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U.S. Overseas Basing: Background and Issues for Congress

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CRS REPORT
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Committees of Congress

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U.S. Overseas Basing: Background and Issues for Congress

Since World War II, the U.S. military has maintained a large network of overseas bases (that is, military facilities located outside the United States and its territories). Currently, the U.S. Department of Defense (DOD) manages or uses at least 128 overseas bases in at least 51 different countries. Policymakers cite a variety of strategic reasons for the maintenance of overseas bases, including

- Facilitating rapid responses to military contingencies outside the United States;
- Deterring adversaries from attacking the United States or its allies and partners; and
- Assuring allied and partner nations of U.S. security commitments.

The United States typically acquires overseas basing rights through diplomatic arrangements with host nations, often in the form of bilateral executive agreements. Within DOD, a variety of offices and organizations are involved in the management of overseas basing activities, including the Office of the Secretary of Defense, the geographic combatant commands, and the individual Services.

Congress's role in overseas basing is significant, and includes appropriating funds for basing activities, setting certain policies and requirements through legislation, and overseeing the executive branch's management of basing posture and security relationships with host nations. Overseas basing therefore presents a number of issues for congressional consideration, including

- How much funding should Congress appropriate for overseas basing activities?
- Does the executive branch's approach to managing relations with nations that host U.S. bases align with congressional priorities?
- Does the current overseas basing posture adequately support strategic and operational objectives?

SUMMARY

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Introduction

Purpose

This report provides an overview of U.S. overseas military bases, as well as information concerning their functions, management, resourcing, and related issues for congressional consideration. Its contents are unclassified, and the terms and methods used herein may differ from those used by the Department of Defense (DOD) or other executive branch organizations.[1] Additionally, because of the unclassified nature of this report, classified materials—for example, DOD's Enduring Location Master List (ELML)—were not used in its preparation.[2]

Methodology

To identify active U.S. overseas bases, CRS used a number of unclassified sources, the most foundational of which were DOD's annual Base Structure Reports (BSRs).[3] Other U.S. government sources used in its preparation included budget justification documents for military construction (MILCON) at overseas locations; DOD press releases and public statements (including individual unit and installation websites); executive reporting pursuant to the War Powers Resolution; Department of State press releases, Integrated Country Strategies, and related documentation; congressional testimony, reports, and related documentation; and information provided by executive branch officials and organizations. In addition, media reports were used to supplement government-provided information as necessary.

To characterize active U.S. overseas bases, this report sorts locations identified from the above sources into one of two categories. The first, *persistent bases*, includes overseas sites that have been continuously used by DOD for at least 15 years and at which the U.S. military exercises some degree of operational control (this category tends to include DOD's largest and most well-known bases).[4] The second, *selected other U.S. military sites*, includes overseas sites that do not meet one or both of the criteria for persistent bases, but at which DOD maintains some sort of territorially linked presence or access.[5] This report does not include locations that DOD may use on a temporary basis for military exercises or contingency operations without intending to make persistent sites of U.S. military activity.[6]

[1] For information on the ways in which DOD accounts for and characterizes its overseas bases, refer to **Appendix C**.

[2] The ELML is a classified, comprehensive inventory of overseas U.S. military bases that DOD uses to "identify, validate, and document locations that represent an enduring, strategic U.S. security interest for the foreseeable future." For more information, see DOD, *DOD Instruction 3000.12 Management of U.S. Global Defense Posture*, May 8, 2017, p. 11, https://www.esd.whs.mil/Portals/54/Documents/DD/issuances/dodi/300012p.pdf; and DOD, *DOD Instruction 4165.14 Real Property Inventory and Reporting*, September 8, 2023, p. 20, https://www.esd.whs.mil/Portals/54/Documents/DD/issuances/dodi/416514p.pdf.

[3] For more information about Base Structure Reports, refer to **Appendix C**.

[4] Exercising operational control may include, among other things: U.S. control of ingress to/egress from base facilities, DOD ownership or leasing of real property, U.S. rights to initiate and manage construction or facility maintenance projects, and the exemption of a U.S. base area from host-nation legal jurisdiction.

[5] This category includes both ally/partner-operated bases that host rotational or episodic U.S. deployments, as well as DOD-operated bases established less than 15 years ago.

[6] For additional information about how DOD classifies temporary locations, also known as *contingency locations*, see **Appendix C.**

Applying the criteria developed above, this report identifies 68 persistent bases and 60 other U.S. military sites across the Indo-Pacific, Europe, the Middle East, Africa, and Central/South America and the Caribbean.

Background

Defining Overseas Bases

The U.S. Department of Defense maintains a network of thousands of buildings, fixed structures, real property, and other defense infrastructure to carry out its mission to provide the nation with military forces to deter aggression and prevail in conflict.[7] The basic administrative unit into which DOD groups its infrastructure is the *installation*, which is statutorily defined as any "base, camp, post, station, yard, center, or other activity under the jurisdiction … [or] operational control of the Secretary of a military department or the Secretary of Defense."[8] An installation or group of installations may, in turn, serve as a *base*, which DOD defines as "a locality from which operations are projected or supported."[9] Bases located outside the United States and its territories are commonly referred to as *overseas bases*.[10]

Overseas bases perform or support a variety of military functions, including

- **Basing of personnel and equipment.** The most elementary function of overseas bases is to provide secure spaces for U.S. servicemembers, weapons systems, munitions, and supplies, thus enabling the United States to maintain and employ military capabilities in regions outside its territory. Bases serve as work sites during both peacetime and wartime, supporting activities ranging from routine office work to the launching of combat aircraft; larger installations may also include housing for DOD personnel and their dependents, as well as morale, welfare and recreation facilities.
- **Domain awareness and area defense.** Overseas bases may play an active role in detecting, defending against, and otherwise countering adversary threats to U.S. and allied/partner forces, facilities, and territory (by hosting, for example, radar facilities or ground-based missile interceptor sites).
- **Maintenance and repair.** Overseas bases may host specialized facilities, equipment, and personnel to maintain, repair, and overhaul weapons systems and other defense equipment outside of U.S. territory. Examples of such facilities

[7] DOD, *National Defense Strategy*, November 2022, https://media.defense.gov/2022/oct/27/2003103845/-1/-1/1/2022-national-defense-strategy-npr-mdr.pdf. See also United States European Command (EUCOM), "About the Command," https://www.eucom.mil/about-the-command; United States Central Command (CENTCOM), CENTCOM Priorities, https://www.centcom.mil/ABOUT-US/COMMAND-PRIORITIES/; and United States Indo-Pacific Command (USINDOPACOM), "Area of Responsibility," https://www.pacom.mil/About-USINDOPACOM/USPACOM-Area-of-Responsibility/.

[8] 10 U.S.C. §2801.

[9] DOD also offers two additional definitions for base: (1) "An area or locality containing installations which provide logistics or other support"; and (2) "Home airfield or home carrier". DOD, *DOD Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms*, May 2023, p. 19.

[10] For the purposes of this report, an *overseas base* is defined as any U.S. base located in the territory of a foreign country, irrespective of its geographical proximity to the United States. Thus, a base located in the Bahamas meets this definition, while one located in Guam does not. Some scholars have also used the term *sovereign basing* to describe the practice of maintaining extraterritorial military facilities in peacetime. See, for example, Sebastian Schmidt, *Armed Guests: Territorial Sovereignty and Foreign Military Basing* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2020).

may include vehicle maintenance facilities, aircraft maintenance hangars, and naval drydocks.

- **Training and exercises.** Overseas bases may contain training and exercise areas intended to maintain and enhance U.S. and allied/partner readiness, test plans and concepts, and demonstrate and improve interoperability.

Why Does the United States Maintain Overseas Bases?

DOD considers the placement and organization of overseas bases—together with the positioning of forces and the structuring of international security agreements—to constitute its *global defense posture*.[11] According to *DOD Instruction 3000.12*, DOD's global defense posture "is the fundamental enabler of U.S. defense activities and military operations overseas and is also central to defining and communicating U.S. strategic interests to allies, partners, and adversaries."[12]

Considered broadly, overseas bases support the ability of the United States to project and sustain military power beyond its territorial bounds. They enable DOD to maintain a persistent presence in areas that the U.S. government determines are important to the national interest, and can facilitate rapid responses to sudden crises or emergencies. They also signal U.S. intentions to other international actors, which may support a variety of strategic aims.[13] For instance, the presence of overseas bases in a region outside U.S. territory may communicate to allies and adversaries alike that the United States views geostrategic developments there as directly relevant to its national security. The presence of overseas bases may also contribute to the defensibility of ally/partner territory, and deny U.S. rivals or adversaries access to strategically significant locations.[14]

For a more detailed consideration of the potential advantages and drawbacks of overseas basing, refer to the "Overseas Basing and National Strategy" subsection of this report's "Issues for Congress" section.

Historical Development

Overseas basing has played a significant role in recent U.S. military history, and much of DOD's current footprint abroad continues to reflect decisions made in the last century (of the 68 persistent military bases identified in this report, for example, 56 were established during the Cold War).

Although the first permanent military facilities abroad date to the late 19th century, overseas basing did not play a major role in U.S. strategy until World War II.[15] Following America's entry

[11] DOD, *DOD Instruction 3000.12 Management of U.S. Global Defense Posture*, May 8, 2017, p. 6, available at https://www.esd.whs.mil/Portals/54/Documents/DD/issuances/dodi/300012p.pdf.

[12] Ibid.

[13] For a more detailed discussion of the role of overseas basing in current U.S. strategy, refer to the "Authorities and Management" section of this report.

[14] See, for example, discussion of potentially expanding the U.S. presence in Gabon and Equatorial Guinea to forestall the potential establishment of a Chinese military base. Michael Phillips, "U.S.-China Tensions Have a New Front: A Naval Base in Africa," *The Wall Street Journal*, February 10, 2024.

[15] The first such sites were coaling stations leased by the U.S. Navy in Mexico (1869), Samoa (1878), and Hawaii (1887). Following the Spanish-American War (1898), bases were established in the newly annexed territories of the Philippines and Guam, as well as at Guantanamo Bay in the independent Republic of Cuba. The United States also established bases in Panama to secure the Canal Zone, as well as in China to protect U.S. citizens and commercial interests. See Seward W. Livermore, "American Naval Base Policy in the Far East, 1850-1914," *The Pacific Historical* (continued...)

into that conflict, the U.S. military established and used hundreds of overseas bases to support its combat operations. These overseas bases included locations in Europe and the Pacific (the U.S. Army Air Forces used over 200 airfields in the United Kingdom alone, for example), as well as sites outside the war's main theaters (e.g., Natal-Fortaleza in Brazil, Camp Amirabad in Iran).[16] After 1945, the United States continued to use certain of these locations, along with newly established bases in the territories of defeated Axis powers, to support occupation and reconstruction activities.[17] Although some policymakers did not expect this global presence to last longer than a few years, the onset of the Cold War in the late 1940s led the United States to maintain and expand its network of overseas bases, particularly in Western Europe and East Asia.[18] This footprint quickly became a major factor in U.S. and allied strategic planning, enabling the projection of military power into distant, geopolitically contested regions.[19]

Although certain core aims of U.S. strategy during the Cold War remained consistent (e.g., to deter—and failing that, prevail in—conflict with the Soviet Union), DOD's overseas basing posture during this period was not static. In some cases, unforeseen political developments, such as the French government's 1966 decision to expel from its territory all military forces under foreign command, could result in base closures.[20] In other cases, changing military requirements, such as those stemming from U.S. involvement in the Vietnam War, could lead to the rapid expansion of basing in a particular region.[21] In 1991—the last year of the Cold War—DOD reported maintaining 134 bases in 18 different countries, with locations in Germany, the United Kingdom, Japan, South Korea, and the Philippines accounting for the majority of listed bases.[22]

The fall of the Soviet Union led to significant changes in America's overseas basing posture. Without a superpower rival, U.S. policymakers assessed that a smaller military presence abroad would suffice to provide for the nation's security, and closed dozens of bases from the North Atlantic to Southeast Asia.[23] In addition, the relative importance of the Middle East to DOD's

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Review Vol. 13, No. 2 (Jun., 1944); Michael Broadhead et al., *The Panama Canal: An Army's Enterprise* (Washington, DC: U.S. Army Center of Military History, 2009); and CRS Report R47589, *U.S. Defense Infrastructure in the Indo-Pacific: Background and Issues for Congress*

[16] Imperial War Museum, "American Airmen in Britain During the Second World War," 2023, https://www.iwm.org.uk/history/american-airmen-in-britain-during-the-second-world-war; Stetson Conn and Byron Fairchild, *United States Army in World War II*: *The Framework of Hemisphere Defense* (Washington, DC: U.S. Army Center of Military History, 1989), pp. 311-330; and T.H. Vail Motter, *United States Army in World War II: The Persian Corridor and Aid to Russia* (Washington, DC: U.S. Army Center of Military History, 1952), p. 214.

[17] The principal Axis powers were Germany, Italy, and Japan.

[18] President Franklin Roosevelt, for instance, stated during the Yalta Conference that U.S. troops were unlikely to stay in Europe for longer than two years. Charles Stefan, "Yalta Revisited," *Presidential Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 23, No. 4, (Fall, 1993), pp. 756-757, https://www.jstor.org/stable/27551152.

[19] For an analysis of Cold War basing posture and its role in U.S. foreign policy and national strategy, see C.T. Sandars, *America's Overseas Garrisons: The Leasehold Empire* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000).

[20] This decision was taken in the broader context of France's withdrawal from the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) integrated command structure. See Eric Stein and Dominique Carreau. "Law and Peaceful Change in a Subsystem: 'Withdrawal' of France from NATO." *The American Journal of International Law,* Volume 62, No. 3 (1968): 577–640.

[21] During the conflict's peak, the United States maintained at least 26 "major base camps" across South Vietnam. Carroll Dunn, *Base Development in South Vietnam, 1965-1970* (Washington, DC: U.S. Army, 1991), p. 135.

[22] CRS analysis of DOD's FY1991 Base Structure Report (BSR), https://apps.dtic.mil/sti/tr/pdf/ADA242825.pdf. Unlike more recent BSRs, which report information for *sites*, the FY1991 BSR reports by *installation*, making its methodology similar to that of this report. CRS, however, cannot determine the exact degree of correspondence between the methodology of the FY1991 BSR and that of this report, so the findings of the former may be used as a broad baseline for historical comparison.

[23] Countries that saw U.S. base closures included the Philippines, Germany, and South Korea. As one planning (continued...)

global posture increased—particularly during the First Gulf War and again following the terror attacks of September 11, 2001—and the United States established new bases in the region.

Although DOD's footprint in Europe and the Indo-Pacific shrank during the 1990s and early 2000s, the reorientation of U.S. strategy around great power competition led to a reversal of this trend by the mid-2010s.[24] In Europe, the perceived resurgence of Russia as a geopolitical threat—particularly after the 2014 and 2022 invasions of Ukraine—informed decisions to base U.S. forces in new locations (e.g., Poland) and reactivate U.S. bases in former locations (e.g., Iceland).[25] In the Indo-Pacific, strategic competition with the People's Republic of China—the U.S. military's "pacing threat"—motivated DOD to deploy more forces to the region, expand existing infrastructure, and obtain access to new sites in Australia, the Philippines, Papua New Guinea, and elsewhere.[26]

Compared to its posture during the Cold War, DOD's current overseas basing posture—particularly since 2010—relies less on large, U.S.-operated installations and more on the rotational use of ally/partner-operated sites (an approach sometimes referred to as "places, not bases").[27] As Congress and DOD look to the future, the need potentially to support more diversified and distributed operational concepts—for example, the Air Force's Agile Combat Employment (ACE)—may prompt further changes to DOD's overseas basing posture.[28]

Current Overseas Military Bases

Overview

From a regional and joint perspective, the six geographically organized combatant commands (COCOMs) provide oversight and theater-level direction of the strategic and operational dimensions of DOD's overseas basing posture (see **Figure 1**).

document put it in 2006, the post-Cold War years saw DOD "mak[e] long overdue adjustments to U.S. basing by moving away from a static defense in obsolete Cold War garrisons and placing emphasis on the ability to surge quickly to trouble spots across the globe." DOD, *Quadrennial Defense Review Report*, February, 2006, p. v.

[24] For more information on the role of great power competition in U.S. strategy, see CRS Report R43838, *Great Power Competition: Implications for Defense—Issues for Congress*.

[25] Poland, which was aligned with the Soviet Union during the Cold War, now hosts about 10,000 U.S. troops. Iceland hosted U.S. forces at Keflavik from 1951 until 2006, and then again from 2016 through today. See Polish Ministry of National Defence, "Increasing the U.S. Military Presence in Poland," https://www.gov.pl/web/national-defence/increasing-the-us-military-presence-in-poland; and Atlantic Council, "Cast Off By the United States A Decade Ago, Keflavik is Again a Key Lookout," May 7, 2018, https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/new-atlanticist/cast-off-by-the-united-states-a-decade-ago-keflavik-is-again-a-key-lookout/.

[26] For more information on DOD's Indo-Pacific basing posture, see CRS Report R47589, *U.S. Defense Infrastructure in the Indo-Pacific: Background and Issues for Congress*.

[27] See, for example, former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Mark Milley's remarks on the subject in Hearing on the Fiscal Year 2023 Defense Budget Request, Testimony of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Army General Mark Milley, House Armed Services Committee, 118th Cong., 1st sess., April 5, 2022. See also "Making 'Places, Not Bases' A Reality," Colonel Michael Pietrucha, *U.S. Naval Institute*, October 2015, https://www.usni.org/magazines/proceedings/2015/october/making-places-not-bases-reality.

[28] For more information on ACE, see CRS In Focus IF12694, *Defense Primer: Agile Combat Employment (ACE) Concept*, by Sarah Gee and Luke A. Nicastro.

Figure 1. Geographic COCOMs

Source: FY2023 Agency Financial Report, DOD, November 2023, p. 17. Available at https://comptroller.defense.gov/Portals/45/Documents/afr/fy2023/DoD_FY23_Agency_Financial_Report.pdf.

The following sections provide broad overviews of U.S. basing, regionally organized by COCOM areas of responsibility (AOR).[29] More detailed, country-level information on current overseas bases is provided in the **Appendix A**.

Indo-Pacific

For the purposes of this report, the Indo-Pacific region corresponds to the AOR of the U.S. Indo-Pacific Command (INDOPACOM).[30] CRS identified 24 persistent bases and 20 other military sites to which DOD has access within the region.[31] As of March 2024, approximately 81,000 active-duty servicemembers were permanently assigned to overseas bases in the Indo-Pacific, with the largest number assigned to locations in Japan (54,774) and South Korea (24,234).[32]

U.S. forces assigned to overseas bases in the Indo-Pacific include Army and Marine Corps ground units (including the Army's 2nd Infantry Division, based in South Korea, and the Marine Corps' III Marine Expeditionary Force, based in Okinawa); Navy warships (including an aircraft carrier, destroyers, cruisers, and amphibious assault ships, all based in Japan); and Army, Navy, Marine Corps, and Air Force aircraft (including rotary-wing, fighter, electronic attack, bomber, airlift, tanker, and other aircraft, primarily based in mainland Japan, Okinawa, and South Korea).[33] The

[29] The exception to this is Central/South America and the Caribbean, for which responsibility is split between U.S. Northern Command (NORTHCOM) and U.S. Southern Command (SOUTHCOM).

[30] The state of Hawaii and the territories of Guam and the Northern Mariana Islands are also located within the INDOPACOM AOR, but U.S. bases in those areas are excluded from the scope of this report (see "Methodology" section above). For a discussion of alternative definitions of the region, see CRS Report R47589, *U.S. Defense Infrastructure in the Indo-Pacific: Background and Issues for Congress*, p. 1.

[31] Refer to **Appendix B** of this report for a comprehensive list of the persistent bases and other military sites identified in this report.

[32] Defense Manpower Data Center, "Military and Civilian Personnel by Service/Agency by State/Country," March 2024, available for download at https://dwp.dmdc.osd.mil/dwp/app/dod-data-reports/workforce-reports.

[33] Refer to the Indo-Pacific section of **Appendix A** for more information. See also "Posture: Overview Briefing," USINDOPACOM, January 2024, on file with the authors.

U.S. military presence in Japan is overseen by U.S. Forces Japan, and the U.S. military presence in South Korea is overseen by U.S. Forces Korea.[34] The headquarters of INDOPACOM is located outside Honolulu, Hawaii.[35]

The Indo-Pacific is routinely described by DOD officials as the "priority theater."[36] The 2022 National Security Strategy characterizes the Indo-Pacific as the "epicenter of 21st century geopolitics," and the 2022 National Defense Strategy identifies attempts by the People's Republic of China (PRC) to "refashion the Indo-Pacific region" as part of "the most comprehensive and serious challenge to U.S. national security."[37] In addition to strategic competition with the PRC, other core regional security interests include deterring and potentially defending against threats emanating from Russia and North Korea.[38] Overseas basing in the region is seen by some analysts and policymakers as a critical enabler of U.S. military operations in a potential great power conflict (particularly involving the PRC).[39] The Indo-Pacific is also the focus of a congressionally established set of defense investments and activities known as the Pacific Deterrence Initiative.[40]

[34] U.S. Forces Japan, "About U.S. Forces Japan," https://www.usfj.mil/About-USFJ/; and U.S. Forces Korea, "About U.S. Forces Korea," https://www.usfk.mil/About/USFK/.

[35] USINDOPACOM, "About USINDOPACOM," https://www.pacom.mil/About-USINDOPACOM/.

[36] See, for instance, Jim Garamone, "Defense Official Says Indo-Pacific is the Priority Theater," *DOD News*, March 9, 2022, https://www.defense.gov/News/News-Stories/Article/Article/2961183/defense-official-says-indo-pacific-is-the-priority-theater-china-is-dods-pacing/.

