficient school capacity and 6 cited affordable housing. Community planners told us they need more detailed information regarding the numbers and demographics of expected DOD population growth in order to prepare implementation plans and secure required financing. DOD Directive 5410.12 requires each of the military services to develop implementing guidance for providing planning information to installations, communities, and OEA. However, we found that none of the services had developed this guidance, either because service officials did not know about the directive or did not consider it a priority. Consequently, military personnel movement data provided to communities by the military services vary widely not only between services, but

sometimes within the same service according to who is providing the information. Among other things, the numbers vary in terms of what populations (such as contractors and students) and time frames are included, and what assumptions are used for the movement of personnel, which oftentimes depend on other DOD actions being completed. In addition, the numbers usually lack important demographic details regarding dependents, such as the number of school-aged children. More than half of the 20 communities we surveyed expressed concerns about the completeness of personnel data received from the installations. Detailed demographics such as the number and age of dependent children are particularly important when planning school infrastructure, for example. Until the military departments begin to disseminate consistent and more detailed information about defense personnel moves, including a description of what is included and what is excluded, and any other limitations of these data, it will be difficult for community, state, and federal officials to efficiently and effectively plan for and provide the necessary infrastructure for members of the armed services, their families, and current residents of the communities. We are recommending that the Secretary of Defense direct the secretaries of the military services, and the Commandant of the Marine Corps, to develop and implement guidance consistent with DOD Directive 5410.12 for the dissemination of consistent, detailed personnel movement information.

While OEA and other DOD, state, local, and federal agencies have provided some assistance to communities expecting DOD growth, the Office of the Secretary of Defense has not provided the high-level leadership necessary to ensure effective interagency and intergovernmental coordination to better leverage resources. DOD's efforts to assist communities affected by base closures, realignments, and other significant defense program changes are consolidated in OEA. The office has been proactive in reaching out to the communities and has provided grants to 18 of the 20 growth communities it has identified as substantially and seriously affected by DOD growth actions, as well as to three states—Virginia, Kansas, and Maryland. Other DOD activities, such as the Defense Access Road program and the DOD Education Activity, have also provided some assistance to growth communities. Further, 11 of the 20 growth communities reported receiving a total of \$131.7 million in state-sponsored funding to support a range of initiatives including building roads, conducting needs assessments, developing business plans, and acquiring lands in support of the installations' missions. Although we did not find any federal programs specifically designed to assist communities impacted by DOD growth, the Department of Labor, for example, provided almost \$30 million in National Emergency Grants to communities affected

by BRAC for, among other things, expanding training in local communities to better match the local job pool with the opportunities presented by the expanding DOD activities. To ensure that communities adversely affected by DOD actions receive assistance, the 22-agency Economic Adjustment Committee (EAC) was created by a presidential executive order⁶ to identify problems of states, regions, and communities affected by defense-related activities and to serve as a clearinghouse to exchange information. Executive Order 12788 directs all executive agencies to afford priority consideration to requests from defense-affected communities for federal technical, financial, or other assistance that are part of a comprehensive plan used by the EAC. The Secretary of Defense or his designee is required as the chair of the EAC to lead interagency and intergovernmental efforts. We reported in October 2005 that leadership is a necessary element for sustaining collaboration among federal agencies.⁷ However, we found that DOD has not provided the necessary leadership. For example, the Office of the Secretary of Defense delegated the chairmanship of the EAC to the Deputy Under Secretary of Defense (Installations and Environment) who has essentially left the EAC operations to OEA, a field office that cannot guide interagency operations at a high enough level to promote interagency cooperation. Consequently, the executive-level committee has met rarely and not at all in 2007 and 2008, and has no plans to reconvene periodically. Although OEA has convened meetings at the subgroup level, policy and budgetary decisions can only be made by the executive-level committee. A fully functional EAC at the executive level could help ensure information sharing and other forms of cooperation among its members for the benefit of all communities affected by DOD activities and better leverage resources by providing a conduit through which member agencies could (1) share information on community needs, as well as ongoing and planned efforts to match resources to meet those needs, and (2) contribute to a clearinghouse of comprehensive, targeted, and timely information on funding programs to all communities. We are recommending that the Secretary of Defense direct the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics to implement the presidential order by developing and implementing a clearinghouse function for sharing information regarding DOD-related impacts,

⁶Exec. Order No. 12049, 43 *Fed. Reg.* 13363 (Mar. 27, 1978), as superseded by Exec. Order No. 12788, 57 *Fed. Reg.* 2213 (Jan. 21, 1992), as amended.

⁷GAO, *Results-Oriented Government: Practices That Can Help Enhance and Sustain Collaboration among Federal Agencies*, [GAO-06-15](#) (Washington, D.C.: Oct. 21, 2005).

community problems, and resources for providing economic adjustment assistance to communities affected by DOD activities.

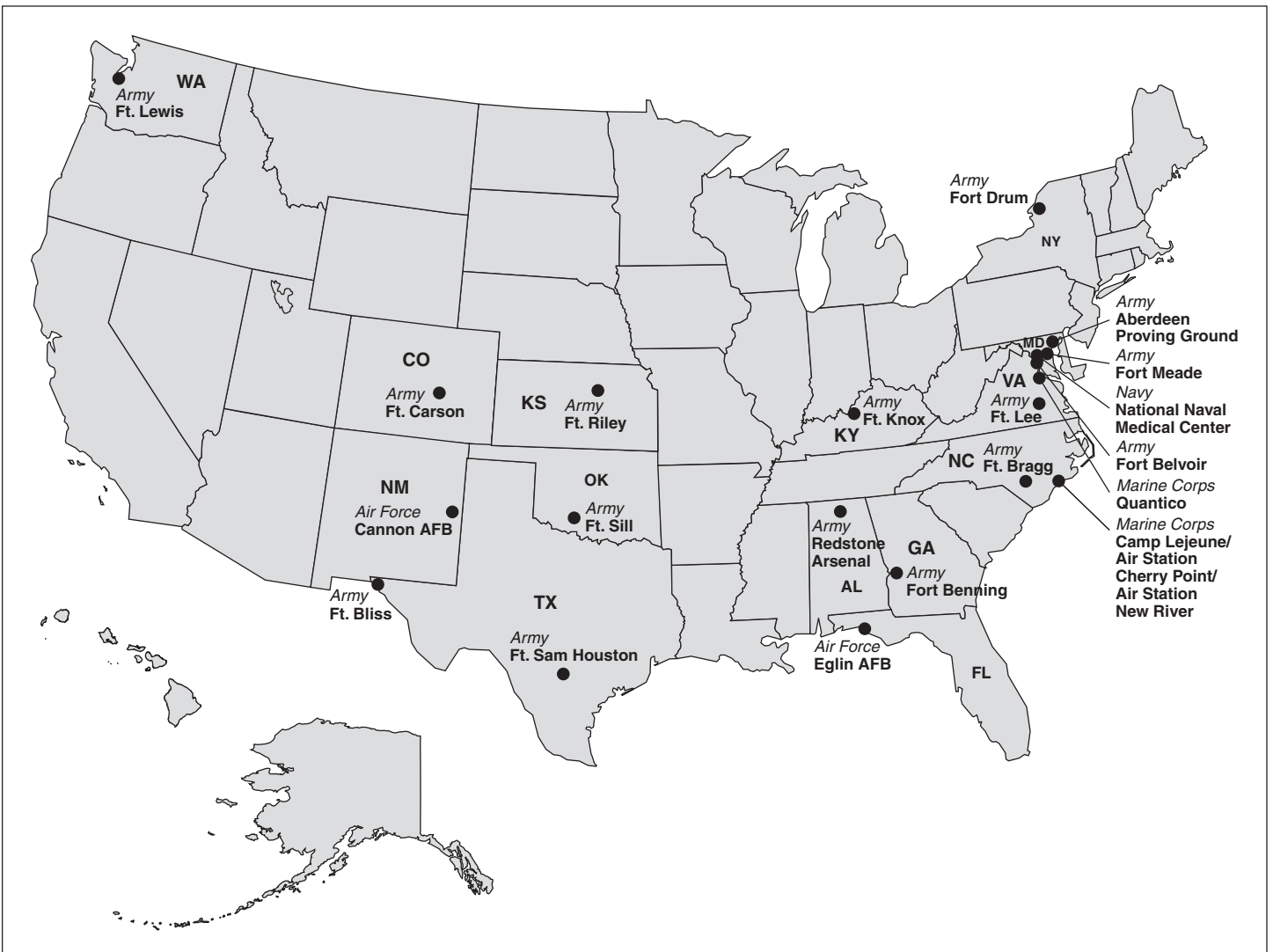
In written comments on a draft of this report, DOD agreed with our recommendations. However, it is unclear from its comments and stated actions as to whether DOD is fully responsive to the intent of our recommendations. Specifically, DOD was not explicit as to what steps it intends to take to ensure that the military services have implemented DOD Directive 5410.12 by the end of fiscal year 2008. Further, DOD was not explicit as to what steps it intends to take to call and periodically hold meetings of the full executive-level, interagency Economic Adjustment Committee to assure the successful implementation of Executive Order 12788. DOD's comments are discussed in more detail at the end of this report and are reproduced in full in appendix IV.

Background

DOD is currently implementing several major force structure and basing initiatives that are expected to result in a large number of personnel movements and changes in the size and shape of its domestic installation infrastructure. First, under the 2005 BRAC round, DOD is implementing 182 recommendations, as set forth by the Base Closure and Realignment Commission, which must be completed by the statutory deadline of September 15, 2011. Through the BRAC process, DOD intends to transform its departmentwide installation infrastructure and, as such, the recommendations have an unusually large number of realignment actions that are expected to result in significant personnel movements across DOD's installations. Second, under the Global Defense Posture Realignment, DOD is realigning its overseas basing structure to more effectively support current allies and strategies in addition to addressing emerging threats. Included in this rebasing effort is the expected return of about 70,000 military and civilian personnel to the United States by 2011. Third, the Army is also undergoing major force restructuring in implementing its force modularity effort, which has been referred to as the largest Army reorganization in 50 years. The foundation for the modular force is the creation of brigade combat teams that are expected to be more agile and deployable to better meet combatant commander requirements. Finally, DOD has recently initiated a Grow the Force initiative intended to permanently increase the end strength of the Army and Marine Corps by 74,000 soldiers and 27,000 marines, respectively, to enhance overall U.S. forces, reduce stress on deployable personnel, and provide necessary forces for success in the Global War on Terrorism.

