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Defense Primer: Military Installations Management

The Department of Defense (DOD) and the three military departments—the Army, Navy, and Air Force—maintain distinctive organizational structures, policies, and programs for managing their installations. Section 2801 of Title 10, United States Code (U.S.C.) defines a *military installation* as “a base, camp, post, station, yard, center, or other activity under the jurisdiction of the Secretary of a military department or, in the case of an activity in a foreign country, under the operational control of the Secretary of a military department or the Secretary of Defense, without regard to the duration of operational control.” In general, this includes all types of *real property*—such as buildings, training ranges, and supporting infrastructure—that are found on a military installation.

Installation management involves overseeing a range of activities, such as installation master planning; facility planning and design; military construction (MILCON); facilities sustainment, restoration, and modernization (FSRM); military housing; and the reutilization or disposal of real property. It may also include activities such as maintaining installation force protection, contracting for utility services, managing support contractors, performing condition assessments, or reviewing real estate agreements.

Management Structures

DOD-Wide Policy and Governance

DOD’s Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition and Sustainment (USD(A&S)) has overall responsibility for the acquisition, management, and disposal of DOD real property. Under the USD(A&S), the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Sustainment (ASD(Sustainment)) has overall responsibility for a portfolio that includes military construction, military housing, and real property. Several Deputy Secretaries of Defense (DASDs) report to the ASD(Sustainment), and oversee policy and budgetary matters related to installation management.

- The DASD for Construction oversees and coordinates the MILCON budgeting process on behalf of the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD). The DASD has responsibility for the Unified Facilities Criteria (UFC), which determines technical specifications and building codes for military facilities. The office also oversees DOD installations and facilities that do not fall under the jurisdiction of a military department.
- The DASD for Real Property’s duties include managing policy related to land acquisition and leases; overseeing the joint basing program; and policies related to temporary contingency bases overseas. This office also oversees some Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) issues.
- The DASD for Housing serves as the statutorily defined Chief Housing Officer, and oversees programs that include the Military Housing Privatization Initiative (MHPI) and the Homeowners Assistance Program.
- The DASD for Environment & Energy Resilience (E&ER) oversees efforts to ensure resilience and cyber-secure energy for weapon systems and installations. This includes oversight of programs related to climate change, compliance with environmental laws and the Energy Resilience and Conservation Investment Program (ERCIP).

Current defense-wide issuances that address real property and associated installation management activities include DOD Instructions in the 4165 series, which implement related DOD policy.

Installation-Specific Policy and Governance

The military departments manage installations under their jurisdiction (**Figure 1**). Management includes development of service-wide MILCON plans, as well as prioritizing FSRM funding for repairs and modernization of infrastructure.

Installation commanders provide oversight for base-level planning and operations. DOD maintains unique oversight for the Pentagon, which is managed by the Washington Headquarters Services, a component of the OSD. For DOD’s twelve joint bases, each joint base has a military department designated as a “lead component” that manages the installation in coordination with supported components and tenant commands.

DOD’s design and construction agents—the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) and the Naval Facilities Engineering Systems Command (NAVFAC)—are not part of DOD’s installation management governance, but do provide technical expertise and contracting support for the planning and execution of military construction projects.

Army Installations

Within the Army, the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Installations, Energy, and Environment (ASA (IE&E)) oversees all matters pertaining to Army infrastructure and installations. The Deputy Chief of Staff, G-9 (Installations) serves as the link between the Army Secretariat and the Army commands that manage installations, a role that includes setting policy, managing programs, and preparing budgets for installations.

With the exception of National Guard facilities, which are typically managed by states, the Army manages installations through its Installation Management Command (IMCOM). IMCOM supports each installation’s commander, known in the Army as a Garrison Commander, to provide for the day-to-day operations of Army installations, including services such as fire safety, policing, housing, and childcare. Garrison commanders typically report up the chain of command through IMCOM. The USACE supports Army installations, and, as applicable, the other military services and DOD components’ installations, by providing technical expertise and contracting capabilities.

Navy Installations

Within the Department of the Navy, the Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Energy, Installations and Environment (ASN (EI&E)) is responsible for overseeing the Navy’s shore installations, construction programs and energy policies. The Deputy Chief of Naval Operations for Fleet Readiness and Logistics (OPNAV N4) sets policy, manages programs, and prepares budgets for the shore installations. The Commander, Navy Installations Command (CNIC) is responsible for worldwide Navy shore installation management, which includes operations, maintenance, housing and safety, and quality of life programs. Navy installation commanders report up the chain of command through CNIC. NAVFAC supports Navy and Marine Corps commanders by providing technical expertise and contracting capabilities.

