



MIAMI-DADE COUNTY FINAL OFFICIAL MINUTES Miami-Dade Military Affairs Board

Fire Fighters Memorial Building
8000 NW 21st Street
Miami, FL 33122

February 5, 2014
As Advertised

Harvey Ruvin, Clerk
Board of County Commissioners

Christopher Agrippa, Director
Clerk of the Board Division

Mary Smith-York, Commission Reporter
(305) 375-1598



CLERK'S SUMMARY AND OFFICIAL MINUTES
MILITARY AFFAIRS ADVISORY BOARD
February 5, 2014

The Military Affairs Advisory Board (MAB) convened in a meeting on February 5, 2014, at 6:00 p.m. at the Fire Fighters Memorial Building, 8000 N.W. 21st Street, Miami, Florida, 33122.

The following voting Board members were present: Commissioner Jose "Pepe" Diaz, Chairman; Mario Alvarez; Dr. Anthony Atwood; Rose Brito; Thomas Davis; Councilman Timothy Daubert; Diana Gonzalez; Kevin Humes; Eduardo Lombard; Joseph Martory; and Jorge Sibila.

The following voting Board members were absent: David Blake; Mark Blumstein; David Conley; Manuel Gonzalez; Charles Johnson; Christopher Miller; Don Slesnick, II; and Keith Vail Whitbeck.

The following non-voting Board members were present: Edward Haynes; Lt. Col. Robert Stacks; and Shane Suzuki.

The following non-voting Board members were absent: Glorianne Amor; Major Brooke Cortez, Sergeant Eddy Fonseca, Jr; Colonel Morris Hatcher; Captain Mark Jackson; City of Doral Vice Mayor Sandra Ruiz; and Joanna Sandstrom.

The following staff members were present: Gustavo Cruz, MAB Director; Assistant County Attorney Miguel Gonzalez; Antonio Crawford, Office of Commission Auditor; and Deputy Clerk Mary Smith-York.

The following guests were also present: Lt. Col. Antonio Colmenares, USMC (Ret); Dr. William Valencia, Miami Veterans Administration Healthcare System (VAHS); Ms. Karen Vassell and Mr. Ralph Rios, West Kendall Baptist Hospital; Lt. Col. Sonny Vo, Florida International University (FIU) Army ROTC; and Mr. Arturo Campa, Executive Producer, Miami International Jazz Fest.

❖ **Welcome:**

Chairman Diaz called the meeting to order at 6:15 p.m. and welcomed MAB members and guests to tonight's (2/5) meeting. Pursuant to Florida Statutes, he opened the public hearing calling for anyone wishing to be heard on any item on tonight's agenda. Seeing no one appear wishing to be heard, Chairman Diaz closed the public hearing.

❖ **Moment of Silence/Pledge of Allegiance:**

Miami Lakes Councilman Timothy Daubert led the MAB in a moment of silence, after which Mr. Joseph Martory led the Pledge of Allegiance.

❖ **Board Member Roundtable:**

The following introductions and updates were made by MAB members:

Mr. David Blake, representing Commissioner Monestime, District 2.

Mr. Kevin Humes, representing Commissioner Jordan, District 1, advised that, on behalf of the Health Foundation of South Florida, he would later today make a presentation regarding the Enhanced Fitness Exercise Program.

Professor Anthony Atwood, representing Commissioner Moss, District 9, reported that on May 5, 2014, the Military Museum would be supporting a family survivor-type event at U.S. Southern Command (SOUTHCOM) and on May 17, 2014, a possible fundraising event.

Lt. Col. Jorge Sibila, representing County Commissioner Bruno Barreiro, District 5.

Mr. Joseph Martory, representing BCC Chairwoman Rebeca Sosa, District 6, announced that the Veteran's Association would host a dinner dance on February 8, 2014, at the Miami Elks Lodge #948, 10301 Sunset Drive, Miami, Florida, and invited those interested in attending to see him later.

Mr. Eduardo Lombard, representing Commissioner Zapata, District 11, announced that this Friday (2/7), the FIU Department of Veterans and Military affairs and the Miami Vet Center would host its annual Veterans Career and Resource Fair at FIU; and that the Vietnam Traveling Memorial Wall would be stationed in Key Largo from April 11-14, 2014.

Councilman Timothy Daubert, representing Commissioner Bovo, District 13.

Mr. Thomas Davis, representing Commissioner Bell, District 8, noted that over 200 had been deployed from the Homestead Air Reserve Base.

Ms. Diana Gonzalez, representing the Miami-Dade Defense Alliance.

Ms. Rosa Brito, representing the Homestead/Florida City Chamber of Commerce.

Mr. Mario Alvarez, representing Miami-Dade County Mayor Carlos Gimenez.

Mr. Shane Suzuki, representing the Miami Veteran's Administration Healthcare System.

❖ **Old Business:**

➤ **MAB Logo**

Chairman Diaz provided a brief overview of the MAB's discussion on creating a logo for this entity and displayed a draft designed by a staff member. He advised that he would request County staff to create several designs to present for MAB members' consideration at the next meeting. Chairman Diaz stated that Mr. Cruz would distribute copies prior to the next meeting so MAB members could review and prepare to discuss the designs at the next meeting.

Mr. Cruz explained that the purpose of establishing a logo for the MAB was to identify the organization at events and activities.

➤ **South Florida Region Homeless Veterans Stand Down**

Lt. Col. Antonio “Mico” Colmenares, USMC (Ret.), Veterans Services Director, City of Miami and Florida Veterans Foundation Director, Tallahassee, appeared before the MAB and announce that his organizations were sponsoring a San Diego Styled Homeless Veterans 3-Day Stand Down. He noted this event would be held at the American Legion Post 29, located at 6445 NE 7th Avenue, Miami, FL 33138, over the Memorial Day Weekend, May 23-25, 2014 and would be at no cost to participants. Lt. Col. Colmenares invited volunteers to get involved and help with this event and distributed packets containing complete details regarding the stand down event. He also encouraged members to inform him of friends, relatives, and political associates, as well as all interested agencies and organizations, who would like to assist with this event that would help an estimated 500 homeless veterans. Lt. Col. Colmenares noted the opening ceremony would be held that Friday, May 23, 2014, and noted the City of Miami would provide the stages and other supplies, with the Florida Veterans Foundation providing all other necessary items. He noted a site of 50 tents named “Camp Hope” would be set up and expressed a need for the County to provide buses for this event. Lt. Col. Colmenares advised that the last such event had held in Miami was in 2007, and that he was excited that, at last count, the number of homeless veterans on the streets was less than 200. He announced that the goal was to report in June 2014, that one of the major cities in the county, and in the country, had ended veterans’ homelessness.

In response to Chairman Diaz’ inquiry as to what process would be used to determine the authenticity of veterans, Lt. Col. Colmenares explained the verification system that would be done by the Veterans’ Administration; emphasizing that the event designed strictly for veterans on the street; not those in shelters. He displayed informational cards, advising that he would distribute them to MAB members for issuance to homeless veterans when the date was near.

Ms. Gonzalez stated that the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA) was interested in doing a similar activity for women and that she would share this information with that organization.

Lt. Col. Colmenares announced that a meeting to discuss this event was scheduled for 12:00 noon on February 12, 2014, at Goodwill Industries Store, 2121 NW 21 Street, Miami, Florida, and asked that those planning to attend RSVP because lunch was being served.

Mr. Suzuki briefly described the authentication process and the services that would be provided in an effort to assist the homeless veterans.

Chairman Diaz noted his concerns regarding abuse of this effort were address during his conversation with Lt. Col. Colmenares and expressed his support of this event.

It was moved by Councilman Daubert that the MAB support the 2014 Memorial Day Weekend Homeless Veteran Stand Down Event and place information regarding the event on its Website.

This motion was seconded by Ms. Brito, and upon being put to a vote, passed by a vote of 11-0 (Members David Blake; Mark Blumstein; David Conley; Manuel Gonzalez; Charles Johnson; Christopher Miller; Don Slesnick, II; and Keith Vail Whitbeck were absent).

Responding to Mr. Haynes question pertaining to participating agencies, Lt. Col. Colmenares advised that an awards luncheon for all participants was planned for all individuals and agencies who participated in the event. He noted a few celebrities scheduled to appear at the event and emphasized that the focus was to place 20 veterans into housing.

➤ **70th Anniversary of D-Day:**

Mr. Gustavo Cruz distributed copies depicting the D-Day logo that would be used on information commemorating the 70th Anniversary of D-Day. He noted he was working with County staff to provide a link on the MAB Website that would announce that June 2014 was the 70th Anniversary of D-Day and provide information about related activities and events.

Chairman Diaz asked that MAB members, who wanted to participate in the efforts toward making this event successful, contact Mr. Cruz.

❖ **NEW BUSINESS**

➤ **Chairman's Comments/Appointment:**

Chairman Diaz advised that, due to excessive absences, MAB members, Mr. Don Slesnick and Mr. Charles Johnson, was asked to withdraw their membership, and stressed the importance of members being able to attend meetings.

Assistant County Attorney Miguel Gonzalez advised that the ordinance creating the MAB provided for automatic removal of those members with a specific number of absences; however, if the MAB wished to formalize this action, it could conduct a vote.

Chairman Diaz stated that allowing the automatic removal, pursuant to the ordinance, would prevent potential issues and asked MAB members to recommend individuals who were willing to perform for those vacant seats. He explained that the Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce would need to make a new appointment and that he would need to make the other appointment for District 12.

➤ **BRAC**

Chairman Diaz noted he spoke with Ms. Donna Shalala, President, University of Miami, and Mr. Mark B. Rosenberg, President, Florida International University, regarding the issue of ROTC and centralizing Southern Strike among the three schools.

Lt. Col. Sonny Vo, Professor of Military Science, Florida International University (FIU) Army ROTC, appeared and explained that, although the ranks in the army were being depleted with the drawdown, quality men and women were still needed to fill those ranks. He stated that in South Florida, he was in charge of training military cadets in seven universities, including University of Miami (UM), FIU, Palm Beach Atlantic University. Lt. Col. Vo noted the Southern Strike

Battalion program cadets graduated at the same level as cadets attending West Point Academy, with the exception of being more mature. He described a program, at FIU's School of Nursing, for which the Department of Defense approved a multimillion grant that allowed Army medics to enroll in an accelerated program and earn Bachelor of Nursing degrees in 12 months versus 24 months. He requested MAB members to submit the names of any army medics who might be interested in this opportunity to Mr. Cruz.

In response to Mr. Haynes' question regarding individuals experiencing difficulty in traditional enrollment, Lt. Col. Vo stated he would be the point of contact for those students and described examples of the assistance available to help students achieve degrees. He noted this program was open to all branches of the armed service.

Chairman Diaz expressed great respect for Lt. Col. Vo and noted his support for this program, commenting that he recently visited the new Military and Veterans Affairs Building, formerly the old airport tower. He requested a motion that a portion of the MAB be accepted as voting members in the Southern Strike Program at three schools: FIU, UM, and Miami-Dade College, which he noted would be presented for approval to be included in the MAB By-laws by the Miami-Dade Board of County Commissioners (BCC).

It was moved by Ms. Gonzalez that a request be made to the BCC that a portion of the MAB members be approved to serve as members of the Southern Strike Program and that the By-laws be amended to reflect this change. This motion was seconded by Ms. Brito, and upon being put to a vote, passed by a vote of 11-0 (Members David Blake; Mark Blumstein; David Conley; Manuel Gonzalez; Charles Johnson; Christopher Miller; Don Slesnick, II; and Keith Vail Whitbeck were absent).

Mr. Thomas Davis distributed handouts containing information regarding the Base Realignment and Closure Program (BRAC) and discussed issues concerning the BRAC Committee. He warned that the military BRAC was imminent and that the significant drawdowns would affect the Veterans Administration (VA) and jobs in South Florida. Mr. Davis briefly described the overall consequences that would result from the closing of military bases and listed the units located in South Florida that could be impacted. He indicated that within the next few weeks, efforts to energize views about BRAC and prepare for the impending cuts needed to take place. He noted Ms. Diana Gonzalez and Councilman Timothy Daubert were members of the BRAC Committee and knowledgeable assets in preparing to protect the Homestead Air Force Base, the U.S. Special Operations Command South (SOC SOUTH), and all the small National Guard Units in this community. Mr. Davis explained that the military had already begun making cuts and defined success as not losing a unit once the BRAC process was activated and providing the space, acreage, and support to the displaced smaller organizations resulting from the closure of Youngstown Air Reserve Station or other National Guard base.

In response to Chairman Diaz' inquiry as to the status of the Florida Defense Support Task Force (FDSTF) assembled by Governor Rick Scott, Ms. Gonzalez noted a visit to South Florida was originally planned for October 2013; however, because the base could not support that visit, it was rescheduled for May 2014. She referred to the article distributed by Mr. Davis entitled "The Spectrum Group" and noted this group had partnered with The Principi Group to form the

consulting team, Principi Spectrum, hired by the State. Ms. Gonzalez informed members that Secretary Anthony J. Principi was the chair of the 2005 BRAC Commission and addressed the FDSTF at every meeting. She stated the team had visited Homestead and had listed together with MacDill Air Force Base and Florida Defense Alliance in Orlando, as the three Florida bases in danger of closing. Ms. Gonzalez recommended the MAB engage in the same type of methodology utilized in 2005, including establishing community leaders forums and developing a strategic plan. She concurred with Mr. Davis' comments about now being the time to get motivated to minimize any negative impact, and that movements were being made daily toward the BRAC process.

Chairman Diaz commented that this Board was created to address just this type of issue and listed the areas of the government, military, community that the MAB members represented.

Mr. Davis advised that Ms. Gonzalez had informed him that the military in Miami-Dade County was a \$5 billion dollar industry and suggested the MAB's motto be "We are going to fight for Miami-Dade."

In response to Mr. Haynes' question as to whether the National Guard Armory, on N.W. 7th Avenue, would be impacted by the BRAC process, Mr. Davis stated that, according to the articles he distributed, there was no way to know what would actually happen.

Lt. Col. Robert Stacks noted that he was asked to submit three nominations to the Secretary of the Army to serve as the Civilian Aide to the Secretary of the Army, and noted a vacancy existed in South Florida. He asked all interested in serving in this position let him know and he would pass names in.

Chairman Diaz requested members to submit any names to Mr. Cruz to remain in compliance with the Sunshine Laws.

Lt. Col. Stacks stated there were three weeks remaining in this recruitment period and advised that those interested should prepare a one-page biography, adding that he would submit the requirement to Mr. Cruz for distribution to the MAB members.

➤ **Allocation of MAB Trust Fund money for an electronic tablet for the Director**

Mr. Gustavo Cruz introduced the foregoing request and stated the reason for the request was to provide the MAB Director with the ability to showcase the MAB's activities during meetings with other organizations.