When considered collectively, the simultaneous implementation of these initiatives is generating large personnel increases at many military installations within the United States, which, in turn is impacting the communities that are in close proximity to those installations. As of January 2008, OEA was assisting 20 communities surrounding growth installations based on direct DOD impacts in light of community-specific needs and resources. Figure 1 shows those impacted locations.

Figure 1: Location of 20 DOD Communities Expecting Substantial DOD-Related Growth over Fiscal Years 2006-2012



Source: Army, Marine Corps, Navy, Air Force, Office of Economic Adjustment, Map Resources (maps).

As indicated in figure 1, most of the growth locations are attributable to the Army, which is affected more than any other military service by force structure and basing initiatives. As shown in table 1, available DOD data indicate that these 20 installations are expecting a combined net growth of over 173,000 military and civilian personnel over fiscal years 2006-2012, not counting family members and nonmission-related contractors who are also expected to relocate to the surrounding communities and generate additional community infrastructure needs. It should be noted that these estimates are based on planned personnel movement actions as of March 2008 and are subject to change over time as there are a number of factors, such as revisions in operational plans associated with the Global War on Terrorism, which may give cause for estimate revisions. As table 1 shows, the vast majority of the community locations predicted to be most affected by DOD growth surround Army installations, with Fort Bliss, Fort Belvoir, Fort Riley, and Fort Lee expected to experience personnel growth rates of more than 50 percent over fiscal years 2006-2012. Moreover, while Fort Knox, Kentucky and Cannon Air Force Base, New Mexico are actually expected to incur overall losses in personnel at their facilities between fiscal years 2006 and 2012, OEA has identified growth challenges for the surrounding communities and therefore treats them as such. For example, the Fort Knox population is changing from mostly military students living on base to a civilian population living off base, creating new growth demands on the surrounding community's infrastructure and services.

Table 1: Estimated Growth in DOD Personnel (Military and Civilian Not Including Dependents) at 20 Growth Installations over Fiscal Years 2006-2012

Service and installation	Beginning population for fiscal year 2006	Estimated ending population for fiscal year 2012	Estimated net gain (loss) in population	Percentage of estimated net gain (loss) in population
Army^a				
Fort Bliss, TX	19,500	46,500	27,000	138
Fort Belvoir, VA	19,600	45,200	25,600	130
Fort Riley, KS	14,900	25,200	10,300	69
Fort Lee, VA	13,000	20,100	7,100	55
Fort Sam Houston, TX	21,400	31,400	10,000	46
Fort Carson, CO	23,000	32,800	9,800	43
Fort Benning, GA	39,800	55,700	15,900	40
Fort Lewis, WA	34,700	47,500	12,800	37
Fort Bragg, NC	55,800	72,000	16,200	29
Fort Meade, MD	33,400	40,000	6,600	20
Aberdeen Proving Ground, MD	16,600	19,600	3,000	18
Redstone Arsenal, AL	26,000	29,800	3,800	14
Fort Drum, NY	20,500	22,500	2,000	10
Fort Sill, OK	26,200	28,100	1,900	8
Fort Knox, KY	22,900	20,100	(2,800)	(12)
Navy/Marine Corps^b				
Marine Corps Base Quantico, VA	16,400	22,700	6,300	38
Bethesda National Naval Medical Center, MD	5,200	7,000	1,800	35
Eastern North Carolina (Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune, and Marine Corp Air Station New River and Cherry Point, NC)	70,000	83,800	13,800	20
Air Force^c				
Eglin Air Force Base, FL	16,300	19,900	3,600	22
Cannon Air Force Base, NM	4,300	2,800	(1,500)	(35)
Total	499,500	672,700	173,200	35

Source: GAO analysis of Army, Navy, Marine Corps, and Air Force data.

Notes: These U.S.-based installations have been identified by OEA as locations where surrounding communities are expected to experience substantial and serious impacts due to DOD growth activities. Although Fort Knox and Cannon AFB show a negative net growth over time, OEA determined that the expected change in personnel demographics (e.g., changing from primarily military to primarily civilian) could cause significant challenges to the surrounding communities. These numbers do not include family members and nonmission-related contractors. Estimates have been rounded to the nearest hundred.

^aThe Army estimates are based on March 2008 Army Stationing and Installation Plan data. As presented, these personnel figures consist of Army and other active military, civilian, and mission contractors, as well as military and civilian students and trainees. Army Reserve personnel are not included.

^bThe Navy and Marine Corps data were obtained from the installation level and consist of Navy and Marine Corps and other active military, civilian, and mission contractors, as well as military and civilian students and trainees. The data are current as of March 2008 with the exception of Bethesda, which provided data current as of January 2008 that reflect the beginning of fiscal year 2008, not fiscal year 2006 as indicated for the column.

^cThe Air Force data were obtained from the installation level and consist of Air Force and other active military, civilian, and mission contractors, as well as military and civilian students and trainees. Both the Eglin and Cannon Air Force Base estimates are as of March 2008.

Moreover, because the growth estimates displayed in table 1 exclude dependents associated with military and civilian personnel movements as well as support contractors who may elect to relocate to these growth locations, these estimates do not represent total growth at these locations.

As shown in table 2, available military projections for increases in the number of dependents at these locations over fiscal years 2006-2012 currently exceed 168,000. The Army has reported significant dependent growth for the communities surrounding Fort Bliss, Fort Belvoir, Fort Riley, Fort Knox, Fort Lee, and Fort Carson, each of which is expected to experience a greater than 50 percent increase in the number of military dependents. It should be noted that the Army dependent numbers are currently being reviewed by some communities and the Department of Education, which is described later in this report. It should also be noted that even with the best estimate, the number of dependents that will actually relocate and when is not certain due to a number of factors, such as the timing and duration of the military personnel's next overseas deployment.

Table 2: Estimated Growth in DOD Dependents at 20 Growth Installations over Fiscal Years 2006-2012

Service and installation	Beginning population for fiscal year 2006	Estimated ending population for fiscal year 2012	Estimated net gain (loss) in population	Percentage of estimated net gain (loss) in population
Army				
Fort Bliss, TX	17,300	59,200	41,900	242
Fort Belvoir, VA	10,400	25,500	15,100	145
Fort Riley, KS	15,800	30,300	14,500	92
Fort Knox, KY	10,400	16,600	6,200	60
Fort Lee, VA	5,800	9,000	3,200	55
Fort Carson, CO	28,700	43,600	14,900	52
Fort Lewis, WA	40,200	57,800	17,600	44
Fort Sam Houston, TX	13,100	18,700	5,600	43
Fort Bragg, NC	66,200	83,300	17,100	26
Fort Benning, GA	19,900	24,900	5,000	25
Aberdeen Proving Ground, MD	6,000	7,500	1,500	25
Fort Meade, MD	20,200	24,100	3,900	19
Fort Drum, NY	26,300	29,000	23,700	10
Fort Sill, OK	16,300	18,000	1,700	10
Redstone Arsenal, AL	7,400	8,000	600	8
Navy/Marine Corps				
Marine Corps Base Quantico, VA	9,200	10,600	1,400	15
Bethesda National Naval Medical Center, MD	2,800	3,700	900	32
Eastern North Carolina (Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune, and Marine Corp Air Station New River and Cherry Point, NC)	87,600	99,600	12,000	14
Air Force				
Eglin Air Force Base, FL	29,300	35,100	5,800	20
Cannon Air Force Base, NM	9,100	5,700	(3,400)	(37)
Total	442,000	610,200	168,200	38

Source: GAO analysis of Army, Navy, Marine Corps, and Air Force data.

Note: Army dependent information is based on the March 2008 Army Stationing and Installation Plan data and includes estimates of the military dependent population (all family members including spouse as well as school-aged and nonschool-aged children) and DOD civilian dependent school-aged children, but excludes spouses and nonschool-aged children of DOD civilians, as well as all dependents for mission-related contractors. Navy, Marine Corps, and Air Force dependent estimates were provided at the installation level and could not be broken down by military and civilian school-aged children and include all military family members. Data regarding non-Marine Corps military and civilian dependent estimates were unavailable. All estimates are as of March 2008 with the exception of Bethesda, which are the most recent available as of January 2008 and are for the beginning of fiscal year 2008, not fiscal year 2006 as indicated for the rest of the column. Estimates have been rounded to the nearest hundred.

In addition to the growth estimates depicted in tables 1 and 2, the communities surrounding growth installations can expect additional personnel growth from indirect economic development such as employment opportunities created by defense support contractors.

Based on a series of presidential executive orders dating back to 1978 and amended as recently as May 2005, it has been long-standing DOD policy⁸ that DOD takes the leadership role within the federal government in helping communities respond to the effects of defense-related activities. The current version of the executive order, which is included in appendix III, states that the Secretary of Defense, through the EAC, shall, among other things, establish a Defense Economic Adjustment Program to assist substantially and seriously affected communities from the effects of major defense closures and realignments. The order identifies the 22 federal agency members of the EAC and names the Secretary of Defense or the Secretary's designee as the Chair of the committee with the Secretaries of Labor and Commerce as co-vice chairs. The order states that the EAC shall advise, assist, and support the program and develop procedures for ensuring that state and local officials are notified of available federal economic adjustment programs. The order further states that the program shall, among other things, identify problems of states and communities that result from defense-related activities and that require federal assistance; assure timely consultation and cooperation with federal, state, and community officials concerning DOD-related impacts; assure coordinated interagency and intergovernmental adjustment assistance; prepare, facilitate, and implement cost-effective strategies and action plans to coordinate interagency and intergovernmental economic adjustment efforts; and serve as a clearinghouse to exchange information among federal, state, and community officials involved in the resolution of community economic adjustment problems including sources of public and private financing. The order also states that all federal executive agencies shall afford priority consideration to requests from defense-

⁸With the issuance of executive order 12049 in March 1978, the President recognized that changes in DOD activities necessitated a coordinated approach for federal economic assistance. The order specified that DOD, working with the EAC, had the lead role in conducting various efforts designed to assist in the alleviation of serious economic adjustment impacts that result from major defense realignments. Executive order 12788, issued in January 1992, subsequently superseded the prior order but continued the intent for the federal government to play a role through the EAC in providing assistance to defense-impacted communities. Executive order 13286 was issued in February 2003 to update the membership while executive order 13378 was issued in May 2005 to change the EAC chair from rotating among DOD, Labor, and Commerce to only be chaired by DOD.

affected communities for federal assistance that are part of a comprehensive plan used by the committee.

