

GAO

**Fact Sheet for the Chairman,
Subcommittee on Military Construction,
Committee on Appropriations, House of
Representatives**

September 1986

FORCE STRUCTURE

Information on Relocation of Army's 6th Infantry Division Headquarters



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September 19, 1986

The Honorable W. G. Hefner
Chairman, Subcommittee On Military Construction
Committee On Appropriations
House of Representatives

Dear Mr. Chairman:

In July 1986, your office requested that we review the Army's decision to move the 6th Infantry Division (Light) headquarters from its present location at Fort Richardson, Alaska, to Fort Wainwright, Alaska, and that we include in our review an examination of the Army's cost estimate for the relocation. Results of our review are summarized below and are discussed in detail in appendix I.

Currently, the 6th Division consists of a division headquarters and one active component brigade at Fort Richardson and a reserve brigade (roundout) at Fort Snelling, Minnesota. The active component brigade was formed from the available assets of the 172nd Separate Infantry Brigade already assigned to Fort Richardson. A second active component brigade is being formed at Fort Wainwright.

Since elements of the 6th Division will be located at both Forts Richardson and Wainwright, the Army had to decide whether the division headquarters should remain at Fort Richardson. Several factors were considered in this decision, including command, control and communications; training; joint planning; facilities; and cost. Fort Richardson was favored for joint planning purposes and Fort Wainwright was preferred because most division training will occur there. According to the Army, locating the headquarters at the primary training facility enhances the opportunity for headquarters staff to more readily participate in training exercises and provide command emphasis to training. Joint planning can be accomplished through communication, and Fort Wainwright is only one hour by air from Fort Richardson. Therefore, Fort Wainwright was selected as the headquarters location.

Initial proposals for locating the headquarters indicated that Fort Wainwright was a more costly alternative. The Army believed, however, that more economical proposals for Fort Wainwright could be developed and, having selected this location for the headquarters, prepared alternative proposals and revised cost estimates. According to Army officials, revised estimates for the Fort Richardson option were not prepared since Fort Wainwright had already been selected as the headquarters location.

The Army estimates that relocating the division headquarters to Fort Wainwright will cost about \$21 million. Included is about \$11 million for facilities, about \$7 million for relocating the Bureau of Land Management District Office which was located on Fort Wainwright, and \$3 million for transferring personnel from Fort Richardson. Major facility related projects include modifying bachelor enlisted quarters (\$3.4 million) and renovating the future division headquarters building (\$4 million).

In conducting our work, we interviewed Army officials and reviewed the Army's proposals for locating the division headquarters. We analyzed the Army's cost estimates for relocating the division, including estimates for constructing and renovating facilities and moving required personnel to Fort Wainwright. Supporting documentation examined included facility plans, designs, requirements, and cost factors. Our work was conducted from July to September 1986 at Department of Army Headquarters, Washington, D.C.; Headquarters, U.S. Army Forces Command, Fort McPherson, Georgia; and the 6th Infantry Division, Forts Richardson and Wainwright, Alaska.

As arranged with your office, unless you publicly announce its contents, we plan no further distribution of this report until 7 days from the date of the report. At that time, we will send copies to interested parties and make copies available to others upon request.

If we can be of further assistance, please let us know.

Sincerely yours,



Thomas S. Brew
Associate Director

INFORMATION ON RELOCATINGARMY'S 6TH INFANTRY DIVISION HEADQUARTERSBACKGROUND

The 6th Division is part of the Joint Task Force, Alaska, which also includes components of the Air Force. When it is fully manned in 1989, the 6th Division will consist of approximately 10,700 soldiers. It will have a division headquarters at Fort Wainwright, Alaska; two active component brigades (one at Fort Richardson, Alaska; the other at Fort Wainwright); and one reserve brigade (the 205th Separate Infantry Brigade), Fort Snelling, Minnesota.

Currently, the division consists of a division headquarters and one active component brigade at Fort Richardson and the Minnesota brigade. The active component brigade was formed from the available assets of the 172nd Separate Infantry Brigade already assigned to Fort Richardson. A second active component brigade is being formed at Fort Wainwright, and the Army plans to move the division headquarters there by 1989.

Fort Wainwright was the location of the 171st Infantry Brigade until 1972 when, due to worldwide Army strength reductions, the brigade was deactivated. Since then, the facilities at Fort Wainwright have been used by Army personnel for training exercises and by others, including the Bureau of Land Management and personnel working on the Alaskan pipeline.

By 1989 Fort Richardson is expected to accommodate about 4,700 soldiers. By that same time, approximately 6,000 soldiers will be assigned to Fort Wainwright.

