

The Challenge of BRAC: Staying in Business During the Relocation



The greatest challenge of any BRAC workforce realignment is not the MILCON (Military Construction), nor is it the disassembly and reassembly of the organization's assets and workspaces. The greatest challenge is the organization's ability to continue to fully meet its mission objective while undergoing the entire BRAC process, the workforce attrition and dislocation and the loss of significant senior workforce experience.

A critical part of a successful BRAC program is the effective management of continued operations as the workforce undergoes traumatic changes. The following list, though not all inclusive, provides a representative sample of typical workforce reactions to BRAC mandated realignments:

- ✗ Early retirees
- ✗ Loss of senior mission expertise
- ✗ Loss of mission support personnel
- ✗ Loss of base support personnel
- ✗ Loss of senior management personnel
- ✗ Early loss of personnel who refuse to relocate

- ✗ Loss of 'one of a kind' subject matter experts
- ✗ Early loss of corporate knowledge base
- ✗ Loss of critical support contractors
- ✗ Loss of organizational efficiency
- ✗ Erosion of workforce morale

The organization's management must act early to address the loss of mission and support personnel with contingency plans which are developed to maintain mission effectiveness throughout the losing base turmoil and receiving base 'stand-up'. Examples of options that can be exercised are:

- ✗ Increase use of temporary contractor staff augmentation.
- ✗ Offer incentives to critical-skill personnel to provide support until completion of transfer
- ✗ Update important documentation
- ✗ Baseline asset data
- ✗ New hire with relocation contingency clause
- ✗ Attain support from in-region military bases

- ✗ Structure the relocation to allow organizational continuity throughout from beginning to end
- ✗ Consider short-term 'commuting' and/or telecommunicating arrangements for critical employees
- ✗ Implement early cross-training
- ✗ Fill projected management vacancies early, allowing for orderly training & turnover
- ✗ Initiate early receiving base contact and integration
- ✗ Streamline check-out and check-in processes

Each base is different! Actions from this list, in addition to others that are tailored to the specific requirements of the BRAC affected organizations, will go a long way to minimizing the 'BRAC Effect' on the workforce and its mission capability.

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