OEA, located in Arlington, Virginia, is a DOD field activity that reports to the Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Installations and Environment, under the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics.⁹ OEA is responsible for facilitating DOD resources in support of local programs and providing direct planning and financial assistance to communities and states seeking assistance to address the impacts of DOD's actions. The office has a fiscal year 2008 budget exceeding \$57 million, \$45 million of which is to fund its core programs—which include assistance to closing and growing locations—and a staff of 35 civilians and 3 military liaisons. Currently, OEA is managing about 240 community projects including closing, downsizing, and growth bases. OEA assistance to growth communities is primarily focused on assisting local communities to organize and plan for population growth due to DOD activities.

Growth Communities Have Begun to Identify Infrastructure Needs, but Planning Has Been Hampered by a Lack of Consistent and Detailed Information about DOD Personnel Movements

Communities surrounding DOD growth installations have begun to identify infrastructure needs in general terms, but planning efforts have been hampered by a lack of consistent and detailed information about anticipated DOD personnel movements. Due to the complexity of DOD's current growth activities, coupled with ongoing operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, precise data about the magnitude and makeup of personnel movements continue to evolve. However, until the military departments begin to disseminate consistent and more detailed information about the defense personnel moves they know about, it will be difficult for community, state, and federal officials to plan for and provide necessary infrastructure and quality-of-life support to members of the armed services, their families, and other community residents.

Communities Have Begun to Plan for Expected Growth

Many of the 20 communities that OEA has determined will be substantially and seriously affected by DOD growth have begun planning and taking action on projects and programs that will help them accommodate the expected influx of military and civilian personnel, military families, and

⁹DOD Directive 3030.01 (Mar. 5, 2006).

contractors over the next several years. DOD's *Base Redevelopment and Realignment Manual*¹⁰ states that mission and personnel increases at military installations can place direct and significant demands on surrounding community infrastructure and services. It further notes that large, rapid influxes of personnel and changes in missions create the need for an immediate partnership between community leaders and installation leaders to manage the changes. Coordinated management of change provides an opportunity to minimize the negative effects on the community while enhancing the long-term quality of life for defense personnel and community residents. Among other things, communities must prepare roads, schools, and other infrastructure to accommodate the expected growth, which can require significant lead time to plan, budget for, finance, and construct.

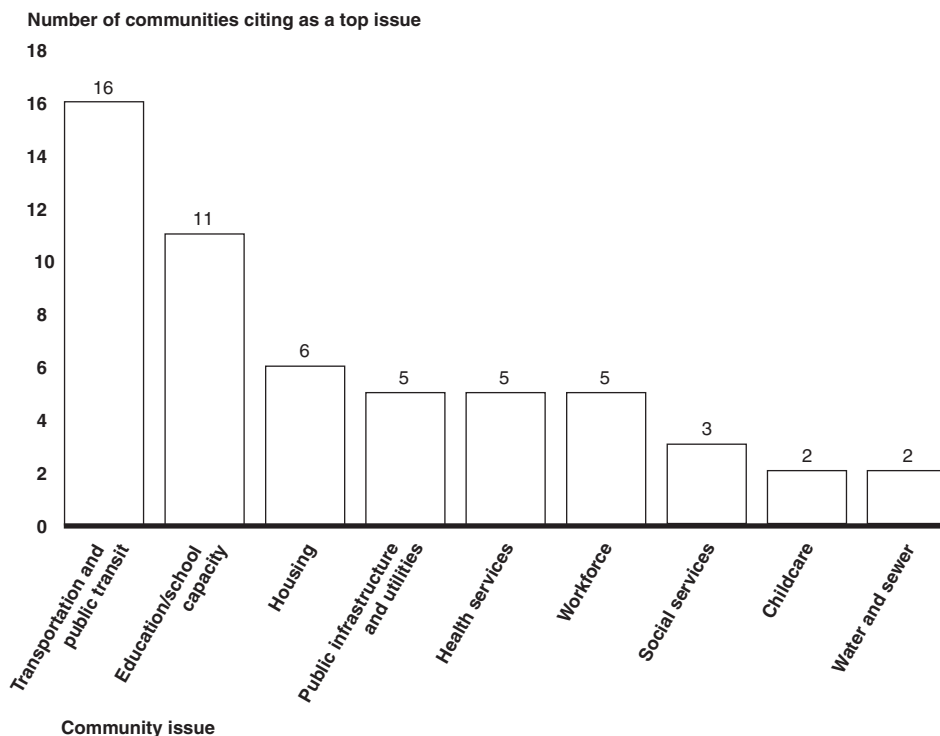
According to our survey of 20 growth communities, 18 have established planning processes to engage local stakeholders to consider potential community impacts, determine priorities, and ultimately develop an action plan. Although all communities are different and are in various planning stages, most of these growth communities have begun developing growth management plans, which are used to identify specific infrastructure improvements such as, roads, schools, and housing that may be required to support the expected growth. Of the 20 communities, 3 completed growth management plans by the end of 2007 and 13 had started plans—the majority of which are scheduled to be completed by the end of 2008. Two of the remaining 4 communities have opted not to develop a growth management plan and instead are proceeding to develop studies targeted toward issues that are already apparent. For example, Fort Belvoir, where traffic congestion has been identified as an issue, will be using its OEA planning grant to develop transportation models. At the time of our review, the communities surrounding Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune and Marine Corps air stations New River and Cherry Point in eastern North Carolina were in the early stages of establishing a community planning organization and were expected to apply for OEA planning assistance soon.

Based on our survey, coupled with our analysis of community profiles prepared by the growth communities for OEA's December 2007 Growth

¹⁰DOD, *Base Redevelopment and Realignment Manual*, DOD 4165.66M (Washington, D.C.: Mar. 1, 2006).

Summit,¹¹ we found that transportation, schools, and housing were identified by the communities as their top growth-management issues. When asked to report their top infrastructure challenges, 16 of the 20 communities cited transportation, principally roads. Insufficient school capacity was named by 11 communities. Six communities said affordable housing was a major challenge. Other issues that were identified by at least 1 growth community included water and sewerage, health services, workforce development, child care, spousal employment, law enforcement, and emergency services. Figure 2 illustrates our analysis of the top issues identified by 2 or more of the 20 growth communities.

Figure 2: Summary of Top Growth Challenges Identified by 20 Growth-Impacted Communities



Source: GAO analysis of community profiles prepared for OEA.

¹¹OEA hosted a Growth Summit in St. Louis, Missouri, in December 2007. All 20 growth communities participated in informational sessions, workshops, and peer networking opportunities, and provided feedback to OEA on local growth experiences to date, including techniques or services that have assisted these affected communities to better respond to the anticipated growth.

In the summary profiles prepared for the OEA Growth Summit, the communities described some of the impacts these issues would have on their communities if they were not addressed prior to the arrival of the new personnel. The impacts ranged from increased usage and associated congestion on local roads to concerns about the adequacy of schools and questionable quality of healthcare facilities which are likely to be stretched to accommodate the expected increased demand. Communities also expressed concerns about obtaining funding to implement the plans that call for new infrastructure to be built in order to accommodate expected growth. Funding issues are discussed later in this report.

Precise Planning Efforts Have Been Hampered by a Lack of Consistent and Complete Information about Military Growth

Although communities have made progress in planning for growth in general terms, community planners told us that they need more detailed information regarding the numbers and demographics of expected DOD population growth in order to prepare more refined implementation plans and secure required financing. DOD Directive 5410.12 requires the services to provide maximum advance information and support to state and local governments to allow planning for necessary adjustments in local facilities and public services, workforce training programs, and local economic development activities. Further, the directive requires each of the military services to develop implementing guidance for providing planning information to installations, communities, and OEA. However, our review found that none of the services have developed implementing guidance as required by the directive, and senior officials from each of the services acknowledged that this guidance has not been prepared. Senior military officials we interviewed either did not know about the directive or did not see it as a priority for implementation. As a result, information that has been provided to communities regarding planned DOD personnel movements has been inconsistent and lacks important demographic details.

The Army has established its centralized Army Stationing and Installation Plan database as the official source of Army personnel numbers. However, we recently reported¹² that these numbers were often inconsistent with personnel information received from installation officials—the primary source of personnel data used by community planners. To the Army’s credit, most of the installation-level officials we spoke with said that the consistency of the data being provided to communities is improving.

¹²[GAO-07-1007](#).

Nevertheless, in our survey and during follow-up discussions with the 20 communities, more than half expressed concerns about the consistency and completeness of the personnel information they were provided. For example, one community representative from the Fort Belvoir, Virginia area indicated that the planning numbers being discussed at the installation level differed from those being discussed at the headquarters level by nearly 5,000 personnel due to the omission of mission-related contractors. According to this official, the Army was notified of the omission, but had not included them in subsequent briefings. Another community representative from the Fort Bragg, North Carolina community told us that the planning numbers they used during a public meeting were disputed by a senior military installation official. According to this official, the difference was so great (nearly 1,500 military personnel due to the omission of another military service using the base) that the community had to go back and revise its plans, duplicating an already complicated effort, wasting valuable time and money in the process. This situation could have been avoided if the installation had prepared and disseminated complete information to the community in a more timely manner.

Other communities also expressed concerns regarding the timeliness of the data. For example, a community leader responsible for leading community development efforts near Fort Knox, Kentucky indicated that his organization did not have timely access to the detailed population information needed to plan effectively. He noted that understanding the size and the timing of the population movements was essential to his planning efforts and for ensuring that the state budget was sufficient to address the expected growth needs. He indicated that growth information was obtained through multiple sources including the installation, discussions with Pentagon officials, and by proactively monitoring Pentagon growth announcements. Without timely access to information he noted that it was difficult to know if his organization was making the best decisions about the development of supporting infrastructure. He indicated that when changes happen, the Army does not share much information, which places a lot of stress on the community, which must then work with rumors and wait until the Army arrives at a final decision before any official information is released. A community leader from the Fort Bliss, Texas area expressed similar concerns regarding the timeliness of information and suggested that receiving the planning information on a regular (quarterly) schedule would help reassure the community that it has the best and most up-to-date information so that planning efforts remain realistic. He also noted that he did not have much confidence in the civilian personnel numbers that the Army has provided because they do not match the ratio of civilian personnel to military personnel that is

seen across the Army for similar capabilities. While he complimented the Army's transition office for providing quick updates and information on projected increases, regular, quarterly updates would give the community confidence that it has the most up-to-date information. This community leader also remained unclear as to why Fort Bliss civilian personnel numbers appear to be understated.