Marine Corps Installations

As the Marine Corps falls under the Department of the Navy, the ASN (EI&E) is also responsible for overseeing Marine Corps installations. Within Headquarters Marine Corps (HQMC), the Deputy Commandant for Installations and Logistics (DC I&L) sets policy, manages programs, and prepares budgets for Marine Corps installations. The Marine Corps manages its installations through Marine Corps Installations Command (MCICOM). MCICOM exercises command and control of Marine Corps installations via regional commanders and on-site installation commanders. Like CNIC, MCICOM works with NAVFAC to execute installation projects and services.

Air Force Installations

The Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for Installations, Environment, and Energy (SAF/IE) provides oversight for all plans, policies, and programs related to Air Force installations. The Air Staff of Headquarters U.S. Air Force

(HAF) sets policy, manages programs, and prepares budgets for installations, largely through HAF Logistics, Engineering, and Force Protection (HAF/A4).

The Air Force’s major commands (MAJCOMs) conduct day-to-day management of Air Force installations through their installation commanders (either operational wing commanders who are ‘dual-hatted’ to manage an installation as well as operational units, or “base wing commanders” whose primary role is installation management. These commanders rely on the Air Force Installation and Mission Support Center (AFIMSC) to provide installation and mission support capabilities to Air Force installations. AFIMSC also houses the Air Force Civil Engineer Center (AFCEC), a unit that provides engineering and contracting services.

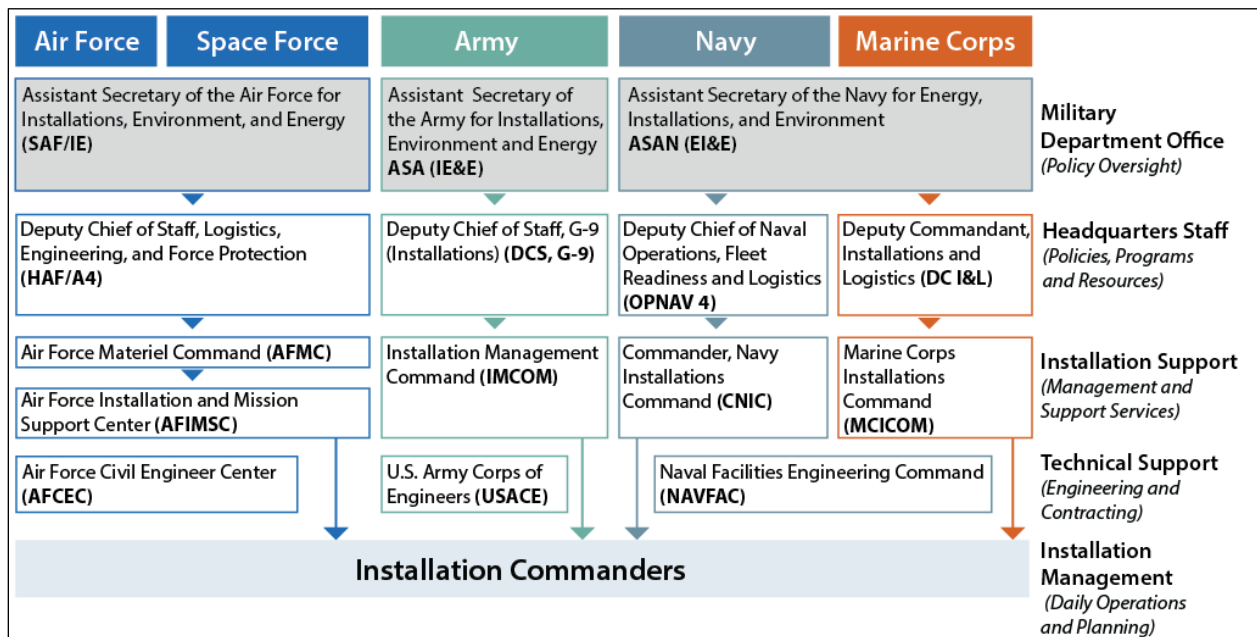
Space Force Installations

Since establishment of the U.S. Space Force under the Department of the Air Force in 2019, six Air Force bases have been re-designated as Space Force bases (Patrick (FL); Buckley (CO); Peterson (CO); Schriever (CO); Los Angeles (CA); and Vandenberg (CA)). Their installation management structure remains unchanged. The Space Force bases receive support from AFIMSC and the Air Force leadership for policies and budgeting within the Department of the Air Force.

OSD-Managed Installations

The ASD(S) provides oversight for installations not under the jurisdiction or operational control of a military department. That can, which include installations supporting DOD components—for example, sites under jurisdiction of combat support agencies such as the Defense Health Agency or the Defense Logistics Agency. The DASD for Construction is the program manager for OSD-managed installations.

Figure I. Military Installations Management Structures



Source: CRS graphic.

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