How Will BRAC Affect Eastern North Carolina

How will BRAC affect the Eastern Region of North Carolina? On May 9 and 10, 2005, the President of the United States announced that a total of 100 military bases will be closed, and the closure of these bases will have a devastating economic impact on the communities in which they are located. The question on the minds of many is how will this affect the military bases that are scheduled to close. The answer to this question will give the Pentagon’s BRAC recommendations for military facilities that should be closed.

So what will happen to the bases that are closed? According to President Bush, “technology is the ticket” for energy, and he is seeking more nuclear power, refineries, drilling, and diesels. The President has also ordered federal agencies to “simplify the permitting process” for oil refineries at retired bases.

Soon, we will know what will happen to our military bases. On May 16, Defense Secretary Rumsfeld will give the Pentagon’s BRAC recommendations for military facilities that should be closed.

Source: www.globalsecurity.org
The Eastern Area Local Area’s unemployment was 5.3 percent in March, down from February’s 6.0 rate. During this period, unemployment rates dropped in eight of the nine Local Area counties. Greene County was one of only two counties in the State which had a rate increase over the month.

Unemployment rates for the Metropolitan Statistical Areas in our Local Area were:
- Goldsboro – 5.3 percent, down from 5.9 percent
- Jacksonville – 5.4 percent, down from 6.3 percent

Unemployment rates for the Micropolitan Statistical Areas in our Local Area were:
- Kinston – 5.7 percent, down from 6.4 percent
- Morehead City – 5.2 percent, down from 6.1 percent
- New Bern – 4.7 percent, down from 5.4 percent.

In March, $3.4 million in unemployment insurance benefits were paid to individuals in the Eastern Carolina Local Area.

Onslow County received the highest amount – $664,239
Wayne—$626,421
Carteret—$465,456
Greene—$170,729
Pamlico—$68,636
Carter—$458,922
Duplin—$453,400
Lenoir—$361,636
Greene—$310,279
Jones—$86,189
Pamlico—$65,549.

*March 2005 data are preliminary, and not seasonally adjusted.

Source: ESC of NC

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Rate</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Greene</td>
<td>5.7%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lenoir</td>
<td>5.0%</td>
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<td>Duplin</td>
<td>5.1%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Onslow</td>
<td>5.3%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pamlico</td>
<td>5.0%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Craven</td>
<td>4.7%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wayne</td>
<td>4.4%</td>
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March 2005 Unemployment Rate Decreased in 8 of 9 Counties.
Greene County was one of two counties in the State with an increase in unemployment.

Board of Directors

Carteret County
Mike Kraszeski, Vener Technologies, Vice President
Dave Insoe, Carteret County Economic Development, Executive Director
James Garner, Creative Outta, Owner
Lynda Clay, Chief Elected Official

Craven County
Joseph Greaser, International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers, AFL-CIO, Directing Business Representative
Tom Taylor, Affic Insurance, Retired Executive
Kimsey Welch, Vocational Rehabilitation, Director
Lee K. Allen, Chief Elected Official

Duplin County
Jerome Shepard, National Spinning, Plant Manager
Alex Asburn, Duplin General Hospital, Director of Latino Health Care Access
Patricia Vinson, Smithfield Foods, Senior Financial Analyst
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Bud May, Greene Lamp, Inc., Executive Director
Judy Darden, Darden Bookkeeping, Owner
Mary Betty Kearney, Chief Elected Official

Jones County
Frank Emory, Emory Construction, Owner
Thelma Simmons, Jones County OSS, Executive Director
Adrienne Fiedler, Jones Co. Partnership for Children, Early Ed. Specialist
Joseph Wiggins, Chief Elected Official

Lenoir County
Brantley Briley, Lenoir Community College, President
Phil Prescott, Jr., Parker-Lowe & Associates, Imaging Consultant
Debbie Beech Burrell, FACILITATE, CEO
George W. Graham, Jr, Chief Elected Official

Onslow County
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Don Harris, Standstage Diesel, Retired
Ralph Leads, Employment Security Commission, Manager
Lionell Midgett, Chief Elected Official

Pamlico County
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Carla Bynum, B & B Yacht Designs, Owner
Gary Mastrodonato, The Masters, LLC Wealth Mgmt., CEO/President
Christine Mele, Chief Elected Official

Wayne County
Bonnie Carlton, KAN SEEK, Owner
Melanie Sanders, Position Central Specialist, Caswell Center
Fletcher Bizzell, Excel Home Fashions, HR Manager
J.D. Evans, Chief Elected Official

Worker together to make a difference in eastern North Carolina!

*How far you go in life depends on your being tender with the young, compassionate with the aged, sympathetic with the striving, and tolerant of the weak and strong. Because someday in your life, you will have been all of these.*

~George Washington Carver
Recently, several of our Board members and staff, along with our counterparts from Cape Fear, Lumber River, and Region L participated in our first two-day combined “Vision East Workforce Development Board Retreat” which was facilitated by John Mescal, Corporation for a Skilled Workforce.