Most of the community representatives we interviewed were quick to point out how helpful local installations have been to their planning efforts and acknowledged that military actions continue to change and complete personnel predictions are uncertain. Nevertheless, several communities expressed concerns about the lack of information regarding dependents, particularly regarding the number of school-aged children expected to accompany arriving military personnel. According to community planners, detailed demographic data, such as the number and ages of dependent children expected to accompany incoming service members, are particularly important when planning to meet future demands for education and housing. For instance, a community official from the Fort Riley, Kansas area indicated that Fort Riley is receiving a greater number of younger, single soldiers than originally expected, resulting in fewer school-aged children and higher demand for rental housing than the community initially anticipated. Community officials from the Fort Benning, Georgia area have had long-standing disagreements with Army officials regarding the number of school-aged children that are expected to arrive. Although the Army and local officials have recently reached an agreement regarding the projected number of children the Fort Benning community should use for planning purposes, this example raises questions about the reliability of dependent data being provided to other communities.¹³ The Air Force and the Navy do not centralize their personnel movement data and have, thus far, not attempted to calculate the number of school-aged children that will accompany their relocating service members. Neither service could provide detailed information regarding dependents.

¹³In making its calculations, the Army uses a planning factor that is multiplied against the number of military and DOD civilian personnel expected to arrive at a given installation. This aggregate number provides a gross estimate of the number of dependent school-aged children but lacks details, such as grade levels. Also, the Army data do not include an estimate of school-aged children that might accompany mission contractors. The Army has asked each of the military installations to provide better estimates of school-aged dependents to the communities. As of March 31, 2008, only Fort Benning had responded to this request.

OEA, as part of its duties under executive order 12788, is to serve as a clearinghouse of DOD planning information to the public, but without consistent data and timely updates from all military services, it cannot effectively perform this function. As a result, communities—as well as state and federal agencies—have been left to their own devices to obtain needed information. Several community officials told us that they have resorted to gathering their own demographic data in order to obtain the detailed dependent information required for their planning. For instance, community officials from San Antonio, Texas have visited the units that are expected to relocate to Fort Sam Houston and have interviewed personnel within these units to determine key demographic information that might aid them in their community planning efforts. While these methods allow communities to obtain some of the detailed planning information they require, these communities must often resort to diverting resources from planning and implementation to developing information that the services should have already provided them.

Information on school-aged children is also important to the Department of Education, which uses this information for providing assistance to federally impacted school districts. During our review, the Department of Education expressed frustration with the Army's inconsistent and incomplete information in this area. According to OEA officials, the Army, the Department of Education, and OEA had begun negotiating a memorandum of understanding to establish a framework for addressing, among other things, issues involved in reporting actual or projected numbers of school-aged dependents. The memorandum would require the Army to develop, monitor, and share projections of dependent student data associated with military, civilian, and mission-support contractors and to establish a system for sharing historical and actual military dependent student data by installation. In commenting on a draft of this report, the office of the Under Secretary of Defense (Military Community and Family Policy) noted that this effort had been expanded beyond the Army to encompass all of DOD. At the time of our review the memorandum had not been finalized.

Without high-level DOD direction to the military services to establish and implement guidance in accordance with the DOD directive regarding how and when information related to DOD personnel movements will be distributed to affected communities and what types of data will be included, information that the services provide the installations, communities, and other federal agencies will likely continue to be inconsistent and incomplete. Furthermore, OEA's efforts to establish a centralized clearinghouse for this information, which could greatly

improve the consistency and availability of personnel planning data, will continue to be hampered. The complexity of DOD's current growth activities, coupled with ongoing operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, creates a situation where precise data about the magnitude and makeup of personnel movements are continuing to evolve. Nevertheless, until the military departments begin to disseminate consistent and detailed information about defense personnel moves, including a description of what is included in the data and any uncertainties such as timing of personnel movements, it will be difficult for community, state, and federal officials to plan for and provide the necessary infrastructure to support members of the armed services, their families, and current residents of surrounding communities.

OEA and Other Agencies Are Providing Some Assistance to Communities, but the Office of the Secretary of Defense Has Not Provided the High-Level Leadership Necessary to Help Ensure Interagency and Intergovernmental Coordination

While OEA, other DOD agencies, and some state, local, and federal government agencies have provided some assistance to DOD growth communities, the Office of the Secretary of Defense has not provided the high-level leadership necessary to help ensure interagency and intergovernmental coordination at levels that can make policy and budgetary decisions to better leverage resources through the EAC. The EAC was established over 30 years ago for the purpose of sharing information and coordinating assistance to communities adversely affected by DOD activities—including growth, closures, and other actions. Although the Secretary of Defense, or his designee, is directed by presidential executive order to chair the EAC and lead efforts to share information within the federal government and among state and local agencies, OSD has not provided the leadership necessary to make this happen effectively. However, in the absence of a fully functioning EAC at the executive level, OEA has been proactive in working with communities it believes will be substantially and seriously affected by DOD growth activities and in reaching out to other federal agencies at the working level. In addition, other DOD agencies, non-DOD federal agencies, and state and local agencies have also provided various kinds of assistance to growth communities.

OEA Has Provided Planning and Technical Assistance to Affected Communities

DOD's efforts to assist communities affected by base closures, realignments, or expansions are consolidated in OEA, which has been proactive in working with communities it believes will be substantially and seriously impacted by DOD activities. To assist growth communities, OEA has identified those communities expected to be impacted by DOD growth activities and have expressed a need for planning assistance. This planning assistance has helped many of those communities hire planners or consultants to undertake studies to identify gaps in their existing local infrastructure that must be filled in order to accommodate the expected population growth. During our survey of the 20 growth-impacted communities, we found that the representatives were complimentary of OEA's role in supporting their planning process through grants and technical support. Many communities referred to OEA as their only source of federal assistance. As table 3 shows, OEA provided grants¹⁴ to 18 of the 20 communities and to three states—Virginia, Kansas, and Maryland. Both Virginia and Maryland are using their grants for transportation planning, and Maryland is also using its grant to plan for environmental impacts to the Chesapeake Bay. Kansas used its OEA grant to hire a state coordinator to help communicate DOD-related community impacts to state policymakers.

¹⁴The Secretary of Defense may provide economic adjustment assistance to any community located near a military installation being closed or realigned as part of the 2005 BRAC round. Pub. L. No. 101-510, Title XXIX, § 2905, as amended by Pub. L. No. 107-107, Title XXX (2001). The Secretary of Defense may also provide adjustment assistance to communities meeting specific criteria for being affected by certain DOD activities. 10 U.S.C. § 2391.

Table 3: Office of Economic Adjustment Grants to 20 Growth-Impacted Communities and Selected States (October 2005 through March 2008)

Growth communities and states	Total grants for October 2005 through March 2008
Growth communities	
Aberdeen Proving Ground, MD	\$3,565,254
Bethesda National Naval Medical Center, MD	119,238
Cannon Air Force Base, NM	506,498
Eastern North Carolina ^a	0
Eglin Air Force Base, FL	1,364,923
Fort Belvoir, VA	1,663,190
Fort Benning, GA	3,468,714
Fort Bliss, TX	1,229,886
Fort Bragg/Pope Air Force Base, NC	1,725,006
Fort Carson, CO	517,830
Fort Drum, NY	737,579
Fort Knox, TN	565,867
Fort Lee, VA	303,329
Fort Lewis/McChord Air Force Base, WA	0
Fort Meade, MD	1,447,630
Fort Riley, KS	829,400
Fort Sam Houston, TX	931,709
Fort Sill, OK	744,606
Quantico Marine Corps Base, VA	163,545
Redstone Arsenal, AL	722,438
States	
Commonwealth of Virginia	1,900,000
State of Kansas	345,125
State of Maryland	4,059,906
Total	\$26,911,673

Source: Office of Economic Adjustment, DOD.

Note: According to OEA, the Ft. Lewis and Eastern North Carolina communities had not requested assistance at the time of our review, but are expected to do so in the future.

^aEastern North Carolina consists of the Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune and Marine Corps air stations New River and Cherry Point.

Other DOD Agencies Have Provided Some Assistance to Affected Communities

In addition to OEA, other DOD agencies have provided some assistance to growth communities. For example, the Defense Access Road program¹⁵ administered by the Military Surface Deployment and Distribution Command provides a method for DOD to pay for public highway infrastructure improvements required as a result of sudden or unusual defense-generated traffic impacts if certain criteria¹⁶ are met. When the commander of an installation determines that improvements to a public road are needed, it is the commander's responsibility to bring the deficiencies to the attention of the appropriate state or local transportation authority. In cases where the owning transportation authority cannot or will not correct the deficiency, the installation commander can request the improvements under the Defense Access Road program. We recently reported¹⁷ that in March 2008, the DOD had requested \$36.2 million for a new access road in the Fort Belvoir, Virginia area. If the funds are appropriated by Congress, this project is expected to be completed by the end of fiscal year 2010.

Another DOD agency that has provided assistance to some growth communities is the DOD Education Activity. This activity, located within the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Military Community and Family Policy, operates over 200 schools worldwide, 57 of which are located in the continental United States. This activity recently published an update to a report on assistance to local educational agencies for defense dependents education.¹⁸ This report, required by the John Warner National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2007,¹⁹ directed the Secretary of Defense to update the DOD plan to provide assistance to local educational agencies that experience growth and/or decline in the

¹⁵ 23 U.S.C. § 210.

¹⁶ Projects are eligible for funding if they meet one of the following criteria: (1) a new access road to a facility is needed to accommodate a defense action, (2) a defense action causes traffic to double, (3) a new or improved access road is needed to accommodate a temporary surge in traffic to or from an installation due to a defense action, (4) a new or improved access road is needed to accommodate special military vehicles such as heavy equipment transport vehicles, and (5) a replacement road is required for one closed due to military necessity.

¹⁷ GAO, *Defense Infrastructure: DOD Funding of Infrastructure and Road Improvements Surrounding Growth Installations*, [GAO-08-602R](#) (Washington, D.C.: Apr. 1, 2008).

¹⁸ *The Department of Defense Update to the Report on Assistance to Local Educational Agencies for Defense Dependents Education* (Washington, D.C.: March 2008).

¹⁹ Pub. L. No. 109-364, § 574 (2006).

enrollment of military students as a result of the force structure changes, relocation of military units, or the closure or realignment of military installations. The DOD Education Activity also established a directorate in October 2007 to help provide quality education opportunities for military children and to assist military-connected school systems. This assistance is geared toward issues unique to military children, such as helping them keep up with changing curriculum requirements as they are moved from base to base. Although some off-base schools that may receive assistance are among those experiencing DOD growth, the program does not specifically focus on growth communities.