It was moved by Mr. Daubert that the MAB approve allocation of an amount, not to exceed \$1,500.00, for the purchase of an electronic tablet for use by the MAB Director. This motion was seconded by Ms. Brito, and upon being put to a vote, passed by a vote of 11-0 (David Blake; Mark Blumstein; David Conley; Manuel Gonzalez; Charles Johnson; Christopher Miller; Don Slesnick, II; and Keith Vail Whitbeck were absent).

➤ **Sunset Review Approval**

Mr. Gustavo Cruz, MAB Director, advised that it was time for the MAB's sunset review, which occurred every two years. He distributed copies of the completed 2014 Sunset Review Questionnaire and asked members to review the content, and if acceptable, approve for submittal to the Clerk of the Board.

Following review, it was moved by Ms. Brito that the MAB 2014 Sunset Review Questionnaire be approved as presented. This motion was seconded by Ms. Gonzalez, and upon being put to a vote, passed by a vote of 11-0 (David Blake; Mark Blumstein; David Conley; Manuel Gonzalez; Charles Johnson; Christopher Miller; Don Slesnick, II; and Keith Vail Whitbeck were absent).

➤ **West Baptist Hospital Dinner for Veterans**

Ms. Karen Vassell, Community Relations and Special Projects Manager, appeared before the MAB and introduced Mr. Ralph Rios, Vice President, West Kendall Baptist Hospital, who would make today's (2/5) presentation.

Mr. Ralph Rios, Vice President, West Kendall Baptist Hospital, stated that West Kendall Baptist Hospital was the newest members of the Baptist Health family and was building a sense of community in that area. He announced that the organization had initiated on January 22, 2014, hosting a Military Family Appreciation Dinner to honor service members and bring their families together. Mr. Rios explained that five additional dinners were scheduled for the coming months and would likely be extended for a year based on positive feedback. He distributed announcement cards and asked that MAB members promote this free event to the service members and families in the community. Mr. Rios advised that on May 28, 2014, Lexus of West Kendall would be hosting a larger event for military veterans and their families, and asked that MAB members spread the word and distribute the announcement cards.

In response to Ms. Gonzalez' recommendation that this information be disseminated through the Morale, Welfare, and Recreation (MWR) offices, Chairman Diaz requested a vote from MAB members to support these efforts and advertise this event on the MAB Website.

It was moved by Councilman Daubert that in support of the West Kendall Baptist Hospital's efforts, the MAB post the announcements for the Military Family Appreciation Dinner events on the MAB Website. This motion was seconded by Ms. Brito, and upon being put to a vote, passed by a vote of 11-0 (Members David Blake; Mark Blumstein; David Conley; Manuel Gonzalez; Charles Johnson; Christopher Miller; Don Slesnick, II; and Keith Vail Whitbeck were absent).

➤ **Resolution for Toys for Tots 2014**

Assistant County Attorney Miguel Gonzalez referenced the vote at the last MAB meeting, directing him to draft a resolution requesting the County's support for the Toys for Tots Drive this year (2014). He advised that the draft resolution was available for the MAB's approval and would provide for a subsequent appropriation of funds and support from the County Mayor's Office and urge other municipalities to provide support as well.

It was moved by Ms. Gonzalez that the Resolution requesting support for the 2014 Toys for Tots Drive be approved as presented. This motion was seconded by Ms. Brito, and upon being put to a vote, passed by a vote of 10-0 (Members David Blake; Mark Blumstein; David Conley; Timothy Daubert; Manuel Gonzalez; Charles Johnson; Christopher Miller; Don Slesnick, II; and Keith Vail Whitbeck were absent).

➤ **Proclamation for Colonel Valeria Gonzalez-Kerr**

Chairman Diaz introduced the foregoing item and recognized Col. Gonzalez-Kerr's courage in informing him that the assets for the parade had been lost. He stated that because funding was not available to send a MAB member to present the proclamation to Col. Gonzalez-Kerr, it would be sent by a representative.

Mr. Cruz advised that, on behalf of the MAB, BCC Chairwoman Sosa, Commissioner Diaz, and Mayor Gimenez signed a proclamation declaring Saturday (2/8) Colonel Valeria Gonzalez-Kerr Day. He stated that this proclamation would be presented to Col Gonzalez-Kerr by Major McMillan during the change of command ceremony at Camp Banding Joint Training Center, in Stark, Florida.

➤ **Allocation of funds for Golden Veterans Parade poster contest runners up**

Mr. Gustavo Cruz introduced the foregoing request, informing MAB members that a Golden Veterans Parade Poster Contest was held for high school students and that the funds were already allocated for the top three winners. He advised that this request was for additional money to fund prizes of \$250.00 for each of the five (5) runners-up, for a total of \$1,250.00.

It was moved by Ms. Brito that the MAB approve the allocation of \$1,250.00, to award \$250.00 to each of the five (5) runners-up in the Golden Veterans Parade Poster Contest. This motion was seconded by Ms. Gonzalez, and upon being put to a vote, passed by a vote of 11-0 (David Blake; Mark Blumstein; David Conley; Manuel Gonzalez; Charles Johnson; Christopher Miller; Don Slesnick, II; and Keith Vail Whitbeck were absent).

➤ **Presentation by Dr. Valencia of UM Health on an exercise program for veterans in County parks**

Mr. Kevin Humes noted a program focused on the issue of obesity and diabetes for senior veterans and noted the Park, Recreation and Open Spaces Department (PROS), the University of Miami (UM), and the Veterans Administration Healthcare System (VAHS) had created a free advanced fitness program. He stated PROS had identified 12 parks in the County that would participate in this program and noted this effort was being correlated with the 12 districts and the veteran representative in each district. He provided a brief description on the components of the program and its goal to recruit Afghanistan and Iraqi veterans.

Dr. William Valencia, Engineer of Design & Technology, Miami Veterans Administration Healthcare System (VAHS), distributed copies of a PowerPoint Presentation outlining the five-year implementation of the Enhanced Fitness Exercise Program at Miami VAHS. He highlighted the following issues: 1) the objectives; 2) the problem 3) the available intervention; and 4) the alternative solution. Dr. Valencia noted the program revealed that approximately 80

percent of veterans were overweight. He addressed the fact that most VA hospitals lacked the amount of space needed for exercise rooms and described the success rate of the program. Dr. Valencia stated his organization was working to develop methods to sustain the program, making it available to veterans at no cost to the county or to the veterans. He advised that implementation required leaders, licenses, locations, trainers, and participants and would be available in 13 parks around Miami-Dade County.

➤ **Medal of Valor Ceremony 2014**

Mr. Gustavo Cruz provided a brief overview of the foregoing item, noting the Medal of Valor was the highest honor awarded to the families of service men and women who were killed in active duty. He stated the tentative date for the ceremony was May 20, 2014 and gave a brief description of the process.

➤ **Financial Disclosures for 2013**

Mr. Cruz stated members must complete the Advisory Board Training.

Mr. Cruz requested members to complete the form and submit it to him for finalizing and forwarding to the Clerk of the Board for processing.

Assistant County Attorney Miguel Gonzalez stated he thought it was for voting members only but would verify if applicable to non-voting members

Non-Agenda Item

Mr. Arturo Campa, Executive Producer, announced the Miami International Jazz Festival and asked for the Board's support, highlighting the positive fiscal impact to this County. He noted his music career of 40 years and explained that this event would provide benefits countywide. Mr. Arturo stated that, as a veteran and out of respect for fellow veterans, he would offer a 25 percent discount to all veterans who supported this event. Mr. Campa further expressed his desire to establish a program called "Idle Hands" that would help teach students in the music field. He asked for the MAB's support in sponsoring the Miami International Jazz Festival, which currently had only \$10,000 of the actual \$35,000 cost to produce the event.

Mr. Cruz noted loss of quorum and asked Mr. Campa to present him with information on his proposal so he could pass it on to the MAB members.

❖ **Approval of Minutes:** (September 4, 2013; October 2, 2013, and October 29, 2013)

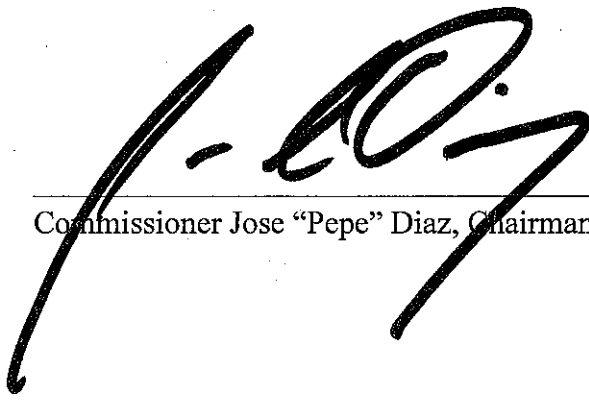
It was moved by Ms. Brito that the minutes for the MAB meetings of September 4, 2013; October 2, 2013; and October 29, 2013 be approved as presented. This motion was seconded by Mr. Davis, and upon being put to a vote, passed by a vote of 11-0 (Members David Blake; Mark Blumstein; David Conley; Manuel Gonzalez; Charles Johnson; Christopher Miller; Don Slesnick, II; and Keith Vail Whitbeck were absent).

❖ **Next Meeting date is scheduled for March 5, 2014.**

❖ **Discussion items for the next agenda**

❖ **Adjournment**

There being no further business to come before the Military Affairs Advisory Board, the meeting adjourned at 7:56 p.m.



Commissioner Jose "Pepe" Diaz, Chairman



Miami – Dade Military Affairs Board

February 5, 2014

Prepared by: Mary Smith-York

EXHIBITS LIST

NO.	DATE	ITEM #	DESCRIPTION
1	02/05/2014		Military Affairs Board Agenda
2	02/05/2014		South Florida Region Homeless Veterans Stand Down Information Pkg.
3	02/05/2014		70 th Anniversary of D-Day Logo
4	02/05/2014		BRAC – Information downloaded from Internet
5	02/05/2014		2014 Sunset Review Questionnaire
6	02/05/2014		West Baptist Hospital Dinner for Veterans Announcement Card
7	02/05/2014		Resolution for Toys for Tots 2014
8	02/05/2014		Presentation by Dr. Valencia of UM Health Re: Enhanced Fitness Exercise Program
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MIAMI-DADE COUNTY
OFFICE OF THE CHAIR
MILITARY AFFAIRS ADVISORY BOARD
MONTHLY MEETING
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 5TH, 2014
6:00 PM

FIRE FIGHTERS MEMORIAL BUILDING
8000 NW 21 Street, Doral, FL 33122
AGENDA

❖ **Welcome**

❖ **Moment of Silence / Pledge of Allegiance**

❖ **Board Member Roundtable**

❖ **Old Business**

- **MAB Logo**
- **South Florida Region Homeless Veterans Stand Down**
- **70th Anniversary of D-Day**

❖ **New Business**

- **Chairman's Comments/Appointment**
- **BRAC**
- **Allocation of MAB Trust Fund money for an electronic tablet for the Director**
- **Sunset Review approval**
- **West Baptist Hospital Dinner for Veterans**

- Resolution for Toys for Tots 2014
- Proclamation for Colonel Valeria Gonzalez-Kerr
- Allocation of funds for Golden Veterans Parade poster contest runner ups
- Presentation by Dr. Valencia of UM Health on an exercise program for veterans in County parks
- Medal of Valor Ceremony 2014
- Financial Disclosures for 2013
- ❖ Approval of Minutes (October 2nd, 2013 and October 29th, 2013)
- ❖ Next meeting date is scheduled for March 5th, 2014
- ❖ Discussion items for the next agenda
- ❖ Adjournment



DRAFT SOUTH FLORIDA REGION

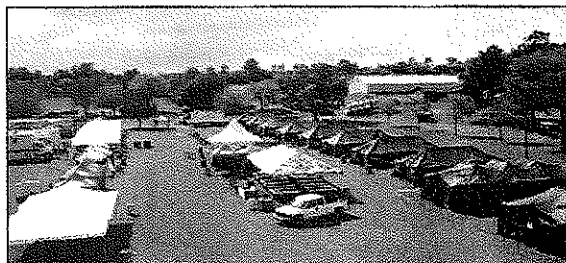
(Monroe, Miami-Dade, Broward)

May 23-25, 2014

HOMELESS VETERANS STAND DOWN



WELCOME TO STAND DOWN... During the three-day event, The American Legion Post 29 located at 6445 NE 7th Ave Miami, FL 33138 will take on a military atmosphere as tents and cots are set up for homeless veterans who will live and sleep on the property through the weekend.



HELP IS HERE... Veterans and their families who are living on the streets or who do not have permanent housing will get free access to:

- Two nights of sleeping accommodations
- Bus passes
- Three days of hot meals
- Hot showers & clean clothes
- Haircuts for men and hair treatments for women
- Dental examinations
- Medical examinations and prescriptions written
- Infectious diseases screenings/testing
- Vision examinations
- Hearing and Glucose testing
- Pharmacy Services
- AA/NA/ALANON Meetings
- PTSD & TBI Counseling and information
- Housing Voucher Applications, counseling and services
- Veterans and Children day and evening Entertainment
- Animal Shelter/care/adoptions

- Job and Employment applications/Counseling/Resume writing
- VA Disability Claims processing
- Military personnel records checks and replacement application
- Legal counseling and/or Stand Down Court (sign up by 03/15/2014)
- State Photo Identification cards (Need Birth Certificate and SS Card)
- Social Security Benefits (Food Stamps, SSI & Disability) processing
- Medicaid Applications
- Birth Certificates ordered
- GED enrollment
- Art Therapy
- Pet Therapy
- Women and Children Services and Information
- Voter Registration



HOW CAN YOU HELP?

- **Sponsor one of the many military tents---** \$500.00 dollars sponsorship per tent
- **Volunteer your services:** barbers and stylist, set-up and tear-down assistance. Food Services, Veteran Escort, and Tent Leaders are just a few of the needs at Stand Down
- **Volunteer Items:** food, clothing, back packs, blankets, towels, and comfort items, are all required to make this a successful event
- **Make a Tax Exempt Donation to the Florida Veterans Foundation:** For "SoFlo Homeless Stand Down"

For more information contact: LtCol Tony Colmenares USMC (Ret)
Ph: 305-984-7849 Email: Colmenaresa@fdva.state.fl.us

SPONSORSHIP LEVELS OF COMMITMENT

The Florida Veterans Foundation and City of Miami is hosting a SoFlo Homeless Veterans Stand Down. It will be held on Memorial Day weekend May 23-25. We will be offering our homeless and at-risk veterans a hand-up.

In times of war, exhausted combat units requiring time to rest and recover were removed from the battlefields to a place of security and safety. Today, Stand Down refers to a grassroots, community-based intervention program designed to help the nation's estimated 67,000 homeless veterans "combat" life on the streets.