With 22 counties represented, we focused on the common issues faced by our Boards and how we can address them more effectively. Three themes emerged during our discussions: education, employment, and economic development. Education was identified as the number one issue hindering our workforce competitiveness in the East. Raising community awareness for the need to improve educational attainment levels became identified as the number one priority that our Boards can address collectively. One Board member said it best, “While education is a requirement, learning has become optional.” We must find a way to convince our families of the need for life-long learning if our children are going to have the same opportunities for economic prosperity that we have been given.

To put our challenge in perspective, on a global scale, data from www.compete.org indicates that the United States’ twelfth grade math and science assessments rank as number nine among other countries. With North Carolina lagging behind as compared to the other states, identifying skill gaps and raising basic skills levels must be a workforce development priority for all of us – workforce boards, educators, parents, students, elected officials, government, community organizations, and especially the private sector. One approach that was agreed upon was supporting North Carolina’s New Career Readiness Certificate Initiative using WorkKeys as a tool to identify skill gaps and raise basic skills levels of our current and future workforce.

Other strategies included strengthening our alliances with economic development in identifying current and future industry growth areas and ensuring that available education and training opportunities are in place to produce a highly skilled workforce. By the end of the retreat, our Boards agreed that we share a common vision for eastern North Carolina, that is, to have a highly skilled workforce that can help local firms compete in a technologically advanced global economy. We left with a renewed sense of purpose and mission on improving the eastern region’s workforce to ensure that our citizens earn wages and achieve educational attainment levels that are above the state average. As four boards combined their efforts, VISION EAST became a new reality and we intend for the creativity shown by that group to be just the beginning.

By: Tammy Childers, Executive Director
Vision East Strategic Planning Retreat
Board and staff from 4 Boards joined forces to address workforce issues facing the area.

The Vision East Strategic Planning Retreat combined the efforts of the Cape Fear, Eastern Carolina, Lumber River, and Region L Workforce Development Boards. The Vision East Retreat was held at Sunset Beach, NC on April 29 & 30 and was facilitated by John Metcalf, of Corporation for a Skilled Workforce (CSW). There were over 40 Board members and staff from the four workforce development boards (WDBs).

ECWDB members in attendance were Alex Ashbourn, Jerome Shepard, Gary Mastroodonato, Patricia Vinson, Thelma Simmons, Bonnie Cartton, Kimsey Welch, Phil Prescott Jr., Frank Emory, and Ralph Leeds.

Through the combined Vision East Retreat, the WDBs agreed that they share commonalities in regards to the needs, goals, and issues faced by the region’s workforce. With this in mind, Vision East developed a unified mission, vision, and key strategies.

It was the consensus of all in attendance that it makes sense to combine efforts and work together to identify and address workforce issues.

The Vision East WDBs are currently devising a marketing committee, which will be responsible for creating and implementing a unified marketing strategy.

The Retreat was just the beginning of Vision East Board members and staff from the partnering WDBs are all excited about working together and using the knowledge and insight of each other as momentum for achieving workforce goals.

First Annual Youth Quiz Bowl
Thirteen teams competed in the Eastern Carolina Youth Council’s first quiz bowl.

The Eastern Carolina Youth Council sponsored its first annual Youth Quiz Bowl on Saturday, March 12, 2005. The Quiz Bowl was held at the New Bern Riverfront Convention Center from 10:00 am until 2:30 pm.

Thirteen Local Area youth teams competed for prizes and trophies. The youth were motivated and excited about participating in this academic competition.

Through this event, the participants were able to increase their knowledge and build upon their team work skills. The youth participants enjoyed the friendly competition and look forward to next year’s competition. There were even several friendly comments as to who will take first place next year!

Fourth Annual Youth Summit
With over 240 Local Area youth in attendance, this year’s Summit was the largest yet!

The Eastern Carolina Youth Council hosted its fourth annual Youth Summit on Thursday, April 28 from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm at the New Bern Riverfront Convention Center.

Attending the Summit were over 240 youth from the nine-county Local Area. The theme for the event was “We All Have Something to YELL About.” The three workshops were “Commit to Get Fit,” “What’s Hot an’ What’s Not,” and “Youth@Work.”

Lunchtime entertainment was provided by Judy Crousell, from Dobbs Youth Development Center, who sang “Because of Who You Are.”

The youth began their day with keynote speaker Tracy Williams, former Harlem Globe Trotter, who motivated and encouraged the youth to follow their dreams and achieve their goals.

“All that motivational speaking that he did about the future, I am going to follow my dream to be a teacher,” said Shakira Frazier, a Greene lamp participant from Carteret County.