DOD, through its supplement to the Department of Education's Impact Aid Program, provides financial assistance to local educational agencies that are impacted by the presence of military or DOD civilian dependent students and DOD children with severe disabilities. In fiscal year 2007, the total appropriation for the DOD supplement to the Department of Education's Impact Aid Program was \$43 million.

Some Assistance Has Been Provided to Communities by State, Local, and Federal Agencies

Other federal agencies as well as the state and local agencies of jurisdiction have provided some assistance to growth communities. Since there is currently no centralized mechanism for collecting information on all of the types of assistance provided to DOD communities, the information we collected should not be viewed as complete. Furthermore, although our survey of the 20 growth communities completed in April 2008 did not necessarily identify all of the funding that has been provided to these communities and we did not validate the responses, it did reveal the magnitude and variety of resources that may be available to them. For example, 11 communities reported receiving a total of \$131.7 million in state-sponsored funding to support a range of initiatives including building roads, conducting needs assessments, developing business plans, and acquiring easements in support of the installations' missions. Five communities indicated that they have received a total of \$167.2 million in local funding. The majority of local funding came from communities near Fort Carson, Colorado and Fort Riley, Kansas. Fort Carson instituted a special purpose tax through a rural transportation authority which raised \$78.8 million in local funding to improve roads. Communities outside of Ft. Riley raised \$87.3 million through local bonds for the construction of two schools and the expansion of a community hospital. Three communities received a total of \$212,500 from private funding sources. For example, the community surrounding Fort Benning, Georgia received \$160,000 in 2003 from the Fort Benning Futures Partnership, a community action group, to study the impact of BRAC.

In an attempt to identify some of the federal assistance that may have been provided or that may be available to growth communities, we obtained information from structured questions administered to seven federal agencies²⁰ and from information provided by DOD. Although we did not find any federal programs in these agencies specifically designed to assist communities impacted by DOD-related growth, officials from those agencies we contacted told us that there are numerous programs that growth communities can apply and be considered for if they meet specific eligibility requirements. For example, the Department of Labor reported that it had provided more than \$65 million in Workforce Innovation in Regional Development grants to expand employment and advancement opportunities for workers, and it has given almost \$30 million in National Emergency Grants to communities affected by BRAC, including growth communities. In addition, our analysis shows that for fiscal year 2008, the Department of Education estimates that over \$428 million in Federal Impact Aid grants will be provided for the operational support of local schools based on the number of federally connected children who are in attendance in specific local school districts in states with growth installations.²¹ This assistance is not provided to DOD growth communities only, but to any community where federally connected children are attending school. Appendix II provides a list of the assistance programs identified by the eight federal agencies we contacted (including DOD), for which DOD growth communities may be eligible.

In April 2006, OEA, in its capacity to provide administrative support to the EAC, published a compendium²² of federal assistance programs for communities, businesses, and workers affected by BRAC closures or realignments and other DOD actions. The compendium—which provided federal points of contact, internet addresses, and telephone numbers—was

²⁰We selected the following seven federal agencies based on recommendations by OEA project managers familiar with the needs of the communities: the Department of Transportation, the Department of Education, the Department of Labor, the Department of Commerce, the Small Business Administration, the Department of Agriculture, and the Department of Housing and Urban Development.

²¹The Impact Aid program provides section 8003 assistance to school districts that educate children living on Indian reservations, military bases, low-rent housing properties, or other federal lands. School districts use Impact Aid for various purposes, including salaries of teachers and teacher aides, textbooks, after-school and special enrichment programs, and remedial tutoring.

²²The President's Economic Adjustment Committee, *Federal Assistance for Impacted Communities* (Washington, D.C.: Apr. 11, 2006).

a helpful first step. However, the compendium did not provide important details on available assistance programs, such as eligibility requirements, application procedures, and deadlines—information that could have been easily gathered through a fully functioning EAC.

The EAC Is Intended to Assist Communities Adversely Affected by DOD Actions, but the Office of the Secretary of Defense Has Not Provided the High-Level Leadership Necessary to Ensure Interagency and Intergovernmental Coordination

The EAC was established over 30 years ago for the purpose of sharing information and coordinating assistance to communities adversely affected by DOD activities—including growth, closures, and other actions. Although the Secretary of Defense, as chair of the EAC, is directed by executive order to provide a forum for sharing information within the federal government and among state and local agencies, the Office of the Secretary of Defense has not provided the high-level leadership necessary to make this happen effectively.

To ensure that communities substantially and seriously affected by DOD actions receive assistance, the 22-agency EAC was created by presidential executive order.²³ Executive order 12788 designated the Secretary of Defense, or his designee, to chair the committee and designated the Secretaries of Labor and Commerce, or their designees, to serve as committee co-vice-chairs. The order also directs the EAC to identify problems of states and communities that result from defense-related activities and that require federal assistance. The order directs all executive agencies to afford priority consideration to requests from defense-affected communities for federal technical, financial, or other assistance that are part of a comprehensive plan used by the EAC. In addition, the committee was tasked with making communities that are substantially and seriously affected by DOD actions—including both closings and growth activities—aware of available federal economic adjustment programs. The executive order further requires the EAC to serve as a clearinghouse to exchange information among its member agencies for the benefit of all communities affected by DOD activities. Such interagency and intergovernmental coordination is important to more effectively leverage resources, and our prior work²⁴ has concluded that successful collaboration requires commitment by senior officials in respective federal agencies to articulate their agreements in a formal

²³Exec. Order No. 12049, 43 *Fed. Reg.* 13363 (Mar. 27, 1978), as superseded by Exec. Order No. 12788, 57 *Fed. Reg.* 2213 (Jan. 21, 1992), as amended.

²⁴GAO-06-15.

document such as a memorandum of understanding, interagency guidance, or interagency planning documents.

Although staff-level working group meetings have been held,²⁵ the executive-level committee has not met since November 2006 and committee leadership currently has no plans to convene periodic meetings. Furthermore, the EAC has not developed a plan to ensure information sharing and other forms of cooperation among its member agencies for the benefit of all communities affected by DOD activities. While the Secretary of Defense is required to lead interagency and intergovernmental efforts to assist communities most affected by its activities, OSD delegated this function to the Deputy Under Secretary (Installations and Environment), who has not held regular meetings of the executive-level EAC. According to representatives of key EAC federal agencies with whom we spoke with, they have not been fully engaged in the committee process and DOD has not kept them entirely informed of department activities that might better help them provide assistance to affected DOD communities. Furthermore, one executive-level EAC representative we spoke with was unaware that the executive order requires her agency to afford priority consideration to requests from defense-affected communities for federal assistance as part of a comprehensive plan used by the EAC.

In the absence of a fully functioning EAC, OEA has proactively organized ad hoc outreach visits with senior federal officials for education issues. Officials representing the Department of Education, the Army, the Office of the Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Military Community and Family Policy, and OEA met with leaders representing states, installations, communities, and local education activities at Forts Drum, Riley, Bliss, and Benning between September 2007 and January 2008. The purpose of these visits was to provide stakeholders with information involving student population growth issues, improve communication among all partners, identify gaps or lags in capacities, and to more extensively document specific requests for federal action to assist communities and states responding to student growth. In addition, OEA has sponsored conferences attended by state, local, and federal agencies and affected community representatives, providing an opportunity for communities to

²⁵ Although the full executive-level committee has not met recently, OEA has convened subgroups at the working level. However, the subgroups have focused primarily on issues other than expected growth impacts.

discuss issues with officials from OEA and participating federal entities that are members of the EAC. The most recent conference, a 3-day Growth Summit, was held in December 2007. During our conversations with representatives of the 20 growth communities, several communities volunteered how helpful the summit was to them in that they could exchange lessons learned with other communities facing similar challenges. At the summit, OEA announced plans to work with communities to prepare a list of projects that could not be undertaken to address DOD-related growth activities due to a lack of funding. Once these projects are identified and validated by OEA project managers, OEA plans to present this information to the Office of Management and Budget and cognizant federal agencies sometime during the summer of 2008 for possible budget consideration.

OEA can not guide interagency operations at a high enough level to promote effective interagency cooperation. Only high-level leadership from the Secretary of Defense can marshal the resources of the executive federal agency EAC members and only these high-level federal officials can affect possible policy and budget decisions that may be required to better assist the communities. Without high-level DOD leadership, the EAC will continue to function at the working group level and communities affected by all types of DOD actions (growth and closure) will lack an important source of information and support. Conversely, a functional EAC could better leverage resources by providing a conduit through which member agencies could share any ongoing and planned efforts that could assist DOD-affected communities, better match available resources to community needs, identify and avoid redundancies and serve as a clearinghouse for providing comprehensive, targeted, and timely information about funding programs to all DOD-affected communities.

Conclusions

Although the long-term outlook for communities surrounding growing DOD facilities is generally encouraging, the very real challenges many communities face to accommodate the expected influx of personnel will require carefully targeted investments and judicious use of local, state, and federal resources. Communities that are unable to provide needed infrastructure improvements by the time DOD executes its planned personnel movements could face overcrowded schools, clogged roadways, and overburdened public services. Conversely, some communities could make substantial investments or incur large debts only to find that new residents will be longer in coming or fewer in number than expected. Hence, accurate, detailed, and timely planning information is vital to both maximize the efficient use of resources and to ensure the highest quality of

life possible for relocating DOD personnel and their families. Unless DOD shares its best available information regarding personnel movements—including demographics as well as information on the limitations of the data and when to expect updates—in the timeliest practical manner, some communities surrounding growing installations may bear unnecessary burdens as they strive to accommodate growth that they have little or no ability to control. Furthermore, without a centralized and user-friendly source for obtaining such information, many communities, especially small towns and rural areas that lack the experience or planning personnel to effectively research and compete for grant opportunities, may be disadvantaged.

By executive branch policy, federal agencies have a shared responsibility with local and state governments in growth areas for providing affected communities with assistance, but have done so in a generally uncoordinated fashion. In addition, as the instigating force behind the growth initiatives—the 2005 BRAC, overseas rebasing, force modularity, and Grow the Force—and the body accountable for implementing BRAC recommendations, DOD is charged by presidential executive order and DOD directive to lead federal efforts to alleviate the impact of its actions. Without providing the leadership necessary to fully implement the presidential executive order to provide consistent and complete information and be fully engaged in the high-level cooperation of other federal agencies, DOD risks allowing the needs of affected communities to go unfulfilled in an inefficient, hit-or-miss search for assistance. Until DOD begins to fully leverage the interagency resources of the EAC and achieve unity of effort aimed at maximizing assistance to affected communities, state and local governments may not be able to provide expanded infrastructure and services for DOD personnel while maintaining existing amenities. As a result, quality of life for both military and civilian residents, along with military readiness, could be degraded.