[37] The White House, *National Security Strategy*, October 2022, p. 37, https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/Biden-Harris-Administrations-National-Security-Strategy-10.2022.pdf; and DOD, *National Defense Strategy*, October 2022, p. 4, 2003103845/-1/-1/1/2022-national-defense-strategy-npr-mdr.pdf.

[38] See, for example, the 2024 statement of INDOPACOM Commander Admiral John Aquilino before the House Armed Services Committee. Admiral John C. Aquilino, "2024 INDOPACOM Statement for the Record," https://www.congress.gov/118/meeting/house/116960/witnesses/HHRG-118-AS00-Wstate-AquilinoJ-20240320.pdf. For more information on the strategic implications of great power competition, see CRS Report R43838, *Great Power Competition: Implications for Defense—Issues for Congress*, by Ronald O'Rourke.

[39] For more information, see discussion in CRS Report R47589, *U.S. Defense Infrastructure in the Indo-Pacific: Background and Issues for Congress*, pp. 4-7.

[40] For more information, see CRS In Focus IF12303, *The Pacific Deterrence Initiative: A Budgetary Overview*.

Figure 2. U.S. Overseas Bases in the Indo-Pacific

Source: CRS analysis of unclassified U.S. government documentation (including DOD budget documents, Base Structure Reports, official unit/installation webpages, press releases, Department of State documents, congressional testimony, and information provided by executive branch officials to CRS).

Notes: The "Persistent" label describes a site that has been used consistently by DOD for at least 15 years and at which DOD exercises some degree of operational control. Bases in Guam and other U.S. territories are not depicted. *Acronyms: AB=Air Base, CS=Communications Station, MCAS= Marine Corps Air Station, MCB= Marine Corps Base, MCI=Marine Corps Installation, NAF=Naval Air Facility, NB=Naval Base, NCS=Naval Communication Station, NB=Naval Base, NSF=Naval Support Facility, USAG=U.S. Army Garrison, USFA=U.S. Fleet Activity.*

Europe

For the purposes of this report, Europe corresponds with the United States European Command (EUCOM) AOR. CRS identified 31 persistent bases and 19 other military sites to which DOD has access in the region.[41] As of March 2024, approximately 67,200 active-duty servicemembers were permanently assigned to overseas bases in Europe, with the largest contingents assigned to locations in Germany (35,068), Italy (12,375) and the United Kingdom (10,058).[42] However, as of June 2024, thousands of additional servicemembers are present in Europe on rotational deployments or other temporary assignments. In June 2024, the White House stated in a letter to congressional leaders that "approximately 80,000 United States Armed Forces personnel are assigned or deployed to North Atlantic Treaty Organization [NATO] countries in Europe, including those deployed to reassure our allies and to deter further Russian aggression."[43]

U.S. forces assigned to overseas bases in Europe include Army ground units; Navy warships (including destroyers and an amphibious command ship, based in Spain and Italy); and Army, Navy, and Air Force aircraft (including rotary-wing, fighter, electronic attack, bomber, airlift, tanker, and other aircraft). EUCOM is headquartered in Stuttgart, Germany, although its three military service components maintain headquarters elements at other locations.[44]

The U.S. military presence in Europe has increased in response to Russia's 2022 invasion of Ukraine. In June 2022, for example, a DOD press release claimed that, since the invasion, DOD had "deployed or extended over 20,000 additional forces to Europe in response to the Ukraine crisis, adding additional air, land, maritime, cyber, and space capabilities."[45] Prior to this surge, the Army maintained three brigade combat teams in Europe; since then, DOD has announced permanent forward stationing of a corps forward headquarters, a garrison command, a field support battalion, two squadrons of F-35s, an air defense artillery brigade headquarters, a short-range air defense battalion, a combat sustainment support battalion headquarters, and an engineer brigade headquarters.[46]

U.S. basing in Europe is closely integrated with NATO activities and objectives. Many U.S. bases host NATO organizations and perform NATO-related functions, and every European host nation covered in this report (except Kosovo and Cyprus) is a NATO member.[47] According to the

[41] Refer to the **Appendix B** of this report for a comprehensive list of the persistent bases and other military sites identified in this report.

[42] Defense Manpower Data Center, "Military and Civilian Personnel by Service/Agency by State/Country," March 2024, available for download at https://dwp.dmdc.osd.mil/dwp/app/dod-data-reports/workforce-reports.

[43] Aside from Kosovo and Cyprus, every European country in which DOD maintains overseas bases is a NATO member. The White House, "Letter to the Speaker of the House of Representatives and President pro tempore of the Senate regarding the War Powers Report," June 7, 2024, https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/presidential-actions/2024/06/07/letter-to-the-speaker-of-the-house-of-representatives-and-president-pro-tempore-of-the-senate-war-powers-report/.

[44] U.S. Army Europe and Africa is headquartered at U.S. Army Garrison Wiesbaden, U.S. Air Forces in Europe and Air Forces Africa is headquartered at Ramstein Air Base, and U.S. Naval Forces Europe and Africa is headquartered at Naval Support Activity Naples. DOD, "U.S. European Command Headquarters," https://www.defense.gov/Multimedia/Photos/igphoto/2003028524/. See also EUCOM, "History," https://www.eucom.mil/about/history.

[45] DOD, "Fact Sheet - U.S. Defense Contributions to Europe," June 29, 2022, https://www.defense.gov/News/Releases/Release/Article/3078056/fact-sheet-us-defense-contributions-to-europe/. In April 2022, EUCOM claimed the region hosted "just shy of 20,000 deployed service personnel who are not normally stationed in Europe," including two division headquarters, and five brigade combat teams. "House Armed Services Committee Holds Hearing on National Security Challenges in Europe", 118th Cong., April 26, 2023.

[46] DOD, "Fact Sheet - U.S. Defense Contributions to Europe," June 29, 2022, https://www.defense.gov/News/Releases/Release/Article/3078056/fact-sheet-us-defense-contributions-to-europe/.

[47] NATO, "About Us," https://www.nato.int/nato-welcome/.

EUCOM Commander, Russia is the central security issue in the region, constituting a "formidable and unpredictable threat that will challenge U.S. and European interests for the foreseeable future."[48] Europe is also the focus of a set of U.S. defense investments and activities known as the European Deterrence Initiative (EDI).[49]

[48] U.S. Congress, House Committee on Armed Services, *Statement of General Christopher Cavoli, United States Army*, U.S. European Command, 118th Cong., 1st sess., April 26, 2023, p. 3.

[49] See CRS In Focus IF10946, *The European Deterrence Initiative: A Budgetary Overview* for more information.

Figure 3. U.S. Overseas Bases in Europe

Source: CRS analysis of unclassified U.S. government documentation (including DOD budget documents, Base Structure Reports, official unit/installation webpages, press releases, Department of State documents, congressional testimony, and information provided by executive branch officials to CRS).

Notes: The "Persistent" label describes a site that has been used consistently by DOD for at least 15 years and at which DOD exercises some degree of operational control. *Acronyms: AB=Air Base, NAS=Naval Air Station, NB=Naval Base, NB=Naval Base, NS=Naval Station, NSA=Naval Support Activity, NSF=Naval Support Facility, RAF=Royal Air Force, USAG=U.S. Army Garrison.*

Middle East

For the purposes of this report, the Middle East corresponds with the U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) AOR.[50] CRS identified eight persistent bases and 11 other military sites to which DOD has access in the Middle East.[51] As of March 2024, approximately 5,400 active-duty servicemembers were permanently assigned to overseas bases in the Middle East, with the largest number assigned to locations in Bahrain (3,479).[52] As of June 2024, thousands of additional servicemembers were present on rotational deployments or other temporary assignments. According to a June 2024 letter submitted by the Biden Administration to congressional leaders, this number includes approximately 3,813 servicemembers in Jordan and 2,321 servicemembers in Saudi Arabia.[53]

As part of the U.S. response to the ongoing Israel-Hamas conflict, Houthi attacks on international shipping, and related geopolitical developments, DOD deployed additional servicemembers and units to the Middle East in 2023 and 2024. In October 2023, DOD announced the deployment of a carrier strike group, a Terminal High Altitude Area Defense battery, and additional Patriot battalions to the Middle East.[54] In December 2023, DOD announced the commencement of a multinational security initiative in the Red Sea (Operation Prosperity Guardian), and in January 2024 began launching air and missile strikes against Houthi targets in Yemen and alleged Iranian-linked militias in Iraq.[55] U.S. bases in Iraq, Syria, and Jordan have also been subjected to intermittent drone and missile attacks since October 2023.[56]

CENTCOM is headquartered in Tampa, Florida, and operates a forward headquarters at Al Udeid Air Base in Qatar.[57] In March 2024, the CENTCOM commander identified three "lines of effort" for his command: "deterring Iran, countering violent extremist organizations, and competing strategically [i.e., with Russia and China]."[58] Compared to other regions, overseas basing in the

[50] The CENTCOM AOR also includes countries located in Central Asia; however, because the United States does not appear to maintain any publicly acknowledged bases in that region, this section confines its attention to the Middle East.

[51] Refer to **Appendix B** of this report for a comprehensive list of the persistent bases and other military sites identified in this report.

[52] Defense Manpower Data Center, "Military and Civilian Personnel by Service/Agency by State/Country," March 2024, available for download at https://dwp.dmdc.osd.mil/dwp/app/dod-data-reports/workforce-reports.

[53] The White House, Letter to the Speaker of the House of Representatives and President pro tempore of the Senate regarding the War Powers Report, June 7, 2024, https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/presidential-actions/2024/06/07/letter-to-the-speaker-of-the-house-of-representatives-and-president-pro-tempore-of-the-senate-war-powers-report/.

[54] DOD, "Statement from Secretary of Defense Lloyd J. Austin III," October 21, 2023, https://www.defense.gov/News/Releases/Release/Article/3564874/statement-from-secretary-of-defense-lloyd-j-austin-iii-on-steps-to-increase-for/. Figures for total U.S. regional troop presence cited in January 2024 media reports have ranged from 50-60,000. See, for example, "Who Are the Houthis?" *Financial Times*, January 11, 2024. See also discussion in CRS Report R47828, *Israel and Hamas Conflict In Brief: Overview, U.S. Policy, and Options for Congress*.

[55] For more information, see CRS Insight IN12301, *Houthi Attacks in the Red Sea: Issues for Congress* and CRS Insight IN12309, *Iraq: Attacks and U.S. Strikes Reopen Discussion of U.S. Military Presence*.

[56] As of June 2024, three U.S. servicemembers had been killed by such attacks. According to one media report, a DOD official stated that U.S. servicemembers in Iraq, Syria, and Jordan had been attacked a combined 165 times between October 17, 2023, and January 29, 2024. Lara Seligman, "Enemy Drone Evaded Detection by Trailing U.S. Drone Landing at Jordan Base," *PoliticoPro*, January 29, 2024, https://subscriber.politicopro.com/article/2024/01/jordan-drone-iran-biden-00138363?source=email.

[57] CRS In Focus IF11428, *United States Central Command*, by Nathan J. Lucas and Brendan W. McGarry.

[58] General Michael "Erik" Kurilla, "Statement for the Record Before the Senate Armed Services Committee," USCENTCOM, March 7, 2024, at https://www.centcom.mil/about-us/posture-statement/.

Middle East (particularly Iraq and Syria) has been the subject of considerable recent controversy, both within the United States and internationally.[59]

Figure 4. U.S. Overseas Bases in the Middle East

Source: CRS analysis of unclassified U.S. government documentation (including DOD budget documents, Base Structure Reports, official unit/installation webpages, press releases, Department of State documents, congressional testimony, and information provided by executive branch officials to CRS).

[59] For more information, see CRS Insight IN12309, *Iraq: Attacks and U.S. Strikes Reopen Discussion of U.S. Military Presence*.

Notes: The "Persistent" label describes a site that has been used consistently by DOD for at least 15 years and at which DOD exercises some degree of operational control. *Acronyms: AB=Air Base, NSA=Naval Support Activity.*

Africa

For the purposes of this report, Africa corresponds with the U.S. Africa Command (AFRICOM) AOR. CRS identified two persistent bases and seven other military sites to which DOD has access in the region. AFRICOM characterizes sites in the latter category as "posture locations," which it describes as locations with "minimal permanent U.S. presence, [that] have low-cost facilities and limited supplies … to perform critical missions and quickly respond to emergencies."[60] As of March 2024, approximately 1,150 active-duty servicemembers were permanently assigned to overseas bases in Africa, with the largest number assigned to locations in Djibouti (406).[61] The number of active-duty servicemembers at overseas bases in Africa on rotational or other duty assignments is likely higher—for example, the Navy has reported the presence at Djibouti's Camp Lemonnier of "approximately 4,000 U.S., joint, and allied forces military and civilian personnel."[62] AFRICOM is headquartered in Stuttgart, Germany.[63]

AFRICOM is the newest geographic COCOM, and its AOR contains fewer permanently assigned servicemembers than that of any other COCOM. In his March 2024 Posture Statement before the Senate Armed Services Committee, the AFRICOM commander described violent extremist organizations and the expansion of PRC and Russian influence as the major threats to U.S. interests in the region.[64] Compared to basing in other regions, U.S. posture in Africa has been particularly dynamic in 2024. In January 2024, *The Wall Street Journal* reported that DOD was seeking to establish additional bases in coastal West Africa—specifically in Ghana, Côte d'Ivoire, and Benin—to support unmanned aerial surveillance operations.[65] And in March 2024, the Nigerien government revoked its Status of Forces Agreement with the United States, leading DOD to announce it would withdraw from the country (which had previously hosted two U.S. bases) by September 15, 2024.[66]

[60] AFRICOM, "Statement of General Michael E. Langley before the Senate Armed Services Committee," March 16, 2023, https://www.africom.mil/document/35173/africom-cleared-fy24-sasc-posture-hearing-16-mar-2023pdf.

[61] Defense Manpower Data Center, "Military and Civilian Personnel by Service/Agency by State/Country," March 2024, available for download at https://dwp.dmdc.osd.mil/dwp/app/dod-data-reports/workforce-reports.

[62] U.S. Navy, "Installation Information," https://cnreurafcent.cnic.navy.mil/Installations/Camp-Lemonnier-Djibouti/. Rion Codrington, "Partner Appreciation Day Celebrates 21 Days of Partnership at Camp Lemonnier," U.S. Navy, November 8, 2023, https://cnreurafcent.cnic.navy.mil/Installations/Camp-Lemonnier-Djibouti/News/Article/3587466/partner-appreciation-day-celebrates-21-years-of-partnership-at-camp-lemonnier/. AFRICOM has also confirmed this figure.

[63] AFRICOM, "About the Command," https://www.africom.mil/about-the-command.

[64] AFRICOM, Statement of General Michael E. Langley before the Senate Armed Services Committee," March 7, 2024, https://www.africom.mil/document/35430/usafricom-fy25-posture-statement-iso-sasc-hearing-7-mar-24pdf.

[65] Michael Phillips, "U.S. Seeks Drone Bases in Coastal West Africa to Stem Islamist Advance," *The Wall Street Journal*, January 3, 2024, https://www.wsj.com/world/africa/u-s-seeks-drone-bases-in-coastal-west-africa-to-stem-islamist-advance-21282861.

[66] DOD, "Joint Statement from the U.S. Department of Defense and the Department of National Defense of the Republic of Niger," May 19, 2024, https://www.defense.gov/News/Releases/Release/Article/3780392/joint-statement-from-the-us-department-of-defense-and-the-department-of-nationa.

Figure 5. U.S. Overseas Bases in Africa

Source: CRS analysis of unclassified U.S. government documentation (including DOD budget documents, Base Structure Reports, official unit/installation webpages, press releases, Department of State documents, congressional testimony, and information provided by executive branch officials to CRS).

Notes: The "Persistent" label describes a site that has been used consistently by DOD for at least 15 years and at which DOD exercises some degree of operational control.

Central/South America and the Caribbean

For the purposes of this report, Central/South America and the Caribbean correspond with the U.S. Southern Command (SOUTHCOM) AOR, with one exception (the Bahamas—which hosts the U.S. Navy's Atlantic Undersea Test and Evaluation Center—is technically in the U.S. Northern Command AOR). CRS identified three persistent bases and three other military sites to which DOD has access in the region. As of March 2024, approximately 1,650 active-duty servicemembers were permanently assigned to overseas bases in Latin America and the Caribbean, with the largest number assigned to Cuba (616) and Honduras (365).[67] SOUTHCOM is headquartered in Doral, Florida.[68]

Overseas basing in Central/South America and the Caribbean appears to mainly support counternarcotics operations, as well as some logistical and Research, Development, Test and Evaluation (RDT&E) activities.[69] In her 2024 Posture Statement before the House Armed Services Committee, the SOUTHCOM commander described the expansion of PRC and Russian influence and the activities of transnational criminal organizations as major regional threats to U.S. security.[70]

[67] Defense Manpower Data Center, "Military and Civilian Personnel by Service/Agency by State/Country," March 2024, available for download at https://dwp.dmdc.osd.mil/dwp/app/dod-data-reports/workforce-reports.

[68] SOUTHCOM, "About Us," https://www.southcom.mil/About/.

[69] See the "Latin America and the Caribbean" section of **Appendix A**.

[70] U.S. Congress, House Committee on Armed Services, *Statement of General Laura Richardson, United States Army*, U.S. Southern Command Posture Statement, 118th Cong., 1st sess., March 8, 2023, p. 3 available at https://www.southcom.mil/Portals/7/Documents/Posture%20Statements/2023%20SOUTHCOM%20Posture%20Statement%20FINAL.pdf?ver=rxp7ePMgfX1aZVKA6dl3ww%3d%3d.

Figure 6. U.S. Overseas Bases in Central/South America and the Caribbean

Source: CRS analysis of unclassified U.S. government documentation (including DOD budget documents, Base Structure Reports, official unit/installation webpages, press releases, Department of State documents, congressional testimony, and information provided by executive branch officials to CRS).

Notes: The "Persistent" label describes a site that has been used consistently by DOD for at least 15 years and at which DOD exercises some degree of operational control. *Acronyms: CSL=Cooperative Security Location.*

Authorities and Management

Treaties and International Agreements

To acquire, lease, or otherwise obtain access to land and facilities for the purpose of overseas basing, the United States enters into diplomatic arrangements with foreign governments. Generally speaking, such arrangements take the form of bilateral agreements concluded between the executive branch and host-nation governments. These agreements may be referred to by a number of different names, including Status of Forces Agreements (SOFAs), Defense Cooperation Agreements (DCAs), Visiting Forces Agreements (VFAs), or Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs), and their scopes and provisions may vary widely. In some cases, the terms of such agreements—or even their existence—may not be public.

International agreements addressing basing rights are also typically separate from (though aligned with or governed by) any treaty that may exist between the United States and the country in question.[71] Such agreements may also address related issues such as legal jurisdiction over U.S. personnel, tax and customs exemptions, or other issues. In addition to its bilateral basing agreements, the United States is party to a multilateral SOFA that applies to all members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO).[72]

The specific terms negotiated to govern land and infrastructure usage at overseas bases may vary by location. However, some practices and procedures are generally observed. According to DOD

> The Department uses land, buildings, and other overseas facilities obtained through various international treaties and agreements negotiated by the Department of State. The Department purchases capital assets overseas with appropriated funds; however, the host country retains title to the land and capital improvements. Treaty terms generally allow the Department continued use of these properties until the treaties expire. In the event treaties or other agreements are terminated, use of the foreign bases is prohibited and losses are recorded for the value of any irretrievable capital assets. The settlement due to the United States or host nation is negotiated and takes into account the value of capital investments and may be offset by environmental cleanup costs, if applicable.[73]

Relevant Statutory Authorities

Title 10, Chapter 159 of the *United States Code* (U.S.C.) governs DOD's acquisition, use, and disposal of real property, including overseas bases.[74] Relevant portions of this chapter include provisions authorizing the Secretary of Defense to lease land and structures in foreign countries (10 U.S.C. §2675) and requiring the Secretary of Defense to provide information to Congress regarding overseas base closures and realignments, as well as the status of overseas bases (10 U.S.C. §2687a).[75] In addition, 10 U.S.C. §2350k authorizes the Secretary of Defense to "accept

[71] For example, the U.S.-Japan SOFA states that it is enacted "pursuant to Article VI of the Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security between the United States of America and Japan." "Agreement … Regarding Facilities and Areas and the Status of United States Armed Forces in Japan," 1960, available online via U.S. Army Japan at https://www.usarj.army.mil/Portals/33/cmdstaffs/sja/doc/sofa_201601.pdf.

[72] The text of this SOFA is available at https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_17265.htm.

[73] DOD, *FY2023 Agency Financial Report*, November 2023, p. 145, https://comptroller.defense.gov/Portals/45/Documents/afr/fy2023/DoD_FY23_Agency_Financial_Report.pdf.

[74] 10 U.S.C. §2661 *et seq*.