During the three-day event, American Legion Post 29, 6445 NE 7th Ave, Miami, FL 33138 will take on a military atmosphere as tents and cots are set up for homeless veterans, who will live and sleep on the property through the weekend. Veterans who are living on the streets or who do not have permanent housing will get free access to showers, food, clothing, medical services, legal and mental health services, and job counseling. Most importantly, though, they will receive companionship and camaraderie.

Stand Down is a time for the community to connect with our homeless veterans and to begin to break down the barriers that are keeping these heroes on the streets. The "hand up, not a handout" philosophy of Stand Down requires the work of countless volunteers, businesses, and local, state and national organizations

***Stand Down" began in San Diego in 1988. Twenty-five years later, that organization has celebrated many successes, and was featured in 2010 on "60 Minutes." There are now more than 200 Stand Downs throughout the country.

Donations

Squad Level Sponsor \$500

- Sponsor announcement on the SoFlo Homeless Vets website
- Certificate of Meritorious Mast for sponsorship presented at awards luncheon

Platoon Level Sponsor \$1000

- Sponsor announcement on the SoFlo Homeless Vets website
- Signage with logo on a Camp Hope Tent
- Listing on Sponsor Banner at the Entertainment Stage
- Certificate of Appreciation for sponsorship presented at awards luncheon

Company Level Sponsor \$2500

- Sponsor announcement on the SoFlo Homeless Vets website
- Signage with logo on a Camp Hope Tent
- Listing on Sponsor Banner at the Entertainment Stage
- Inclusion in promotional material prior to Stand Down
- Certificate of Commendation for sponsorship presented at awards luncheon

Battalion Level Sponsor \$5000

- Sponsor announcement on the SoFlo Homeless Vets website
- Signage with logo on a Camp Hope Tent
- Inclusion in promotional material prior to Stand Down
- Listing on Sponsor Banner at the Entertainment Stage
- Corporate Logo at main entrance gate at the American Legion
- Special Recognition on SoFlo Homeless Vets Website
- Introduction of corporation on main stage
- Platinum Level Award Plaque for sponsorship presented on stage

Brigade Level Sponsor \$10000

- Sponsor announcement on the SoFlo Homeless Vets website
- Signage with logo on a Camp Hope Tent
- Listing on Sponsor Banner at the Entertainment Stage
- Inclusion in promotional material prior to Stand Down
- Corporate Logo at main entrance gate at the American Legion
- Special Recognition and corporate information on SoFlo Homeless Vets Website
- Introduction of corporate speaker on main stage
- Gold Level Award Plaque for sponsorship presented on stage

All Corporate donations are tax exempt and exemption forms will be mailed to the corporate headquarters. **Only checks will be accepted and should be made out to the Florida Veterans Foundation, Inc.** The Florida Veterans Foundation is a state created non-profit operating under IRS Code 510(c)(3).

For further information about Corporate Sponsorships, please contact:

LtCol Tony Colmenares USMC (Ret)
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SoFlo HOMELESS VETERANS STAND DOWN

May 23-25 2014

SUPPORTIVE SERVICES CHECKLIST

- ☐ Veterans verification-- VA
- ☐ Dental Examinations— VA and Borinquen Medical Center
- ☐ Medical Examinations and prescriptions — VA and Borinquen Medical Center
- ☐ Infectious Disease screening/testing—Health and Human Services and VA
- ☐ Vision examinations—VA and Light House for the Blind
- ☐ Hearing and Glucose testing—VA
- ☐ Pharmacy Services—VA
- ☐ AA Meetings
- ☐ PTSD and TBI Counseling and Information—VA
- ☐ Animal Shelter/care/adoptions
- ☐ Employment—Workforce
- ☐ Legal Counseling—NOVA
- ☐ DMV
- ☐ Social Security Benefits processing—DCF
- ☐ Medicaid Applications
- ☐ GED Enrollment
- ☐ Voter Registration
- ☐ Women and Children Services and Information-- DCF

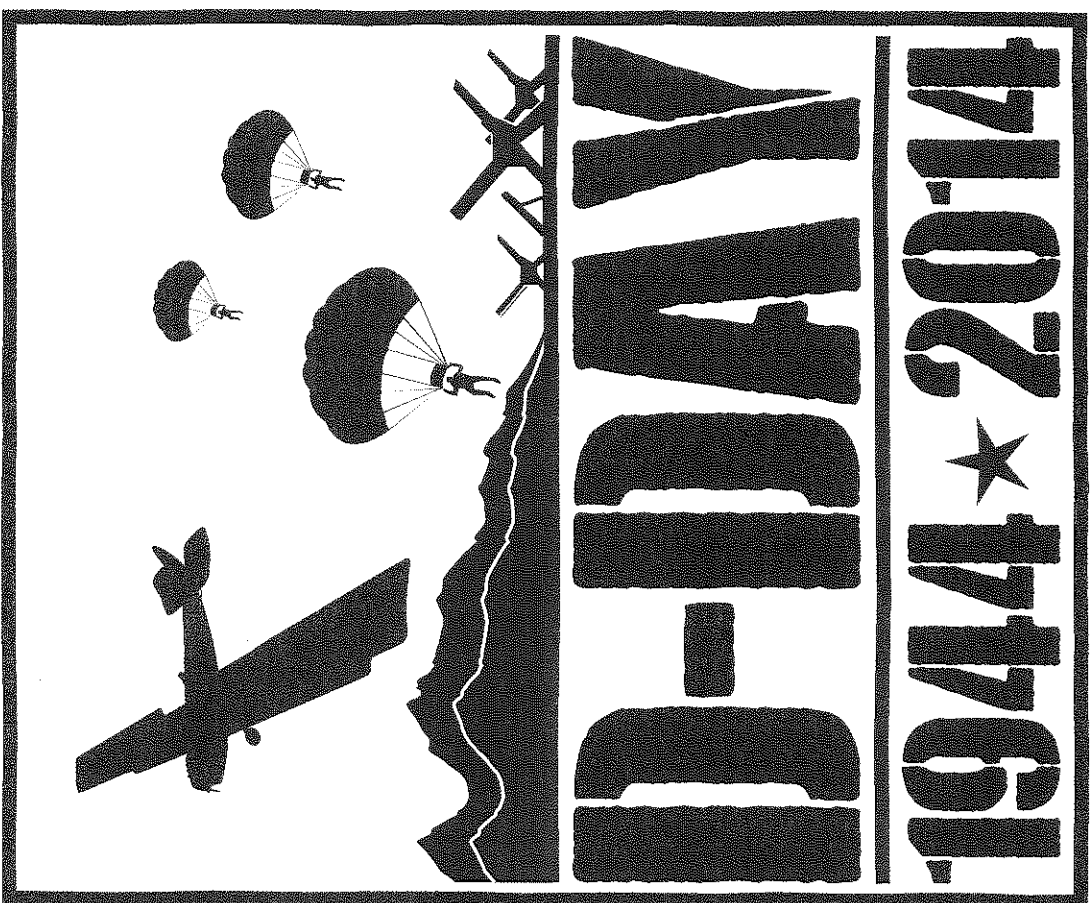
SoFlo HOMELESS VETERANS STAND DOWN

May 23-25 2014

VENDOR SERVICES CHECKLIST

- ☐ Sponsors-- Monetary Donations and Supplies (All donations must be by **CHECK** and made out to the Florida Veterans Foundation for "SoFlo Homeless Veterans Stand Down". A letter will be provided to the donor organization for tax purposes)
 - Supplies
 - Trash Bags
 - Trash Cans
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 - Water containers or water bottles
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 - Winn Dixie
 - Sedano's
 - El Presidente
 - Walgreens
 - CVS
 - Home Depot
 - Lowes
 - SAMs Club
- ☐ Showers
- ☐ Toilets
- ☐ Cots (400)
- ☐ Barbers (Haircuts)
- ☐ Hair Stylist (For Women)
- ☐ Transportation (4 passenger Vans)
 - Rental Vehicle Locations
- ☐ Food (3 Days) Catering (3 Breakfast, 3 Lunches, 2 Dinners) enough to feed 500 people
 - Subways
 - Dominos
 - Pizza Hut

- Pollo Tropical
 - Other local restaurants
- ☐ Lighting Equipment (Flood Lights)
- ☐ Stage for entertainment (Sound System)
- ☐ Bleachers or chairs for 500 people
- ☐ Clean Clothes
 - Good Will
 - Salvation Army
- ☐ Bus Passes
 - Monroe
 - Miami-Dade
 - Broward
- ☐ Folding Tables for Vendors (30)
- ☐ Folding chairs (200)
- ☐ Canopy Tents (20)
- ☐ Educational/Voc Rehab Institutions
 - Miami Dade College
 - Broward Community College
 - FIU
 - NOVA
 - Etc....
- ☐ Veterans Services Organizations
 - American Legions
 - VFWs
 - Navy League
 - Marine Corps League
 - DAV
 - VVA
 - Etc....
- ☐ Insurance carriers
- ☐ Security



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The SPECTRUM Group BRAC News

Recent News

Continued Sequestration Would Exacerbate Cuts at Installation Level, Hagel Warns
From ADC 360
July 10, 2013

Spending on installation and community support would continue to suffer significant reductions next year if the Pentagon is forced to accommodate \$52 billion in automatic cuts to its fiscal 2014 budget, Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel told the leadership of the Senate Armed Services Committee on Wednesday.

Funding for facilities maintenance and base operations is taking a disproportionate hit this year to mitigate the impact of \$37 billion in sequester cuts, and those accounts would continue to bear the burden of deficit reduction next year. Limits on facilities maintenance in FY 2014 "would add to the list of facilities that need work," while cutbacks in community support would "disrupt or halt community activities that help build bonds between the military and local citizens," according to a [memo from Hagel](#).

"Overall these various actions would reduce jobs in local communities, including many jobs in small businesses, and so contribute to disrupting community life in areas near military bases," the memo states.

The consequences for civilian employees may be greater next year, however, as the department considers "mandatory reductions-in-force (RIFs)" in an attempt to avoid another year of furloughs. "While painful, RIFs would permit DOD to make targeted cuts in civilian personnel levels rather than the more across-the-board cuts associated with furloughs," according to the memo.

Hagel's memo and accompanying letter to the committee provides a "high-level summary of an early version of DOD's contingency plan for FY 2014" and does not spell out specific cuts. It came in response to a request for the secretary to outline how the department would cope with spending caps next year. The budget request the administration sent Congress for FY 2014 assumed the caps would be lifted in FY 2014.

"In sum, the abrupt, deep cuts caused by the BCA [2011 Budget Control Act] caps in FY 2014 will force DOD to make nonstrategic changes," he stated. Training and readiness would remain at currently degraded levels, according to the memo, or in some cases would continue to decline.

Two Navy air wings might not be able to achieve full flight hours; special operations units would experience declining readiness; the Army most likely would cancel many of its culminating training events at its combat training centers for a second straight year; and the Air Force would significantly reduce training at more than half of its active flying units.

To avoid even greater cuts in combat power, readiness and modernization, Hagel urged lawmakers to support the cost-cutting recommendations the Pentagon asked for in previous budget requests. Those include limiting growth in military pay raises; raising Tricare retiree fees; eliminating lower-priority ships; retiring all Air Force aircraft proposed in last year's budget; and enacting statutory changes to allow officials to target "lower-performing" civilian personnel.

"Finally, the department hopes that Congress will support DOD's request for another round of Base Closure and Realignment in 2015. While BRAC will not save near-term dollars, the past five BRAC rounds are now saving more than \$2 billion a year, and another round will eventually add to these substantial savings," the memo states

- See more at: <http://www.defensecommunities.org/headlines/continued-sequestration-would-exacerbate-cuts-at-installation-level-hagel-warns/#sthash.XbOmHbP4.dpuf>

Think Tanks Implore Policymakers to Approve BRAC, Other Budget Reforms

From ADC 360

June 3, 2013

Launching a new base closure round would be a critical first step in helping the Pentagon address the spending pressures threatening the long-term viability of the nation's security, according to a letter published Monday by a group of 10 think tanks spanning the ideological spectrum.

"It is our shared belief that the Department of Defense urgently needs to close excess bases and facilities, reexamine the size and structure of the DOD civilian workforce, and reform military compensation," stated the letter signed by 25 analysts from organizations including the American Enterprise Institute, the Center for a New American Security, the Stimson Center and the Brookings Institution.

"While we do not all agree on the best approach to reform in each case, we agree that if these issues are not addressed, they will gradually consume the defense budget from within," it said.

The letter proceeded to try to overcome lawmakers' resistance to a new BRAC round, pointing out that the 2005 round was an anomaly that left DOD saddled with an estimated 20 percent excess capacity.

"Members of Congress on both sides of the aisle should partner with the Pentagon to identify the true scale of excess capacity and then work expeditiously to better match the department's vast network of facilities to its shrinking force," it stated.

The letter also urged the Pentagon and Congress to downsize DOD's civilian and contractor workforce, saying the "changing needs of a downsizing military and shifting strategy" no longer correlates with the current number of civilian employees, reported Government Executive.

"None of these reforms will be easy, painless or popular. But they are absolutely essential to maintaining a strong national defense over the long term," according to the letter

Past Base Closings Raise Questions About Future

By Frank Oliveri

Roll Call

May 7, 2013

In the past, the Pentagon has been able to convince skeptical lawmakers to authorize rounds of base closures by promising significant savings.

But the 2005 base realignment and closure round may have been a game-changer politically because it cost far more than promised and breaking even on those costs will take longer than expected.

The Pentagon insists that the next BRAC round, which it would like to begin in 2015, will be different. Officials say the process will cost \$2.4 billion over three years, fiscal 2016 through 2018, but will start saving money soon after.

Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel told the Senate Armed Services Committee on April 17 that the military doesn't require a new study to know that with end strength coming down by about 100,000 and the war in Afghanistan winding down, the military needs to slim down its bases.

"BRAC, as we all know, is imperfect," Hagel said. "But in the long term, there are significant savings. The previous five rounds of BRAC are saving id="mce_marker"2 billion annually. And those savings will continue."

But lawmakers can't get past the 2005 BRAC, the biggest ever, which suffered from increased costs that decreased the projected savings.

The 2005 BRAC involved more than 800 defense locations and the planned relocation of more than 125,000 personnel. The BRAC commission originally estimated that it would cost about \$21 billion for facility construction, renovation and other upfront expenses. The four previous BRAC rounds cost in total \$25 billion, according to the Government Accountability Office.

But the GAO found that implementation costs grew to \$35.1 billion, and the annual accrued savings is expected to drop almost 10 percent, to \$3.8 billion.

In a March report, the GAO suggested several matters for Congress to consider for amending BRAC laws if it decides to authorize future BRAC rounds.

"First, if cost savings are to be a goal of any future BRAC round, Congress could elevate the priority DOD and the BRAC Commission give to potential costs and savings as a selection criterion for making BRAC recommendations," the report concluded. "Second, Congress could consider requiring [the Office of the Secretary of Defense] to formally establish targets that the department expects to achieve from a future BRAC process and require OSD to propose selection criteria as necessary to help achieve those targets."