FACTORS CONSIDERED IN DECIDING
THE HEADQUARTERS LOCATION

Having decided that elements of the division would be stationed at Forts Richardson and Wainwright, the Army had to decide where to locate the division headquarters. The Army prepared various proposals for placing the headquarters at either location. Key factors considered included command, control, and communications; training; joint planning; facilities; and cost. For most factors, the Army considered either location equally suitable for placing the headquarters. However, Fort Wainwright was considered advantageous for training purposes while Fort Richardson was favored for conducting joint planning.

According to the Army, the training advantage held by Fort Wainwright was the primary reason for placing the division headquarters there. The Army considered the large size and terrain of the Fort Wainwright training area ideal. According to the Army, it provides an opportunity to exercise units for tactical operations needed to secure critical installations in Alaska and to prepare a coherent force for worldwide deployment. In addition, division officials told us that large-scale exercises could be conducted only at Fort Wainwright and most of the division's training would be conducted there. According to Army officials, it is desirable to have a division headquarters located where major training exercises will occur. Collocation enhances the opportunity for the headquarters staff to more readily participate in training exercises and can facilitate command emphasis on training.

Army officials considered the physical proximity of Fort Richardson to the Joint Task Force, Alaska, at nearby Elmendorf Air Force Base, advantageous for joint planning purposes. However, division officials told us the adequacy of its communication capability from Fort Wainwright and the division commander's ability to rapidly travel to Fort Richardson were compensating factors. The division commander told us he and his immediate staff could fly from Fort Wainwright to Fort Richardson in about one hour.

ESTIMATED RELOCATION COSTS

The Army estimates the relocation of the 6th Infantry Division headquarters will cost about \$21 million. Cost estimates include about \$10.8 million for facilities, \$7.2 million for relocating the Bureau of Land Management District Office, and about \$3 million for relocating about 450 soldiers.

Initial proposals for locating the headquarters indicated that Fort Wainwright was a more costly alternative. The Army believed, however, that more economical proposals for Fort Wainwright could be developed. Having selected the Fort Wainwright location for the headquarters, the Army made several modifications to the initial proposal and prepared revised cost estimates. For example, an earlier proposal to move the installation management staff, involving about 600 personnel, was deleted. These personnel will remain at Fort Richardson. Army officials told us installation management staff could operate satisfactorily at Fort Richardson.

Major facilities projects to be undertaken at Fort Wainwright include modernizing bachelor enlisted quarters and renovating the future headquarters building, as shown in table I.1.

Table I.1: Major Facilities Projects at Fort Wainwright

<u>Facility</u>	<u>Estimated cost</u> (millions)
Modernizing bachelor enlisted quarters	\$ 3.40
Constructing special security office	2.15
Renovating the future division headquarters building	4.00
Renovating a portion of a barracks for the 6th Signal Battalion Headquarters	<u>1.20</u>
Total	<u>\$10.75</u>

The Army plans to modernize bachelor enlisted quarters having a capacity for housing 600 soldiers. Division officials estimate \$3.4 million of the total project cost is attributable to the headquarters relocation. This estimate covers the housing needs for about 150 of the 450 soldiers transferring to Fort Wainwright. The funds for this project are included in the Army's fiscal year 1988 military construction program.

According to division officials, locating the headquarters at Fort Wainwright requires renovating facilities to protect sensitive classified information. Army officials told us the \$2.15 million cost estimate for this facility is preliminary. This amount is included in the division's fiscal year 1989 military construction program.

Division officials estimate it will cost \$4 million to renovate the facilities which will house the division headquarters. The renovation will involve painting, lighting, and other rehabilitation, including asbestos removal. An Army official told us the \$4 million estimate is preliminary and that fiscal year 1987 operations and maintenance funds have been requested for this project.

Included among the 450 personnel transferring to Fort Wainwright is the 6th Signal Battalion, which provides communication support to the division headquarters. Division officials estimate it will cost \$1.2 million to modify part of an

existing building for the battalion's headquarters. The funds for the renovation are included in the division's fiscal year 1985 and 1986 operations and maintenance program.

Since 1979, the Bureau of Land Management has occupied several facilities at Fort Wainwright. Included is the building which will be used to house the division headquarters. In connection with the Bureau's vacating this facility by September 30, 1986, the Department of Defense Appropriations Act for fiscal year 1986 required the Army to transfer \$7.2 million to the Bureau.

The 6th Infantry Division also estimates the headquarters relocation will require about \$3 million for transferring headquarters and support personnel from Fort Richardson to Fort Wainwright. These costs primarily consist of travel, temporary allowances, and expenses associated with moving household goods.

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