Conclusions

- Physical boundaries make “aggregate needs and lands” meaningless
- Most “home stations” constrained and isolated
- Army has coherent, but implicit, strategy
  - Organizational boundaries inhibit explanation
  - Difficult to “prioritize” initiatives
- Organizational boundaries could inhibit BRAC and simulation in land strategy
  - Large ranges important
  - Comprehensive basing study needed

Figure 39

Figure 39 presents the general conclusions of the briefing. We find that the physical distance between Army installations effectively isolates them. While internal organizational boundaries do exist and could inhibit efficient use of the total resource, these obstacles are
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small compared to the costs of moving units among installations. Concepts such as “Army-wide” lands or the ability to sacrifice land expansions in some areas, if they proceed elsewhere, are meaningless.

The active Army’s “home stations” are small and isolated. Each would benefit from additional land. However, the Army uses a diverse set of techniques involving simulation, visits to “training centers,” and training tools to offset land shortfalls. In answer to the question posed in the title of this briefing, we conclude that the Army does have a coherent land strategy. Unfortunately, it is an implicit one. It is also a strategy within the confines of political obstacles to major realignments. The Army does not have a strategy in place should there be opportunities to achieve a major realignment of units.

The Army’s formal methodology for calculating land requirements ignores this strategy, both because it is an implicit one and because of the organizational boundaries within each level of command. Those implementing TC 25-1 are not the combat units that have improvised to cope with land shortages. The result is that Army needs can become exaggerated and that the implicit acquisition strategy is left unexplained, undermining the credibility of land initiatives. We also find that the call for the Army to rationalize land initiatives by military importance is not realistic. A wide range of Army bases would benefit from additional land, but it is local political support and the availability of land—not military significance—that determine whether any land can be acquired. Military significance is a prerequisite for gaining any political support, but it does not determine the ultimate outcome.

The politics of land use imply that it will be increasingly difficult for the Army to satisfy its demands for training land through expansion. Simulation technology development and realignment are two alternative ways of attacking the problem. However, these alternatives have not made a strong impression across the Army. The Army must overcome internal organizational boundaries that inhibit the integration of land issues into these two processes.

Proper integration of these factors will lead to increased attention to the future of the “large ranges.” These ranges constitute the Army’s
training land reserve but are not recognized as such by the current major command structure. The Army needs to conduct a comprehensive basing study that considers all Army assets without regard to internal organizational boundaries.
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Programmatic Recommendations

- Make implicit strategy explicit
- Host training conference on TC 25-1
- Reexamine two cases:
  - NTC/China Lake
  - Bliss/White Sands
- Work test-training range institutional issues
  - Bliss/White Sands site for case study
- Track simulation for land impacts
- Conduct strategic basing study
  - Cross command
  - Cross service
- Work toward Bliss renewal in 99-606 process
- Analyze converting “large range” to home station

Figure 40

Figure 40 highlights the programmatic conclusions that emerge from the briefing.

The physical isolation of Army installations implies that a national land strategy (under the assumption that there are no opportunities for significant realignments) will produce little substantive change in policy. Nevertheless, the absence of such a strategy has been a confusing point that has damaged Army and military land initiatives. TC 25-1, which misses key aspects of the Army’s implicit strategy, worsens the situation. We therefore recommend that the Army publish a land strategy for the purpose of explaining its current actions and policies. To do this, the Army should convene an internal conference composed of land managers and trainers to resolve problems in TC 25-1.

We reached the general conclusion that physical, not organizational, boundaries are the major factor inhibiting efficient use of the Army’s
total resource. However, Fort Irwin/China Lake and Bliss/White Sands are possible exceptions. The Army should reexamine these cases and answer the questions regarding the Fort Irwin expansion highlighted in Figure 33.

Although physical boundaries were more significant, organizational boundaries, particularly those acting to discourage the use of test ranges by training units, are not insignificant. The Army should identify the obstacles and organize a plan to overcome them. Given the declining activity at White Sands and the need for additional space for Fort Bliss's Roving Sands exercise, this may constitute an ideal opportunity for an experiment aimed at overcoming these obstacles.

The Army should reemphasize its effort to consider the implications of simulation technology on land use. At present the Integrated Training Area Management Program in ODSCOPS and the Army Training and Support Center at TRADOC have responsibility for considering this linkage. Both institutions have been emphasizing the implications of environmental issues on training land. It would be consistent with their charters and require only a slight shift in emphasis for these offices to conduct a thorough examination of this issue.

As noted in the previous chart, the Army (or DoD) should prepare for future BRACs by conducting an Army-wide (DoD-wide) basing study that is not bound by the existing organizational boundaries within the Department of Defense.

The 600,000-acre McGregor Range at Fort Bliss is subject to the renewal process as stipulated under Public Law 99-606. The Fort Bliss/White Sands complex may be the only location where the Army can conduct field training for some of the Army After Next concepts. Fort Bliss is the only “large range” in the lower 48 states that is part of the Army’s training base. The Army should therefore actively seek the renewal of McGregor Range as an important hedge against future requirements.

Finally, we recommend that the Army conduct a conceptual study on the steps needed to convert a “large range” to a home station. Such a conversion could represent a significant step in overcoming land shortages, but the costs and obstacles are significant. The Army
should examine alternatives and consider phased strategies that would allow greater use of its land reserves.

We conclude by answering the five policy questions listed below Figure 2.

• **Why is it important to have a coherent national military land strategy?**

  The military has a long-term need to access land for military training and testing. There is intense competition for land, and land-use decisions are made in political forums not directly concerned with military affairs. The military can best defend its needs by developing a coherent strategy that can be understood by policymakers outside the Department of Defense. Such a strategy must explain why there could be an aggregate oversupply along with local shortages.

• **What organizational boundaries divide DoD land resources? What physical boundaries?**

  The military land base is divided into by military services, the major commands within each service, subcommands, and individual installations. At each level there are intraorganizational boundaries between land managers and land users. With some exceptions, the Army’s land base is physically divided into small-isolated-overcrowded installations in the East (mostly) and large open ranges in the West.

• **How does the Army determine land needs, and how would a strategy that minimizes the role of organizational boundaries change decisionmaking?**

  The Army compares local land needs with local resources. It does not consider “Army-wide” lands. The methodology suffers from the intra-agency organizational boundaries by failing to account for the implicit strategy used to cope with land shortages. An approach that overcomes this obstacle would give a more realistic and understandable assessment of Army needs. But it would not change decision-making, because it is the physical boundaries that prevent optimized use of the total military land resource.
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• **How much land does the Army need?**

In the absence of an opportunity to realign units and bases, the physical boundaries in the Army land base make the issue of total Army needs meaningless. Each installation’s resources, and the tools that can be used to offset land shortages, must be evaluated individually.

• **How will these answers change with new developments in simulation technology or with additional rounds of BRAC?**

One means of addressing the physical boundaries is to realign military units to better match land resources. Developments in simulation technology could change the type of BRAC actions that would be needed. However, there is little organizational attention given to the land use implications of BRAC or simulation technology. Some past BRAC actions have even worked against a rationalization of military land usage.