The youth also gave back to the community by donating non-perishable food items to the Food Bank of North Carolina. Over 400 pounds of food was collected at the Youth Summit for the Food Bank!

Once again, the youth declared the Summit a success and are looking forward to next year’s event!

Vision
Our vision for the eastern counties of North Carolina is a highly skilled workforce with an educational attainment level that meets the needs of the 21st Century workplace, so that local firms can compete in a technologically advanced global economy.

Value Added
We add economic value to our communities by ensuring that quality education, job training, and employment opportunities are available for job-training seekers and employers alike, thereby improving the quality of life for our citizens throughout Eastern North Carolina.

Mission
Our mission is to ensure that our workforce development system is customer-focused, demand-driven, and accountable in preparing our current and future workforce to meet the changing needs of a highly-competitive global economy.

Cape Fear Workforce Development Board
East Carolina Workforce Development Board
Lumber River Workforce Development Board
Regional Workforce Development Board

Key Strategies
- Engage business and community leaders in addressing workforce issues and promote strategies to improve education levels and basic workplace skills.
- Strengthen alliances with economic development to identify and address the workforce needs of current and future industries.
- Implement a community awareness plan that promotes the WDBs, JobLink Career Centers, and partner services.
- Identify and implement effective employment and training strategies that result in employment opportunities for all citizens.
NC's Career Readiness Certificate Initiative

The Career Readiness Certificate is a component of an emerging statewide system of portable skills credentials. This initiative promotes the attainment of academic, employability, and industry/occupation specific skills in order to qualify for current and anticipated jobs in North Carolina.

For more information about WorkKeys, visit www.workkeys.com.

Source: NC Community College System

Project HEALTH Trains Dislocated Workers for Healthcare Jobs

Lenoir Community College and the Lenoir County JobLink received grant.

Biotechnology Industry Continues to Grow in North Carolina

The plan aims to create 125,000 biotech-related jobs in North Carolina by 2023.

Bush Administration to Redesign WIA and Decrease Funding

Proposal calls for a 10% cut and authority for Governors to redesign workforce system.
Finding people to fill jobs doesn’t have to be hard work!

That’s why the JobLink Career Center provides recruitment solutions that are tailored to your business—no matter what type of industry. We offer a wide range of products and services handled by our experienced employment professionals.

YOUR BUSINESS WILL BENEFIT FROM:

- Experienced workforce development professionals.
- Recruitment solutions tailored to suit the needs and culture of your business.
- A wide selection of job-ready candidates.

Your Business Services Provided

How Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Programs Can Help YOU...

- Increase employment, retention, earnings, and skill attainment of job seekers.
- Improve the quality of the workforce.
- Enhance productivity and competitiveness of the nation.

WIA Programs Benefit Employers & Job Seekers—Call your Local JobLink Career Center to learn more!

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Employment Solutions Tailored to Your Staffing & Budget Needs:

- Tax Credit and Hiring Incentive Information
- Resource for Job-Ready Candidates
- Employee Recruitment
- Employee Retention Assistance
- Rapid Response Consultations for Business Layoffs or Plant Closings
- Customized Training for Employees
- Workplace Literacy

Specialized Services for Employers

- Skills Assessment of Job Candidates—applicants or current employees can receive skills/aptitude testing through our JobLink Career Centers.
- ADA Accommodations—provides workplace modification assistance to employers who seek to help employees with disabilities.
- Workplace Literacy—an instructional program that addresses job-specific basic skills competencies.
- On-the-Job Training Programs—participating employers may be reimbursed up to 50% of the individual's starting wage rate during the training period.
- Customized Training—training modified to meet a company's specific workforce objectives based on job task analysis.
- English as a Second Language—provides English language instruction to non-native speakers of English at the workplace.

Business Training Linked to Small Business Survival & Success

Analysis shows direct correlation between level of training investment and profitability. Providing extra skills to employees leads to higher job satisfaction, which shows up in better corporate performance and business success. The analysis also found that less than 17% of the reasons cited for business failure are due to outside influences such as inflation or state of the economy.

Local Area Small Business Center is Recognized for Its Success

Craven Community College's Small Business Center was recently named the Eastern Region Center of Excellence and was one of three regional winners in North Carolina for its success in working with small businesses. “Our Small Business Centers are providing remarkable assistance all across the state,” said Willa Dickens, system's director of the Small Business Network. “These small businesses are the backbone of our economy, and the counseling and guidance they receive at the local Small Business Center enables them to thrive.”

Among the selection criteria for the regional winners were annual reports, services to the community, an exemplary example of assistance to a small business and an innovative approach.

Each of the state's community colleges has a Small Business Center, but only those that submitted a narrative detailing their activities, along with their annual report, were considered by the judges. Congratulations to the Small Business Center at Craven Community College!

Source: Sun Journal