[75] 10 U.S.C. §2687a required DOD to provide an annual report to Congress detailing the status of overseas bases. Per Sec. 1061 of the FY2017 National Defense Authorization Act (P.L. 114-328), the requirement for DOD to submit this report ended on December 31, 2021.

contributions from any nation because of or in support of the relocation of elements of the armed forces from or to any location within that nation." These contributions may be used to pay numerous overseas basing costs, including those related to design and construction services, communications services, and the rental of office space.[76] Finally, 10 U.S.C. §2721 requires the Secretary of Defense to maintain records of, inter alia, the department's fixed property and installations "on both a quantitative and a monetary basis."[77]

DOD Policy and Organizations

To manage its overseas bases, DOD has promulgated several issuances to establish policy and assign responsibilities. *DOD Instruction 3000.12* establishes a Global Posture Executive Council (GPEC) to oversee global defense posture (which consists of the placement and organization of overseas bases, together with the positioning of forces and the structuring of international security agreements).[78] Pursuant to this instruction, several DOD positions are responsible for broad aspects of overseas basing, including the following:

- **The Under Secretary of Defense for Policy (USD [P]).** USD (P) "establishes policy and overall guidance for the governance of global defense posture."[79]
- **The Assistant Secretary of Defense for Strategy, Plans and Capabilities (ASD [SPC]) and the Director, Joint Staff (DJS)**. The ASD (SPC) and the DJS co-chair the GPEC and provide oversight, policy guidance, and assistance on posture matters.[80]
- **The Secretaries of the Military Departments and Military Service Chiefs.** The Secretaries and Service Chiefs review combatant commander posture plans, support posture planning by requiring relevant cost data and estimates, and provide base operations support and management functions for enduring locations assigned to their Service(s).[81]
- **The Combatant Commanders (CCDRS).** The CCDRS evaluate the adequacy of current posture to support their campaign plans and associated objectives, develop a theater or functional posture plan, and coordinate requirements with other stakeholders.[82]

The GPEC also includes representation from numerous other DOD and U.S. government organizations.[83]

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[76] 10 U.S.C. §2350k. Refer to the "Burden Sharing" subsection of this report for further discussion of this issue.

[77] 10 U.S.C. §2721. DOD's annual Base Structure Report is prepared in accordance with the requirements of this statute.

[78] DOD, *DOD Instruction 3000.12 Management of U.S. Global Defense Posture*, May 8, 2017, p. 6, https://www.esd.whs.mil/Portals/54/Documents/DD/issuances/dodi/300012p.pdf.

[79] Ibid.

[80] Ibid.

[81] Ibid.

[82] In addition to the DOD officials noted above, the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition and Sustainment (USD (A&S)) exercises overall responsibility and oversight of DoD real property, including the maintenance of a real property inventory. Within the office of the USD (A&S), the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Energy, Installations, and Environment produces the annual Base Structure Report. See DOD, *DOD Instruction 4165.14 Real Property Inventory and Reporting*, September 8, 2023, pp. 4-5, https://www.esd.whs.mil/Portals/54/Documents/DD/issuances/dodi/416514p.pdf?ver=201.

[83] These include the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy (USD [P]); the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition (continued...)

In addition to DODI 3000.12, DOD Directive 3000.10 ("Contingency Basing Outside the United States") establishes policy and assigns responsibilities specifically for overseas contingency basing.[84]

On a day-to-day basis, each military department (MILDEP) manages its overseas bases through its own organizational structures, policies, and programs.[85] From a regional and joint perspective, the six geographically organized COCOMs provide oversight and theater-level direction of the strategic and operational dimensions of DOD's overseas basing posture.

Issues for Congress

Resourcing Overseas Basing

Congress's most direct role in overseas basing is to consider whether or not to make funds available to establish and maintain military bases. Congress appropriates funds to military construction (MILCON) accounts to pay for the construction or expansion of base facilities and certain operation and maintenance (O&M) accounts to pay for base operations, maintenance, and related support activities.[86] Congress also funds appropriations accounts that support other aspects of DOD's global defense posture (e.g., overseas deployments) that may be considered part of overseas basing. Congress faces questions that include (1) whether to appropriate funds for overseas basing-related activities (and, if so, how much); and (2) whether DOD's execution of overseas basing-related appropriations meets congressional intent.

Total Overseas Basing Costs

Other than for military construction projects, DOD's budget documents do not typically break down spending by geographical location. As a result, it can be difficult to accurately determine the total costs of overseas basing, or identify costs by region or site. There are also numerous ways to define the costs of overseas basing, each of which could yield different figures. For example, one definition could include only spending associated with the real property and physical infrastructure (e.g., buildings, structures) occupied by overseas bases. Another could include spending associated with permanently stationing DOD servicemembers, weapons systems, and other assets overseas.[87] A third could include the costs of rotational deployments,

and Sustainment (USD [A&S]); the Director of Cost Assessment and Program Evaluation (OSD [CAPE]); the Under Secretary of Defense, Comptroller/Chief Financial Officer, Department of Defense (OUSD[C]/CFO; the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness (OUSD [P&R]); the Department of State; and the National Security Council. DOD, *DOD Instruction 3000.12 Management of U.S. Global Defense Posture*, May 8, 2017, pp. 6-7.

[84] Organizations with responsibilities relating to overseas contingency basing under DOD Directive 3000.10 include those identified in *DOD Instruction 3000.12*, plus the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Sustainment, the Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence and Security, and the DOD Chief Information Officer. DOD, *DOD Directive 3000.10 Contingency Basing Outside the United States*, August 27, 2021, https://www.esd.whs.mil/Portals/54/Documents/DD/issuances/dodd/300010p.pdf?ver=2017-08-18-132434-003.

[85] For more information on the general management of military bases, see CRS In Focus IF11263, *Defense Primer: Military Installations Management*.

[86] For more information on MILCON appropriations, see CRS Report R44710, *Military Construction: Authorities and Processes*.

[87] Including costs related to the personnel or weapons systems that DOD bases overseas in an estimate of total costs for overseas bases is subject to debate because moving such personnel or weapons systems back to the Continental United States (CONUS) would not necessarily eliminate those costs. Attempts to determine a marginal increased cost for basing personnel and weapons overseas are subject to numerous assumptions. See for example, RAND Corporation, *A Cost Analysis of the U.S. Air Force Overseas Posture*, 2013, https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR150.html.

exercises, and similar activities conducted at overseas bases. Because MILCON and certain O&M accounts (i.e., the Base Operations Support, or BOS, and Facilities Sustainment, Restoration, and Modernization, or FSRM, subactivity groups) are common to all three definitions, these appropriations are discussed in more detail in the "MILCON " and "Operation & Maintenance (O&M) " sections of this report.

To estimate total overseas basing-related MILCON spending for FY2023, CRS reviewed DOD's FY2024 "Military Construction, Family Housing, and Base Realignment and Closure Program (C-1)" budget submission. The total obligation authority enacted for FY2023 for MILCON projects associated with combatant commands outside the continental United States (OCONUS) was $5.355 billion.[88]

In FY2023, DOD provided two different estimates of non-MILCON overseas basing costs as part of its annual budget submission. The first is the "overseas cost summary" which "identifies the amounts necessary for payment of all personnel, operations, maintenance, facilities, and support costs for all [DOD] overseas military units and the costs of supporting all dependents who accompany DoD personnel outside of the United States."[89] This estimate—which includes some funding for procurement and research and development—puts the total cost for overseas operations activities at $27.8 billion.[90]

In the same document, DOD provided an estimate of $31.7 billion for enacted appropriations to support overseas operations in FY2023.[91]

Although the figures reported by DOD may serve as a useful indicator, they may not include all of the non-MILCON spending associated with overseas basing, as they may exclude costs related to contingency operations, rotational deployments or training exercises involving units ordinarily based in the United States.

Independent researchers have also provided alternative estimates for the total cost of U.S. overseas basing. One 2021 study by the Quincy Institute for Responsible Statecraft estimated the total cost to be $55 billion annually.[92] A RAND Corporation report from 2013 analyzed the Air Force's overseas operations and concluded that the costs to maintain the Air Force's overseas

[88] In this instance, the data for overseas bases includes Guam and Hawaii, which are geographically within the INDOPACOM AOR. Office of the Under Secretary of Defense (Comptroller/Chief Financial Officer), Military Construction, Budget Estimates for Fiscal Years 2023, (C-1), https://comptroller.defense.gov/Budget-Materials/Budget2025/, provided the source for the analysis.

[89] Office of the Under Secretary of Defense (Comptroller/Chief Financial Officer), *Defense Operations and Maintenance Overview Book, Fiscal Year 2024 Budget Estimates*, Overseas Cost Summary, May 2023, p. 191, https://comptroller.defense.gov/Portals/45/Documents/defbudget/FY2024/FY2024_OM_Overview.pdf

[90] According to DOD, this estimate aims to capture "the amounts necessary for payment of all personnel, operations, maintenance, facilities, and support costs for all overseas military units and the costs of supporting all dependents who accompany DOD personnel outside of the United States." Office of the Under Secretary of Defense (Comptroller/Chief Financial Officer), *Defense Operations and Maintenance Overview Book, Fiscal Year 2024 Budget Estimates*, Overseas Cost Summary, May 2023, p. 191, https://comptroller.defense.gov/Portals/45/Documents/defbudget/FY2024/FY2024_OM_Overview.pdf.

[91] Office of the Under Secretary of Defense (Comptroller/Chief Financial Officer), *Defense Operations and Maintenance Overview Book, Fiscal Year 2024 Budget Estimates*, Overseas Cost Summary, May 2023, p. 325-326, https://comptroller.defense.gov/Portals/45/Documents/defbudget/FY2024/FY2024_OM_Overview.pdf.

[92] Quincy Institute for Responsible Statecraft, "Drawdown: Improving U.S. and Global Security Through Base Closures Abroad," September 24, 2021, p. 3, https://quincyinst.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/quincy-brief-no.-16-sept-2021-vine-1.pdf.

force structures and installations overseas rather than in the United States was roughly $3.4 billion, which amounted to about 2% of the Air Force's total budget at the time of the study.[93]

Some of DOD's overseas basing costs may be defrayed by financial or in-kind contributions from foreign governments. For further discussion, refer to this report's "Burden Sharing" section below.

MILCON Appropriations

MILCON appropriations fund the planning, design, and building of physical infrastructure at DOD installations.[94] In FY2023, Congress appropriated a total of $13.593 billion for specific MILCON projects worldwide.[95] Of that total, $5.355 billion—or 39%—went to locations in overseas combatant commands. Congress may consider whether this total is appropriate to meet U.S. strategic and operational objectives; depending on its assessment, Congress may consider increasing, decreasing, or keeping constant annual MILCON appropriations.

Aside from the question of how much total funding to appropriate for overseas MILCON projects, Congress may also consider where and how MILCON funds are spent. As **Figure 7** shows, the regional distribution of MILCON funding has varied over the past 15 years. The proportion of spending in the CENTCOM AOR—which accounted for a plurality of overseas MILCON projects by financial value for several years during the late 2000s and early 2010s—has decreased considerably, for instance, while projects in the INDOPACOM AOR have accounted for the majority of overseas MILCON spending for the past four fiscal years.[96] This change likely reflects strategic developments; as DOD's focus has shifted from the Global War on Terror to great power competition, the allocation of MILCON funds has changed to reflect the increased importance of Europe and the Indo-Pacific vis-à-vis the Middle East. Congress may consider whether the current distribution of MILCON funds adequately reflects the balance of its regional priorities and may determine whether or not to modify the geographical or functional allocation of such appropriations.

[93] RAND Corporation, *A Cost Analysis of the U.S. Air Force Overseas Posture*, 2013, https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR150.html.

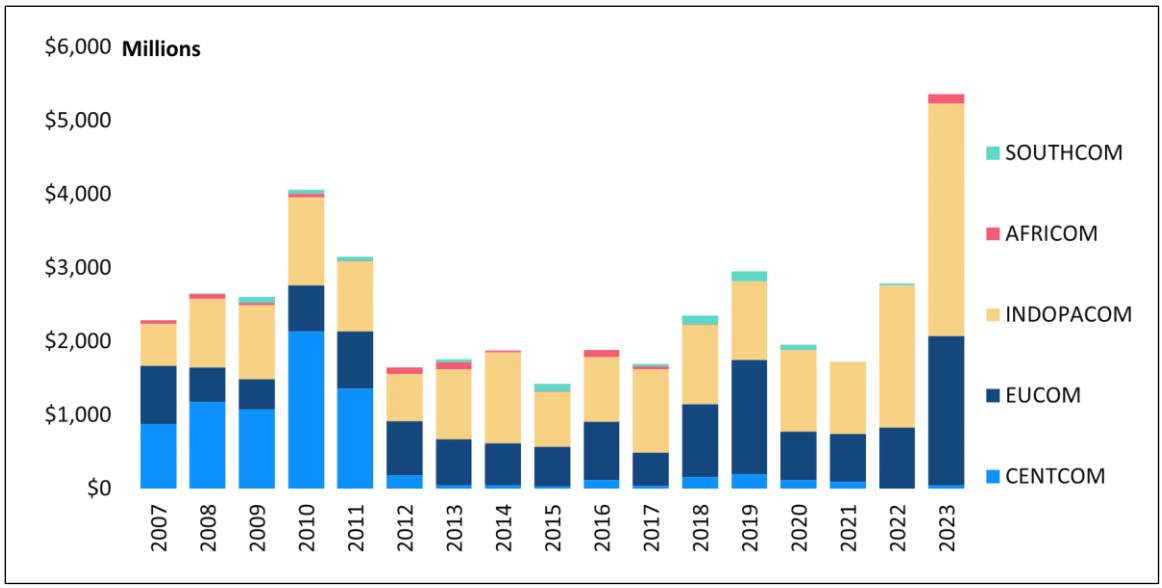
[94] For more information on MILCON appropriations generally, see CRS Report R44710, *Military Construction: Authorities and Processes*.

[95] The $13.593 billion figure here is based on a CRS analysis of DOD C-1 documents and includes all military construction projects for which funding was appropriated for FY2023 and for which DOD recorded a specific location for the project; it does not include accounts such as unspecified minor military construction, planning and design, Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) activities, family housing operations, family housing improvement funds and the NATO Security Investment Program. In this instance, the data for overseas bases includes Guam and Hawaii, which are geographically within the INDOPACOM AOR. Office of the Under Secretary of Defense (Comptroller/Chief Financial Officer), Military Construction, Budget Estimates for Fiscal Years 2023, (C-1), https://comptroller.defense.gov/Budget-Materials/Budget2025, provided the source for the analysis.

[96] Because the INDOPACOM AOR includes Hawaii, Guam, and other U.S. territories, not all INDOPACOM MILCON spending is associated with overseas basing.

Figure 7. DOD Military Construction Spending by Region, FY2007-FY2023

Total Obligational Authority by COCOM AOR



Source: CRS analysis of DOD Under Secretary of Defense (Comptroller) Military Construction, Family Housing and Base Realignment and Closure Program (C-1) documents, FY2015-FY2023, https://comptroller.defense.gov/Budget-Materials/.

Notes: This figure excludes MILCON accounts that are not associated with specific locations in DOD budget documents (e.g., DOD-wide, Planning and Design accounts, Family Housing Operations and Maintenance, Base Realignment and Closure Account, Family Housing Improvement Fund). Data also excludes MILCON projects in the continental United States/elsewhere in the NORTHCOM AOR.

Operation & Maintenance (O&M) Appropriations

Two subactivity groups (SAGs) within the operation and maintenance (O&M) appropriation directly fund support and maintenance of military bases, including those overseas: Base Operations Support (BOS) and Facilities Sustainment, Restoration, and Management (FSRM). Unlike MILCON, these elements of O&M spending are not typically disaggregated by location or installation; CRS is therefore unable to perform a geographic analysis of Base Operations Support or Facilities Sustainment, Restoration, and Modernization spending.

The FSRM SAGs support activities such as major repairs to buildings and structures, the restoration of damaged facilities, and limited facility alterations. In FY2023, Congress appropriated approximately $17.419 billion for FSRM across DOD, with the active-component Army (approximately $5.147 billion), the active-component Air Force (approximately $4.391 billion), the active-component Navy (approximately $3.956 billion), and the active-component Marine Corps ($1.342 billion) receiving the largest amounts, respectively.[97] These FSRM figures include domestic and overseas costs.[98]

[97] The FSRM total of $17.419 also include accounts for reserve components; the Joint Explanatory Statement for the Department of Defense Appropriations Act, 2023, provided the source for this analysis, available at https://www.appropriations.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/Division%20C%20-%20Defense%20Statement%20FY23.pdf#PAGE=50.

[98] DOD's budget documentation does not distinguish between overseas FSRM funding allocated to domestic and overseas locations.

The BOS SAGs fund "installation services," including facilities operations (e.g., utilities, engineering services), logistics operations (e.g., food services, vehicle management), community services (e.g., morale, welfare, and recreation programs), security services (e.g., installation law enforcement, physical security), information technology services (e.g., telephones, network services), and related activities.[99]

Congress may consider whether these totals are adequate to meet its basing objectives and priorities, and adjust the level of annual appropriations as necessary. For example, if Congress assesses that the tempo of overseas base operations is increasing, it may decide to increase appropriations for BOS or FSRM activities; conversely, if Congress determines that there is less need for such operations, it may hold these appropriations constant or decrease them. Additionally, if Congress determines it lacks sufficient information about where these O&M funds are actually being spent, it may require DOD to provide more information as to the geographic distribution of overseas basing-related O&M spending.

Managing Relations with Host Nations

The strategic value of an overseas base depends in large part on good U.S. relations with the base's *host nation*—that is, the nation whose territory the base occupies. With certain limited exceptions, the United States does not typically maintain overseas bases without the agreement of the host nation (of the areas covered by this report, only sites in Syria and Guantanamo Bay in Cuba are used without host-nation consent).[100]

Congress faces several related questions, such as whether or not the executive branch is developing and maintaining relations with host nations that adequately support U.S. national strategy and congressional policy priorities; how the presence and operation of U.S. forces may affect regional security dynamics; how the behavior of adversaries may affect the security of U.S. servicemembers and partner forces; and what the costs and consequences of alternative approaches may be.

Negotiating Basing Rights

As described in the "Authorities and Management" section of this report, the United States relies on a variety of diplomatic understandings—mainly, but not exclusively, bilateral executive agreements—to establish and govern overseas basing rights.

As a result, the executive branch—especially DOD and the Department of State—is mainly responsible for negotiating the terms and conditions of U.S. overseas basing rights. However, Congress may exercise oversight over the terms and implementation of these executive agreements by requiring reports, holding hearings, expressing the sense of Congress, or issuing direction to DOD through legislation. Additionally, Congress may choose to legislate a statutory role for itself in the negotiation or approval of basing agreements, if Members determine that congressional priorities are not adequately reflected in the executive branch's handling of such

[99] Each of the MILDEPs manages its own Base Operations Support SAG; for an example, see "FY2024 Budget Estimates, O&M, Army, Vol. I," Department of the Army, March 2023, pp. 202-203, https://www.asafm.army.mil/Portals/72/Documents/BudgetMaterial/2024/Base%20Budget/Operation%20and%20Maintenance/Regular%20Army%20Operation%20and%20Maintenance%20Volume%201.pdf.

[100] Both the Syrian and Cuban governments consider the U.S. military presence in their respective countries to contravene their sovereignty and violate international law. See "We Demand Immediate and Unconditional Withdrawal of Foreign Forces from Syrian Territory," *Syrian Arab News Agency*, December 22, 2017, https://sana.sy/en/?p=122073, and CRS Report R44137, *Naval Station Guantanamo Bay: History and Legal Issues Regarding Its Lease Agreements*.

relations (for example, Congress could require notification or approval before the conclusion of any new basing agreements or it could link U.S. financial expenditures on basing in certain countries to specific burden sharing, force protection, or other considerations). For basing arrangements that require congressional action or approval (for example, those established by treaties, or congressionally enacted agreements like the Compacts of Free Association), Congress may consider which kinds of terms and conditions are most advantageous to the national interest.

Reliable Access and Political Risk

Another issue Congress may consider is reliability of U.S. access to overseas bases, which may be understood as a function of political risk.

Because nearly all overseas bases are ultimately subject to foreign sovereignty, DOD's ability to use these locations may be affected by political developments beyond U.S. control.[101] Instances of host nations altering the terms of—or outright revoking—U.S. basing rights have occurred several times in recent history, and can create strategic and operational problems for military planners. The presence of U.S. forces in a country may be the subject of political controversy, and ensuing disputes may lead to abrupt and substantial policy or security changes.

In some cases, host-nation governments have unexpectedly decided to expel U.S. forces (as in France during the mid-1960s, when French president Charles de Gaulle informed the United States that existing basing agreements between the two countries no longer obtained, ending two decades of U.S. military presence).[102] On other occasions, host-nation governments have moved to restrict the ways in which DOD may use bases located in their territories (for example, in 2003 the Turkish government blocked the U.S. military from using Incirlik Air Base for combat operations against Iraq).[103] Another possibility is that a new government may come to power and radically change its country's approach to U.S. basing (as happened recently in Niger, when—following a 2023 *coup d'état*—the new military junta unilaterally cancelled the existing SOFA with the United States, compelling the withdrawal of U.S. forces and the abandonment of two bases).[104]

Congress may also consider the question of access during periods of protracted or intense conflict. Host nations may be unwilling to allow the United States to use bases in their territories, for fear it could expose them to attack or involve them in a war they would rather avoid. Depending on the nature of the conflict, it is possible that even treaty allies may decide to restrict or prohibit the use of their territories by the U.S. military. For example, senior officials in the Philippines—a U.S. treaty ally that hosts bases seen by many analysts as relevant to a potential

[101] There are a few bases over which the United States may be said to exercise a kind of *de facto* sovereignty, since it operates them without the consent of the country in whose legal territory they are located (e.g., the base at Al Tanf in Syria and Guantanamo Bay in Cuba). For academic treatments of the complex relationship between sovereignty and overseas basing, see Sebastian Schmidt, *Armed Guests* (2020) and Alexander Cooley and Hendrik Spruyt, *Contracting States: Sovereign Transfers in International Relations* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009).

[102] This occurred in 1966, as part of France's withdrawal from NATO's integrated command structure. See Eric Stein and Dominique Carreau. "Law and Peaceful Change in a Subsystem: 'Withdrawal' of France from the North Atlantic Treaty Organization." *The American Journal of International Law* 62, no. 3 (1968): 577–640, https://doi.org/10.2307/2197283. See also Jean Lacouture, *De Gaulle: The Ruler, 1945-1970* (New York: Norton & Company, 1991), p. 519.

[103] In February 2024, the government of Iraq was reportedly considering altering or revoking U.S. basing rights in response to U.S. strikes against militias operating in the country. See CRS Insight IN12309, *Iraq: Attacks and U.S. Strikes Reopen Discussion of U.S. Military Presence*. See also Guy Chazan, "As U.S.-Turkish Relations Fray, Historic Base Is on the Sidelines," *The Wall Street Journal*, April 2, 2003.