Recommendations for Executive Action

In order to assist communities in planning to provide the infrastructure necessary to support defense-related growth and to ensure quality of life for members of the armed forces, their families, and other members of surrounding communities, we recommend that the Secretary of Defense

- direct the Secretaries of the military services and the Commandant of the Marine Corps to develop and implement guidance, no later than the end of fiscal year 2008, that is consistent with DOD Directive 5410.12 for the timely, complete, and consistent dissemination of DOD planning information such as estimated timelines and numbers of personnel

relocating, as well as demographic data such as numbers of school-aged children, and to update this information quarterly.

In order to better coordinate and leverage federal resources to assist communities affected by DOD activities, we recommend that the Secretary of Defense

- direct the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics to implement Executive Order 12788 by holding regular meetings of the full executive-level EAC and by serving as a clearinghouse of information for identifying expected community impacts and problems as well as identifying existing resources for providing economic assistance to communities affected by DOD activities. This clearinghouse would provide a centralized source for information from all military services regarding personnel planning information, as well as information regarding any resources available at the federal, state, local, and private-sector levels that can help address potential infrastructure gaps at the affected communities. In addition, this information should be updated at least quarterly and made easily available to all interested stakeholders at the local, state, and federal levels.

Agency Comments and Our Evaluation

In written comments on a draft of this report, DOD concurred with our recommendations. However, while DOD indicated concurrence, it is unclear from its comments and stated actions as to what actions, if any, DOD plans to take to meet the intent of our recommendations. DOD's comments are reprinted in their entirety in appendix IV. DOD, as well as several other federal agencies cited in this report, also provided technical comments on a draft of this report which we incorporated as appropriate.

DOD concurred with our recommendation to direct the military services to develop and implement guidance that is consistent with DOD Directive 5410.12, which provides overall policy for minimizing economic impacts on communities resulting from defense activities. Although DOD indicated it would continue to work with the cognizant DOD components to ensure compliance with the directive, actions taken to date have not resulted in the military services' development and implementation of guidance which we believe is necessary for providing more complete and consistent personnel relocation planning data for impacted communities. Moreover, DOD was not explicit in its comments as to what steps it intends to take to ensure that the military services have implemented such guidance by the end of fiscal year 2008. With respect to our recommended action to

provide information updates on a quarterly basis, DOD indicated that not all situations are conducive to quarterly updates. The primary basis for recommending quarterly updates was because the Army, which has the majority of growth activities affecting local communities, updates its centralized personnel movement database on a quarterly basis and could therefore provide quarterly updates. The other services do not have centralized databases and currently provide the information on an as-needed basis. While we agree that some flexibility in the update process may be warranted so as to not create burdensome situations, we continue to believe that it is critical that updated data important for community planning be disseminated on a regular basis to community entities in a manner that is timely, complete, and consistent to provide assurance to the communities that they have the best and most accurate DOD information possible for planning purposes.

DOD also concurred with our recommendation directing the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisitions, Technology, and Logistics to implement Executive Order 12788 to better coordinate and leverage federal resources by holding regular meetings and by developing a centralized clearinghouse of information to provide, among other things, a centralized source for personnel relocation data and available resources to address potential community infrastructure gaps. As noted in its comments, DOD stated that it will develop an information clearinghouse which will identify federal programs and resources to affected communities, present successful state and local responses, and provide EAC members with a basis to resource their assistance programs. Although we believe this to be a step in the right direction, we continue to believe that the EAC, as the senior-level federal committee established by presidential executive order to assist interagency and intergovernmental coordination in support of defense-impacted communities, needs to meet on a regular basis to exercise its responsibilities and assure the successful implementation of Executive Order 12788. However, based on DOD's comments, it is unclear as to whether DOD, as chair of the EAC, intends to call and periodically hold meetings of the full executive-level committee to provide the high-level federal leadership that we believe is necessary to more effectively coordinate federal agency assistance to impacted communities. As our review has shown, the full committee has not met since November 2006. While DOD has left the workings of the EAC to the Office of Economic Adjustment, we do not believe that this office can effectively guide interagency operations at a high enough level to promote interagency cooperation and provide priority considerations to defense-affected communities and therefore we reiterate our recommendation to hold regular meetings of the executive-level EAC.

We are sending copies of this report to other interested congressional committees; the Secretaries of Defense, Army, Air Force, and Navy and the Commandant of the Marine Corps; and the Director, Office of Management and Budget. We will also make copies available to others upon request. In addition, the report will be available at no charge on GAO's Web site at <http://www.gao.gov>.

If you or your staff has any questions concerning this report, please contact me at (202) 512-4523 or at 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 IV.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Brian Lepore". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Brian" and the last name "Lepore" clearly distinguishable.

Brian J. Lepore, Director
Defense Capabilities and Management

List of Congressional Committees

The Honorable John P. Murtha
Chairman

The Honorable C.W. Bill Young
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Defense
Committee on Appropriations
House of Representatives

The Honorable Daniel K. Inouye
Chairman

The Honorable Ted Stevens
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Defense
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate

The Honorable Ike Skelton
Chairman

The Honorable Duncan Hunter
Ranking Member
Committee on Armed Services
House of Representatives

The Honorable Carl Levin
Chairman

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

Appendix I: Scope and Methodology

To examine the extent to which communities affected by defense actions arising from the implementation of the base realignment and closure (BRAC) 2005 round recommendations, the Global Defense Posture Realignment, Army force modularity, and Grow the Force initiatives have identified necessary infrastructure requirements to meet anticipated growth projections, we collected and analyzed available Department of Defense (DOD) data regarding the expected personnel growth at selected communities within the United States. We selected all 20 communities that DOD's Office of Economic Adjustment (OEA) had determined to be growth locations expected to be substantially and seriously impacted based on OEA criteria¹ as of January 2008. (See table 1 for a full listing of these locations.) We interviewed OEA project managers designated to work with each of these communities to obtain background and insight into the challenges these communities were facing and their progress in identifying needed infrastructure within their communities as a result of the military growth. In order to present information regarding expected growth at each military installation, we analyzed Army and Air Force headquarters-level data, and Navy and Marine Corps installation-level population data. We obtained and analyzed the estimated installation population between fiscal years 2006 and 2012 for military, civilian, and mission contractor personnel as well as their families for the 20 growth communities that OEA identified to be substantially and seriously impacted. Installation and dependent population data for the Army were obtained from the centralized Army Stationing and Installation Plan database. To obtain consistent data from the Navy, Marine Corps, and the Air Force—none of which maintain a centralized database for this information—we developed and administered a data collection instrument using the Army database categories. The Navy and Marine Corps provided data directly from the installation level, while the Air Force provided data

¹The Secretary of Defense may provide economic adjustment assistance to any community located near a military installation being closed or realigned as part of the 2005 BRAC round. Pub. L. No. 101-510, Title XXIX, § 2905, as amended by Pub. L. No. 107-107, Title XXX (2001). The Secretary of Defense may also provide adjustment assistance to communities meeting specific criteria for being affected by certain DOD activities. 10 U.S.C. § 2391. To be eligible under the section 2391 authority, an affected community must meet one of the following thresholds: (1) more than 2,000 direct military, civilian, and contractor DOD personnel (i.e., net additional) will be added to the installation; or (2) more military, civilian, and contractor personnel than the number equal to 10 percent of the number of persons employed in counties or independent municipalities within 15 miles of the installation, whichever is less; and (3) federal, state, or local community impact planning assistance is not otherwise available. Additionally, OEA must make a finding that the affected community will experience a “direct and significantly adverse consequence” based on the direct DOD impacts in light of community-specific needs and resources.

through its headquarters Office of Manpower and Personnel. We made numerous contacts with cognizant Army, Navy, Marine Corps, and Air Force officials both at the headquarters and installation level in order to gather and explain these data. We conducted a survey with OEA's designated point of contact at each of the 20 communities and periodically followed up to ascertain, among other things, their progress in identifying growth issues and the status of plans to identify needed support infrastructure. We received completed questionnaires from all 20 locations and conducted follow-up interviews with all 20 to ensure that our information was current. We further interviewed senior officials from each of the military services regarding their practices in providing installation growth projections to growth-impacted communities and OEA in accordance with DOD policy. We also visited 1 location representing each of the top three growth challenges as determined by our survey. These locations and their corresponding growth challenges were Eglin Air Force Base, Florida (transportation); Fort Benning, Georgia, (schools); and Fort Sill, Oklahoma (housing). At each location we interviewed cognizant installation and local community officials regarding the communities' planning issues and analyzed impact and planning data. In addition, we used information collected from site visits during our 2007 review of Army growth installations for a total of 10 location visits.² We also attended numerous workshops involving military growth communities—an Association of Defense Communities Conference in August 2007 in Miami, Florida; a December 2007 OEA-sponsored growth summit in St. Louis, Missouri; a Fort Belvoir town hall meeting in Fairfax County, Virginia, in April 2007; a meeting of the Committee for a Sustainable Emerald Coast in Fort Walton Beach, Florida, in August 2007; and the second annual meeting of the Fort Bragg and Pope Air Force Base BRAC Regional Task Force in Fayetteville, North Carolina, in October 2007. Attending these meetings provided us with more detailed perspectives on community issues and the efforts of selected federal agencies to provide needed assistance. The OEA-sponsored growth summit was particularly helpful in that all 20 communities attended and presented information briefs on their top issues, which we gathered and summarized for this report. We also interviewed officials from the National Governors Association and the Association of Defense Communities who were familiar with infrastructure and financing issues facing military growth communities.

²The 10 combined installation and surrounding community site visits included Eglin Air Force Base, Florida; Fort Belvoir, Virginia; Fort Bliss, Texas; Fort Benning, Georgia; Fort Carson, Colorado; Fort Lee, Virginia; Fort Meade, Maryland; Fort Riley, Kansas; Fort Sill, Oklahoma; and Fort Sam Houston, Texas.