Deputy Defense Chief Renews Call for BRAC, Military Pay Cuts

By Charles S. Clark
Government Executive
May 7, 2013

Citing a "coming together of two great historic forces," Deputy Defense Secretary Ashton B. Carter on Tuesday said that the Pentagon's shift to a post-9/11 defense strategy and its execution of spending cuts to reduce the budget deficit, "if properly managed, can reinforce each other" in achieving the defense posture for the decade ahead.

Speaking to reporters at the National Press Club, Carter during a strategic overview announced that the Pentagon is now reiterating requests made in the fiscal 2014 budget for a new round of the Base Realignment and Closure Commission and for adjustments to military health care premiums and copays. Congress last year rejected both ideas.

Carter also said the Pentagon will ask Congress for reprogramming authority to move funds to operations and maintenance to cope with sequestration, which is forcing across-the-board cuts of \$37 billion this fiscal year. "Sequestration is not just bad in and of itself, it distracts from the true strategic and managerial tasks upon us," he said. "We need the cloud of sequestration dispelled, not just moved to the horizon. [We] need a return to normal budgeting."

Secretary Chuck Hagel has not made a final decision on furloughs of civilian employees, Carter said, "but if we have to furlough, it will harm morale and productivity in our support functions and damage readiness." In the next five or six fiscal years, he added, the civilian workforce may be cut by 5 percent or 6 percent.

Carter said his talk was part of a series on how the department is "ready to make tough choices" in putting a "stable and solid foundation on the strategic transition we've embarked upon as the nation moves" from fighting two wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, a shift that is both "physical and intellectual," he said.

He said the transition, building on the reforms of former Secretary Robert Gates and the \$487 billion in cuts over 10 years already in the strategic plan, will be comparable to the drawdowns that followed the Vietnam War and the Cold War.

Examples of changes in the acquisition area will include "setting targets on what things should cost," Carter said, naming the Joint Strike Fighter, the Ohio-class missile submarine and a new strategic bomber. He predicted more fixed-price contracts, and promised to trim personnel in the Office of the Defense Secretary, Joint Chiefs and Defense agencies, which amount to about one-fifth of the defense budget.

In asking for a BRAC round to begin in fiscal 2015, Carter called the method "a comprehensive and fair tool that requires an up-front investment." The budget includes \$2.4 billion as a "pay-for," he noted, but in the long run, the first five rounds have proven to save \$2 billion annually.

On health care, he noted that President Obama's fiscal 2014 budget requests a \$3 billion cut in those accounts compared with the current levels.

Odierno says Army 'preparing for the worst'

By Chris Carroll
Stars and Stripes
May 7, 2013

WASHINGTON — If sequestration continues, the Army might not be ready by next year to respond to contingencies such as the Syrian conflict, Army Chief of Staff Gen. Ray Odierno said Tuesday.

Although Army readiness is suffering because of billions of dollars in defense cuts this year, Odierno said the service still could put boots on the ground in Syria if called upon to do so.

But that might not be the case for long if Congressional deadlock over how to reduce the federal deficit persists, and sequestration is repeated in 2014, he said.

"Readiness is OK right now, but it's degrading significantly because our training is reducing," he said. "So the next three to four months, we'd probably have the capability to do it. Next year it probably becomes a little more risky because our readiness is lower."

Odierno said the Free Syrian Army is gaining ground against Syrian President Bashar al-Assad. The rebels will eventually bring down the regime, Odierno predicted.

"I kind of believe it's not a matter of if, it's a matter of when," he told reporters at a media breakfast in Washington.

But whether U.S. soldiers would have the training needed to intervene in the potentially chaotic aftermath is in question.

"We'll have the troops to go, but the increased risk goes up," he said. "And what is the risk? The risk is lives."

Because of sequestration, 80 percent of the Army is currently limited to training exercises at the squad level, while six brigade training rotations so far have been canceled, Odierno said.

While such news may be chilling to soldiers, Odierno said he realizes it means little to the average U.S. citizen. In a recent talk with a federal legislator, he said, "They told me, 'I haven't gotten a single call from a constituent about defense.'"

With public pressure to avert sequestration lacking, Odierno seemed pessimistic about the possibility of solving the Army's budget woes.

"We're preparing for the worst," he said.

Official Makes Case for More Base Closures, Realignments

**By Donna Miles
American Forces Press Service**

WASHINGTON, April 25, 2013 - Recognizing congressional resistance to another round of base realignments and closures, a senior defense official told a Senate panel yesterday it would be irresponsible to cut the military's "tooth" without doing everything possible to eliminate excess within its "tail."

John C. Conger, acting deputy undersecretary of defense for installations and environment, made the case for a 2015 BRAC round during testimony before the Senate Armed Service Committee's readiness and management support subcommittee.

DOD is facing a serious problem in light of its declining budgets and force structure, but has limited flexibility to adjust its infrastructure accordingly, he told the panel.

"We need to find a way to strike the right balance so infrastructure does not drain too many resources from the warfighter," he said. "We need to be cognizant that maintaining more infrastructure than we need taxes other resources that the warfighter needs — from depot maintenance to training to bullets and bombs."

Conger cited \$8 billion in annual, recurring savings from the first four rounds of BRAC in 1988, 1991, 1993 and 1995. BRAC 2005 is producing another \$4 billion in annual savings through avoided costs for base operating support, personnel and leasing costs, he reported.

Meanwhile, BRAC 2005 eliminated 13,000 civilian positions — an example of the kind of workforce efficiencies the fiscal 2013 National Defense Authorization Act requires, he said. Previous BRAC rounds averaged 36,000 eliminations per round.

"Congress has already demanded these civilian personnel cuts, and if they are not made through BRAC, they will need to be made elsewhere," Conger argued.

As the department seeks cost-saving measures, it also is undergoing a comprehensive review that kicked off in January to identify potential cases for closure or consolidation there, he noted.

"There are other examples where we're driving towards efficiencies throughout the department, and we have to do that. Installations are just one piece of the puzzle," Conger said. "But as we cut down in force structure, it would be irresponsible of us not to ... propose ways to cut the tail as we cut the tooth."

Conger acknowledged skepticism in Congress about the need for another round of BRAC, most likely, he said, because implementing the last round cost so much more than anticipated.

"To be clear, BRAC 2015 will not look like BRAC 2005," he told the panel. The previous BRAC, he said, was conducted while the force structure and budgets were growing, and under leadership-directed transformations across the department.

"Today, force structure is shrinking, the budget is shrinking, and we are firmly focused on reducing our future costs," he said, noting similar circumstances during the first four rounds of BRAC.

"I can assert with confidence that a 2015 round will have far more in common with them than it would with the 2005 round," Conger said.

The BRAC discussion came within the context of the Defense Department's fiscal 2014 budget proposal. It includes id="mce_marker"1 billion for military construction, id="mce_marker"0.9 billion for investments to sustain and restore DOD facilities and \$3.8 billion for environmental measures.

The request, Conger noted, is slightly higher than the fiscal 2013 appropriation. This is in part because all but the most critical projects and measures were curtailed this year due to sequestration.

"While budgets are constrained and force structure shrinks, our infrastructure is being held constant," he told the senators, emphasizing that DOD must maintain its 550,000 buildings and structures that support military operations and readiness.

Full report available at [Politico](#)

**By Kate Brannen
February 28, 2013**

The Pentagon is planning to ask Congress for two new rounds of military base closures in its upcoming budget, according to defense sources. The Defense Department made the same request last year, but it was immediately shot down by Democrats and Republicans at the outset of the election year.

In a meeting this week of governors appointed to advise the government on defense issues, DoD officials said they planned to seek authorization for a round of the Base Realignment and Closure process first in 2015, followed by a second round in 2017, according to a former defense official.

Last year, then-Defense Secretary Leon Panetta requested BRAC for 2013 and 2015. Although defense officials have been calling for the closure and consolidation of bases for more than a year, only Congress can authorize the BRAC process, in which bipartisan a panel studies potential options for closures and then presents its recommendations for a vote. For members of Congress often anxious to protect home-district bases, the word "BRAC" is politically poisonous.

Still, in a Feb. 6 roundtable with reporters, Panetta said another round of BRAC was necessary. "We'll have to consolidate, obviously, in infrastructure and for that reason we will likely, again, propose that BRAC be put in place," Panetta said. "We'll have to because you can't have a huge infrastructure supporting a reduced force."

His successor, Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel, told lawmakers in written responses at the time of his Jan. 31 confirmation hearing that he would not rule out potential base closures.

This time around could be different with sequestration looming, there's even more pressure on the Pentagon to reduce its budget. That could put heat on Congress to allow the Pentagon to use every cost-cutting tool it has to find savings while preserving military capability.

According to an official readout of the Feb. 25 meeting with the governors, Deputy Defense Secretary Ash Carter and Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano discussed cybersecurity, strategic trends affecting the defense budget and a review of the Hurricane Sandy response.

'14 Budget to Include BRAC Request, Panetta Reveals**Association of Defense Communities
February 6, 2013**

For the second year in a row the Pentagon will ask Congress for a new round of base closures, Defense Secretary Leon Panetta told reporters Wednesday during a preview of the department's fiscal 2014 budget request.

The announcement came as no surprise after Congress roundly rejected the administration's proposal last year to hold BRAC rounds in 2013 and 2015.

"We will have to because ... you can't have a huge infrastructure supporting a reduced force," Panetta said in explaining the need to trim the military's infrastructure.

The administration's budget request normally would have been released this week, but the recent deal to avert the fiscal cliff and uncertainty over sequestration has delayed it. The White House may not submit the FY 2014 request to Congress until late in March, reported the American Forces Press Service.

As expected, the budget proposal will continue the drawdown in end strength for the military, with the size of the Army shrinking to 490,000 active duty soldiers and the Marine Corps declining to 182,000 troops over the coming years.

The Defense Department will propose some additional cuts to the Air Force and "we will resubmit some of our proposed cuts to the Navy," Panetta said.

The budget will call for additional savings in overhead. "We have identified \$30 billion in new initiatives over the next five years to eliminate overhead and duplication," he said.

A few areas would receive increased investment, including assistance for transitioning out of the military, family programs and suicide prevention.

If sequestration goes into effect March 1 — triggering about \$45 billion in automatic defense cuts in the current fiscal year — the budget will have to be "thrown out of the window" and the services could face significant downsizing, said Panetta and Gen. Martin Dempsey, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

"Our fear is that it really is going to create a readiness crisis for the military that is going to make it very difficult to respond to the crises that we still have to confront in the world," Panetta said.

New BRAC Round Would Be Considered for Savings, Hagel Says**January 30, 2013**

Former Nebraska Sen. Chuck Hagel (R) said he would consider carrying out a base closure round as a prudent option to cope with budget constraints, according to the responses the nominee for defense secretary submitted to policy questions from the Senate Armed Services Committee.

"As with industry, the department should examine its infrastructure and eliminate excess. The BRAC process is not perfect, but I believe BRAC is a fair and comprehensive way to right-size the department's footprint, and is the best process identified to date," Hagel wrote in response to the committee's advance policy questions.

"If confirmed, I would have to look at the need for BRAC in the future," he said.

Hagel drew a sharp contrast between the 2005 round and a potential new one.

"It is my understanding that the 2005 BRAC round was an anomaly, the only round conducted while the department was growing. It focused on transformation, jointness and relocating forces from overseas," he noted.

"A future BRAC round is more likely to be like the rounds in 1993 and 1995 where excess capacity was reduced," Hagel wrote.

And while the nominee was not asked to describe how DOD would support communities affected by a future base closure round, in response to a separate question Hagel said the Pentagon would work with communities

that lose a brigade combat team as the Army trims its end strength to 490,000 personnel and eliminates eight brigades.

"I recognize that any force structure reduction will affect Army communities, and I expect that the Army and the Department of Defense will work with those communities to help minimize the impact," he said.

Hagel also addressed the need to cut the defense budget, agreeing with Defense Secretary Leon Panetta that sequestration would be "devastating," but stating that the spending reductions already incorporated into the department's long-term budget are achievable.

"I believe the department's strategy can be accomplished within the constraints of the Budget Control Act. But only if the department has to retain the flexibility to adjust the size of its forces and infrastructure, and take[s] steps to control its costs, in accordance with the administration's present strategy and budget," he said.

Hagel will testify today before the Armed Services committee. Read the story in the [Hill](#).

Alabama prepares for more BRAC

Decatur Daily

November 30, 2012

Alabama took its first major step this month in preparing for expected military cuts by hiring a consultant to prepare for the next Base Realignment and Closure round.

The Military Stability Foundation, a not-for-profit corporation that received \$275,000 from the state general fund this fiscal year, accepted a bid from Spectrum Group/Principi Group this month to help protect the state's four major military installations, including Redstone Arsenal in Huntsville.

"The foundation hired the consultant," said Chuck Carver, executive director of the foundation. "It's two groups that came together to bid on this contract. Their primary mission is to be the eyes and ears of Alabama in the Washington area."

About 14 groups bid on the contract, Carver said.

He said the groups, which include many retired military officers, will collect information from the Pentagon, Congress and the defense industry.

Carver said the groups will receive a monthly fee, but details on the amount and services are still being worked out.

Local efforts to influence BRAC will continue, Carver said. Spectrum-Principi will provide local delegations with information and will keep state officials updated.

"The Military Stability Foundation cannot, by law, interfere with what the local folks are doing," Carver said.

"We're charged to provide support to the local areas. The reason we chose to spend the money (on a consultant) is so we can provide intel, information and documentation on what's going on in Washington, so they can do a better job of strategizing and planning."

The timing of the next BRAC is uncertain, but past realignments show it can have profound positive or negative effects on Alabama installations.

"We're preparing Alabama to compete with other states across the country over the next round of BRAC, which we think will be 2015," said State Sen. Arthur Orr, R-Decatur, one of 18 members of the state Military Stability Commission, an unfunded state agency that works with the foundation.

"You can also lose in BRAC, as some communities know, so we're playing both offense and defense against competitors around the country," Orr said.

A BRAC round in 1995 resulted in the closure of Fort McClellan in Anniston. The Defense Department has closed more than 350 installations in the course of five rounds of BRAC. The 2005 BRAC added thousands of personnel to Redstone.

Carver said he expects federal budget constraints to reduce the Defense Department budget by as much as 20 percent. If Congress fails to compromise before automatic spending cuts set to take effect Jan. 1, the cuts would be much larger.

Lt. Gov. Kay Ivey, who spoke at Kiwanis Club of Decatur on Thursday, is head of the state Military Stability Commission. The state's funding for the private foundation was essential, she said.

"This has enabled us to contract with a firm skilled in this arena of impacting the Department of Defense," Ivey said. "There's a private fundraising effort to add to that so we can be really effective at impacting the decision of the DoD. It's a public-private partnership."