[104] For more information, refer to CRS In Focus IF12464, *Niger*, by Alexis Arieff; see also Eric Schmitt, "U.S. and Niger Announce Withdrawal of American Personnel by September," *The New York Times*, May 19, 2024, https://www.nytimes.com/2024/05/19/us/politics/us-niger-military-withdrawal.html.

U.S.-China conflict—have stated that, in the event of a regional war, their government may bar U.S. forces from using Philippine territory to conduct or support combat operations against third parties.[105]

Congress may consider the degree to which the United States can depend on host nations—particularly countries with histories of instability or anti-American political traditions—to grant or maintain basing rights on sufficiently favorable terms. Congress may also consider whether or not DOD adequately accounts for this kind of political risk in its strategic and operational planning. If Congress identifies issues with DOD's approach, it could require new plans, strategies, or reports to address these risks. If there are particular countries of concern, Congress could also prohibit the development of new basing arrangements with these countries, or introduce specific requirements to govern basing in these locations.

Burden Sharing

Another issue is the degree to which a host nation may contribute to the upkeep and support of U.S. forces and facilities at bases in its territory (often referred to as *burden sharing*). The question of whether host nations are paying enough to support U.S. basing has been a contentious political issue since the early Cold War. Some critics and policymakers have alleged that host-nation governments contribute less than they should to defray the costs of America's military presence in their countries, especially considering that (1) some host nations (such as Germany, Japan, and South Korea) are high-income countries; and (2) U.S. basing provides security and further economic benefits.[106] Others have argued that host nations generally contribute an appropriate amount to support U.S. basing and that the United States benefits as much as host nations from its global defense posture.[107]

DOD annually reports at least some of the burden sharing contributions it receives from host nations. According to the most recent report, in FY2023, the United States received a total of $714.2 million in burden sharing contributions from five countries (Kuwait, Japan, South Korea, Saudi Arabia, and Poland).[108]

Despite this information, as noted above, the structure of DOD's budget presents difficulty in determining the costs associated with overseas basing. CRS is unable to conclusively determine how much of DOD's total overseas basing costs are covered by host-nation contributions. The Government Accountability Office (GAO) recently attempted to evaluate burden sharing for major U.S. allies in a 2021 report examining, inter alia, the contributions of the Japanese and South Korean governments to supporting the U.S. military presence in their respective countries. GAO found that, between FY2016 and F2019, Japan and South Korea provided $12.6 billion and

[105] In April 2023, for instance, Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. said that U.S. forces would be barred from using bases in his country to undertake "offensive action." Kristina Maralit, "Marcos rules out offensive actions from new EDCA sites," *The Manila Times*, April 11, 2023. See also discussion in CRS Report R47589, *U.S. Defense Infrastructure in the Indo-Pacific: Background and Issues for Congress*, pp. 22-23. Some analysts have raised similar questions about South Korea and Japan—see, for example, Kiyoshi Sugawa, "Should Japan Defend Taiwan?", *Responsible Statecraft*, May 2023, https://responsiblestatecraft.org/2023/05/02/should-japan-defend-taiwan/.

[106] For an example of this argument, see Doug Bandow, "750 Bases in 80 Countries Is Too Many for Any Nation: Time for the US to Bring Its Troops Home," Cato Institute, October 4, 2021, https://www.cato.org/commentary/750-bases-80-countries-too-many-any-nation-time-us-bring-its-troops-home.

[107] For an example of this argument, see Rachel S. Cohen, "Why Overseas Military Bases Continue to Make Sense," *War on the Rocks*, January 14, 2021, https://warontherocks.com/2021/01/why-overseas-military-bases-continue-to-make-sense-for-the-united-states/.

[108] DOD, "Report on Burden Sharing Contributions," December 2023. This report was prepared pursuant to the terms of 10 *U.S.C.* §2350k(j) and is on file with the authors.

$5.8 billion, respectively, in "direct financial support" to pay costs—such as "labor, construction, and utilities"—associated with U.S. overseas basing.[109] In the Japanese case, host-nation contributions amounted to 60.2% of the value of DOD obligations associated with the U.S. military presence over the same period. In the South Korean case, host-nation contributions amounted to 43.3% of the value of DOD obligations associated with the U.S. military presence over the same period.[110] According to media reports, the government of Germany—which hosts the second largest number of permanently assigned U.S. servicemembers, behind Japan—reported contributing $270 million to U.S. basing costs between 2012 and 2019.[111] As another example, Qatar is reportedly making investments in DOD's Al Udeid Air Base to support the continuation of the U.S. military presence there.[112]

If Congress is concerned that the current degree of burden sharing is insufficient, a number of options are available. Congress could seek more information on foreign contributions to U.S. basing costs by requiring DOD to provide data on such contributions, commissioning independent reports, or holding hearings. If Congress determines that host nations are not paying enough, it could condition appropriations for certain overseas basing-related expenditures on relevant host nation(s) meeting certain contribution thresholds, require the revision of existing basing arrangements, or prohibit DOD from basing forces in countries that fail to contribute sufficiently to U.S. basing costs.

Aligning Overseas Basing with Strategic and Operational Priorities

Although the executive branch has long exercised the lead role in determining national military strategy and managing the U.S. military's overseas basing posture, Congress may shape executive branch decision-making and exercise oversight in a number of ways. It may assess whether the placement and organization of overseas bases adequately supports U.S. interests and strategic goals, for instance, and consider whether current posture meets the requirements of new operational concepts, weapons systems, or other warfighting developments.

Overseas Basing and National Strategy

Since the early days of the Cold War, overseas basing has played a significant role in national strategy.[113] Its principal contribution has been to enable the *forward presence* (sometimes also referred to as "forward deployment" or "forward posture") of U.S. forces, which DOD officials have claimed deters potential adversaries from attacking the United States and its allies and partners.[114] In addition to enabling military operations, overseas bases may signal that the U.S.

[109] Government Accountability Office, *Burden Sharing: Benefits and Costs Associated with the U.S. Military Presence in Japan and South Korea, GAO-21-270*, March 17, 2021, https://www.gao.gov/products/gao-21-270.

[110] GAO calculated the total value of such DOD obligations to be $20.9 billion, in the case of Japan, and $13.4 billion, in the case of South Korea. To arrive at these figures, GAO compiled appropriations from relevant military personnel, O&M, and MILCON accounts. For more information on GAO's methodology, see ibid., pp. 42-46.

[111] Chase Winter, "Germany Spends Millions on U.S. Military Bases," *Deutsche Welle*, August 21, 2019, https://www.dw.com/en/germany-spends-millions-of-euros-on-us-military-bases/a-50106376.

[112] For more information, see CRS Report R47467, *Qatar: Issues for the 118th Congress*, by Christopher M. Blanchard, pp. 5-6.

[113] See Townsend Hoopes, "Overseas Bases in American Strategy," *Foreign Affairs*, October 1958, pp. 69-82, https://www.jstor.org/stable/20029332.

[114] The deterrence of adversary attacks has been a consistent goal of U.S. strategy; of the four "defense priorities" identified by the 2022 National Defense Strategy, two ("deterring strategic attacks against the United States, Allies, and partners" and "deterring aggression, while being prepared to prevail in conflict when necessary") relate to deterrence. (continued...)

government views particular areas as important to the national interest, as well as communicate U.S. commitment to the defense and support of regional allies and partners. Overseas basing may also entail risks to U.S. servicemembers and assets (for example, U.S. forces based in Iraq, Syria, and Jordan have been attacked by armed groups dozens of times in 2023 and 2024).[115]

Evidence for the strategic effects of DOD's current and recent global basing posture varies. A 2013 report on overseas basing by the RAND Corporation identified three major strategic benefits (contingency responsiveness, deterrence and assurance, and security cooperation) and three major strategic risks (political risks, operational risks, and violent extremism risks).[116]

The deterrent effect of overseas basing is difficult to measure. Some researchers have claimed that "some types of U.S. forward posture do generally have deterrent effects when deployed near the ally or partner state to be defended," particularly those which are relatively immobile (e.g., heavy ground forces).[117] Other analysts have posited that "the deterrence value of overseas military bases is frequently exaggerated," explaining U.S. strategic successes by reference to geopolitical developments other than the forward military presence such bases enable.[118]

Among those who attribute a positive strategic effect to overseas basing, some argue that the benefits of an expansive posture outweigh both the risks and the costs. On this view, a restrained global or regional posture could undermine DOD's ability to project force in distant regions and respond to potential contingencies.[119] Some also claim that an insufficiently robust basing posture will signal to potential aggressors that a particular area is unimportant to U.S. national interests—or that U.S. commitment to regional allies and partners is tenuous or uncertain—and thus make conflict more likely.[120]

Alternatively, some maintain that an overly expansive basing posture actually increases the risk of conflict, because it creates or intensifies adversary perceptions of U.S. threats.[121] This line of argument is sometimes connected to what international relations theorists call the *security dilemma* (a phenomenon in which states' attempts to improve their security cause other states to feel less secure and improve their own military capabilities, precipitating a cycle that can end in armed conflict). Some proponents of this perspective claim that U.S. basing could undermine regional or global stability by provoking rival counter-moves.[122] Others have emphasized the

National Defense Strategy, November 2022, p. 7, https://media.defense.gov/2022/oct/27/2003103845/-1/-1/1/2022-national-defense-strategy-npr-mdr.pdf.

[115] For more information, see CRS Insight IN12309, *Iraq: Attacks and U.S. Strikes Reopen Discussion of U.S. Military Presence*, by Christopher M. Blanchard and CRS In Focus IF11930, *Syria and U.S. Policy*, by Christopher M. Blanchard.

[116] Michael J. Lostumbo *et al*. *Overseas Basing of U.S. Military Forces*, RAND Corporation, 2013, https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR201.html.

[117] Bryan Frederick *et al*., *Understanding the Deterrent Impact of U.S. Overseas Forces*, RAND Corporation, 2020, pp. xiv-xv, https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR2533.html.

[118] John Glaser, "Withdrawing from Overseas Bases," Cato Institute, July 18, 2017, https://www.jstor.org/stable/resrep04988.

[119] For an example of this argument, see Raphael S. Cohen, "Why Overseas Military Bases Continue to Make Sense for the United States," *War on the Rocks*, January 14, 2021, https://warontherocks.com/2021/01/why-overseas-military-bases-continue-to-make-sense-for-the-united-states/.

[120] Ibid.

[121] For an example of this argument, see Tyler McBrien, "Why the U.S. Should Close Its Overseas Military Bases," *Foreign Policy*, May 16, 2023, https://foreignpolicy.com/2023/05/16/military-defense-overseas-bases-united-states-force-posture/.

[122] For an example of this argument, see Stephen M. Walt, "Does Anyone Still Understand the 'Security Dilemma'?" *Foreign Policy*, July 26, 2022, https://foreignpolicy.com/2022/07/26/misperception-security-dilemma-ir-theory-russia-ukraine/.

costs for U.S. servicemembers, arguing that overseas basing in conflict-prone areas unnecessarily exposes DOD servicemembers to danger without meaningfully contributing to national security.[123]

Congress may assess the strategic consequences of DOD's current overseas basing posture, and consider whether or not modifications to that posture—such as increasing or reducing the number of overseas bases—would advance U.S. interests.

Overseas Basing and Distributed Operational Concepts

In addition to broader strategic considerations, Congress may also consider the degree to which overseas basing posture aligns with DOD's own warfighting plans and requirements. Over the past five years, the Air Force, Army, Navy, and Marine Corps have all developed concepts for more distributed and diversified combat and logistical operations. The Air Force's Agile Combat Employment (ACE), the Army's Multi-Domain Operations (MDO), the Navy's Distributed Maritime Operations (DMO), and the Marine Corps' Expeditionary Advanced Basing Operations (EABO) all represent attempts to reduce the vulnerability of air, naval, and ground forces and increase their effectiveness against an adversary able to credibly disrupt, contest, or deny U.S. control of the battlespace.[124] The services' new concepts break from previous planning paradigms, and their implementation may require a different approach to basing, one in which large, permanent, and concentrated bases are supplemented by—or even replaced with—smaller, temporary, or distributed facilities.

Of all of these operational concepts, ACE may potentially entail the most significant basing changes. The Air Force describes ACE as a means of "shift[ing] operations from centralized physical infrastructures to a network of smaller, dispersed locations that can complicate adversary planning and provide more options for joint force commanders."[125] Some analysts have characterized this as a 'hub-and-spokes' approach, with an enduring location (e.g., an existing U.S. or allied airbase) serving as a hub for a number of contingency locations (e.g., civilian airports, austere airstrips) between which aircraft can be shifted and from which sorties may be launched. According to its proponents, ACE will thereby minimize vulnerability to kinetic attack (particularly in regions like the Indo-Pacific and Europe, where potential adversaries possess highly capable ballistic missile arsenals) and maximize the effectiveness of U.S. and allied airpower.[126]

Although the basing implications of the Army's MDO and the Navy's DMO are less sweeping, both concepts envision decreasing the concentration of logistics and supply infrastructure. As part of MDO, the Army seeks to "disperse deployment and sustainment," partly through "dispersed supply nodes operated by forward presence units;" while the Navy's vision of a larger, more dispersed fleet operating over a wider area could increase the need for forward, distributed logistics and maintenance sites (including what the Navy terms "distributed expeditionary shore

[123] For examples of this argument in the context of Middle East basing, see Matthew Petti, "The Killing of 3 American Troops Was an Avoidable Tragedy," *Reason*, January 29, 2024, https://reason.com/2024/01/29/the-killing-of-3-american-troops-was-an-avoidable-tragedy/; and Paul Pillar, "Bring U.S. Troops Home From Iraq and Syria Now," Responsible Statecraft, Jan. 29, 2024, https://responsiblestatecraft.org/us-troops-iraq-syria-jordan/.

[124] For more information, see CRS In Focus IF12599, *Defense Primer: Navy Distributed Maritime Operations (DMO) Concept*, by Ronald O'Rourke and CRS In Focus IF11409, *Defense Primer: Army Multi-Domain Operations (MDO)*, by Andrew Feickert.

[125] "Agile Combat Employment," U.S. Air Force, pp. 3-4, https://www.doctrine.af.mil/portals/61/documents/ afdn_1-21/afdn%201-21%20ace.pdf.

[126] See CRS In Focus IF12694, *Defense Primer: Agile Combat Employment (ACE) Concept*, by Sarah Gee and Luke A. Nicastro.

infrastructure" to provide forward damage repair, mobile construction, cargo handling, and medical services).[127] From a ground-forces perspective, the Marine Corps' EABO similarly envisions the "employment of mobile, low-signature, persistent … naval expeditionary forces from a series of austere, temporary locations ashore or inshore within a contested or potentially contested maritime area."[128]

The implementation of these concepts may require changes to DOD's overseas basing posture, resourcing, and management. They may also entail complex diplomatic negotiations with current or potential host nations. Congress may consider the costs and benefits of a more distributed approach to overseas basing, assess the extent to which these concepts are being implemented, and consider whether or not changes to annual defense appropriations are necessary to successfully execute these plans and concepts.

[127] "The U.S. Army in Multi-Domain Operations 2028," U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command, December 6, 2018, p. 37, https://www.army.mil/article/243754/the_u_s_army_in_multi_domain_operations_2028; and "CNO Releases Navigation Plan 2022," U.S. Navy Press Release, July 26, 2022, p. 10, https://media.defense.gov/2022/jul/26/2003042389/-1/-1/1/navigation%20plan%202022_signed.pdf.

[128] *Tentative Manual for Expeditionary Advanced Base Operations*, Department of the Navy, Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps, February 2021, pp. 1-3 and 1-4, https://mca-marines.org/wp-content/uploads/tm-eabo-firstedition-1.pdf.

Appendix A. U.S. Overseas Basing by Country

This appendix provides more detailed information on U.S. overseas basing in individual countries. The list below provides summaries of basing arrangements in 51 host nations (sorted by region). In addition, **Appendix B** provides a comprehensive list of all overseas bases covered by this report.

Indo-Pacific

U.S. overseas basing in the Indo-Pacific is established and governed by bilateral executive agreements between the United States and regional governments, as well as congressionally approved Compacts of Free Association (in the cases of the Marshall Islands, Micronesia, and Palau). Most of the U.S. servicemembers permanently assigned to this region are stationed at persistent bases in Japan and South Korea. Over the past 15 years, DOD has established rotational basing arrangements in Australia, the Philippines, and elsewhere.

Australia

The United States maintains Marine Rotational Force-Darwin at Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) Base Darwin and Robertson Barracks between April and October of each year, and rotationally deploys combat aircraft at RAAF Base Tindal and other Australian military sites. U.S. *Virginia*-class submarines are to be rotationally based near Perth beginning in the mid-to-late 2020s.[129] In addition, the United States and Australia jointly operate the Naval Communication Station Harold E. Holt and Joint Defence Facility Pine Gap sites.[130]

According to the Defense Manpower Data Center (DMDC), approximately 732 active-duty servicemembers were permanently assigned to Australia as of March 2024 (this figure does not include servicemembers on temporary duty or rotational assignments).[131]

British Indian Ocean Territory (Diego Garcia)

The United States maintains Naval Support Facility (NSF) Diego Garcia in the British Indian Ocean Territory (commonly referred to as Diego Garcia), an overseas dependency of the United Kingdom.[132] NSF Diego Garcia provides logistical support for forces operating in and around the Persian Gulf and Indian Ocean, and hosts a maritime pre-positioning squadron as well as

[129] The White House, "Fact Sheet: Trilateral Australia-UK-US Partnership on Nuclear-Powered Submarines," March 13, 2023, https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2023/03/13/fact-sheet-trilateral-australia-uk-us-partnership-on-nuclear-powered-submarines/.

[130] Because these facilities perform sensitive intelligence, communications, and related functions, official sources make scant mention of them. For recent press reporting on these sites, see Matthew Knott, "'Seriously Disturbed': MPs Alarmed by Disrepair at Secretive Military Facility," *The Sydney Morning Herald*, September 14, 2023, https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/time-to-move-on-from-afghanistan-war-crimes-parliamentary-committee-20230914-p5e4k6.html; and Alex Barwick, "In Alice Springs Everyone has an Opinion on the Pine Gap Spy Base, but No-One wants to Talk about What Happens Inside," *Australian Broadcasting Corporation*, May 15, 2024, https://www.abc.net.au/news/backstory/2024-05-16/backstory-expanse-podcast-spies-in-the-outback-pine-gap-barwick/103844652.

[131] Defense Manpower Data Center, "Military and Civilian Personnel by Service/Agency by State/Country," March 2024, available for download at https://dwp.dmdc.osd.mil/dwp/app/dod-data-reports/workforce-reports.

[132] The U.S. presence at Diego Garcia dates to the late 1960s and is managed through a bilateral agreement between the United States and the United Kingdom. For more information, see CRS Report R47589, *U.S. Defense Infrastructure in the Indo-Pacific: Background and Issues for Congress*, pp. 16-17 and 43-44.

detachments from the U.S. Fleet and Industrial Supply Center, Air Mobility Command, Pacific Air Force, and the 21st and 22nd Space Operations Squadrons.[133]

According to DMDC, approximately 223 active-duty servicemembers were permanently assigned to Diego Garcia as of March 2024.[134]

Japan

Japan hosts large U.S. Army, Navy, Marine Corps, and Air Force bases, including Camp Zama, Fleet Activities Yokosuka, Marine Corps Air Station Iwakuni, Yokota Air Base, and Misawa Air Base.[135] These sites are used to base and support a wide variety of Army ground units, Navy vessels (including an aircraft carrier, destroyers, cruisers, and amphibious assault ships), and Army, Navy, Marine Corps, and Air Force aircraft (including fighter, electronic attack, command and control, tiltrotor, tanker, and airlift aircraft). DOD also uses defense infrastructure in Japan to detect and intercept missile threats, maintain and repair surface warships and submarines, and conduct training and exercises.[136]

The Japanese prefecture of Okinawa, located about 400 miles southwest of Japan's four main islands, hosts Army, Marine Corps, and Air Force bases, including Army Garrison Okinawa, Marine Corps Base Camp Butler, and Kadena Air Base. These sites are used to base and support Marine Corps ground units (including the III Marine Expeditionary Force, the Corps' largest combat unit stationed overseas) and Marine Corps and Air Force fighter, tilt-rotor, rotary wing, airlift, and aerial refueling aircraft. DOD also uses Okinawa to conduct training and exercises specific to jungle environments and to store fuel.[137] DOD installations on Okinawa represent the closest U.S.-operated bases to Taiwan and the South China Sea, both possible operational areas in a potential conflict with the PRC. Pursuant to a bilateral agreement between the United States and Japan, DOD has committed to relocating approximately 9,000 Marines from Okinawa to Guam (and other locations outside Japan) beginning in 2024.[138]

According to DMDC, approximately 54,774 active-duty servicemembers were permanently assigned to Japan as of March 2024.[139]

Republic of Korea (South Korea)

The Republic of Korea (ROK, or South Korea) hosts Army, Navy, Marine Corps, and Air Force bases, including Camp Humphreys, Fleet Activities Chinhae, Marine Corps Installation Camp

[133] "About Diego Garcia," Commander, Navy Region Japan, https://cnrj.cnic.navy.mil/Installations/NSF-DiegoGarcia/About/About-Diego-Garcia/.

[134] Defense Manpower Data Center, "Military and Civilian Personnel by Service/Agency by State/Country," March 2024, available for download at https://dwp.dmdc.osd.mil/dwp/app/dod-data-reports/workforce-reports.

[135] The U.S. military presence in Japan dates to the end of World War II. U.S. bases in Japan played major logistical roles during the Korean and Vietnam Wars and formed an important element of America's Cold War strategy in Asia. For more information, see CRS Report R47589, *U.S. Defense Infrastructure in the Indo-Pacific: Background and Issues for Congress*, pp. 48-49.