To assess DOD's efforts and the efforts of other government agencies to provide resources and other assistance to affected communities, we reviewed applicable DOD directives and executive orders to determine what role DOD and other agencies have in this process. To ascertain the extent to which communities were receiving state and local funds, we asked the communities to estimate the amount received as part of our survey of the 20 communities. To determine the extent and type of federal assistance being provided, we first conducted interviews with senior OEA officials because OEA serves as a key DOD activity in assisting communities in addressing growth challenges. To determine the extent of non-DOD federal assistance which might be available to growth-impacted communities, we administered a structured data collection instrument (structured questions which we e-mailed) to seven federal agencies—the Department of Transportation, the Department of Education, the Department of Labor, the Department of Commerce, the Small Business Administration, the Department of Agriculture, and the Department of Housing and Urban Development—identified by OEA as key federal agencies that, based on the community issues, may be the most helpful. We asked questions regarding what assistance they had provided the DOD-impacted communities and what programs they could suggest that might provide assistance to these communities. The results of these interviews were summarized and included in the report. We conducted follow-up interviews with senior officials at the Department of Transportation Federal Highway Program and Federal Transit Administration; the Department of Education Elementary and Secondary Education and Impact Aid Program; and the Department of Labor Employment and Training Administration to better understand their knowledge about DOD activities and what plans they had, if any, to assist the impacted communities. We further interviewed senior DOD officials responsible for military community and family; military housing; education; and transportation policies and practices to determine the types and extent of assistance that DOD was providing to impacted communities in those specific areas of interest.

During the course of our review, we contacted the following offices with responsibility for planning, managing, studying, or overseeing growth at defense impacted communities:

Office of the Secretary of Defense

- Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Installations & Environment, Arlington, Virginia
- Office of Economic Adjustment, Arlington, Virginia

- Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Military Community and Family Policy, Arlington, Virginia
- Department of Defense Education Activity, Arlington, Virginia
- Military Surface Deployment and Distribution Command, Defense Access Road Program, Newport News, Virginia

Army

- Army Office of the Assistant Secretary for Installations & Environment, Arlington, Virginia
- Army Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Army for Installation Management, Arlington, Virginia
- Army Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Installations & Environment, Housing Division, Arlington, Virginia
- Army Installation Management Command, Arlington, Virginia

Navy

- Navy Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Installations & Facilities, Arlington, Virginia
- Navy Base Realignment and Closure Program Management Office, Arlington, Virginia

Air Force

- Air Force Deputy Assistant Secretary for Installations, Arlington, Virginia
- Air Force Office of Manpower and Personnel, Arlington, Virginia

Marine Corps

- Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps, Arlington, Virginia

Other federal agencies

- Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Program and Federal Transit Administration, Washington, D.C.
- Department of Education, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Elementary and Secondary Education and the Office of the Impact Aid Program, Washington, D.C.
- Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration, Washington, D.C.
- Department of Agriculture, Office of Rural Development, Washington, D.C.

- Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration, Washington, D.C.
- Small Business Administration, Office of Financial Assistance and Office of Business Development, Washington, D.C.
- U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Office of Community Planning and Development, Washington, D.C.

Associations

- Association of Defense Communities, Washington, D.C.
- National Governors Association, Washington, D.C.

States

- Georgia Military Affairs Coordinating Committee, Atlanta, Georgia
- North Carolina Eastern Region, Kinston, North Carolina

Conferences, town hall meetings, and workshops attended

- Association of Defense Communities 2007 summer conference in Miami, Florida
- Town Hall Meeting, Fort Belvoir Virginia, in Mount Vernon, Virginia
- Fort Bragg, BRAC Regional Task Force Annual Meeting, Fayetteville, North Carolina
- Committee for a Sustainable 2030 Emerald Coast, Fort Walton Beach, Florida
- DOD, Office of Economic Adjustment 2007 Growth Summit, in St. Louis, Missouri.

We conducted our work from February 2007 through May 2008 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. Obtaining installation and family population data from the Navy, Marine Corps, and Air Force required numerous follow-ups by telephone and e-mail and still the data were not complete for our needs. Unlike the Army, these military services do not have a centralized database for this information, and were required to draw from various databases and from the installations themselves in order to fulfill our request. For its part, the Army maintains a centralized database which is updated on a quarterly basis. However, these data have their own shortcomings as described in this report. We found these estimates by nature are not precise and rounded them to the nearest

hundreds to provide a sense of the growth in personnel and families communities have to use for planning purposes. Overall, we believe that the evidence obtained for this report provides a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives.

Appendix II: Types of Federal Assistance Available to All Domestic Communities, Including DOD-Affected Growth Communities, as Identified by 8 of the 22 EAC-Member Agencies

Federal agency	Program
Defense	<p>DOD Supplemental Impact Aid provides financial assistance to Local Educational Agencies (LEAs) that are heavily impacted by the presence of military or DOD civilian dependent students. Eligible LEAs must have at least 20 percent military or civilian dependent students in average daily attendance in their schools, as counted on their Federal Impact Aid application for the preceding year.</p> <p>Impact Aid for Children with Severe Disabilities is available to any LEA that has at least two military dependent children with severe disabilities that meet certain special education cost criteria. DOD works with LEAs and the Department of Education to clarify or resolve any funding or disbursement eligibility issues.</p>
Education	<p>Impact Aid Program provides technical assistance and disburses payments to local educational agencies that are financially burdened by federal activities based on a statutory formula for students reported annually in section 8003 applications to the Department.</p>
Commerce	<p>Economic Adjustment Assistance Program is the primary vehicle for BRAC-related assistance to communities. The program provides technical, planning, and infrastructure assistance.</p> <p>Public Works and Economic Development Program is available to communities impacted by “sudden and severe” changes in economic conditions. This program provides for construction or rehabilitation of essential public infrastructure facilities.</p>
Housing and Urban Development	<p>Community Development Block Grant Program provides annual grants on a formula basis to entitled communities to carry out a wide range of community development activities directed towards neighborhood revitalization, economic development, and improved community facilities and services.</p> <p>The HOME Program provides grants to states and local governments to implement local housing strategies designed to increase home ownership and affordable housing for low- and very low-income Americans.</p>
Labor	<p>National Emergency Grant Program grants are discretionary awards that temporarily expand service capacity at the state and local levels through time-limited funding assistance in response to significant dislocation events.</p> <p>High Growth Job Training identifies industries in need of talent development, connects businesses to the workforce system, and creates programs designed to meet their specific workforce needs.</p> <p>Community-Based Job Training Grants address the need for a partnership between the workforce system and the vocational education system and increase the capacity of community colleges to meet employer demands by providing grants to colleges.</p> <p>Workforce Innovation in Regional Economic Development (WIRED) Initiative stresses the critical role talent development plays in creating effective regional economic development strategies. The initiative goes beyond traditional strategies for worker preparation by bringing together state, local, and federal entities; academic institutions (including K-12, community colleges, and universities); investment groups; foundations; and business and industry to address the challenges associated with building a globally competitive and prepared workforce.</p>

**Appendix II: Types of Federal Assistance
Available to All Domestic Communities,
Including DOD-Affected Growth
Communities, as Identified by 8 of the 22
EAC-Member Agencies**

Federal agency	Program
Small Business Administration	<p>Patriot Express Program provides lending partners with a government-guaranteed loan program tailored to active duty and reserve personnel and their immediate family members.</p> <p>Business Development Program, section 8 (a), is a program designed by Congress to provide socially and economically disadvantaged businesses with the requisite management and technical assistance to enhance their ability to compete in the American marketplace. The program utilizes set-aside and limited competition federal contracts, assistance through SBA's Mentor-Protégé Program, and management and technical assistance through 7(j) designated funds to provide business development assistance to 8(a) firms.</p> <p>Management and Technical Assistance Program, section 7(j), is one of the forms of business development assistance provided to more than 8,800 firms that participate in the 8(a) Business Development Program, as well as other 7(j) eligible concerns. SBA has been able to leverage the assistance provided through the 7(j) program with other forms of management and technical assistance. Additional agency-sponsored workshops, seminars, and conferences have augmented the 7(j) assistance. The training is conducted nationwide and focuses on marketing strategies, doing business with the federal government, how to write winning proposals, crafting an effective cost proposal, maximizing cash flow management, and cost and pricing training.</p>
Transportation	<p>Highway Trust Fund, Title 23, U.S.C., authorizes funding of broad categories of transportation programs from the Highway Trust Fund, which is the main source of federal transportation funding to the states. Priorities are set at the state/local level.</p>
Agriculture	<p>Business & Industry Guaranteed Loan Program provides financial backing for rural businesses. Commercial loan guarantees are available up to 80 percent of the loan amount.</p> <p>Cooperative Extension through Land Grant Universities that provide resource descriptions to communities and annually seeks input on needed services.</p> <p>Community Facilities Direct Loans and Grants Program provides guaranteed loans to develop essential community facilities in rural areas and towns of up to 20,000 in population.</p> <p>Single-Family Housing Program guarantees housing loans to help low and moderate-income individuals or households purchase homes in rural areas.</p> <p>Multi-Family Housing Program provides loans to develop and/or rehabilitate rural rental housing under two direct loan programs, one for farm labor tenancy and one loan-guaranteed program.</p> <p>Rural Rental Assistance Program provides support for very-low and low-income households to assist in paying rent in Rural Development-financed properties.</p> <p>Rural Development Electric Program provides direct loans and loan guarantees to help finance the construction of electric distribution, transmission, and generation facilities.</p> <p>Rural Development Telecommunications Loan Program offers loans for infrastructure improvement and expansion.</p> <p>Rural Business Enterprise Grant Program provides grants for rural projects that finance and facilitate development of small and emerging rural business, help distance learning networks, and help fund employment-related adult education programs.</p> <p>Rural Business Opportunity Grant Program promotes sustainable economic development in rural communities with exceptional needs.</p> <p>Intermediary Relending Program is to help alleviate poverty and increase economic activity and employment in rural communities.</p> <p>Rural Economic Development Loan and Grant Program provides funding to rural projects through local utility organizations.</p> <p>Section 9006 Guaranteed Loan Program encourages commercial financing of renewable energy and energy efficiency projects.</p> <p>Section 9006 Grant Program provides grants for agricultural producers and rural small businesses to purchase renewable energy systems.</p> <p>Rural Development Water and Wastewater Program provides direct loans, grants, and loan guarantees to help finance the construction of drinking water, sanitary sewer, solid waste, and storm drainage facilities in rural areas and cities and towns of 10,000 or less.</p>

Source: DOD and the Departments of Education, Commerce, Labor, Transportation, Agriculture, Housing and Urban Development, and the Small Business Administration.

Appendix III: Executive Order 12788, as Amended through May 2005

EXECUTIVE ORDER 12788

THE PRESIDENT

As AMENDED

Defense Economic Adjustment Program

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, including 10 U.S.C. 2391 and the Defense Economic Adjustment, Diversification, Conversion, and Stabilization Act of 1990, enacted as Division D, section 4001 *et seq.*, of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1991, Public Law 101-510, and to provide coordinated Federal economic adjustment assistance necessitated by changes in Department of Defense activities, it is hereby ordered as follows:

Section 1. *Function of the Secretary of Defense.* The Secretary of Defense shall, through the Economic Adjustment Committee, design and establish a Defense Economic Adjustment Program.