Carver said the state Military Stability Commission had limited authority.

"The commission has no mechanism to make contracts or spend money, so they formed the foundation to take action in their name," Carver said. "We get direction from the commission."

Carver said the foundation can accept money from the state and private corporations. Formed last year, it already has received private donations.

"Sometimes people don't want their contributions known," Carver said. "We're not required to release the donors. That's something we have to discuss with the board. Everything we do with the state money will be absolutely public information."

The limited state funds, he said, means private contributions will be important.

"We're about to be involved in a fairly aggressive fundraising campaign to increase the amount we already have, which is not much considering the job we've got to do," Carver said.

Florida, which also hired the Principi Group, may have a head start on Alabama. Last month, a Florida task force released parts of a 991-page study — prepared by Spectrum Group for id="mce_marker".48 million — evaluating the state's military installations and setting goals to improve its position in the next BRAC.

Anthony J. Principi founded the Principi Group. A former Secretary of Veterans Affairs, he was chairman of the 2005 BRAC Commission.

Carver said his foundation's contract with Spectrum-Principi prevents the consultant from taking sides between its state clients.

"Let's say Alabama and Florida compete for one particular activity," Carver said. "They can advise both, but they've got rules to follow on keeping them separate."

Report Outlines Challenges ahead for Florida's Installations

**Defense Communities 360
October 31, 2012**

A strategic plan released this week by the Florida Defense Support Task Force recommends a multitude of goals the state should strive to achieve, including addressing encroachment, supporting DOD's efforts to conserve energy and shift energy use toward renewable sources, improving transportation access, and strengthening its support for military families and veterans.

The 991-page report, produced by the Spectrum Group, was launched last year to help the state cope with potential consolidation and realignment actions stemming from the Pentagon's need to help reduce the federal deficit.

The strategic plan "represents a coordinated effort with state, Florida congressional delegation and local defense community's leadership to protect and enhance our military missions and installations in difficult economic conditions," according to a letter accompanying the report from State Rep. Ritch Workman (R), chairman of the task force.

The report calls for the state to take a strong stance against offshore oil drilling and other activities that could limit military use of the Gulf of Mexico Range Complex, reported the Florida Current. The plan also recommends that officials:

- lower installations' cost of doing business;
- prevent and mitigate encroachment affecting installations, ranges and flight corridors;
- improve education in public schools;
- complete implementation of joint land use studies at all installations that have conducted them;
- enhance quality of life for military families and retirees throughout the state and within communities; and
- continue to strengthen support for military families and veterans with a focus on education, health care, employment and family programs.

"In response to this report, we are outlining an aggressive advocacy and action plan to ensure that Florida's needs and our nation's needs are met to address the issues facing America at home and around the world," Gov. Rick Scott (R) said in a [written statement](#).

A [nine-page summary](#) of the plan lists recommendations for each of Florida's installations that can be accomplished at either the state or federal level.

Rick Scott: Florida 'Uniquely Prepared' to Tackle National Security

By: JIM TURNER
Sunshine State News

Gov. Rick Scott declared Florida "uniquely prepared" to handle national security both domestically and abroad, following the release of a report on the status of military bases in the state.

The Florida Defense Support Task Force, headed by Rep. Ritch Workman, R-Melbourne, released findings Tuesday from a \$1.48 million study that evaluated the military installations, ranges and airspace within Florida and outlined short- and long-range goals to make Florida more "military friendly."

Among the recommendations: providing incentives for defense missions to remain or relocate to Florida; preventing exploration and drilling that could limit military use of the Gulf of Mexico Range Complex; linking bases in Florida with Space Florida for unmanned aerial vehicle testing and training; and supporting basing an F-35 joint strike fighter at Jacksonville Air National Guard and basing new KC 46 refueling tankers at MacDill Air Force Base.

"The strategic plan provided a comprehensive overview of the strengths of Florida's military missions and installations so that we remain forward-looking and proactive in our mission to protect our troops and citizens," Scott stated in a release.

"In response to this report, we are outlining an aggressive advocacy and action plan to ensure that Florida's needs and our nation's needs are met to address the issues facing America at home and around the world."

The task force was created in November 2011 to help the state ward off any base realignments or closures.

The task force has contracted The Principi Group to lobby on behalf the state at the federal level, while having the Florida Legislature work with the congressional delegation and local defense communities, Workman noted in a letter to Scott.

"The intent is to work collaboratively with all interested parties to ensure that Florida cements its position as the most military-friendly state in the nation," Workman noted.

Scroll down for a list of short- and long-term recommendations.

Short-Term Strategic Goals: Implement an aggressive advocacy and action plan based on the recommendations in The Spectrum Group analysis. Plan will pursue installation specific strategic goals at national and state levels as shown [here](#).

Study pinpoints issues at Florida military bases

By TOM McLAUGHLIN
Daily News

An upbeat summary of a study done to pinpoint where Florida military bases could be vulnerable in an era of downsizing and closure was released Tuesday by Gov. Rick Scott's office.

The nine-page "strategic plan" excerpts a 991-page document produced for the Florida Defense Support Task Force by The Spectrum Group at a cost of \$1.48 million.

The full report is not a public record, according to state Rep. Ritch Workman, the task force's chairman.

"We don't need to highlight our potential weaknesses for other states to benefit from," said Workman, R-Melbourne. "We're trying hard not to give someone the opportunity to cannibalize our state."

The fear is that other states can use Florida's bases' perceived weaknesses to pry military missions from the state, Workman said.

The document released Tuesday speaks in broad terms. It outlines actions that should be taken at the national and state level to protect military installations.

According to the summary, Eglin Air Force Base requires help at the federal level in three areas:

- To maintain Air Force weapons research, development, testing and evaluation synergies and functions.
- Federal legislation to manage/control structures being built in the coastal waters.
- To acquire more compatible missions and aircraft to fully utilize the capacity/potential at Eglin.

Hurlburt Field needs federal assistance in just one case, according to the summary:

- To resolve pavement condition issues, especially the asphalt portion of Taxiway G and a portion of the C-130 transport aircraft apron.

As far as improvements that can be accomplished at the state level, Eglin had two items:

- Support road improvements to facilitate ingress/egress.
- Prevent encroachment that could impact the Gulf range complex east of the military mission line. Hurlburt again had a single item of concern:
- Support for proposed "west gate" construction and off-base auxiliary roads.

The task force was created in 2011 through legislation sponsored by state Sen. Don Gaetz of Niceville.

It's job is to find ways to protect the state's 20 bases from spending cuts and the scrutiny of a Base Realignment and Closure Commission expected to be convened in 2015.

The Spectrum Group was commissioned to put its report together in April.

Workman said the thing that really stood out to him after reading the full report was how solidly Florida's bases seem to be positioned when compared to other military installations around the country.

State Rep. Matt Gaetz, a task force member, said after a meeting last week on Okaloosa Island that Northwest Florida's bases stand out as secure even among the rest of the state's installations.

In a news release issued with the summary, Gov. Rick Scott said the Spectrum Group report "clearly outlines how Florida is uniquely prepared to tackle national security issues both at home and abroad."

"The strategic plan provided a comprehensive overview of the strength of Florida's military missions and installations so that we remain forward-looking and proactive," he said.

David Goetsch, an Okaloosa County resident and vice chairman of the task force, said the report gives the organization a starting point as work begins to shore up the weaknesses noted.

"Now we need to get on it," he said. "2015 is just around the corner."

The task force reviewed and suggested edits to the report in its meeting at Okaloosa Island. The discussion was closed to some members of the public.

Rocky McPherson with Enterprise Florida said last week only task force members, Spectrum Group representatives and state government employees such as himself and John Konkas, chief of staff to Lt. Gov. Jennifer Carroll, would be allowed to attend the closed-door session.

The task force voted to approve the report and send it on to Scott.

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BRAC News

The Base Realignment and Closure process is an exercise by the federal government to determine the best use of its military installations. This includes both the closure and realignment of assets in an effort to increase efficiency within the Defense Department.

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DoD maintains BRAC fight, despite opposition from Congress

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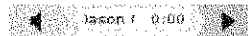


By Jared Serbu

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The Senate Armed Services Committee appeared poised Thursday to mirror its House counterpart in rejecting the Defense Department's repeated requests for another round of military base closures. But DoD maintains it needs to shed excess infrastructure one way or another, and keeping bases it doesn't want is costing taxpayers billions of dollars each year.

The last time DoD analyzed its bases in 2004, it estimated it had 24 percent more infrastructure than it needed. Keeping those bases open was one matter during a period when money flowed relatively freely to the Pentagon, but DoD has argued that era is over. Under sequestration, the Pentagon is eliminating training for military members, deferring critical maintenance on weapons systems and facilities,

cutting back contracts and furloughing most of its civilian employees.

The department says under those circumstances, paying to heat, cool and maintain mostly-vacant buildings isn't the wisest move.

Lawmakers have been unmoved by the argument. In its version of the 2014 Defense authorization bill, the House Armed Services Committee voted to prohibit DoD from even studying another round of real estate divestitures through the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) process.

The Senate is marking up its version of the bill in a closed session this week, but the subcommittee with jurisdiction over the issue passed similar language.

"I continue to believe, like many others, that we can't afford the up-front cost of another BRAC, especially given the dramatically increased cost to implement the 2005 round of BRAC," said Sen. Jeanne Shaheen (D-N.H.), the chairwoman of the Armed Services Subcommittee on Readiness and Management Support.

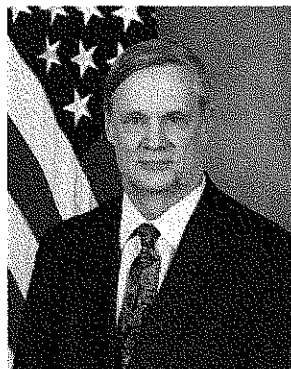
Shrinking forces begot fewer installations

DoD officials almost universally have encountered a hostile reception to BRAC during the annual round of posture hearings on Capitol Hill, but they say ignoring the problem won't make it go away.

Defense Undersecretary Robert Hale, DoD's comptroller, said the department needs to shed infrastructure, and times have changed a lot since the 2005 BRAC round. Most importantly, he said, the military is shrinking this time around, not growing, as it was when preparations for the 2005 round began in 2002.

"Congress constantly cites the high cost of the 2005 round, and I'll give you that. It cost too much," he said Thursday at the annual conference of the Association of Defense Communities, a group which represents state and local officials whose jurisdictions include military bases. "But that wasn't what we normally do with BRAC rounds. We spent \$35 billion on that little puppy, because we didn't just close bases, we built a lot of new facilities. That's not what we want to do with BRAC 2015."

In lieu of closing stateside bases, lawmakers are fixated on what they believe to be excess infrastructure in geographic areas where there's no chance of a voter backlash: in Europe, South Korea and other overseas sites. They're currently considering a resolution that would tell DoD to further analyze its bases in foreign countries and proclaim that closing U.S. bases is "neither affordable nor feasible."



Robert Hale, comptroller, Department of Defense

DoD doesn't need the explicit permission of Congress to restructure its basing infrastructure overseas. The department says it's been using that free hand for the past several decades to do exactly what Congress now is demanding.

"Between 2007 and 2017, we are reducing our facility footprint in Europe by 51 percent and our operating budget by 57 percent so we have a facility infrastructure that's aligned with our force structure," said Katherine Hammack, the Army's assistant secretary for installations, energy and environment. "We know how to do this. We know how to coordinate it. Our challenge [with stateside bases] is that we can't manage our infrastructure the way you would in a business. Our board of directors hasn't given us that authority."

Overseas bases already smaller

The Office of the Secretary of Defense is leading a new study to determine if the military can cut its European bases further, but Hammack said the Army is taking similar measures in Korea, reducing its base infrastructure by 40 percent.

The Air Force tells a similar story, saying it's cut its bases in Europe by 75 percent since 1992.

Kathleen Ferguson, the acting assistant secretary of the Air Force for installations, environment and logistics, said the service has not been able to divest much real estate at all back home since 2004, when it estimated 24 percent of its infrastructure was unneeded.

"If you look at BRAC 2005, it closed eight little locations. That was 0.8 percent of our [plant replacement value]," she said. "Since then, we've reduced our force structure by 500 aircraft and about 8 percent of our active duty end strength. We know we have excess capacity out there. We're spending dollars to maintain unnecessary installations. Is this something the department likes to do? No, we never like to do a round of BRAC. But this is something we think is necessary for our nation as we go forward."

Recognizing that BRAC authority is a longshot in the near-term, DoD officials say they are taking other near-term steps to try to manage their excess real estate in a less-costly way.

For example, Hammack said the Army is exploring new authority Congress granted it last year to develop intergovernmental agreements with state and local officials to provide services on military bases and make use of excess facilities on those bases.

"For instance, perhaps we need snow removal on our base and the city needs a place to put their snowplows during the summer when they're not removing snow. In exchange for you not having to build a new building to house those vehicles, you could use our unused motorpool facilities in exchange for providing snow removal," she said. "I think there are opportunities to put our excess infrastructure to use in some ways that could save money for the base and save money for the communities around them as well."

Medical facilities getting a hard look

Also outside the BRAC process, Hale said DoD now is seriously examining the way its medical facilities are organized.

"We have remarkable degrees of under-utilization in some of our hospitals and clinics," he said. "They haven't been restructured in many years, medicine has been moving much more toward outpatient care and TRICARE is now so successful that many of the people who would have otherwise used the military treatment facilities are now using TRICARE. We have an ongoing study on this, but some of this will be painful, because we're going to be talking about consolidating or even closing some military treatment facilities."

But like bases in general, DoD would need Congress' go-ahead to consolidate its hospitals, and officials say the bottom line is that it can't do much in the way of achieving cost savings with its stateside facilities unless lawmakers relent on their BRAC opposition.

The Army's Hammack made the case to local officials Thursday that another round of base closures, done smartly, could be a win-win for the cities and towns around military installations.

"If we have excess real estate and you have a business that's looking for real estate, it only makes sense for us to come together," she said. "Whether that's land, buildings or utility systems, we have capabilities we no longer require that could be put to productive reuse. As we downsize, those facilities are not benefiting any of us. It's a waste of taxpayer dollars to continue to operate a base that's half full."

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Air Force exploring cuts without BRAC

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WASHINGTON -- The congressional dysfunction virus has hit the Pentagon, or at least the Air Force.

On Monday, speaking at an Air Force Association breakfast, acting Air Force Secretary Eric Fanning described a summer spent working on two budgets for fiscal 2015, though only one will go to Congress next year. That's because Congress has not passed this year's fiscal 2014 budget, and the Air Force is surviving on the continuing resolution based on fiscal 2013 levels.

Normally, 2015 planning would be based on fiscal 2014 figures, but services are guessing what they might get when legislators finally act. They also must plan for what seems likely -- sequestration, the automatic cuts that apply under the 2011 Budget Control Act if Congress doesn't change the lower defense spending caps set for fiscal 2015.