[136] Ibid., pp. 39-41.

[137] Ibid., p. 41.

[138] Irene Loewenson, "Marines Start Moving From Japan to New Base on Guam," *Marine Corps Times*, December 29, 2023, https://www.marinecorpstimes.com/news/your-marine-corps/2023/12/29/new-in-2024-marines-start-moving-from-japan-to-new-base-on-guam/. See also CRS In Focus IF10672, *U.S. Military Presence on Okinawa and Realignment to Guam*.

[139] Defense Manpower Data Center, "Military and Civilian Personnel by Service/Agency by State/Country," March 2024, available for download at https://dwp.dmdc.osd.mil/dwp/app/dod-data-reports/workforce-reports.

Mujuk, and Osan Air Base. These sites are used to base and support Army units (including the 2nd Infantry Division/ROK-U.S. Combined Division) and Air Force fighter, reconnaissance, and attack aircraft. Pursuant to a 2004 U.S.-ROK agreement, DOD installations are mainly concentrated around two "hubs": the first centers on the city of Pyeongtaek and includes Camp Humphreys and Osan Air Base, while the second centers on Daegu and includes USAG-Daegu, Fleet Activities Chinhae, and MCI Camp Mujuk.[140] Uniquely, the U.S. and ROK militaries share operational control of their forces in the country through the ROK/U.S. Combined Forces Command, which acts as a unified, binational "warfighting headquarters."[141] U.S. basing posture in South Korean is primarily organized around deterring and resisting potential DPRK aggression.

According to DMDC, approximately 24,234 active-duty servicemembers were permanently assigned to South Korea as of March 2024.[142]

The Marshall Islands, Micronesia, and Palau (Freely Associated States)

The United States maintains Army Garrison Kwajalein Atoll (which hosts the Ronald Reagan Ballistic Missile Defense Test Site) in the Marshall Islands, and is currently constructing a radar site in Palau.[143] The U.S. military presence in the Freely Associated States is governed by the Compacts of Free Association, which establish unique political relationships between the United States and each FAS government.[144] Per the terms of the Compacts, the United States has responsibility for the defense of the FAS, as well as basing and access rights within FAS territories.

According to DMDC, approximately 101 active-duty servicemembers were permanently assigned to as the Freely Associated States of March 2024.[145]

The Philippines

The United currently has access to nine Philippine-operated defense sites under the terms of the 2014 U.S.-Philippines Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement (EDCA).[146] Per the EDCA, U.S. access to these sites is authorized "on a rotational basis, as mutually determined;" authorized activities U.S. forces may conduct include "security cooperation exercises; joint and combined

[140] For more information, see CRS Report R47589, *U.S. Defense Infrastructure in the Indo-Pacific: Background and Issues for Congress*, pp. 41-42 and 50. See also Terence Roehrig, "South Korea: An Alliance in Transition," in Lord and Erickson (ed.) Rebalancing U.S. Forces, pp.74-75.

[141] "Mission of the ROK/U.S. Combined Forces Command," U.S. Forces Korea, https://www.usfk.mil/About/CFC/.

[142] Defense Manpower Data Center, "Military and Civilian Personnel by Service/Agency by State/Country," March 2024, available for download at https://dwp.dmdc.osd.mil/dwp/app/dod-data-reports/workforce-reports.

[143] CRS Report R47589, *U.S. Defense Infrastructure in the Indo-Pacific: Background and Issues for Congress*, p. 39.

[144] CRS In Focus IF12194, *The Compacts of Free Association*.

[145] "Military and Civilian Personnel by Service/Agency by State/Country," DMDC, March 2024, available for download at https://dwp.dmdc.osd.mil/dwp/app/dod-data-reports/workforce-reports.

[146] Between 1898 and 1946, the Philippines was a U.S. territory. The U.S. military maintained significant bases in the Philippines, which played roles during World War II and the Vietnam War. The last persistent U.S. base in the country closed in 1991. See CRS Report R47589, *U.S. Defense Infrastructure in the Indo-Pacific: Background and Issues for Congress*, pp. 47-50. "Philippines, U.S. Announce Four New EDCA Sites," DOD, February 1, 2023, https://www.defense.gov/News/Releases/Release/Article/3285566/philippines-usannounce-four-new-edca-sites/.

training activities; humanitarian assistance and disaster relief activities; and such other activities as may be agreed upon."[147]

According to DMDC, approximately 310 active-duty servicemembers were permanently assigned to the Philippines as of March 2024.[148]

Singapore

The United States maintains a small permanent presence at its Navy Region Center Singapore, which coordinates logistical support for visiting surface warships, and also conducts ongoing rotational deployments of Littoral Combat Ships and P-8 Poseidon aircraft.[149] Facilities to which the U.S. military has access include Changi Naval Base and Sembawang shipyard, while Paya Lebar Air Base may host U.S. servicemembers and aircraft on a rotational basis.[150] Basing in Singapore is governed by a number of executive agreements.[151]

According to DMDC, approximately 229 active-duty servicemembers were permanently assigned to Singapore as of March 2024.[152]

Other Indo-Pacific Bases

In addition to the locations described above, DOD may have access to a number of other bases in the region. For example, U.S. forces used a number of Thai military bases on a rotational basis during the Global War on Terror (e.g., U-Tapao Royal Thai Navy Air Field), and in 2023 DOD concluded an agreement with Papua New Guinea to allow U.S. forces access to six airports and seaports in the country.[153] U.S. Navy vessels also routinely conduct visits at a wide array of Indo-Pacific regional ports.[154]

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[147] "Agreement between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the Republic of the Philippines on Enhanced Defense Cooperation," signed April 28, 2014, https://www.state.gov/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/14-625-Philippines-Defense-Cooperation.pdf.

[148] Defense Manpower Data Center, "Military and Civilian Personnel by Service/Agency by State/Country," March 2024, available for download at https://dwp.dmdc.osd.mil/dwp/app/dod-data-reports/workforce-reports.

[149] CRS Report R47589, *U.S. Defense Infrastructure in the Indo-Pacific: Background and Issues for Congress* , p. 43; and "U.S. Security Cooperation with Singapore," U.S. Department of State, April 12, 2023, https://www.state.gov/u-s-security-cooperation-with-singapore/.

[150] CRS Report R47589, *U.S. Defense Infrastructure in the Indo-Pacific: Background and Issues for Congress*, pp. 16 and 43.

[151] These include the 2019 U.S.-Singapore 2019 Amended MOU, the 2015 U.S.-Singapore EDCA, and the 2005 U.S-Singapore Strategic Framework Agreement. "Fact Sheet: 2019 Protocol of Amendment to the 1990 Memorandum of Understanding," Singapore Ministry of Defense, September 24, 2019, https://www.mindef.gov.sg/web/portal/mindef/news-and-events/latest-releases/article-detail/2019/September/24sep19_fs; "Strategic Framework Agreement," U.S. Department of State, 2005, https://www.state.gov/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/05-712-Singapore-Defense-Cooperation.EnglishOCR.pdf; and "Carter, Singapore Defense Minister Sign Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement," DOD News, December 7, 2015, https://www.defense.gov/News/News-Stories/Article/Article/633243/carter-singapore-defense-minister-sign-enhanced-defense-cooperation-agreement/.

[152] Defense Manpower Data Center, "Military and Civilian Personnel by Service/Agency by State/Country," March 2024, available for download at https://dwp.dmdc.osd.mil/dwp/app/dod-data-reports/workforce-reports.

[153] Jim Garamone, "U.S., Thai Defense Leaders Look to Future in Indo-Pacific," Department of Defense, May 13, 2022, https://www.defense.gov/News/News-Stories/Article/Article/3030852/us-thai-defense-leaders-look-to-future-in-indo-pacific/. "U.S.-Papua New Guinea Agreement on Defense Cooperation," Annex A, signed May 22, 2023, https://www.state.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/63374-Papua-New-Guinea-Defense-08.16.2023.pdf.

[154] See "CNO: Port visits expanding across Asia-Pacific," *Navy Times*, September 24, 2014, https://www.navytimes.com/news/your-navy/2014/09/24/cno-port-visits-expanding-across-asia-pacific/.

Europe

U.S. overseas basing in Europe is established and governed by bilateral executive agreements between the United States and regional governments, as well as the multilateral NATO SOFA (except for Cyprus and Kosovo, all of the countries included in this section are members of NATO).[155] Most of the U.S. servicemembers permanently assigned to Europe are stationed at persistent bases in Germany, Italy, and the United Kingdom. Over the past ten years (and particularly following Russia's 2022 invasion of Ukraine), the United States has established a military presence in many Eastern European countries. In addition, DOD frequently conducts rotational deployments in Europe involving tens of thousands of servicemembers. To reflect these deployments, throughout this section CRS has supplemented DMDC-provided figures—which only include permanently assigned servicemembers—with reporting or estimates from other sources, as appropriate.

Belgium

DOD maintains several administrative sites in Belgium, which are overseen by U.S. Army Garrison Benelux.[156] U.S. basing in Belgium mainly supports NATO activities, including support for coordination with the nearby NATO headquarters in Belgium (the Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe, or SHAPE, is located in Casteau near Mons, Belgium).[157]

According to DMDC, approximately 1,106 active-duty servicemembers were permanently assigned to Belgium as of March 2024.[158]

Bulgaria

The United States currently has access to four military facilities in Bulgaria under the terms of a 2008 cooperative security agreement.[159] A bilateral agreement between Bulgaria and the U.S. also permits up to 2,500 U.S. servicemembers to enter the country for military training.[160] In March 2022, the U.S. Army deployed a Stryker armored-vehicle infantry company to support a NATO battle group in the country, and U.S. Navy warships have made recurring port visits to Varna.[161]

DOD's FY2023 Base Structure Report identifies the Novo Selo Training Area, and Graf Ignatievo Air Base as DOD facilities, and Congress has appropriated funds for MILCON projects at these bases.[162]

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[155] The NATO SOFA is available for download at https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_17265.htm.

[156] U.S. Army, "U.S. Army Garrison Benelux Communities," https://home.army.mil/benelux/about/communities.

[157] NATO, "About Us," https://shape.nato.int/about.

[158] Defense Manpower Data Center, "Military and Civilian Personnel by Service/Agency by State/Country," March 2024, available for download at https://dwp.dmdc.osd.mil/dwp/app/dod-data-reports/workforce-reports.

[159] These facilities are: the Novo Selo Training Area, Bezmer Air Base, Graf Ignatievo Air Base, and a storage facility in Aytos. "U.S. Bulgaria Partnership", U.S. Embassy, Sofia, Bulgaria, April 9, 2008, https://web.archive.org/web/20100325095350/http://bulgaria.usembassy.gov/shared_facilities_faq.html.

[160] U.S. Department of State, *Defense Cooperation Agreement between the United States and Bulgaria*, April 26, 2006, p. 5, https://www.state.gov/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/06-612-Bulgaria-Defense-Cooperation.done_.pdf.

[161] "U.S. to Deploy Armored Unit to Bulgaria to Boost NATO's Eastern Flank", *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty*, March 19, 2022, https://www.rferl.org/a/us-stryker-deployment-bulgaria/31761140.html. U.S. Navy, "USS *Arleigh Burke* Departs Varna, Bulgaria," November 30, 2021, https://www.navy.mil/Press-Office/News-Stories/Article/2856406/uss-arleigh-burke-departs-varna-bulgaria/.

[162] Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Energy, Installations, and Environment, *FY2023 Base Structure*
(continued...)

According to DMDC, approximately 19 active-duty servicemembers were permanently assigned to Bulgaria as of March 2024.[163]

Cyprus

The U.S. Air Force regularly deploys servicemembers and assets to RAF Akrotiri, a British overseas base in Cyprus.[164] Although little information concerning the U.S. presence in Cyprus is publicly available, DOD's FY2023 Base Structure Report lists RAF Akrotiri as a U.S. site, and in 2020 the Air Force initiated a $27 million MILCON project at RAF Akrotiri. [165]

In November 2023, five U.S. servicemembers died in a helicopter crash off the coast of Cyprus; they were reportedly special operations troops conducting a refueling training mission.[166]

According to DMDC, approximately 11 active-duty servicemembers were permanently assigned to Cyprus as of March 2024.[167]

Estonia

DOD regularly conducts exercises in and rotational deployments to Estonia.[168] In May 2023, for instance, the U.S. Air Force sent F-22 Raptors to Ämari Air Base in Estonia, with the intent to "to deter aggression in the Baltic Sea region," and the U.S. Marine Corps conducted training exercises in Estonia.[169]

Between FY2015 and FY2018, DOD received about $45 million in MILCON appropriations for infrastructure improvements at Ämari Air Base.[170]

Report, https://www.acq.osd.mil/eie/BSI/BEI_Library.html. Also see Office of the Under Secretary of Defense (Comptroller/Chief Financial Officer), Military Construction, Budget Estimates for Fiscal Years 2015-202, (C-1), https://comptroller.defense.gov/Budget-Materials/Budget2024//

[163] Defense Manpower Data Center, "Military and Civilian Personnel by Service/Agency by State/Country," March 2024, available for download at https://dwp.dmdc.osd.mil/dwp/app/dod-data-reports/workforce-reports.

[164] The Air Force lists an element of the 9th Reconnaissance Wing as being located at RAF Akrotiri, for instance, and numerous DOD press releases have identified other Air Force personnel and units as being present at the base. See U.S. Air Force, "9th Reconnaissance Wing," https://www.16af.af.mil/About-Us/Unit-Fact-Sheets/Article/1962918/9th-reconnaissance-wing/; and Tech Sgt. Chuck Marsh, "C-17 Globemaster Prepares for Takeoff," DOD, at https://www.defense.gov/Multimedia/Photos/igphoto/2001080448/.

[165] DOD, *FY2023 Base Structure Report*, https://www.acq.osd.mil/eie/BSI/BEI_Library.html; Office of the Under Secretary of Defense (Comptroller/Chief Financial Officer), *Military Construction, Fiscal Year 2022 Budget Estimates*, (C-1), https://comptroller.defense.gov/Budget-Materials/Budget2020/; and Joint Explanatory Statement accompanying P.L. 116-94, Division F, https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/CREC-2019-12-17/pdf/CREC-2019-12-17-house-bk3.pdf#page=330.

[166] Dan Lamothe and Paulina Villegas, "Army identifies Special Operations soldiers Killed in 'Mishap' Over Mediterranean," *The Washington Post*, November 13, 2023, https://www.washingtonpost.com/national-security/2023/11/12/military-helicopter-crash-mediterranean-5-killed/.

[167] Defense Manpower Data Center, "Military and Civilian Personnel by Service/Agency by State/Country," March 2024, available for download at https://dwp.dmdc.osd.mil/dwp/app/dod-data-reports/workforce-reports.

[168] For example, DOD, "U.S. Army unit continues forging bonds with Estonian Allies," December 21, 2023, https://www.dvidshub.net/news/460537/us-army-unit-continues-forging-bonds-with-estonian-allies.

[169] David Roza, "F-22 Raptors Deploy to Estonia to Bolster Baltic Air Defense," *Air and Space Force Magazine*, May 15, 2023, https://www.airandspaceforces.com/air-force-f-22-raptor-nato-estonia/. Also see Office of the Under Secretary of Defense (Comptroller), *European Reassurance Initiative, Department of Defense Budget*, May 17, 2018, p. 15, https://comptroller.defense.gov/Portals/45/Documents/defbudget/fy2018/fy2018_ERI_J-Book.pdf.

[170] CRS analysis of DOD Under Secretary of Defense (Comptroller) Military Construction, Family Housing and Base Realignment and Closure Program (C-1) documents, FY2015-FY2023, https://comptroller.defense.gov/Budget-Materials/.

According to DMDC, approximately 20 active-duty servicemembers were permanently assigned to Estonia as of March 2024.[171] In September 2023, media report about 600 U.S. servicemembers in Estonia.[172]

Finland

The United States does not currently maintain a military presence in Finland, but in December 2023, the United States and Finland signed a Defense Cooperation Agreement that grants DOD access to 15 Finnish military sites.[173]

According to DMDC, approximately 32 active-duty servicemembers were permanently assigned to Finland as of March 2024.[174]

Germany

Since the end of World War II, Germany has hosted a large, enduring U.S. military presence, including several large Army and Air Force bases.

The Army's bases in Germany are grouped into five garrisons: U.S. Army Garrison Ansbach; U.S. Army Garrison Bavaria (which includes the Grafenwoehr Training Area and the Hohenfels Training Area, DOD's largest permanent training areas in the region); U.S. Army Garrison Rheinland-Pfalz; U.S. Army Garrison Stuttgart; and U.S. Army Garrison Wiesbaden.[175] (Each Army garrison may encompass multiple constituent sites—sometimes distributed across a wide area—that are not listed individually in this report). Army assets assigned to locations in Germany include a combat aviation brigade and a field artillery brigade.[176]

The U.S. Air Force in Germany includes a wing headquarters and a squadron of fighter aircraft (F-16C/D Fighting Falcons) at Spangdahlem Air Base, as well as an air mobility wing headquarters and reportedly a squadron of transport aircraft (C-130J-30 Hercules) at Ramstein Air Base.[177] Germany also hosts Landstuhl Regional Medical Center, DOD's largest overseas medical facility.[178]

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[171] Defense Manpower Data Center, "Military and Civilian Personnel by Service/Agency by State/Country," March 2024, available for download at https://dwp.dmdc.osd.mil/dwp/app/dod-data-reports/workforce-reports.

[172] Tetiana Fedosiuk, "The Signal of Deterrence and Reassurance," The International Centre for Defence and Security, September 8, 2023, https://icds.ee/en/the-signal-of-deterrence-and-reassurance/.

[173] Finland also joined NATO in April 2023, departing from a long tradition of formal neutrality. U.S. Department of State, "Secretary Antony J. Blinken at the Defense Cooperation Agreement Signing Ceremony," December 18, 2023, https://www.state.gov/secretary-antony-j-blinken-at-the-defense-cooperation-agreement-signing-ceremony/.

[174] Defense Manpower Data Center, "Military and Civilian Personnel by Service/Agency by State/Country," March 2024, available for download at https://dwp.dmdc.osd.mil/dwp/app/dod-data-reports/workforce-reports.

[175] U.S. Army Europe and Africa, "Garrisons and Area Support Groups," https://www.europeafrica.army.mil/Garrisons/. U.S. Army Garrison Bavaria, "USAG Bavaria Fact Sheet," https://home.army.mil/bavaria/application/files/6316/1219/0614/USAG_Bv_Fact_Sheet_v1Feb21.pdf.

[176] International Institute for Strategic Studies, "The Military Balance", Figures and Maps, p. 48, https://www.iiss.org/en/publications/the-military-balance/.

[177] "480th FS demonstrates interoperability with German Tornados," U.S. Air Force, May 18, 2023, https://www.spangdahlem.af.mil/News/Article-Display/Article/3399435/480th-fs-demonstrates-interoperability-with-german-tornados/. See also International Institute for Strategic Studies, "The Military Balance", Figures and Maps, p. 48, https://www.iiss.org/en/publications/the-military-balance/ and U.S. Air Force, "Air Mobility Command Fact Sheet," July 2022, https://www.521amow.af.mil/About-Us/Fact-Sheets/Factsheet-Article-View/Article/3098986/air-mobility-command/.

[178] "USAG Rheinland-Pfalz Kaiserslautern Military Community: Medical Services", *Military One Source*, at (continued...)

According to DMDC, approximately 35,068 active-duty servicemembers were permanently assigned to Germany as of March 2024.[179]

Greece

The United States maintains Naval Support Activity (NSA) Souda Bay on the Greek island of Crete, and frequently conducts exercises in and rotational deployments to the country.[180]

NSA Souda Bay includes one of the Mediterranean's few deep-water ports, an all-weather airfield, and refueling and resupply facilities.[181] U.S. warships also conduct port visits to Piraeus (near Athens), and the ports of Thessaloniki and Alexandroupolis support DOD logistical operations in southeastern Europe, including activities related to security assistance for Ukraine.[182]

The U.S. Air Force has conducted air mobility operations training exercises at Larissa Air Base.[183] DOD has also reportedly used Larissa to support MQ-9 Reaper drones for Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (ISR) missions.[184] Stefanovikeio Air Base also serves as a rotational site for a U.S. Army aviation task force.[185]

According to DMDC, approximately 402 active-duty servicemembers were permanently assigned to Greece as of March 2024.[186]

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https://installations.militaryonesource.mil/military-installation/usag-rheinland-pfalz/health/health-care. Alexander Riedel, "US Military Hospital to Replace 70-Year-Old Landstuhl is On Track for 2027, Officials Say," *Stars and Stripes*, April 20, 2023, https://www.stripes.com/theaters/europe/2023-04-20/landstuhl-hospital-70-year-legacy-construction-progress-9852236.html. The Defense Health Agency is currently executing a military construction project estimated to cost nearly $1 billion to build the Rhine Ordnance Barracks Medical Center, which will replace Landstuhl and is scheduled to be completed in 2027.

[179] Defense Manpower Data Center, "Military and Civilian Personnel by Service/Agency by State/Country," March 2024, available for download at https://dwp.dmdc.osd.mil/dwp/app/dod-data-reports/workforce-reports.

[180] The U.S.-Greece Mutual Defense Cooperation Agreement, updated in October 2021, provides the framework for U.S. basing and military access. U.S. Department of State, "The United States and Greece,", February 20, 2023, https://www.state.gov/the-united-states-and-greece-united-by-democratic-values-advancing-shared-goals-for-peace-and-prosperity.

[181] U.S. Department of State, "U.S. Security Cooperation with Greece," October 2022, https://www.state.gov/u-s-security-cooperation-with-greece/. Also see Commander Navy Installations Command, *Welcome to Naval Support Activity Souda Bay*, https://cnreurafcent.cnic.navy.mil/Installations/NSA-Souda-Bay/.