Sec. 2. The Defense Economic Adjustment Program shall (1) assist substantially and seriously affected communities, businesses, and workers from the effects of major Defense base closures, realignments, and Defense contract-related adjustments, and (2) assist State and local governments in preventing the encroachment of civilian communities from impairing the operational utility of military installations.

Sec. 3 *Functions of the Defense Economic Adjustment Program.* The Defense Adjustment Program shall:

- (a) Identify problems of States, regions, metropolitan areas, or communities that result from major Defense base closures, realignments, and Defense contract-related adjustments, and the encroachment of the civilian community on the mission of military installations and that require Federal assistance;
- (b) Use and maintain a uniform socioeconomic impact analysis to justify the use of Federal economic adjustment resources prior to particular realignments;
- (c) Apply consistent policies, practices, and procedures in the administration of Federal programs that are used to assist Defense-affected States, regions, metropolitan areas, communities, and businesses;
- (d) Identify and strengthen existing agency mechanisms to coordinate employment opportunities for displaced agency personnel;
- (e) Identify and strengthen existing agency mechanisms to improve reemployment opportunities for dislocated Defense industry personnel;

(f) Assure timely consultation and cooperation with Federal, State, regional, metropolitan, and community officials concerning Defense-related impacts on Defense-affected communities' problems;

(g) Assure coordinated interagency and intergovernmental adjustment assistance concerning Defense impact problems;

(h) Prepare, facilitate, and implement cost-effective strategies and action plans to coordinate interagency and intergovernmental economic adjustment efforts;

(i) Encourage effective Federal, State, regional, metropolitan, and community cooperation and concerted involvement of public interest groups and private sector organizations in Defense economic adjustment activities;

(j) Serve as a clearinghouse to exchange information among Federal, State, regional, metropolitan, and community officials involved in the resolution of community economic adjustment problems. Such information may include, for example, previous studies, technical information, and sources of public and private financing;

(k) Assist in the diversification of local economies to lessen dependence on Defense activities;

(l) Encourage and facilitate private sector interim use of lands and buildings to generate jobs as military activities diminish;

(m) Develop ways to streamline property disposal procedures to enable Defense-impacted communities to acquire base property to generate jobs as military activities diminish; and

(n) Encourage resolution of regulatory issues that impede encroachment prevention and local economic adjustment efforts.

Sec. 4. *Economic Adjustment Committee.*

(a) *Membership.* The Economic Adjustment Committee ("Committee") shall be composed of the following individuals or a designated principal deputy of these individuals, and such other individuals from the executive branch as the President may designate. Such individuals shall include the:

- (1) Secretary of Agriculture;
- (2) Attorney General;
- (3) Secretary of Commerce;

Appendix III: Executive Order 12788, as Amended through May 2005

- (4) Secretary of Defense;
- (5) Secretary of Education;
- (6) Secretary of Energy;
- (7) Secretary of Health and Human Services;
- (8) Secretary of Housing and Urban Development;
- (9) Secretary of Interior;
- (10) Secretary of Labor;
- (11) Secretary of State;
- (12) Secretary of Transportation;
- (13) Secretary of Treasury;
- (14) Secretary of Veterans Affairs;
- (15) Secretary of Homeland Security;
- (16) Chairman, Council of Economic Advisers;
- (17) Director of the Office of Management and Budget;
- (18) Director of the Office of Personnel Management;
- (19) Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency;
- (20) Administrator of General Services;
- (21) Administrator of the Small Business Administration; and
- (22) Postmaster General.

(b) The Secretary of Defense, or the Secretary's designee, shall chair the Committee.

(c) The Secretaries of Labor and Commerce shall serve as Vice Chairmen of the Committee. The Vice Chairmen shall co-chair the Committee in the absence of both the Chairman and the Chairman's designee and may also preside over meetings of designated representatives of the concerned executive agencies.

(d) *Executive Director.* The head of the Department of Defense's Office of Economic Adjustment shall provide all necessary policy and administrative support for the Committee and shall be responsible for coordinating the application of the Defense Economic Adjustment Program to Department of Defense activities.

(e) *Duties.* The Committee shall:

- (1) Advise, assist, and support the Defense Economic Adjustment Programs;
- (2) Develop procedures for ensuring that State, regional, and community officials, and representatives of organized labor in those States, municipalities, localities, or labor organizations that are substantially and seriously affected by changes in Defense expenditures, realignments or closures, or cancellation or curtailment of major Defense contracts, are notified of available Federal economic adjustment programs; and
- (3) Report annually to the President and then to the Congress on the work of the Economic Adjustment Committee during the preceding fiscal year.

Sec. 5. Responsibilities of Executive Agencies.

(a) The head of each agency represented on the Committee shall designate an agency representative to:

- (1) Serve as a liaison with the Secretary of Defense's economic adjustment staff;
- (2) Coordinate agency support and participation in economic adjustment assistance projects; and
- (3) Assist in resolving Defense-related impacts on Defense-affected communities.

(b) All executive agencies shall:

- (1) Support, to the extent permitted by law, the economic adjustment assistance activities of the Secretary of Defense. Such support may include the use and application of personnel, technical expertise, legal authorities, and available financial resources. This support may be used, to the extent permitted by law, to provide a coordinated Federal response to the needs of individual States, regions, municipalities, and communities adversely affected by necessary Defense changes; and
- (2) Afford priority consideration to requests from Defense-affected communities for Federal technical assistance, financial resources, excess or surplus property, or other requirements, that are part of a comprehensive plan used by the Committee.

Sec. 6. Judicial Review. This order shall not be interpreted to create any right or benefit, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law by a party against the United States, its agencies, its officers, its agents, or any person.

Sec. 7. Construction. (a) Nothing in this order shall be construed as subjecting any function vested by law in, or assigned pursuant to law to, any agency or head thereof to the authority of any other agency or officer or as abrogating or restricting any such function in any manner.

(b) This order shall be effective immediately and shall supersede Executive Order No 12049.

GEORGE BUSH
THE WHITE HOUSE
January 15, 1992.

[Amended 2/28/03 by President George W. Bush, E.O. 13286]
[Amended 5/12/05 by President George W. Bush, E.O. 13378]

Appendix IV: Comments from the Department of Defense



ACQUISITION
TECHNOLOGY
AND LOGISTICS

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

JUN 04 2008

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

Dear Mr. Lepore:

Thank you for the opportunity for the Department of Defense (DoD) to review and provide comment on the GAO Draft Report "DEFENSE INFRASTRUCTURE: High-Level Leadership Needed to Help Communities Address Challenges Caused by DoD-Related Growth," dated May 6, 2008 (GAO Code 350970/GAO-08-665).

The Department concurs with the recommendation to improve the military personnel relocation data provided to affected communities in order to help them be responsive to the needs of their local installations, incoming warfighters and their dependents, and greater civilian population. We also concur with the recommendation that high-level senior leadership would facilitate more effective inter-agency and inter-governmental coordination of assistance. The Department takes great care to work with these communities and will continue to help them address challenges caused by DoD-related growth. Detailed comments on this report's recommendations and efforts currently underway to address them are enclosed.

Sincerely,

Wayne Army
Deputy Under Secretary Defense
(Installations and Environment)

Enclosure:
As stated



GAO DRAFT REPORT – DATED MAY 6, 2008
GAO CODE 350970/GAO-08-665

“DEFENSE INFRASTRUCTURE: High-Level Leadership Needed to
Help Communities Address Challenges Caused by DoD-Related Growth”

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE COMMENTS
TO THE RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATION 1: The GAO recommends that the Secretary of Defense direct the Secretaries of the Military Services and the Commandant of the Marine Corps to develop and implement guidance, no later than the end of FY 2008, that is consistent with DoD Directive 5410.12 for the timely, complete, and consistent dissemination of DoD planning information such as estimated timelines, numbers of personnel relocating, and demographic data, such as numbers of school age children, and to update this information quarterly.

DOD RESPONSE: Concur. While the available information has been improving to assist the local response in many of these communities, the Department will continue to work with the cognizant DoD components to ensure consistent compliance with DoD Directive 5410.12. Furthermore, the information derived through this effort should be available to all Federal, state, and local interests who need to work with the same set of facts in responding to mission growth. Accordingly, we are establishing a clearinghouse to provide this information as referenced in Recommendation 2 of this report.

Not all data for this clearinghouse is conducive to quarterly updates. For example, we need the flexibility to establish a data update protocol in collaboration with the local school districts that coincides with the school calendar. Additionally, given the need to interact extensively with the affected communities concerning certain information, quarterly updates may burden rather than assist a locale. We expect that a responsive clearinghouse will be developed with this flexibility.

RECOMMENDATION 2: The GAO recommends that the Secretary of Defense direct the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics to:

- Implement Executive Order 12788 by holding regular meetings of the full executive level Economic Adjustment Committee so as to develop a clearinghouse of information for identifying expected community impacts and problems as well as identifying existing resources for providing economic assistance to communities affected by DoD activities. This clearinghouse would provide a centralized source for personnel relocation data from all Services, as well as information regarding any available resources at the Federal, state, local and private sector levels that can help address potential infrastructure gaps at the affected communities.
- Update this information at least quarterly and make it easily available to all interested stakeholders at the local, state and Federal levels.

DOD RESPONSE: Concur. The clearinghouse we discuss in our response to Recommendation 1 will also: identify Federal programs and resources available to the affected communities; present successful state and local responses; and provide Economic Adjustment Committee (EAC) members with a basis to resource their responsive Federal programs of assistance. Again, we need flexibility in the update of this information. For instance, Federal programs of assistance do not change on a quarterly basis so we will be striving to ensure current program information is available.

Once local needs for Federal adjustment assistance are identified and validated, EAC members must coordinate resources among the cognizant Federal agencies and allocate resources accordingly, affording priority consideration to requests consistent with Executive Order 12788, as amended. Given the fiscally-constrained environment, senior EAC leadership across all member agencies must be fully engaged with the Defense Economic Adjustment Program. Senior leadership will be necessary to assist inter-agency and inter-governmental coordination at levels that can make policy and budgetary decisions to better leverage resources through the effort. Many of the affected communities are still identifying needs for Federal assistance and DoD, through the Office of Economic Adjustment (OEA), is working with them to articulate these needs and their responsiveness to mission growth.

Appendix V: GAO Contact and Staff Acknowledgments

GAO Contact

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