The Air Force, Fanning said, built "two budgets, a low budget that took sequestration into account in the long run, and then a high budget, which is roughly built off of the president's [fiscal 2014] budget."

Unlike the Army and Navy, the Air Force put almost 99 percent of its effort on the low budget. It was easier to go low and build up plans for a higher 2015 figure than cut to a sequester level, he said. "That's a real struggle for [the Army and Navy], even now to really define what their low budget is," he said.

The Air Force is defending its budget choices before Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel's money people, which Fanning called "a fun thing." He had worked in the Office of the Secretary of Defense, which he said has "a different culture" than the services.

A former Navy aide once told him, "Don't work anywhere in the Pentagon that doesn't have a football team or a band," meaning at the Office of the Secretary of Defense, "they don't have to pay for any of it -- they just tell you what they don't like you not doing anymore."

Fanning said they then must go "across the river" to the Office of Management and Budget, where he expects "they're not going to like a lot of things in" the Air Force budget.

Finally, it goes to Congress, where, he said, "everyone will know when it hits the Hill because you'll be able to hear it [an uproar because of what was cut] no matter where you are in the country."

Fanning noted another area where the virus struck: stopping the Air Force from closing air bases it no longer needs.

The Base Realignment and Closure program is the process Congress established that must be followed before a base can be closed. Meanwhile, taking such a cost-cutting step is "fenced off," Fanning said. "It's kind of the one thing on the Hill that you can find unanimity -- House, Senate, Democrat, Republican -- it's no BRAC, no BRAC, no BRAC," he said with some irony.

"The BRAC law does not allow you to do any deep analysis on infrastructure and excess capacity," Fanning said. During the last BRAC round in 2005, the Air Force already had a 20 percent excess capacity "and we're smaller now than we were then, getting smaller even still," he said, noting further reduction plans of some 25,000 personnel and 550 aircraft.

"You can't get rid of the base, but you don't have anything to put there [and] it's expensive to maintain," Fanning said.

This past year, the Air Force tried to cut back cargo aircraft and change basing. It hit major objections from Congress and governors, because the Air National Guard was involved. Now the Air Force is exploring what the legal options are without BRAC. But Congress is guarding against base reduction.

For example, Sen. Jeanne Shaheen, D-N.H., has an amendment pending for the fiscal 2014 defense bill that would eliminate funds for technical support for a new BRAC round.

Also, a bipartisan group of seven senators has an amendment regarding the ICBM silos that will be emptied of missiles under the new arms treaty with Russia. The senators want the silos to be kept in a missile field with functioning command and control systems in case they must be reloaded.

Another part of the Air Force problem is that sequestration requires immediate reductions while some more rational cuts, such as reducing military and civilian personnel, add to immediate costs. The savings would occur in the future.

The Air Force, Fanning said, wanted to use incentives to get people to leave voluntarily but that is "an investment up front . . . and we estimate that it takes about a year from when you start the process before you start seeing savings in your budget." That meant that it's already too late to see savings in such a move in the fiscal 2015 budget being drawn up.

To outwit the virus, Fanning's view is to accept that "sequester is the new norm" and "the sooner we start dealing with it . . . the sooner we can get some stability."

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Loss of aircraft, jobs at 910th is a call to action by the area

Sunday, December 1, 2013

Does it make any sense for the federal government to have invested hundreds of millions of dollars on the expansion of the air reserve base in Vienna Township, only to turn around and reduce its operational capability? No, it doesn't. But that's what will occur unless decision-makers at the Defense Department change their minds.

What would prompt them to take another look at the reassignment of four C-130 cargo planes from the Youngstown Air Reserve Station's 910th Airlift Wing? The answer: A call from the White House.

There's a reason President Obama should take an interest in what's going on at the base: Politics.

In the last presidential election, Obama won Mahoning County with one of the highest vote percentages in the state: 63.1 percent of the 119,171 voters who cast ballots in 2012. His opponent, Republican Mitt Romney, didn't come close. Likewise, in 2008, Obama garnered 61.4 percent in Mahoning County in his race against Republican John McCain.

Elections have consequences, and the residents of the Mahoning Valley expect the president to show his appreciation for the support he has received — and continues to receive — from this predominantly Democratic region.

Indeed, as the titular head of the national Democratic Party, Obama can't be blind to the reality of the 2014 statewide election in which the Ohio Democratic Party is attempting to unseat Republican Gov. John Kasich and the statewide GOP officeholders.

In addition, the ever important congressional elections will take place against the backdrop of the highly controversial Affordable Care Act, commonly known as Obamacare.

Turnout in Mahoning and Trumbull counties will be key to the party's political fortunes next year.

IMPORTANCE OF AIR BASE

The Youngstown Air Reserve Station is one of the most important cogs in the Mahoning Valley's economic wheel.

In addition to being home to the 910th Wing, the base also accommodates Navy and Marine units. In the 2012 Defense budget, the facility was authorized to have 1,348 Air Force reservists, 250 full-time Air Reserve technicians, 190 Air Force Department of Defense civilian employees and 184 Navy and Marine Corps members.

The base, adjacent to the Youngstown-Warren Regional Airport, has attracted millions of dollars in federal government investment — with good reason. The 910th Airlift Wing is the only fixed-wing aerial spray unit in the Defense Department.

The facility pumps \$100 million a year into the local economy, making it as important as the General Motors Co.'s Lordstown assembly facility and the new \$2 billion Vallourec steel pipe-making complex.

Thus, any reduction in operational capability will have a negative economic effect on the Valley.

If the reassignment of the four C-130 Hercules cargo transport aircraft is not reversed, 50 full-time and 150 part-time jobs will be lost forever.

Those jobs must be saved, if for no other reason than to put a stop to the cannibalization of the air reserve base.

Congressman Tim Ryan of Howland, D-13th, who like his predecessor, James A. Traficant Jr., has made the base a priority, noted that the Defense Department made the decision to reassign the aircraft "regardless of the fact that YARS airmen have been doing an outstanding job and the base has the infrastructure to support additional planes and additional military and civilian jobs."

Ryan, a member of the House Appropriations and Budget committees, pledged to continue to push for long-term investments and manpower increases.

Ryan should convey his disappointment at the reduction of the facility's capabilities to the White House. The congressman should remind the president's political advisers that Mahoning and Trumbull counties have been with him all the way, even when other Democratic regions of the state and nation have been abandoning him.

COALITION NEEDED

Political, business and community leaders should join forces with Ryan in putting together a campaign to, first and foremost, persuade the Obama administration to revisit the aircraft reassignment decision, and then to develop a strategy for bolstering the air base's capabilities.

The leaders should seek a meeting with former Youngstown Mayor Jay Williams, who is now with the Obama White House, to provide guidance on how to lobby the administration.

There is an ironic twist to the decision by the Department of Defense: while the reduction in aircraft from 12 to eight was being announced, a new \$600,000 Air Force Reserve recruiting center at YARS was unveiled.

The federal government does, indeed, work in mysterious ways.



Valley must come together in fight for existing, new jobs

Wednesday, September 25, 2013

There are A COUPLE OF initiatives that require the attention of the Mahoning Valley and the state of Ohio — one more urgent than the other, but both economically important.

The first involves the future of the Youngstown Air Reserve Station in Vienna Township. The base is under threat from a federal panel charged with restructuring the Air Force.

The second has to do with the Camp Ravenna Joint Military Training Center and the possibility of its being chosen as the site for a ground-base system designed to intercept ballistic missiles.

It is not the first time that the air reserve base adjacent to the Youngstown-Warren Regional Airport has been on the Defense Department's radar for a review of its mission. But this time could be different. That's because the push by some members of Congress to reduce spending has never been greater than it is today.

The Republican caucus on Capitol Hill is being forced to the extreme right by members who owe their allegiance to the tea party. The GOP leadership is succumbing to the pressure.

The result is that federal departments across the board are being forced to re-prioritize spending.

Thus, the Youngstown Air Reserve Station, which pumps \$100 million a year into the Valley's economy, is in danger of being cannibalized by the Pentagon.

Although the federal government has invested hundreds of millions of dollars in the Vienna Township C-130H cargo aircraft training facility and concluded that 12 planes were necessary for the base to adequately perform its mission, there is now a move to reduce the number of aircraft to eight.

In fiscal 2011, the Air Force Reserve directed the Youngstown base to lend two aircraft to Little Rock Air Force base to support its training mission, but the planes remained part of YARS' inventory for manning purposes.

Now, the feds want to remove those two from Youngstown's books and also convert another to Backup Aircraft Inventory.

Without a compelling organizational reason, the Pentagon should not be allowed to proceed.

Ohio's two U.S. senators, Democrat Sherrod Brown and Republican Rob Portman, need the backing of politicians, community leaders and business executives in their quest to not only maintain what the

Youngstown base has, but to increase the number of aircraft to 16.

Gubernatorial support

The senators also need the support of Gov. John Kasich, who must be aware that past governors were unstinting in their support of the Mahoning Valley's economic development efforts.

The Camp Ravenna project is less urgent but just as crucial because it could mean an investment of millions of dollars by the Pentagon and a sizeable number of jobs.

The former arsenal is one of five sites being considered for the interceptor-deployment defense system.

The selection process is just beginning, but it's not too early for the Valley, along with the state and Ohio's congressional delegation, to launch a coordinated campaign.

The arsenal is ideally suited for the system being proposed by the defense government. It consists of 21,000 acres between Newton Falls and Ravenna. It has had storied history of participating in the defense of this nation and, like the Youngstown Air Reserve Station, it has received significant economic investment from the federal government. That should be a major consideration as Washington analyzes all the sites.

This is a project that goes beyond partisan politics and provincialism. There should be no hesitation by government, business, labor and community leaders to support the arsenal in the high-stakes sweepstakes.

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Lawmaker tries to block transfer of Guard Apaches and personnel cuts

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The Army has proposed divesting OH-58 Kiowa Warriors and using AH-64 Apaches to meet the armed aerial scout mission. (Army)

By Jeff Schogol
Staff writer

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In what is likely the opening shot in a looming battle between Congress and the Army, Rep. Joe Wilson, R-S.C., has introduced a bill that would freeze the Army's plans to transfer all of the National Guard's AH-64 Apache helicopters to the active-duty force and prevent most of the proposed Guard personnel cuts.

Introduced on Jan. 27, the bill is meant to stop a repeat of the 1990s, when the Army's active component, Guard and Reserve all had to compete for scarce resources, said Caroline Delleney, a spokeswoman for Wilson.

"The Congressman is hopeful that by acting early, the National Guard and the Army will be able to resolve disagreements and design a mutually acceptable plan," Delleney said in an email on

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Monday. "Under sequestration, the active Army, Guard, and Reserve will all have to make sacrifices. It is important that they work together to ensure that the total Army is strong because infighting will only weaken the Army and place our national security at risk."

The Army has proposed divesting its OH-58 Kiowa helicopters and using Apaches from the Guard to fulfill the Kiowa's reconnaissance and scout role. In return, the active-duty force would give the Guard UH-60 Black Hawk helicopters, which the Army believes are better suited to the Guard's homeland defense and disaster response missions.

But lawmakers are concerned that taking away all of the Guard's Apaches could be the first in a series of moves that would undermine the Guard as the active-duty force's combat reserve, a congressional staffer said Monday. Next, the Army could take away the Guard's Bradley Fighting Vehicles.

The bill, which currently has 34 co-sponsors, would also set the Guard's end strength at 350,000 instead of the Army's target of 315,000, the staffer said.

If active-duty Army and National Guard cannot reach an agreement on the helicopters and end strength, a form of the bill would likely be part of the proposed fiscal 2015 National Defense Authorization bill.

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Military Times Sweepstakes

**SUNSET REVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE
MIAMI-DADE COUNTY BOARDS
2014**

I. GENERAL INFORMATION

1. Name of Board reporting: Miami-Dade County Military Affairs

Board _____

2. Indicate number of board members, terms of office, and number of vacancies:

Number of Board

Members: 33

Terms of Office: 1 _____
Number _____ of _____ Vacancies:

4 _____

3. Identify number of meetings and members' attendance (Attach records reflecting activity from **Jan. 1, 2012** through **December 31, 2013**):

Number _____ of _____ Meetings:

12 _____

Number _____ of _____ Meetings with a Quorum:

12 _____

Attendance Records: See Attachment _____

4. What is the source of your funding? General funds for administrative needs.

Sponsor and donations fund all of the Board's signature events. _____

5. Date of Board Creation: _____ Miami-Dade County Military Affairs Board was created on May 17, 2012. _____

6. Attach a copy of the ordinance creating the Board (Please include all subsequent amendments).

See Attachment _____

7. Include the Board's Mission Statement or state its purpose:

The mission of the Military Affairs Board is to provide the Miami-Dade Board of County Commissioners with recommendations in regards to the military and veterans. The Military Affairs Board's focus will be concentrated on issues concerning the Army, Marine Corps, Navy, Air Force, Coast Guard and National Guard Reserves. The Military Affairs Board will serve as an advocate for active duty, reserve, retired, disable and deceased military personnel in Miami-Dade County. _____

8. Attach the Board's standard operating procedures, if any. Not
Applicable _____

9. Attach a copy of the Board's By-Laws, if any.

10. Attach a copy of the Board minutes approving the Sunset Review Questionnaire, **including a vote of the membership.**
See Attachment _____

II. EVALUATION CRITERIA

1. Is the Board serving the purpose for which it was created? (Please provide detailed information) Yes. The Military Affairs Board though in its infancy has created an awareness for the military and veterans in Miami-Dade County. The Military Affairs Board is identifying and developing programs to address the needs of both the veteran and the military in our community. _____

2. Is the Board serving current community needs? (Please provide detailed information) Yes. The Military Affairs Board has been instrumental in addressing the community needs by establishing several committees within the Board to address specific and complex needs. _____

3. What are the Board's major accomplishments?
a. Last 24 months The Military Affairs Board organized and conducted one of the largest Veteran's Day Parades in the history of Miami-Dade County followed by a star studded concert all free of cost due to generous donations from various sponsors. _____

- b. Since _____ established _____ Golden _____ Veterans _____ Parade _____ and Concert _____

4. Is there any other board, either public or private, which would better serve the function of this board?
No _____

5. Should the ordinance creating the Board be amended to better enable the Board to serve the purpose for which it was created? (If "Yes", attach proposed changes)
No _____

6. Should the Board's membership requirements be modified?
No _____

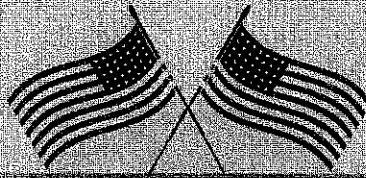
**SUNSET REVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE
MIAMI-DADE COUNTY BOARDS
2014**

7. What is the operating cost of the Board, both direct and indirect? (Report on FY 2012 and FY 2013)

_____ \$58,500/\$6,500 _____

8. Describe the Board's performance measures developed to determine its own effectiveness in achieving its stated goals.

Meeting on a monthly basis. Networking with various veteran and military organizations in order to unite all aspects of the Military Community. Identify and monitor the needs and interest of the Military Community in order to improve their quality of life. Collaborating with other advisory boards in the department by hosting programs together to enhance inter-group relations. Empowering veterans in addressing and finding solutions to community concerns. Establishing a direct line of communication between the Military Affairs Board and the Board of County Commissioners, County administrators, community organizations and the citizens of Miami-Dade County. Establishing events and activities that address the topics of interest to the Military Community.