[182] U.S. Army, "Port of Alexandroupolis Makes Sustainment History with Heavy Brigade Movement," March 17, 2024, https://www.army.mil/article/274572/port_of_alexandroupolis_makes_sustainment_history. See also DOD, "Strategic Port Access Aids Support to Ukraine, Austin Tells Greek Defense Minister," July 18, 2022, https://www.defense.gov/News/News-Stories/Article/Article/3097081/strategic-port-access-aids-support-to-ukraine-austin-tells-greek-defense-minist/.

[183] U.S. Air Force, "521st AMOW AMTs maneuver forces during DE23," June 1, 2023, https://www.safia.hq.af.mil/IA-News/Article/3417550/521st-amow-amts-maneuver-forces-during-de23/.

[184] Elisabeth Gosselin-Malo, "Upgraded Greek Air Base Serves Growing Interest for US drones," *Defense News*, December 13, 2022, https://www.defensenews.com/global/europe/2022/12/13/upgraded-greek-air-base-serves-growing-interest-for-us-drones/.

[185] Defense Visual Information Distribution Service, "Mutual Defense Cooperation Agreement Enhances U.S. Army and Greek Partnership," October 20, 2021, https://www.dvidshub.net/news/407866/mutual-defense-cooperation-agreement-enhances-us-army-and-greek-partnership.

[186] Defense Manpower Data Center, "Military and Civilian Personnel by Service/Agency by State/Country," March 2024, available for download at https://dwp.dmdc.osd.mil/dwp/app/dod-data-reports/workforce-reports.

Greenland (Denmark)

The United States maintains Pittufik Space Base (formerly known as Thule Air Base) in Greenland, an autonomous territory of Denmark. Pittufik is DOD's northernmost overseas base, and supports space domain awareness and surveillance, missile warning and defense, and related functions.[187]

According to DMDC, approximately 135 active-duty servicemembers were permanently assigned to Greenland as of March 2024.[188]

Hungary

DOD conducts rotational deployments to and exercises in Hungary. In July 2021, U.S. European Command and Hungarian Defense Force leaders signed agreements designating Kecskemét Air Base and Pápa Air Bases as "agreed facilities and areas."[189] In July 2023, the U.S. Air Force deployed two rescue squadrons to Papa Air Base for an exercise, and in May 2023, soldiers from the 101st Airborne Division were deployed at Camp Croft near Veszprém.[190]

In FY2023, DOD initiated a $71 million project at Papa Air Base to install a Deployable Air Base System.[191]

According to DMDC, approximately 84 active-duty servicemembers were permanently assigned to Hungary as of March 2024.[192]

Iceland

Iceland hosts U.S. maritime patrol and reconnaissance aircraft at Keflavik Air Base.[193] Since FY2017, Congress has appropriated over $185 million for MILCON projects at Keflavik.[194]

[187] U.S. Space Force, "Pittufik Space Base," https://www.petersonschriever.spaceforce.mil/Pituffik-SB-Greenland.

[188] Defense Manpower Data Center, "Military and Civilian Personnel by Service/Agency by State/Country," March 2024, available for download at https://dwp.dmdc.osd.mil/dwp/app/dod-data-reports/workforce-reports.

[189] U.S. Embassy in Hungary, "U.S., Hungary sign Implementing Agreements for Use of Air Bases," July 21, 2021, https://hu.usembassy.gov/u-s-hungary-sign-implementing-agreements-for-use-of-air-bases/.

[190] "Jolly Vihar 23 enhances US, Hungarian air forces interoperability," U.S. Air Force, July 3, 2023, https://www.af.mil/News/Article-Display/Article/3447366/jolly-vihar-23-enhances-us-hungarian-air-forces-interoperability/; and "Ambassador Pressman Visits U.S. Servicemembers Near Veszprém," U.S. Embassy in Hungary, May 4, 2023, at https://hu.usembassy.gov/news-ambassador-pressman-visits-u-s-servicemembers-near-veszprem/.

[191] Deployable Air Base Systems typically include the materials needed to stand up air operations, including temporary billeting and mess facilities, vehicles, airfield repair resources, and power and electrical equipment. See *Department of Defense Budget Fiscal Year (FY) 2023*, Office of the Under Secretary of Defense (Comptroller), April 2022, p. 30, https://comptroller.defense.gov/Portals/45/Documents/defbudget/FY2023/FY2023_EDI_JBook.pdf.

[192] Defense Manpower Data Center, "Military and Civilian Personnel by Service/Agency by State/Country," March 2024, available for download at https://dwp.dmdc.osd.mil/dwp/app/dod-data-reports/workforce-reports.

[193] During the Cold War, Iceland hosted a permanent U.S. presence at Keflavik; this presence ended in 2006, but U.S. deployments to Keflavik began again in 2016. For more information, see Atlantic Council, "Cast Off by the United States A Decade Ago, Keflavik is Again a Key Lookout," May 7, 2018, https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/new-atlanticist/cast-off-by-the-united-states-a-decade-ago-keflavik-is-again-a-key-lookout.

[194] CRS analysis of DOD Under Secretary of Defense (Comptroller) Military Construction, Family Housing and Base Realignment and Closure Program (C-1) documents, FY2017-FY2023, https://comptroller.defense.gov/Budget-Materials/.

According to DMDC, approximately three active-duty servicemembers were permanently assigned to Iceland as of March 2024.[195] Air Force and Navy units have deployed to Keflavik for exercises and temporary duties, including a detachment of Navy anti-submarine aircraft.[196]

Italy

Since the end of World War II, Italy has hosted a large, persistent U.S. military presence, including several large Army, Navy, and Air Force bases.

U.S. Army Garrison Italy, with a headquarters at Camp Ederle in Vicenza, is home to an airborne infantry brigade combat team that serves as a rapid response force for European, African, and Middle Eastern locations.[197]

Aviano Air Base hosts two F-16 fighter squadrons and a helicopter rescue squadron.[198]

Naval Support Activity Naples hosts the headquarters for U.S. Naval Forces Europe and Africa and the U.S. 6th Fleet. The U.S. 6th Fleet Blue Ridge-class command and control ship, the USS Mount Whitney (LCC 20), is homeported in near Naples at Gaeta.[199] Naval Air Station Sigonella in Sicily hosts a rotational presence of Navy P-8A Poseidon anti-submarine aircraft, as well as a squadron of Marine Corps MV-22 Osprey tilt-rotor aircraft.[200] The Air Force also reportedly maintains unmanned ISR aircraft at Sigonella.[201]

According to DMDC, approximately 12,375 active-duty servicemembers were permanently assigned to Italy as of March 2024.[202]

Kosovo

Since 1999, the United States has maintained military forces in Kosovo to support NATO's Kosovo Force (KFOR), a peacekeeping effort. The U.S. Army's Area Support Group – Balkans

[195] Defense Manpower Data Center, "Military and Civilian Personnel by Service/Agency by State/Country," March 2024, available for download at https://dwp.dmdc.osd.mil/dwp/app/dod-data-reports/workforce-reports.

[196] See, for example, Defense Visual Information Distribution Service, "Chief of Naval Operations visits Patrol Squadron Nine in Keflavik, Iceland," June 15, 2022, https://www.dvidshub.net/news/426594/chief-naval-operations-visits-patrol-squadron-nine-keflavik-iceland. See also U.S. Air Force, "U.S. B-2 Spirit Bombers deploy to Keflavik Air Base for Bomber Task Force 23-4," August 14, 2023, https://www.usafe.af.mil/News/Article-Display/Article/3491598/us-b-2-spirit-bombers-deploy-to-keflavik-air-base-for-bomber-task-force-23-4/.

[197] "U.S. Army Garrison Italy," *Military One Source*, https://installations.militaryonesource.mil/in-depth-overview/usag-italy; and U.S. Army, "173rd Airborne Brigade—Our Mission," https://www.skysoldiers.army.mil/About-Us/Mission/.

[198] U.S. Air Force, "Aviano Air Force Base Fact Sheet," https://www.aviano.af.mil/About-Us/Fact-Sheets/Display/Article/280335/31st-fighter-wing/.

[199] U.S. Navy, "USS Mount Whitney Departs Homeport," October 18, 2023, https://www.navy.mil/Press-Office/News-Stories/Article/3561127/uss-mount-whitney-departs-homeport/.

[200] U.S. Naval Forces Europe and Africa / U.S. Sixth Fleet, "Patrol Squadron 9 Begins Inaugural P-8A Poseidon Deployment," April 13, 2019, https://www.c6f.navy.mil/Press-Room/News/News-Display/Article/1845325/patrol-squadron-9-begins-inaugural-p-8a-poseidon-deployment/; and Alison Bath, "Marine Tilt-Rotor Squadron Shifts from Spain to Sicily," *Stars and Stripes*, December 29, 2021, https://www.stripes.com/branches/marine_corps/2021-12-29/marines-tiltrotor-squadron-assigned-to-nas-sigonella-4119389.html.

[201] *The Military Balance*, International Institute for Strategic Studies, 2023, p. 48, https://www.iiss.org/en/publications/the-military-balance/.

[202] Defense Manpower Data Center, "Military and Civilian Personnel by Service/Agency by State/Country," March 2024, available for download at https://dwp.dmdc.osd.mil/dwp/app/dod-data-reports/workforce-reports.

maintains a headquarters for U.S. military activity in the Balkans at Camp Bondsteel in Kosovo.[203]

According to DMDC, approximately 14 active-duty servicemembers were permanently assigned to Kosovo as of March 2024.[204] However, according to a December 2023 letter submitted by the Biden Administration to congressional leaders regarding the War Powers Report "approximately 578 United States military personnel are [present in Kosovo] among KFOR's approximately 4,487 personnel."[205]

Latvia

DOD regularly conducts exercises in and rotational deployments to Latvia. A U.S. Marine Expeditionary Unit made a port visit to Latvia in September 2023.[206] Between 2015 and 2018, DOD received $13 million in military construction appropriations funds for infrastructure improvements at Lielvarde Air Base.[207]

According to DMDC, approximately 19 active-duty servicemembers were permanently assigned to Latvia as of March 2024.[208] However, media reports suggest the United States reportedly deployed about 600 servicemembers deployed to Latvia in 2022, including some rotational forces at Lielvarde Air Base.[209]

Lithuania

DOD regularly conducts exercises in and rotational deployments to Lithuania. In December 2022, the U.S. Embassy in Lithuania announced the intent to maintain a "persistent rotational presence" of a U.S. Army armored battalion and field artillery battery in Lithuania. The Lithuanian government built Camp Herkus at the Pabrade Training Area to support an increased U.S. military presence in the country, and has reportedly requested that the United States establish a permanent

[203] In addition, the Kosovar government has reportedly requested a permanent U.S. military base in the country. U.S. Army, "Area Support Group—Balkans U.S. Army," https://www.21tsc.army.mil/Units/Area-Support-Group-Balkans/; and "Kosovo Asks U.S. for Permanent Base, Speedier NATO Membership," *Reuters*, February 27, 2022, https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/kosovo-asks-us-permanent-military-base-speedier-nato-membership-2022-02-27/.

[204] Defense Manpower Data Center, "Military and Civilian Personnel by Service/Agency by State/Country," March 2024, available for download at https://dwp.dmdc.osd.mil/dwp/app/dod-data-reports/workforce-reports.

[205] The White House, "Letter to the Speaker of the House of Representatives and President pro tempore of the Senate regarding the War Powers Report," December 7, 2023, https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/presidential-actions/2023/12/07/letter-to-the-speaker-of-the-house-of-representatives-and-president-pro-tempore-of-the-senate-regarding-the-war-powers-report/.

[206] U.S. Navy, "U.S. Navy and Marines Arrive in Latvia for the Upcoming German Baltic Sea Exercise Northern Coast 2023," September 8, 2023, https://www.navy.mil/Press-Office/News-Stories/Article/3520154/us-navy-and-marines-arrive-in-latvia-for-the-upcoming-german-baltic-sea-exercis/.

[207] CRS analysis of DOD Under Secretary of Defense (Comptroller) Military Construction, Family Housing and Base Realignment and Closure Program (C-1) documents, FY2015-FY2023, https://comptroller.defense.gov/Budget-Materials/.

[208] Defense Manpower Data Center, "Military and Civilian Personnel by Service/Agency by State/Country," March 2024, available for download at https://dwp.dmdc.osd.mil/dwp/app/dod-data-reports/workforce-reports.

[209] Alex Horton, Karoun Demirjian and Michael Birnbaum, "U.S. Allies Most Vulnerable to Russia Press for More Troops, Weapons," *Washington Post*, August 13, 2022, https://www.washingtonpost.com/national-security/2022/08/13/us-military-baltics-russia/.

base in the country.[210] U.S. Army soldiers trained at Camp Herkus in April 2022;[211] and U.S. soldiers also conducted training exercises with Lithuanian military units at the Pabrade Training Area in November 2023.[212]

According to DMDC, approximately 19 active-duty servicemembers were permanently assigned to Lithuania as of March 2024.[213] However, in March 2023, the Lithuanian government reported that 966 U.S. servicemembers were present in the country.[214]

Norway

The U.S. Air Force maintains the 426th Air Base Squadron at the Jåttå Military Compound in Stavanger, Norway, which serves as the U.S. National Support Element for the NATO Joint Warfare Centre.[215]

In April 2021, the U.S. and Norway signed a security agreement that provides for the U.S. military "to access specific Norwegian facilities and conduct activities for our mutual defense."[216] The "focal points for increased cooperation with Norway" include Evenes Air Station, Ramsund Naval Station, Rygge Air Station, and Sola Air Station.[217]

The Marine Corps has conducted training exercises in Norway, and maintains a stockpile of prepositioned material in the country. [218]

According to DMDC, approximately 1,438 active-duty servicemembers were permanently assigned to Norway as of March 2024.[219]

Poland

In March 2023, the Army began to permanently assign soldiers to the Victory Corps, or V Corps, forward headquarters at Camp Kosciuszko, in Poznan, Poland.[220] U.S. Army Garrison Poland supports three forward operating sites (FOS) in Poland: Camp Kosciuszko in Poznan, FOS

[210] Jacqueline Feldscher, "Is This the Next US Military Base in Europe?," *Defense One*, October 3, 2021, at https://www.defenseone.com/policy/2021/10/next-us-military-base-europe/185808/; and Jordan Williams , "Lithuanian president to ask for permanent US troop presence", *The Hill*, February 9, 2022, https://thehill.com/policy/defense/593512-lithuanian-president-to-ask-for-permanent-us-troop-presence/.

[211] Defense Visual Information Distribution Center, "Force Protection Drill at Camp Herkus," April 14, 2022, https://www.dvidshub.net/image/7157629/force-protection-drill-camp-herkus.

[212] U.S. Army, "Task Force Marne troops train alongside NATO allies during Strong Griffin exercise in Lithuania," November 17, 2023, https://www.army.mil/article/271786/.

[213] Defense Manpower Data Center, "Military and Civilian Personnel by Service/Agency by State/Country," March 2024, available for download at https://dwp.dmdc.osd.mil/dwp/app/dod-data-reports/workforce-reports.

[214] Ibid., see also "Prime Minister thanks US troops in Lithuania," Government of the Republic of Lithuania, March 31, 2023, https://lrv.lt/en/news/prime-minister-thanks-us-troops-in-lithuania.

[215] U.S. Air Force, "426th Air Base Squadron," https://www.501csw.usafe.af.mil/Units/423d-ABG/426th-ABS/.

[216] U.S. Department of State, "U.S.-Norway Supplementary Defense Cooperation Agreement (SDCA)," April 16, 2021, https://www.state.gov/u-s-norway-supplementary-defense-cooperation-agreement-sdca/.

[217] Ibid.

[218] "26th MEU(SOC) Concludes Training in Norway," U.S. Marine Corps, August 25, 2023, https://www.marines.mil/News/News-Display/Article/3506238/26th-meusoc-concludes-bi-lateral-training-in-norway/.

[219] Defense Manpower Data Center, "Military and Civilian Personnel by Service/Agency by State/Country," March 2024, available for download at https://dwp.dmdc.osd.mil/dwp/app/dod-data-reports/workforce-reports.

[220] U.S. Army, "First Permanently Assigned US Soldiers arrive in Poland," March 8, 2023, https://www.army.mil/article/264637/first_permanently_assigned_us_soldiers_arrive_in_poland.

Powidz, and FOS Zagan.[221] Other locations in Poland that periodically support U.S. rotational forces include Skwierzyna, Świętoszów, Drawsko Pomorskie, Bolesławiec and Toruń.[222] More than 100 infrastructure projects to support the U.S. military in Poland are reportedly in the works, ranging from dining facilities and barracks to training ranges.[223] Most U.S. troops in Poland are reportedly there on nine-month rotations.[224]

U.S. military capabilities in Poland reportedly include an armor brigade; Patriot surface-to-air missile defense systems; F-22 Raptor combat aircraft; and unmanned ISR aircraft.[225]

The U.S. military is also installing an Aegis Ashore Ballistic Missile Defense (AABMD) system at Naval Support Facility Redzikowo, a former military and civilian airfield 225 miles northwest of Warsaw; NSF Redzikowo – which DOD has referred to as "the Navy's newest base" – is operated in conjunction with the Polish Force Protection Battalion.[226]

U.S. Air Force F-16 units have deployed to Lask Air Base near Lodz, Poland, and F-22s have deployed to Powidz Air Base in Poland to support NATO Allied Air Command's Air Shielding mission along NATO's eastern flank.[227] The U.S. Air Force also reportedly operates air-refueling aircraft from Powidz Air Base.[228]

According to DMDC, as of March 2024, 299 active-duty U.S. military servicemembers were permanently assigned to Poland.[229] However, in October 2022, the U.S. State Department reported that the U.S. maintains a rotational force of about 10,000 servicemembers in Poland, which includes an armored brigade combat team, funded through the European Deterrence Initiative.[230]

[221] U.S. Army, "Army Establishes Permanent Garrison in Poland," March 21, 2023, https://www.army.mil/article/265027/army_establishes_permanent_garrison_in_poland.

[222] Government of Poland, "Increasing the US Military Presence in Poland," https://www.gov.pl/web/national-defence/increasing-the-us-military-presence-in-poland.

[223] John Vandiver, "Army's New Poland Garrison went from Warsaw's Wish List to high US Priority," *Stars and Stripes*, March 28, 2023, https://www.stripes.com/theaters/europe/2023-03-28/army-poland-base-9627391.html.

[224] Ibid.

[225] *The Military Balance*, IISS, p. 49, https://www.iiss.org/en/publications/the-military-balance/.

[226] U.S. Navy, "Navy Commissions Naval Support Facility Redzikowo," September 3, 2020, https://www.navy.mil/DesktopModules/ArticleCS/Print.aspx?PortalId=1&ModuleId=523&Article=2336225; and DVIDS, "Naval Support Facility Redzikowo Conducts Change of Command," December 15, 2022, https://www.dvidshub.net/image/7559906/naval-support-facility-redzikowo-conducts-change-command.

[227] U.S. Air Force "52nd Fighter Wing F-16s deploy to NATO's Eastern Flank,", October 3, 2023, https://www.usafe.af.mil/News/Press-Releases/Display/Article/3545712/52nd-fighter-wing-f-16s-deploy-to-natos-eastern-flank/; and "F-22s Conduct Joint Training with Romanian and Italian Air Forces," U.S. Air Force, May 25, 2023, https://www.usafe.af.mil/News/Press-Releases/Display/Article/3406930/f-22s-conduct-joint-training-with-romanian-and-italian-air-forces/.

[228] Jennifer H. Svan, "US Air Force shifts refueling mission from Germany to Poland," *Stars and Stripes*, April 24, 2023, https://www.stripes.com/branches/air_force/2023-04-24/tankers-poland-powidz-9902489.html.

[229] Defense Manpower Data Center, "Military and Civilian Personnel by Service/Agency by State/Country," March 2024, available for download at https://dwp.dmdc.osd.mil/dwp/app/dod-data-reports/workforce-reports.

[230] Department of State, "U.S. Security Cooperation with Poland," October 31, 2022, https://www.state.gov/u-s-security-cooperation-with-poland/.

Portugal

The U.S. Air Force operates Lajes Field in the Azores Islands, a Portuguese territory located about 1,000 miles west of continental Europe. Lajes Field is the home of the 65th Air Base Wing, which supports trans-Atlantic military operations.[231]

According to DMDC, as of March 2024, 247 active-duty U.S. military servicemembers were permanently assigned to Portugal.[232]

Romania

Romania hosts a rotational presence of U.S. forces at several military facilities. In April 2023, the EUCOM commander testified that the rotational presence in Romania at that time included a U.S. Division headquarters, a U.S. brigade combat team, and a U.S. helicopter battalion.[233]

U.S. bomber aircraft have conducted refueling exercises at Mihail Kogălniceanu Air Base, Romania.[234] F-22 units have conducted training at Camp Turzii, Romania, to support NATO Allied Air Command's Air Shielding mission along the eastern flank.[235]

The U.S. Navy operates an Aegis Ashore Missile Defense System (AAMDS) site in Romania at Naval Support Facility (NSF) Deveselu.[236]

DOD reports Mihail Kogălniceanu Air Base, Turzii, and NSF Deveselu as DOD facilities on the FY2023 Base Structure Report and the three facilities have received MILCON funding.[237]

According to DMDC, as of March 2024, 139 active-duty U.S. military servicemembers were permanently assigned to Romania.[238] However, according to the U.S. Department of State, in February 2023 approximately 3,000 DOD personnel were present in Romania.[239]

Spain

Spain hosts U.S. Navy and Air Force bases.

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[231] U.S. Air Force, "65th Air Base Wing," https://www.af.mil/News/Photos/igphoto/2000552780/mediaid/10485/.

[232] Defense Manpower Data Center, "Military and Civilian Personnel by Service/Agency by State/Country," March 2024, available for download at https://dwp.dmdc.osd.mil/dwp/app/dod-data-reports/workforce-reports.

[233] U.S. Congress, House Committee on Armed Services, *Statement of General Christopher Cavoli, United States Army*, U.S. European Command, 118th Cong., 1st sess., April 26, 2023, p. 33, https://www.eucom.mil/document/42365/housearmedservicesonchallengesineurope-politicopropdf.

[234] U.S. Air Force, "B-1B Lancers receive first-ever hot-pit in Romania," June 13, 2023, https://www.usafe.af.mil/News/Press-Releases/Display/Article/3425782/b-1b-lancers-receive-first-ever-hot-pit-in-romania/.

[235] U.S. Air Force, "F-22s conduct joint training with Romanian and Italian air forces," May 25, 2023, https://www.usafe.af.mil/News/Press-Releases/Display/Article/3406930/f-22s-conduct-joint-training-with-romanian-and-italian-air-forces/.

[236] U.S. Navy, "U.S. AEGIS Ashore Missile Defense System Romania Changes Command," September 18, 2021, https://www.navy.mil/Press-Office/News-Stories/Article/2781280/us-aegis-ashore-missile-defense-system-romania-changes-command/.

[237] DOD, *FY2023 Base Structure Report*, https://www.acq.osd.mil/eie/BSI/BEI_Library.html.

[238] Defense Manpower Data Center, "Military and Civilian Personnel by Service/Agency by State/Country," March 2024, available for download at https://dwp.dmdc.osd.mil/dwp/app/dod-data-reports/workforce-reports.

[239] U.S. Department of State, *U.S. Security Cooperation with Romania, Fact Sheet*, February 14, 2023, https://www.state.gov/u-s-security-cooperation-with-romania.

Naval Station Rota, located near the Strait of Gibraltar, provides cargo, fuel, and logistics support to Navy ships and military units transiting the region.[240] The U.S. Navy homeports four Arleigh Burke-class destroyers in Rota.[241] The destroyers are equipped with Aegis Baseline 9 Ballistic Missile Defense systems and are a component of EUCOM's regional missile defense strategies.[242] The U.S. and the government of Spain announced in May 2023 an agreement to expand the size of the Navy fleet authorized to homeport in Rota from four warships to six.[243]

Moron Air Base is about 75 miles northeast of Naval Station Rota. Moron hosts the 496th Air Base Squadron and provides logistical support for moving military equipment and personnel into EUCOM and other regional combatant commands; it has large runways and a refueling systems.[244]

According to DMDC, as of March 2024, 3,292 active-duty U.S. military servicemembers were permanently assigned to Spain.[245]

Türkiye

Türkiye hosts U.S. Air Force and Army bases.

The Air Force operates aviation facilities at Incirlik Air Base and a rotational presence of aerial refueling capabilities.[246] Several open-source media outlets have speculated about whether U.S. tactical nuclear weapons are based at Incirlik Air Base.[247] While Incirlik is located in the EUCOM AOR, the facilities and personnel there frequently support operations in CENTCOM.[248]

Other key U.S./NATO sites in Türkiye include an early warning missile defense radar in Kürecik in eastern Türkiye.[249] Izmir Air Station hosts a headquarters for NATO Allied Land Command.[250]

[240] The installation has three active piers, a 670-acre airfield, and the largest weapons and fuels facilities in Europe. See Commander, Navy Region Europe, Africa, Central, *Naval Station Rota*, Installation Information, https://cnreurafcent.cnic.navy.mil/Installations/NAVSTA-Rota/.

[241] U.S. Navy, *Destroyers (DDG 51)*, Fact Sheet, October 2022, https://www.navy.mil/Resources/Fact-Files/Display-FactFiles/Article/2169871/destroyers-ddg-51/. Also see U.S. Navy, "USS Bulkeley (DDG 84), latest FDNF-E ship, arrives in new homeport Rota, Spain," press release, August 17, 2022, https://www.navy.mil/Press-Office/News-Stories/Article/3130658/uss-bulkeley-ddg-84-latest-fdnf-e-ship-arrives-in-new-homeport-rota-spain/.

[242] U.S. Navy, *Destroyers (DDG 51)*, Fact Sheet, October 2022, https://www.navy.mil/Resources/Fact-Files/Display-FactFiles/Article/2169871/destroyers-ddg-51/.

[243] Heather Mongilio, "U.S., Spain Agree to Host Two More Warships in Rota", *U.S. Naval Institute*, May 9, 2023, https://news.usni.org/2023/05/09/u-s-spain-agree-to-host-two-more-warships-in-rota.

[244] Ramstein Air Base, "Welcome to Morón AB", https://www.ramstein.af.mil/About/Units/496-ABS-Moron/.

[245] Defense Manpower Data Center, "Military and Civilian Personnel by Service/Agency by State/Country," March 2024, available for download at https://dwp.dmdc.osd.mil/dwp/app/dod-data-reports/workforce-reports.

[246] Defense Visual Information Distribution Center, "384th EARS deploys to Incirlik AB, continues air refueling mission," press release, October 21, 2021, https://www.dvidshub.net/image/6928282/384th-ears-deploys-incirlik-ab-continues-air-refueling-mission.

[247] Ibid. p. 53. See also, Zachary Cohen, "Trump appears to confirm open secret about US nuclear weapons in Türkiye", *CNN*, October 16, 2019, https://www.cnn.com/2019/10/16/politics/trump-us-nuclear-weapons-Türkiye/index.html.

[248] Ibid.

[249] CRS Report R41368, *Turkey (Türkiye): Background and U.S. Relations*, by Jim Zanotti and Clayton Thomas, p. 53.

[250] NATO, "Allied Land Command," https://lc.nato.int/. See also Defense Visual Information Distribution Service, "NATO Allied Land Command Welcomes New Commander," August 4, 2022, https://www.dvidshub.net/image/7352516/nato-allied-land-command-welcomes-new-commander.

Diplomatic tensions between the U.S. and Türkiye have reportedly prompted the Turkish government in some situations to consider imposing limits on U.S. military access to Incirlik.[251]

According to DMDC, as of March 2024, 1,690 active-duty U.S. military servicemembers were permanently assigned to Türkiye.[252]

United Kingdom

Royal Air Force Lakenheath is the headquarters for the U.S. Air Force's 48th Fighter Wing, which is the U.S. Air Force's only fourth- and fifth-generation fighter wing in Europe; it includes F-35A Lightening II Joint Strike Fighters and F-15E Strike Eagles.[253] In addition to combat aircraft, U.S. military capabilities in the U.K. reportedly include tanker refueling aircraft (KC-135R/T Stratotankers), ISR aircraft, and V-22 Osprey tilt-rotor aircraft.[254] U.S. Strategic Command also reportedly maintains AN/FPS-132 Upgraded Early Warning Radar in the U.K.[255]

RAF Mildenhall hosts the 100th Air Refueling Wing, which operates KC-135 Stratotanker aircraft.[256] RAF Alconbury is a U.S. facility that hosts U.S. rotational forces.[257] RAF Molesworth is home to the EUCOM Joint Intelligence Operations Center Europe Analytic Center.[258]

Bases in the U.K. also host rotational deployments of U.S. Air Force bomber aircraft from U.S.-based units.[259]

According to DMDC, as of March 2024, 10,058 active-duty U.S. military servicemembers were permanently assigned to the United Kingdom.[260]

[251] U.S. relations with Turkey have deteriorated since 2016 after a cadre of Turkish military officers attempted an unsuccessful coup and some U.S. officials were accused of supporting the coup. See Kyle Rempfer, "Turkish lawyers want to raid İncirlik Air Base and arrest US Air Force officers," *Air Force Times* August 9, 2018, https://www.airforcetimes.com/news/your-air-force/2018/08/09/turkish-lawyers-want-to-raid-incirlik-air-base-and-arrest-us-air-force-officers/. Also see John Vandiver, "Turkey warns sanctions could jeopardize US access to Incirlik Air Base," *Stars and Stripes*, December 11, 2019, https://www.stripes.com/theaters/europe/turkey-warns-sanctions-could-jeopardize-us-access-to-incirlik-air-base-1.610663.

[252] Defense Manpower Data Center, "Military and Civilian Personnel by Service/Agency by State/Country," March 2024, available for download at https://dwp.dmdc.osd.mil/dwp/app/dod-data-reports/workforce-reports.

[253] U.S. Air Force, "Royal Air Force Lakenheath," https://www.lakenheath.af.mil/About-Us/.

[254] International Institute for Strategic Studies, *The Military Balance*, Indexes of Tables, Figures and Maps, p. 49, https://www.iiss.org/en/publications/the-military-balance/.

[255] International Institute for Strategic Studies, *The Military Balance*, Indexes of Tables, Figures and Maps, p. 49, https://www.iiss.org/en/publications/the-military-balance/.

[256] U.S. Air Force, "100th Air Refueling Wing," January 2023, https://www.mildenhall.af.mil/About-Us/Fact-Sheets/Display/Article/270378/100th-air-refueling-wing/.

[257] U.S. Air Force, "RAF Alconbury to remain as a Base for the US Visiting Forces," March 22, 2021, https://www.501csw.usafe.af.mil/News/Article-Display/Article/2545509/raf-alconbury-to-remain-as-a-base-for-the-us-visiting-forces/.

[258] 510st Combat Support Wing, "JIOCEUR Analytic Center changes command," July 11, 2022, https://www.501csw.usafe.af.mil/News/Article-Display/Article/3088754/jioceur-analytic-center-changes-command/.

[259] U.S. European Command, "Bomber Task Force Europe: Supersonic bombers complete successful rotation," June 29, 2023, https://www.eucom.mil/article/42426/bomber-task-force-europe-supersonic-bombers-complete-successful-rotation.

[260] Defense Manpower Data Center, "Military and Civilian Personnel by Service/Agency by State/Country," March 2024, available for download at https://dwp.dmdc.osd.mil/dwp/app/dod-data-reports/workforce-reports.

Middle East

U.S. overseas basing in the Middle East is established and governed by bilateral executive agreements between the United States and regional governments—except in the case of Syria, where U.S. forces are present despite the opposition of Syria's government. Unlike in the Indo-Pacific or Europe, many U.S. servicemembers present in the Middle East appear to be on temporary or rotational assignments, and are thus not accounted for by DMDC's figures. To reflect this, throughout this section CRS has supplemented DMDC-provided figures—which only include permanently assigned servicemembers—with reporting or estimates from other sources, as appropriate. Some DOD documents and statements relating to this region refer to U.S. forces being deployed to and operating from "Southwest Asia," which may designate any number of locales (the usage of this term may reflect both operational security concerns and host-nation political sensitivities).

Bahrain

Bahrain hosts the U.S. Navy's Fifth Fleet and U.S. Naval Forces Central Command (NAVCENT) headquarters at an installation known as Naval Support Activity (NSA) Bahrain.[261] The U.S. Navy's base in Bahrain is one of the most enduring U.S. military sites in the region; the Navy's use of the facility dates back to 1948, when the base was operated by Britain's Royal Navy.[262]

The deep-water port in Bahrain is one of the few facilities in the Persian Gulf that accommodates U.S. aircraft carriers and amphibious assault ships.[263] Navy ships homeported in Bahrain include four mine countermeasures ships (MCMs), one Expeditionary Support Base (ESB) ship, and two logistical support ships operated by the Military Sealift Command (MSC).[264] DOD capabilities in Bahrain reportedly include P-8 Poseidon (an American maritime patrol and reconnaissance aircraft), EP-3E Aries II reconnaissance aircraft, and Patriot missile defense systems.[265]

The U.S. Coast Guard, which is overseen by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, also maintains a squadron of ships in Bahrain, which consists of six fast response cutters, a cutter relief crew, and a 150-member mission support detachment.[266]

According to DMDC, as of March 2024, 3,479 active-duty U.S. military servicemembers were permanently assigned to Bahrain.[267] However, DOD has also reported a total presence of 9,000 servicemembers and DOD civilians.[268] It is likely that the number of DOD personnel fluctuates with the arrival and departure of U.S. ships.

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[261] CRS Report 95-1013, *Bahrain: Issues for U.S. Policy*, by Jeremy M. Sharp.

[262] U.S. Navy, "Naval Support Activity Bahrain," https://cnreurafcent.cnic.navy.mil/Installations/NSA-Bahrain/About/History/.

[263] Dion Nissenbaum, "Israel's President Visits Bahrain to Address Stalled Relations," *The Wall Street Journal*, December 4, 2022, https://www.wsj.com/articles/israels-president-heads-to-bahrain-to-address-stalled-arab-relations-11670133603.

[264] U.S. Navy, "Mine Countermeasures Ships (MCM)," https://www.navy.mil/Resources/Fact-Files/Display-FactFiles/Article/2171622/mine-countermeasures-ships-mcm/.

[265] IISS, *The Military Balance*, p. 47, https://www.iiss.org/en/publications/the-military-balance/.

[266] U.S. Coast Guard, "Patrol Forces Southwest Asia," https://www.atlanticarea.uscg.mil/Our-Organization/Area-Units/PATFORSWA/.

[267] Defense Manpower Data Center, "Military and Civilian Personnel by Service/Agency by State/Country," March 2024, available for download at https://dwp.dmdc.osd.mil/dwp/app/dod-data-reports/workforce-reports.

[268] "Naval Support Activity Bahrain, Installation Overview", *Military One Source*, https://installations.militaryonesource.mil/in-depth-overview/naval-support-activity-bahrain.

Egypt

The U.S. military maintains a presence in Egypt as part of its support to the Multinational Force and Observers (MFO), an international peacekeeping force intended to "supervise the implementation of the security provisions of the Egyptian-Israeli Treaty of Peace and employ best efforts to prevent any violation of its terms."[269]

DOD also periodically participates in joint training and exercises with the Egyptian military, including at Cairo West Air Base.[270]

According to DMDC, as of March 2024, 176 active-duty U.S. military servicemembers were permanently assigned to Egypt.[271] However, according to a December 2023 letter submitted by the Biden Administration to congressional leaders regarding the War Powers Report, 416 military DOD personnel were present in Egypt as part of the U.S. commitment to the MFO."[272]

Iraq

U.S. servicemembers are based at a number of locations inside Iraq, including Al Asad Air Base and Erbil Air Base. [273] According to the White House, the purpose of the U.S. presence in Iraq is to "advise, assist, and enable select elements of the Iraqi security forces … [and] provide limited support to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization mission in Iraq."[274] On a bilateral basis, the U.S. military presence in Iraq is governed by an exchange of diplomatic notes that reference the security provisions of the 2008 bilateral Strategic Framework Agreement.[275] To date, this arrangement has not required the approval of a separate security agreement by Iraq's Council of Representatives. According to former Special Presidential Envoy for the Global Coalition to Counter ISIL Brett McGurk, the 2014 U.S.-Iraq diplomatic notes, which are not public, contain a one-year cancelation clause.[276]

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[269] MFO, "Multinational Force & Observers," https://mfo.org/. See also CRS Report RL33003, *Egypt: Background and U.S. Relations*.

[270] DOD, "179th Expeditionary Fighter Squadron deploys to Egypt in support of Agile Phoenix 22," June 27, 2022, https://www.dvidshub.net/image/7310379/179th-expeditionary-fighter-squadron-deploys-egypt-support-agile-phoenix-22-image-1-11.

[271] DMDC, "Military and Civilian Personnel by Service/Agency by State/Country," March 2024, available for download at https://dwp.dmdc.osd.mil/dwp/app/dod-data-reports/workforce-reports.

[272] The White House, "Letter to the Speaker of the House of Representatives and President pro tempore of the Senate regarding the War Powers Report," December 7, 2023, https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/presidential-actions/2023/12/07/letter-to-the-speaker-of-the-house-of-representatives-and-president-pro-tempore-of-the-senate-regarding-the-war-powers-report/.

[273] DOD, "Into Iraq: Task Force Redleg Assumes Authority of Al Asad Air Base," August 12, 2023, https://www.dvidshub.net/news/453071/into-iraq-task-force-redleg-assumes-authority-al-asad-air-base.DOD, and "CENTCOM Senior Enlisted Leader Visits Erbil Air Base," DOD, July 10, 2023, at https://www.dvidshub.net/image/7918505/centcom-senior-enlisted-leader-visits-erbil-air-base.

[274] The White House, "Letter to the Speaker of the House of Representatives and President pro tempore of the Senate regarding the War Powers Report," December 7, 2023, https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/presidential-actions/2023/12/07/letter-to-the-speaker-of-the-house-of-representatives-and-president-pro-tempore-of-the-senate-regarding-the-war-powers-report/.

[275] Section III of the agreement states: "In order to strengthen security and stability in Iraq, and thereby contribute to international peace and stability, and to enhance the ability of the Republic of Iraq to deter all threats against its sovereignty, security, and territorial integrity, the Parties shall continue to foster close cooperation concerning defense and security arrangements without prejudice to Iraqi sovereignty over its land, sea, and air territory."

[276] Brett McGurk (@brett_mcgurk), Twitter, January 8, 2020, 10:07 AM.

U.S. and coalition training efforts for various Iraqi security forces have been implemented at different locations, including in the Kurdistan region, with U.S. training activities carried out pursuant to the authorities granted by Congress for the Iraq Train and Equip Program and the Office of Security Cooperation at the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad (OSC-I).[277] OSC-I helps administer training and support programs funded through Foreign Military Sales and Foreign Military Financing assistance.[278] Congress has authorized the continuation of train and equip program activities through December 2024 and appropriated funding for related programs that remains available through FY2024.

U.S. military capabilities in Iraq reportedly include AH-64E Apache helicopters, MH-47G Chinook helicopters, MH-60M Black Hawk helicopters, and unmanned surveillance aircraft.[279]

Since October 2023, U.S. bases in Iraq have been subject to numerous attacks by non-state actors in the region, and DOD has conducted strikes against targets in Iraq. For more information, see CRS Insight IN12309, *Iraq: Attacks and U.S. Strikes Reopen Discussion of U.S. Military Presence*, by Christopher M. Blanchard.

In December 2023, media reporting suggested that approximately 2,400 DOD personnel were present in Iraq.[280]

Israel

DOD participates in joint exercises with the Israeli military to foster interoperability.[281] DOD maintains an emergency stockpile of weapons and equipment in Israel.[282]

According to DMDC, as of March 2024, 115 active-duty U.S. military servicemembers were permanently assigned to Israel.[283]

Jordan

The Muwaffaq al Salti Air Base in Jordan reportedly hosts the headquarters of U.S. Air Forces Central's 332nd Air Expeditionary Wing.[284] In July 2023, DOD reportedly deployed F-35s to the base.[285]

[277] Specific authority for the Iraq train and equip program is provided in Section 1236 of the FY2015 National Defense Authorization Act (P.L. 113-291), as amended. OSC-I activities are authorized by Section 1215 of the FY2012 National Defense Authorization Act (P.L. 112-81), as amended.

[278] See description in LIG-OCO, Report to Congress on Operation Inherent Resolve, January 1-March 31, 2020.

[279] *The Military Balance*, IISS, p. 48, https://www.iiss.org/en/publications/the-military-balance/.

[280] See J.P. Lawrence, "No U.S. Troops Injured in Latest Rocket Strike at Iraq Base," *Stars and Stripes*, December 21, 2023.

[281] U.S. Department of State, *U.S. Security Cooperation with Israel*, Fact Sheet, October 19, 2023, https://www.state.gov/u-s-security-cooperation-with-israel/.

[282] CRS Report RL33222, *U.S. Foreign Aid to Israel*, by Jeremy M. Sharp.

[283] DMDC, "Military and Civilian Personnel by Service/Agency by State/Country," March 2024, available for download at https://dwp.dmdc.osd.mil/dwp/app/dod-data-reports/workforce-reports.

[284] J.P. Lawrence, "Pentagon awards latest contract in $265 million project to expand remote air base in Jordan," *Stars and Stripes*, May 13, 2022, https://www.stripes.com/theaters/middle_east/2022-05-13/jordan-air-force-base-contract-pentagon-5988272.html.

[285] Jeremy Binnie, "US Air Force deploys F-35s to Jordan," *Janes*, July 28, 2023, https://www.janes.com/defence-news/news-detail/us-air-force-deploys-f-35s-to-jordan.

In 2021, DOD transferred a stockpile of weaponry and supplies from a military base in Qatar to Jordan.[286]

In January 2024, U.S. Central Command reported that about 350 U.S. military personnel were deployed to a location known as Tower 22.[287] Tower 22 is reportedly located near the borders of Iraq and Syria and close to the U.S. base at Al Tanf in Syria.[288] A drone attack on Tower 22 killed three U.S. servicemembers in January 2024.[289]

According to a December 2023 letter submitted by the Biden Administration to congressional leaders regarding the War Powers Report, DOD had 3,188 military personnel in Jordan."[290] The Biden Administration defines this mission as one "to support Defeat-[Islamic State] operations, to enhance Jordan's security, and to promote regional stability."[291]

According to DMDC, as of March 2024, 120 active-duty U.S. military servicemembers were permanently assigned to Jordan.[292]

Kuwait

Camp Arifjan hosts the forward headquarters of U.S. Army Central (USARCENT), the Army component of CENTCOM.[293] Task Force Spartan in Kuwait reportedly has included two brigades and four battalion task forces, which provide capabilities including helicopter aviation, logistics support, force protection, and information management.[294] The Army maintains a stockpile of prepositioned materiel in Kuwait.[295] The Army pre-positioned stocks (APS) in Kuwait are intended to outfit two combat Army brigades.[296]

At Ali Al-Salem Air Base, the U.S. Air Force's 386th Air Expeditionary Wing is "the primary airlift hub and gateway for delivering combat power to joint and coalition forces in the U.S. Central Command [AOR]."[297] U.S. Air Force capabilities in Kuwait include unmanned

[286] J.P. Lawrence, "US military shifts Army basing from Qatar to Jordan in move that could provide leverage against Iran," *Stars and Stripes,* July 1, 2021, https://www.stripes.com/branches/army/2021-07-01/us-military-closes-qatar-camps-in-move-that-could-play-into-iran-policy-2009140.html.