In honor of the sacrifices and successes
of our servicemembers and their families,

West Kendall Baptist Hospital
would like to invite you to a monthly

Military Family Appreciation Dinner

**Beginning on
Wednesday, January 22*
6-8 p.m.**

West Kendall Baptist Hospital Bamboo Café
9555 SW 162 Avenue, Miami

RSVP to AnaDi@BaptistHealth.net or 786-467-3404.
Space is limited.



West Kendall Baptist Hospital

BAPTIST HEALTH SOUTH FLORIDA

An academic affiliate of the **FIU** Herbert Wertheim College of Medicine

*Additional dates on back

**These Military Family Appreciation Dinners
will be held on the fourth Wednesday
of every month.**

Upcoming dates:

February 26

March 26

April 23

May 28

June 25

Approved _____ Mayor
Veto _____
Override _____

Agenda Item No.

RESOLUTION NO. _____

RESOLUTION EXPRESSING SUPPORT FOR THE 2014 "TOYS FOR TOTS" TOY DRIVE; DIRECTING THE MAYOR OR MAYOR'S DESIGNEE TO PROVIDE THE NECESSARY STAFF AND IN-KIND SUPPORT TO ASSIST THE U.S. MARINE CORPS RESERVE WITH ITS 2014 "TOYS FOR TOTS" TOY DRIVE WHEN THE COMMISSION APPROVES THE SOURCE OF THE FUNDS AND THE NECESSARY AMOUNT AT A LATER DATE; AND URGING MUNICIPALITIES WITHIN MIAMI-DADE COUNTY TO SUPPORT THE TOY DRIVE

WHEREAS, in 1995, the Secretary of Defense approved the Toys for Tots program as an official activity of the U.S. Marine Corps and an official mission of the Marine Corps Reserve; and

WHEREAS, the objectives of the Toys for Tots program are to help less fortunate children throughout the United States experience the joy of Christmas; to play an active role in the development of our nation's children; to unite all members of local communities in a common cause for three months of each year during the annual toy collection and distribution campaign; and to contribute to better communities in the future; and

WHEREAS, over its lifespan, the Toys for Tots program has distributed over 469 million toys to over 216 million less fortunate families; and

WHEREAS, thousands of children in South Florida have benefitted from the Toys for Tots program, and many more would benefit with the enhanced support of this Board, the Administration, and other municipalities within Miami-Dade County;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA, that

Section 1. This Board expresses its gratitude and support for the Toys for Tots program in Miami-Dade County and, specifically, its toy drive in 2014; and

Section 2. In furtherance of its support of the Toys for Tots program in Miami-Dade County, this Board directs the County Mayor or Mayor's Designee, when this Board approves the source of funds and the necessary amount at a later date, to provide the necessary staff and in-kind support to assist the U.S. Marine Corps Reserve with its 2014 Toys for Tots toy drive; and

Section 3. Urges all municipalities within Miami-Dade County to support the 2014 Toys for Tots toy drive.

The Prime Sponsor of the foregoing resolution is Commissioner Jose "Pepe" Diaz. It was offered by Commissioner _____, who moved its adoption. The motion was seconded by Commissioner _____ and upon being put to a vote, the vote was as follows:

Rebeca Sosa, Chairwoman

Lynda Bell, Vice Chair

Bruno A. Barreiro
Jose "Pepe" Diaz
Sally A. Heyman
Jean Monestime
Sen. Javier D. Souto
Juan C. Zapata

Esteban L. Bovo, Jr.
Audrey M. Edmonson
Barbara J. Jordan
Dennis C. Moss
Xavier L. Suarez

The Chairperson thereupon declared the resolution duly passed and adopted this _____, 2014. This resolution shall become effective ten (10) days after the date of its adoption unless vetoed by the Mayor, and if vetoed, shall become effective only upon an override by this Board.

MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA
BY ITS BOARD OF
COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Miami VA GRECC Reports

Enhance Fitness Exercise Program for South Florida Older Veterans

1. The Problem (affecting South Florida Veterans)

There is an epidemic of obesity that affects the US, and Veterans have greater prevalence of obesity when compared to non-Veterans. Obesity is associated with impaired health, greater comorbidities and costs. Miami VA offers the MOVE! program, and while it is an excellent multidisciplinary approach, with psychological, nutritional and pharmacologic interventions, it does not have the capacity to offer sustainable exercise classes. However, VA facilities around the country have limited space, budget and personnel, and there are no official standard exercise programs for all veterans.

2. Miami VAHS 5-year experience implementing an exercise + collaborative efforts for sustainability 2014

Enhance Fitness is an evidence-based exercise program tailored to older adults, developed by University of Washington in the late 1990's, and proven to improve medical and functional parameters in older adults. Miami VAHS implements EF for South Florida Veterans since 2008, with **funding granted by the Health Foundation of South Florida** and its Healthy Aging Regional Collaborative (HARC).

586 Veterans have enjoyed the program, which was implemented under the umbrella of Research and within the local MOVE! program.

As funding is finishing, Miami VAHS, HARC, and Miami-Dade Parks, have partnered to offer EF, at NO-cost for Veterans, no extra cost to the Miami VAHS, for one-year (2014).

Thirteen Parks were chosen around Miami-Dade county. The parks were identified based on appropriate space for an indoor exercise class that does not compete with other existing programs and availability of funding to hire more instructors and support staff to deliver programs.

3. What we request from the Miami-Dade Military Affairs Board

Exercise is a great activity with plenty of benefits, especially when tailored to the appropriate population, with potential greater safety when done under supervision, and potential greater benefits when done in group, especially for older adults, where isolation can be countered with the socialization we've observed in our Veteran participants at Miami VAHS.

We request your kind attention, for we have been successful to implement Enhance Fitness for South Florida Older Veterans for five years, and with the supports of the Healthy Aging Regional Collaborative and the Miami-Dade Parks and Recreation, there will be opportunities for Miami Veterans to exercise in the community during 2014. HARC and the Parks are offering their support to fund ONE-year.

Enhance Fitness Exercise Program 5-year implementation at Miami VAHS

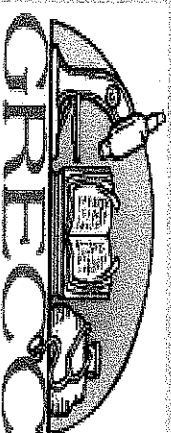
**an opportunity to ENHANCE the health
of South Florida Veterans**

Partnership with

**Health Aging Regional Collaborative
Miami-Dade Parks & Recreation**



Defining
EXCELLENCE
in the 21st Century



Objectives

- 1. The problem:**
High prevalence of overweight/obesity in Veterans, with negative impact to their health.
- 2. The available intervention:**
MOVE! Weight Management Program: multidisciplinary approach (psychological, nutritional, pharmacological).
- 3. What we offer (Miami VAHS):**
Experience: successful 5-year implementation (research) of a supervised exercise program for older Veterans.
- 4. What comes next**
We find the need to expand the opportunities to South Florida Veterans (beyond research).

1. The problem

- Veterans were used to doing a lot of exercise during the service, but thereafter, not enough...
- ~ 80% of Veterans around the country have overweight or obesity, which are associated with impaired health, increased comorbidities and costs.
- Sedentarism (lack of physical activity) affects most older adults in South Florida.
- Obesity Research Journal (2012): overweight Veterans are bigger in the waist than non-Veterans, and higher body mass index (greater cardiovascular and metabolic risks).

2. The available intervention

- The VA MOVE! Weight Management Program
- Excellent National program, supported by VA Central Office and the National Center for Prevention.
- Multidisciplinary approach: psychological, behavioral, nutritional, pharmacological (in some sites).
- Positive results reported for participants.
- **Limitations:** access limited to “in-house” encounters, slowly growing to reach Veterans at home. However, there are NO exercise interventions, with limitations due to space in VA facilities as a factor affecting most VA facilities in the country.

3. The alternative solution

- The **Enhance Fitness** is an evidence-based exercise program for the improvement of medical and functional parameters in older adults.
- **Implemented in Miami VAHS since 2008**, with funding granted by the **Health Foundation of South Florida**, through its *Healthy Aging Regional Collaborative (HARC)*.
- EF enhanced physical function and quality of life in overweight and obese older Veterans.
- **Effectiveness** study: we knew EF exercise worked, we tested if the implementation worked for our Veterans, and the results were successful.

**Enhance Fitness at Miami VAHS
improves all the Geriatric Domains
MEDICAL: Decrease waist circumference.
FUNCTIONAL: Improve hand-grip strength**

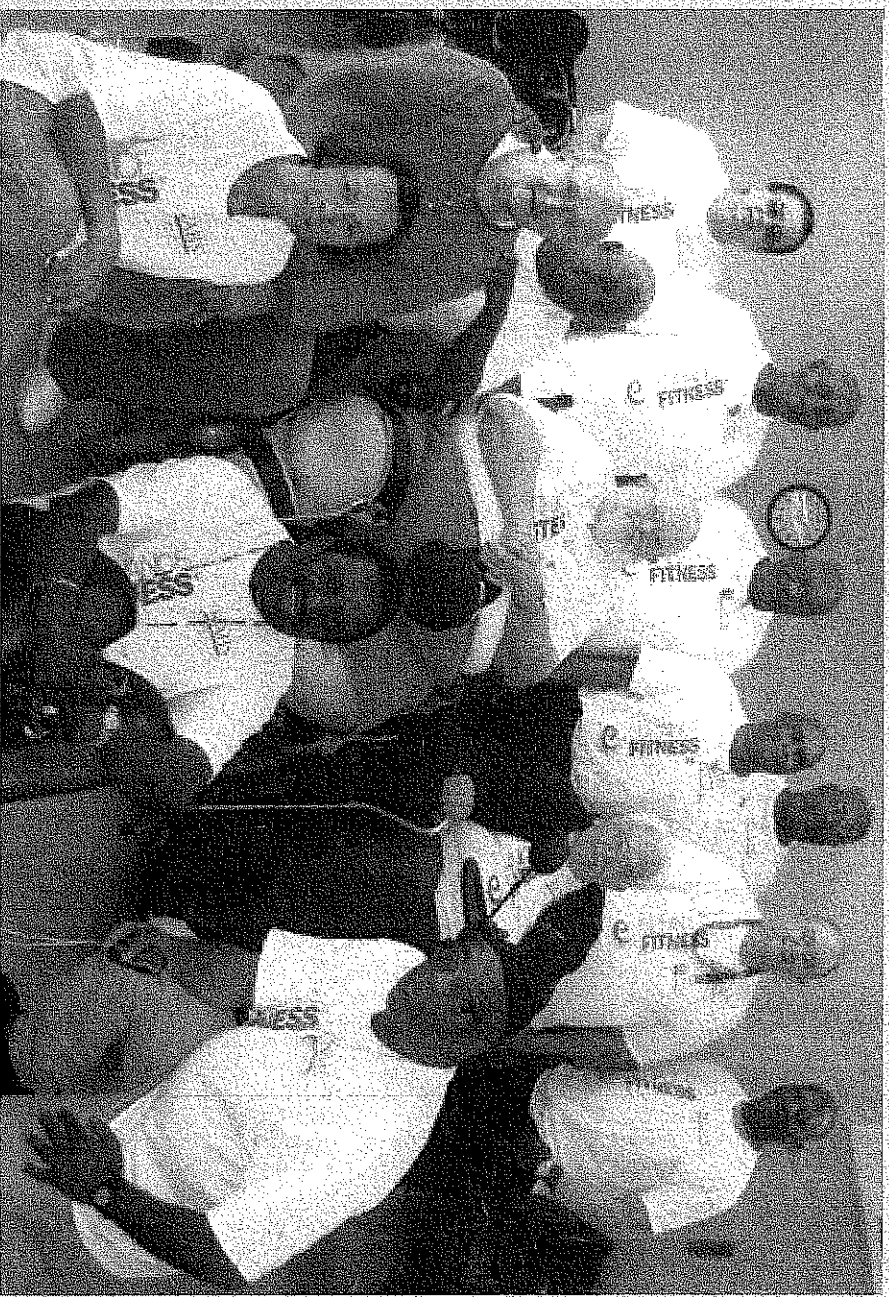


Enhance Fitness at Miami VAHS improves all the Geriatric Domains

PSYCHOLOGICAL: Reduce depression scores

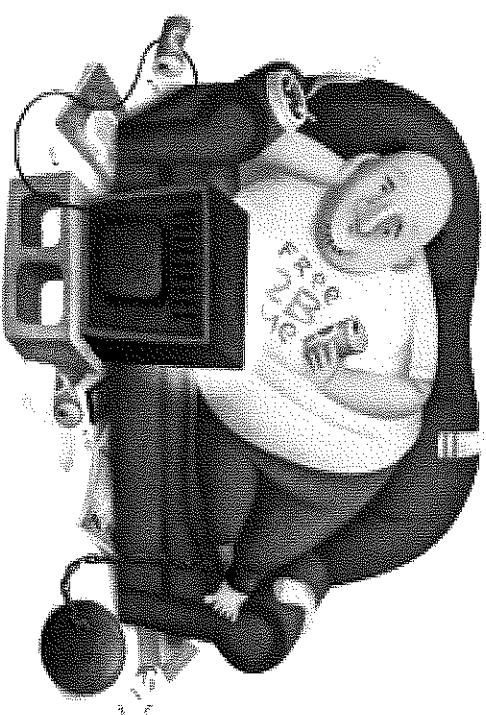
Improves health-related quality of life

SOCIAL:



EF-Exercise is a choice

Personalized, Proactive, Patient-Driven

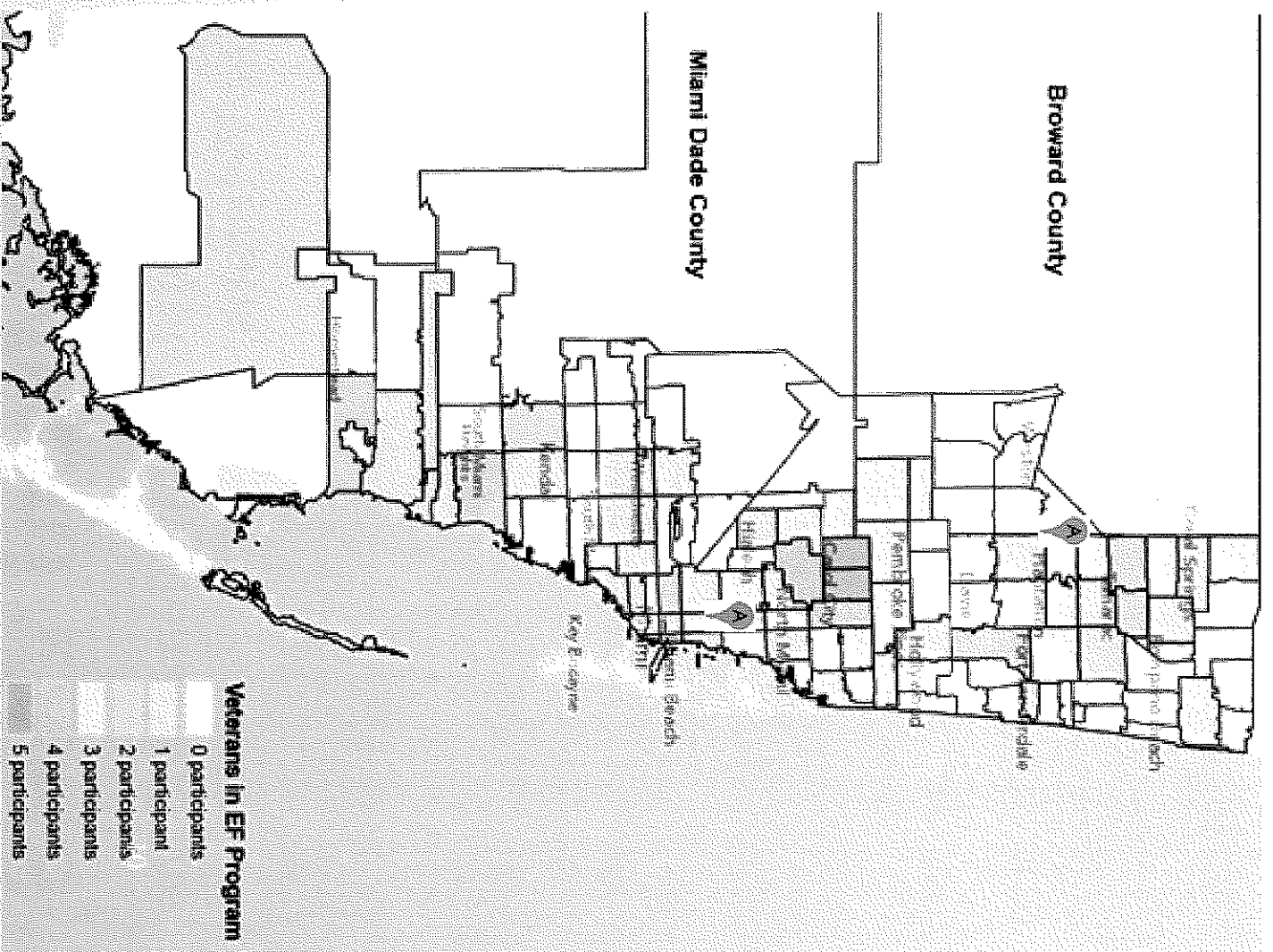


- better quality of life, greater satisfaction (“spirit of the core”)
- increase utilization of our VA healthcare system.
- brings back the culture of exercise & being physically active in a group setting, to the lives of Veterans (“like in the service”)
- maintain the sense of belonging to VA (ACA implementation)
- attract Veterans currently not coming to Miami VAHS.

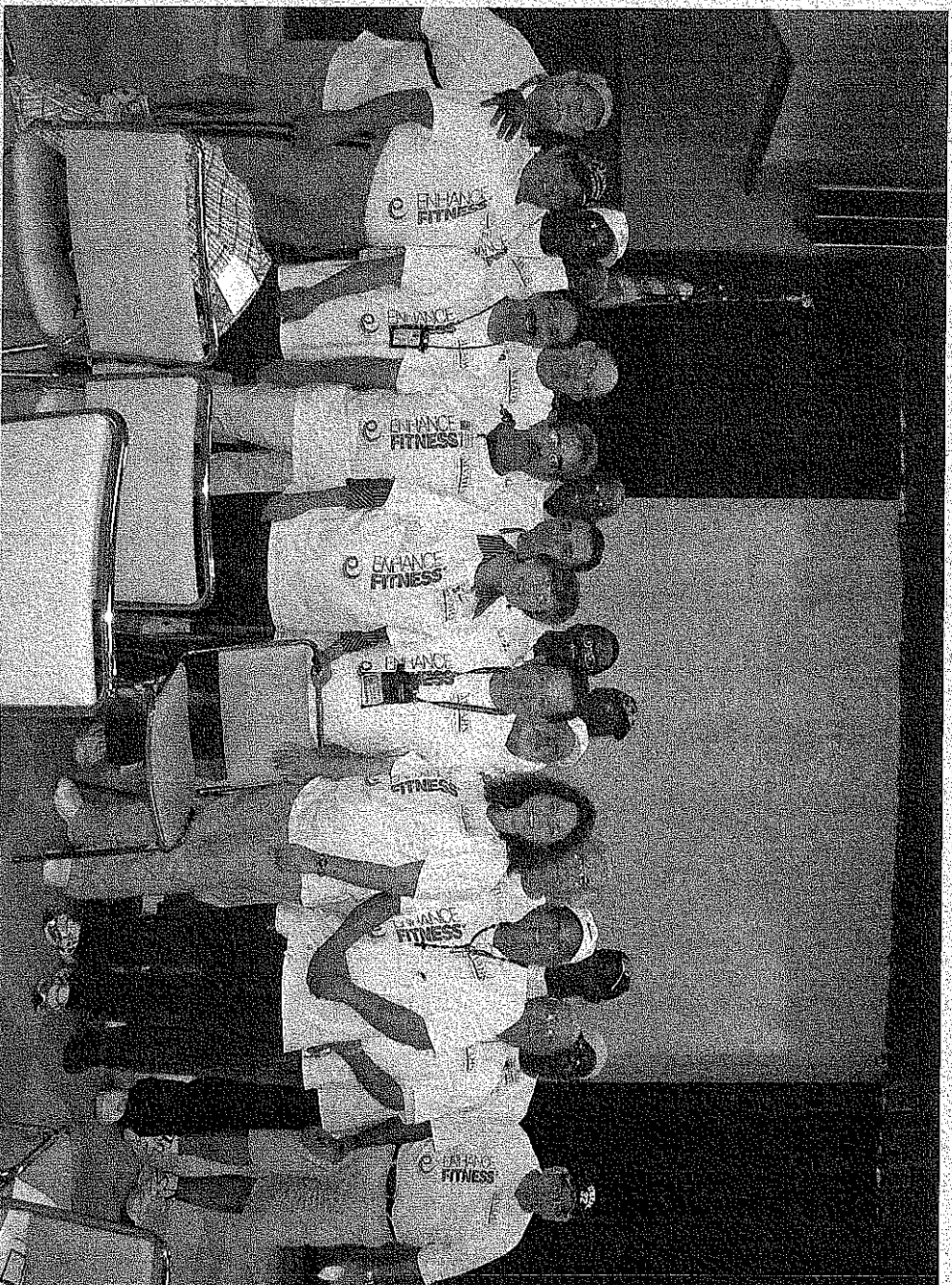
Enhance Fitness at Miami VAHS

- Miami VAHS is the first VA in the country to implement the EF exercise program for older Veterans.
- After 5-years of implementation:
 - 586 veterans were enrolled.
 - 117 remain active participants:
 - Miami Bruce W. Carter Medical Center
 - Broward William “Bill” Kling Outpatient Clinic.
 - 9 certified to train other veterans.
- Positive results shared at local & national meetings.
 - Including a presentation given by a Veteran himself, peer-leader coordinator, to the MOVE! Weight Program National Conference Call on Obesity.

Many Veterans are driving several miles, (with or against “Miami traffic”) to reach our facilities and enjoy the Enhance Fitness exercise program.



from successful Implementation...



**... towards the continuation of veteran-centric
exercise opportunities for South Florida Veterans**

4. What comes next

- Based on the successful results, we want to go **beyond research and expand the opportunities** for Veterans to do exercise.
- In order to serve more Veterans, we have to innovate from the traditional implementation of programs solely at VA facilities, and partner with community organizations and leaders.
 - Continued support from the Health Foundation of South Florida and the Healthy Aging Regional Collaborative.
 - Partnership with the Miami-Dade Parks and Recreation.
- **One size does not fit all.** This is not the only way to do exercise, but certainly one that **help many who chose to do supervised group-exercise.**
- Great opportunity to promote the translation of programs into **Veteran-friendly, Veteran-centric, cost-effective** interventions, helping Veterans in the community.

Strategy for Miami-Dade Veterans

(to be replicated for Broward county)

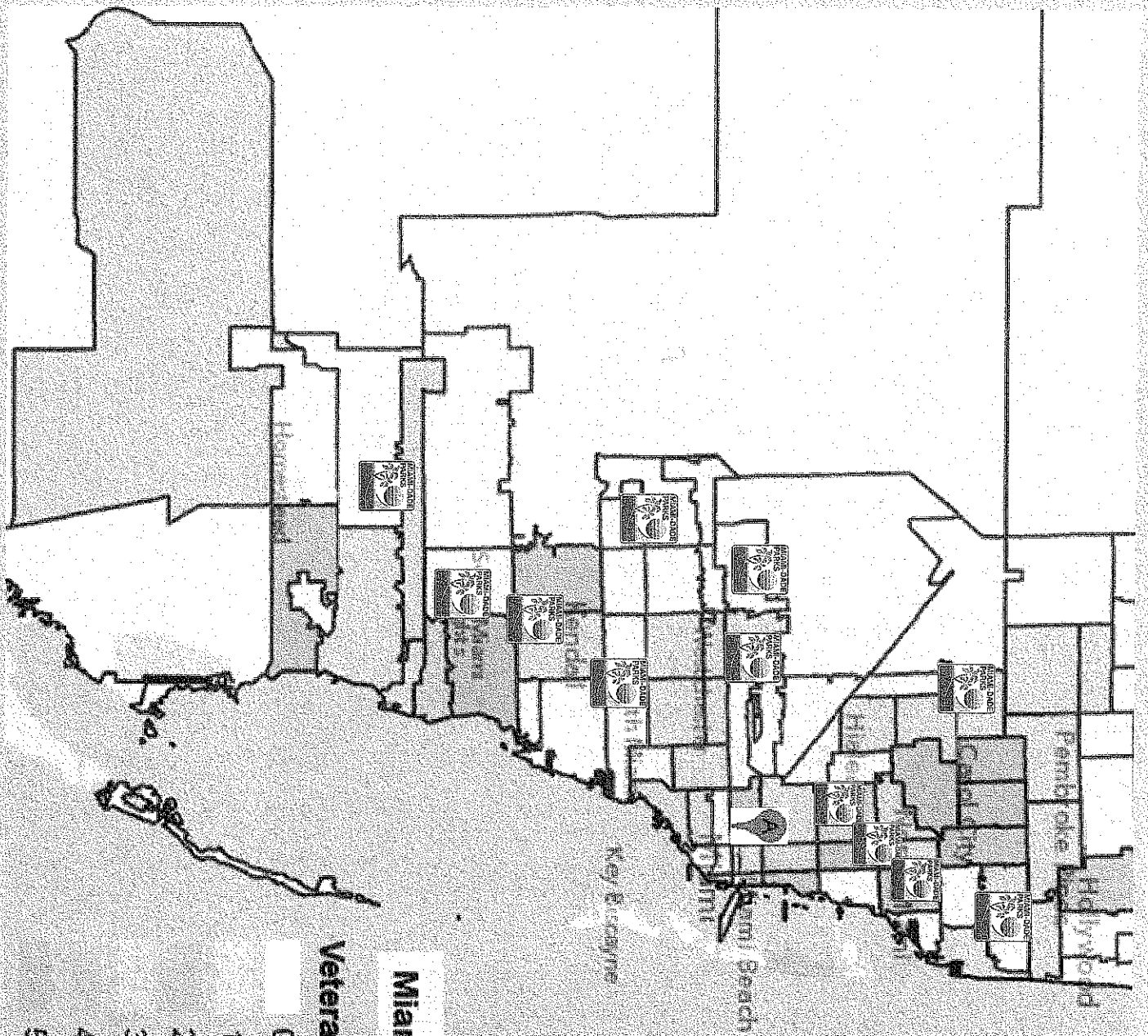
Information Dissemination Flyers at VAMC Information on Parks: opportunity to do exercise (EF) in the community.	PACT Patient-aligned Care team Discuss Offer options for exercise Act Offer & Refer to the MOVE program Inform Flyers available for providers	MOVE/ HPDPC Inform Healthy lifestyle. Exercise opportunities location-schedule-contact at Miami-Dade PROS Offer EF exercise at VAMC upon completion of weekly sessions (according to capacity) Dissemination to CBOCs	GRECC Outreach Functional Evaluation consecutive sample Coordination - Miami-Dade PROS - SFHF - HARC - Miami-Dade MAB Reach Broward County PROS (established contact with Mr. Sargis)
Invite "word of mouth"			

HPDPC: VA Health Promotion and Disease Prevention Committee
CBOCs: VA Community Based Outpatient Clinics

Enhance Fitness at Miami-Dade Parks

2014 Implementation Plan

- **Expanding Opportunities:**
Who will benefit? EF is proven to work for older adults. We agreed to **expand the access to age 55 and above.**
- **Usual Care at Miami VAHS**
Veterans will be evaluated at Miami VAHS facilities, and if considered to be in well condition to do mild to moderate exercise, they will be given information about the locations of the Parks, available schedule, person of contact. Veterans may attend voluntarily.
- **Implementation during 2014**
HARC and PROS supporting EF at the Miami Parks. |
 - **no extra cost to Miami VAHS**
 - **no cost for the Veteran who chooses to participate**



Miami Dade County

Veterans in EF Program

- 0 participants
- 1 participant
- 2 participants
- 3 participants
- 4 participants
- 5 participants

* this is a draft with approximate locations of Parks
Please refer to map to be provided by Miami-Dade Parks

Future Potential – Growth Opportunities

- **Promotion of exercise:** based on success during 2014 Enhance Fitness and other exercise programs could follow in the future, including programs for younger adults.
- **Job opportunities:** **SEVEN** Veterans have been hired by Miami-Dade Parks to become EF trainers. More opportunities may come as program expands.
- **Other Evidence-Based programs offered at the Parks** (Living Healthy, Chronic Disease Self-management, Diabetes Self-Management).
- **Veterans who are not coming to Miami VAHS** could become interested and invited to come.
- **VA Outreach:** Involve entities from the community who would assist the sustainability of exercise programs to Senior Citizens/Veterans (2015 and beyond)