[287] CENTCOM, "UPDATE: U.S. Casualties in Northeast Jordan, near Syrian Border," January 28, 2024, https://www.centcom.mil/MEDIA/PRESS-RELEASES/Press-Release-View/Article/3658552/update-us-casualties-in-northeast-jordan-near-syrian-border/.

[288] John Gambrell, "What is Tower 22, the military base that was attacked in Jordan where 3 US troops were killed?," *The Associated Press*, January 29, 2024, https://apnews.com/article/us-jordan-drone-attack-iran-tower-22-israel-hamas-war-0265beed527e3009a966c0531c08838e.

[289] Ibid.

[290] The White House, "Letter to the Speaker of the House of Representatives and President pro tempore of the Senate regarding the War Powers Report," December 7, 2023.

[291] Ibid.

[292] Defense Manpower Data Center, "Military and Civilian Personnel by Service/Agency by State/Country," March 2024, available for download at https://dwp.dmdc.osd.mil/dwp/app/dod-data-reports/workforce-reports.

[293] CENTCOM, "CENTCOM," https://www.centcom.mil/ABOUT-US/COMPONENT-COMMANDS/.

[294] Virginia National Guard, "29ID assumes authority of Task Force Spartan," July 23, 2021, https://va.ng.mil/News/Article/2705441/29id-assumes-authority-of-task-force-spartan/.

[295] CRS In Focus IF11699, *Defense Primer: Department of Defense Pre-Positioned Materiel*, by Cameron M. Keys.

[296] IISS, *The Military Balance*, p. 49, https://www.iiss.org/en/publications/the-military-balance/.

[297] U.S. Air Force, "The 386th Air Expeditionary Wing," https://www.afcent.af.mil/About/Mission/.

surveillance aircraft, including MQ-9 Reapers.[298] DOD also has combat airlift capabilities in Kuwait.[299]

The largest U.S. air logistics facility in the region is in Kuwait, at the country's international airport, Kuwait International Airport.[300]

According to DMDC, as of March 2024, about 533 active-duty U.S. military servicemembers were permanently assigned to Kuwait.[301] However, in July 2021 the U.S. Department of State reported that approximately 13,500 U.S. servicemembers or personnel were based in Kuwait, primarily at Camp Arifjan and Ali Al-Salem Air Base.[302]

Qatar

Al Udeid Air Base hosts the headquarters of CENTCOM Forward, U.S. Air Forces Central Command (AFCENT) Forward, and U.S. Special Operations Command Central (SOCCENT) Forward, as well as CENTCOM's Combined Air Operations Center, the Combined Joint Interagency Task Force – Syria, and the U.S. Air Force's 379th Air Expeditionary Wing, one of the largest expeditionary wings in the world.[303] Since 2003, Qatar has contributed more than $8 billion in developing Al Udeid Air Base for use by the U.S. military.[304] According to media reports, DOD recently reached a defense cooperation agreement with Qatar that includes terms extending U.S. use of Al Udeid by another ten years.[305]

DOD capabilities in Qatar reportedly include surveillance aircraft, tanker refueling (KC-135 Stratotankers), combat airlift (C-17A Globemasters, CH-130H Hercules), Patriot missile defense systems, and AN/TPY-2 X-band radar to support missile defense systems.[306] The base hosts a rotational presence of combat aircraft.[307]

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[298] *The Military Balance*, IISS, p. 49, https://www.iiss.org/en/publications/the-military-balance/.

[299] CENTCOM, "Joint Exercise Showcases Rapid Global Mobility In CENTCOM Theater," August 13, 2022, https://www.centcom.mil/MEDIA/NEWS-ARTICLES/News-Article-View/Article/3131417/joint-exercise-showcases-rapid-global-mobility-in-centcom-theater/.

[300] Bilal Y. Saab, "Beyond Post-Desert Storm: How to Elevate the US-Kuwait Security Partnership," Middle East Institute, September 14, 2022, https://www.mei.edu/publications/beyond-post-desert-storm-how-elevate-us-kuwait-security-partnership.

[301] Defense Manpower Data Center, "Military and Civilian Personnel by Service/Agency by State/Country," March 2024, available for download at https://dwp.dmdc.osd.mil/dwp/app/dod-data-reports/workforce-reports.

[302] U.S. Department of State, "U.S. Security Cooperation with Kuwait," July 22, 2021, https://www.state.gov/u-s-security-cooperation-with-kuwait-2/.

[303] U.S. Department of State, "U.S. Security Cooperation with Qatar," July 30, 2021, https://www.state.gov/u-s-security-cooperation-with-qatar; and U.S. Air Force, "Fact Sheet," https://www.afcent.af.mil/Units/379th-Air-Expeditionary-Wing/Fact-Sheets/Display/Article/501479/379th-air-expeditionary-wing-fact-sheet/.

[304] U.S. Department of State, "U.S. Security Cooperation with Qatar," July 30, 2021, https://www.state.gov/u-s-security-cooperation-with-qatar.

[305] Jonathan Landay and Kanishka Singh, "US Reaches Deal To Extend Military Presence At Qatar Base - Source," *Reuters*, January 2, 2024, https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/us-reaches-deal-extend-military-presence-qatar-base-source-2024-01-02/.

[306] Ibid. Also see International Institute for Strategic Studies, *The Military Balance*, Indexes of Tables, Figures and Maps, p. 49, https://www.iiss.org/en/publications/the-military-balance/.

[307] U.S. Air Forces Central Command, "Hosting lethality: F-35s arrive at AUAB," September 13, 2023, https://www.afcent.af.mil/Units/379th-Air-Expeditionary-Wing/News/Display/Article/3523998/hosting-lethality-f-35s-arrive-at-auab/.U.S and CENTCOM, "332nd, 379th AEWs work together to expand agile combat employment in AOR," August 28, 2020, https://www.centcom.mil/MEDIA/NEWS-ARTICLES/News-Article-View/Article/2328501/332nd-379th-aews-work-together-to-expand-agile-combat-employment-in-aor/.

DOD also operates Camp As Sayliyah in Qatar, a former Army base that has been used as a U.S. government processing center for Afghans seeking resettlement.[308]

According to DMDC, as of March 2024, about 303 active-duty U.S. military servicemembers were permanently assigned to Qatar.[309] However, media reports suggest there may be as many as 8,000 to 10,000 U.S. personnel operating in Qatar at any given time.[310]

Saudi Arabia

In June 2024, the White House stated that approximately 2,321 U.S. military personnel were in Saudi Arabia.[311] Most of these personnel appear to be stationed at Saudi Arabia's Prince Sultan Air Base (PSAB), which hosts the 378th Air Expeditionary Wing, a U.S. Air Force unit that—according to U.S. Air Forces Central (AFCENT) as of October 2023—"supports approximately 2,200 airmen and soldiers assigned to PSAB, as well as the U.S. Army's Patriot missile defense capability and Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) capability in the region."[312] Air Force capabilities at PSAB include tanker refueling aircraft.[313] PSAB hosts rotational deployments of combat aircraft.[314]

Syria

In June 2024, the White House stated that "a small presence of United States Armed Forces remains in strategically significant locations in Syria to conduct operations, in partnership with local, vetted ground forces, to address continuing terrorist threats emanating from Syria."[315] The U.S. military presence in Syria reportedly includes the base at Al Tanf and various facilities in northeastern Syria.[316] CENTCOM and DOD officials have also indicated a presence of U.S. forces at the Rumalyn Landing Zone, Mission Support Site Conoco, Mission Support Site

[308] U.S. Department of State, "Secretary Antony J. Blinken Remarks to the Press," November 22, 2022, https://www.state.gov/secretary-antony-j-blinken-remarks-to-the-press-4/.

[309] Defense Manpower Data Center, "Military and Civilian Personnel by Service/Agency by State/Country," March 2024, available for download at https://dwp.dmdc.osd.mil/dwp/app/dod-data-reports/workforce-reports.

[310] For open-source reports of higher numbers, see *The Military Balance*, IISS, p. 49; and "US Forces Monitor Mideast Skies at Qatar Base Amid World Cup," *Voice of America*, December 3, 2022, https://www.voanews.com/a/us-forces-monitor-mideast-skies-at-qatar-base-amid-world-cup/6859727.html.

[311] The White House, "Letter to the Speaker of the House of Representatives and President pro tempore of the Senate—War Powers Report," June 7, 2024, https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/presidential-actions/2024/06/07/letter-to-the-speaker-of-the-house-of-representatives-and-president-pro-tempore-of-the-senate-war-powers-report/.

[312] U.S. Air Force, "Changing of the Guard: 378th AEW Holds Change of Command Ceremony," October 10, 2023, https://www.afcent.af.mil/Units/378th-Air-Expeditionary-Wing/News/Article/3552119/changing-of-the-guard-378th-aew-holds-change-of-command-ceremony/.

[313] Unshin Lee Harpley, "KC-135s Arrive in Saudi Arabia to Replace Departed KC-10s," *Air and Space Forces Magazine*, October 17, 2023, https://www.airandspaceforces.com/kc-135s-saudi-arabia-replace-departed-kc-10s/.

[314] See, for example, "Farewell to the Falcon: 457th EFS concludes last deployment flying the F-16," U.S. Air Force, August 9, 2023, https://www.afcent.af.mil/Units/378th-Air-Expeditionary-Wing/News/Article/3487919/farewell-to-the-falcon-457th-efs-concludes-last-deployment-flying-the-f-16/.

[315] The White House, "Letter to the Speaker of the House of Representatives and President pro tempore of the Senate—War Powers Report," June 7, 2024, https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/presidential-actions/2024/06/07/letter-to-the-speaker-of-the-house-of-representatives-and-president-pro-tempore-of-the-senate-war-powers-report/.

[316] Rachel Nostrant, "A Secretive US Special-Operations Base in Syria Is Taking Fire from a Shadowy Middle East War," *Military.com*, November 2, 2022, https://www.military.com/daily-news/2022/11/02/secretive-us-special-operations-base-syria-taking-fire-shadowy-middle-east-war. See also "U.S. Responds to Attack That Killed U.S. Contractor in Syria," DOD, March 24, 2023, https://www.defense.gov/News/News-Stories/Article/Article/3341127/us-responds-to-attack-that-killed-us-contractor-in-syria/.

Euphrates, Mission Support Site Green Village, and at Patrol Base Shaddadi, all in northeast Syria.[317]

U.S. forces in Syria conduct counterterror missions against the Islamic State group and Al Qaeda-affiliated militants, and are equipped to defend themselves against Iran-backed militias that have attacked U.S. facilities.[318] They also advise and assist the Syrian Democratic Forces, on missions that include securing detention facilities holding Islamic State personnel.[319]

The commander of U.S. Central Command said in March 2023 that there were approximately 900 servicemembers deployed to Syria, according to CENTCOM.[320]

United Arab Emirates

Al Dhafra Air Base hosts the Air Force's 380th Air Expeditionary Wing, which includes surveillance aircraft such as MQ-9 Reapers.[321] Air Force capabilities in the UAE also reportedly include airborne early warning and control (AEW&C) aircraft; ISR aircraft; and tanker refueling aircraft.[322] Al Dhafra hosts rotations of combat aircraft units; in 2022, the Air Force deployed F-22 Raptors to the UAE.[323] In April 2023, the Air Force deployed A-10 Thunderbolts to the UAE.[324]

Al Dhafra hosts the Gulf Air Warfare Center, which provides regionally focused air and missile defense training for around 2,000 participants from 10 nations every year.[325] The UAE-owned Port of Jebel Ali and other UAE ports provide logistical support for the U.S. Navy and collectively host more Navy ships than any other port outside the United States.[326]

[317] CENTCOM, "Rocket Attack Targeted US and Partnered Forces in Syria Fails," October 8, 2023, https://www.centcom.mil/MEDIA/PRESS-RELEASES/Press-Release-View/Article/3183695/rocket-attack-targeted-us-and-partnered-forces-in-syria-fails/. "Two Rockets Target Coalition Forces," CENTCOM, January 4, 2023, https://www.centcom.mil/MEDIA/PRESS-RELEASES/Press-Release-View/Article/3258231/two-rockets-target-coalition-forces/. "Pentagon Press Secretary Air Force Maj. Gen. Pat Ryder Holds a Press Briefing," DOD, February 5, 2024, https://www.defense.gov/News/Transcripts/Transcript/Article/3667341/pentagon-press-secretary-air-force-maj-gen-pat-ryder-holds-a-press-briefing/.

[318] The Associated Press, "A look at the US military mission in Syria and its dangers," March 24, 2023, https://apnews.com/article/syria-us-troops-drone-attack-6194dca97f594e3609914637463c4ce3.

[319] Ibid.

[320] Remarks made by CENTCOM commander General Michael "Erik" Kurilla in House Armed Services Committee hearing, "U.S. Military Posture and National Security Challenges in the Greater Middle East and Africa, March 23, 2023.Video available at https://armedservices.house.gov/hearings/full-committee-hearing-us-military-posture-and-national-security-challenges-greater-middle (remarks start at 2:25:30).

[321] U.S. Air Forces Central Command, "380th Air Expeditionary Wing," July 2021, https://www.afcent.af.mil/Units/380th-Air-Expeditionary-Wing/Fact-Sheets/Article/445043/380th-air-expeditionary-wing/.

[322] International Institute for Strategic Studies, *The Military Balance*, Indexes of Tables, Figures and Maps, p. 49, https://www.iiss.org/en/publications/the-military-balance/.

[323] Greg Hadley, "What F-22s Arriving in UAE Can Offer After Recent Iranian-Backed Houthi Attacks," *Air and Space Forces Magazine* , February 15, 2022, https://www.airandspaceforces.com/what-f-22s-arriving-in-uae-can-offer-after-recent-iranian-backed-houthi-attacks/.

[324] U.S. Air Forces Central Command, "First A-10 sortie for 75 EFS generated at Al Dhafra AB," press release, April 6, 2023, https://www.afcent.af.mil/Units/380th-Air-Expeditionary-Wing/News/Display/Article/3354174/first-a-10-sortie-for-75-efs-generated-at-al-dhafra-ab/.

[325] U.S. Department of State, "U.S. Security Cooperation with the United Arab Emirates," July 25, 2021, https://www.state.gov/u-s-security-cooperation-with-the-united-arab-emirates/.

[326] Ibid.

In early 2022, Al Dhafra Air Base was targeted by missile attacks from Yemen.[327]

U.S. officials have raised concerns about UAE ties to China and Russia.[328]

In February 2024, UAE reportedly placed restrictions on DOD's use of military bases located in UAE for launching retaliatory airstrikes on Iranian proxies.[329]

According to DMDC, as of March 2024, about 177 active-duty U.S. military servicemembers were permanently assigned to U.A.E.[330] As of July 2021, the U.S. Department of State reported that about 3,500 servicemembers were based in U.A.E.[331]

Yemen

In December 2023, the Biden Administration reported to Congress that "a small number" of U.S. military personnel "are deployed to Yemen to conduct operations against al-Qa'ida in the Arabian Peninsula and ISIS."[332] Information about the location of those servicemembers is not publicly available.

Africa

U.S. overseas basing in Africa is established and governed by bilateral executive agreements (e.g., DCAs/EDCAs, MOUs). Most of the U.S. servicemembers permanently assigned to this region are stationed at persistent bases in Djibouti. As in the Middle East, most U.S. servicemembers present in Africa appear to be on temporary or rotational assignments, and are thus not accounted for by DMDC's figures. To reflect this, throughout this section CRS has supplemented DMDC-provided figures (which only include permanently assigned servicemembers) with reporting or estimates from other sources, as appropriate.

Djibouti

Djibouti hosts Camp Lemonnier and Chabelley Airfield. Camp Lemonnier was first occupied by U.S. forces in 2002 and serves as the headquarters for Combined Joint Task Force – Horn of Africa, which conducts regional operations to "enhance partner nation capacity, promote regional stability, dissuade conflict, and protect U.S. and coalition interests."[333] The base is located near the Bab al-Mandab Strait and supports operations in the Red Sea and beyond.[334] In addition, since

[327] CRS Insight IN11891, *Attacks Against the United Arab Emirates: Issues for Congress*.

[328] Ibid.

[329] Lara Seligman, Alexander Ward, and Nahal Toosi, "UAE restricts US ability to launch retaliatory airstrikes against Iran proxies," *Politico*, February 14, 2024, https://www.politico.com/news/2024/02/14/united-arab-emirates-retaliatory-airstrikes-iran-00141460.

[330] Defense Manpower Data Center, "Military and Civilian Personnel by Service/Agency by State/Country," March 2024, available for download at https://dwp.dmdc.osd.mil/dwp/app/dod-data-reports/workforce-reports.

[331] U.S. Department of State, "U.S. Security Cooperation with the United Arab Emirates," June 25, 2021, https://www.state.gov/u-s-security-cooperation-with-the-united-arab-emirates/.

[332] The White House, Letter to the Speaker of the House and President Pro Tempore of the Senate Regarding the War Powers Report, December 7, 2023, https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/presidential-actions/2023/12/07/letter-to-the-speaker-of-the-house-of-representatives-and-president-pro-tempore-of-the-senate-regarding-the-war-powers-report/

[333] AFRICOM, "Combined Joint Task Force – Horn of Africa," https://www.africom.mil/our-team/combined-joint-task-force—horn-of-africa.

[334] Bruno Maçães, "The strait at the center of the world", *Politico*, January 29, 2018, https://www.politico.eu/blogs/the-coming-wars/2018/01/the-strait-at-the-center-of-the-world/.

2013 Djibouti has hosted Chabelley Airfield, which the Air Force describes as its "largest remotely piloted aircraft base in Africa."[335]

According to DMDC, approximately 406 active-duty servicemembers were permanently assigned to Djibouti as of March 2024.[336] However, according to the Navy, Camp Lemonnier supports "approximately 4,000 U.S., joint, and allied forces military and civilian personnel."[337]

Gabon

Gabon hosts a cooperative security location in the capital of Libreville.[338] According to the U.S. State Department, access to this base contributes to "enabling the projection of forces in central and southern Africa".[339]

According to DMDC, approximately 12 active-duty servicemembers were permanently assigned to Gabon as of March 2024.[340]

Kenya

Kenya hosts U.S. forces at Manda Bay, a cooperative security location along the country's eastern coast.[341] According to DOD, Manda Bay is used to "provide training to African partners, respond to crises and protect U.S. interests," and base operations are managed by the U.S. Air Force.[342] In 2020, Manda Bay was attacked by al-Shabaab militants, leading to the deaths of one U.S. soldier and two U.S. contract personnel.[343] DOD's Base Structure Report and AFRICOM also identify Mombasa as the site of a cooperative security location.[344]

According to DMDC, approximately 65 active-duty servicemembers were permanently assigned to Kenya as of March 2024.[345]

[335] Tech. Sgt. Jayson Burns, "Chabelley Airfield Celebrates 10-year Anniversary," U.S. Air Force, March 28, 2023, https://www.usafe.af.mil/News/Article-Display/Article/3342622/chabelley-airfield-celebrates-10-year-anniversary/.

[336] Defense Manpower Data Center, "Military and Civilian Personnel by Service/Agency by State/Country," March 2024, available for download at https://dwp.dmdc.osd.mil/dwp/app/dod-data-reports/workforce-reports.

[337] U.S. Navy, "Installation Information," https://cnreurafcent.cnic.navy.mil/Installations/Camp-Lemonnier-Djibouti/. Rion Codrington, "Partner Appreciation Day Celebrates 21 Days of Partnership at Camp Lemonnier," U.S. Navy, November 8, 2023 https://cnreurafcent.cnic.navy.mil/Installations/Camp-Lemonnier-Djibouti/News/Article/3587466/partner-appreciation-day-celebrates-21-years-of-partnership-at-camp-lemonnier/.

[338] U.S. Department of State, "Integrated Country Strategy – Gabon," May 16, 2022, p. 1, https://www.state.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/ICS_AF_Gabon_Public.pdf.

[339] Ibid.

[340] Defense Manpower Data Center, "Military and Civilian Personnel by Service/Agency by State/Country," March 2024, available for download at https://dwp.dmdc.osd.mil/dwp/app/dod-data-reports/workforce-reports.

[341] Tech. Sgt. Dhruv Gopinath, "CSL Manda Bay welcomes SECDEF, Kenya Defence Force leaders," U.S. Air Forces in Europe & Air Forces Africa," September 29, 2023 https://www.usafe.af.mil/Units/435th-Air-Expeditionary-Wing/News/Article/3542164/csl-manda-bay-welcomes-secdef-kenya-defence-force-leaders/.

[342] Department of Defense, "Independent Review into Jan 5, 2020 al-Shabaab Attack at Manda Bay, Kenya," March 10, 2022, https://www.defense.gov/News/Releases/Release/Article/2962655.

[343] Ibid.

[344] Department of Defense, FY2023 Base Structure Report, https://www.acq.osd.mil/eie/BSI/BEI_Library.html.

[345] Defense Manpower Data Center, "Military and Civilian Personnel by Service/Agency by State/Country," March 2024, available for download at https://dwp.dmdc.osd.mil/dwp/app/dod-data-reports/workforce-reports.

Niger

Prior to April 2024, Niger hosted U.S. forces at multiple locations in the country, including two bases known as Air Base 101 (located near the capital, Niamey) and Air Base 201 (located in the city of Agadez). According to DOD, these sites supported counterterrorism operations and security assistance activities.[346] However, following a 2023 *coup d'état*, the U.S. Department of State announced the suspension of economic and military aid to Niger, and in March 2024 the Nigerien government announced the termination of its SOFA with the United States.[347] In May 2024, the Biden Administration announced that U.S. forces would withdraw from the country by September 15, 2024.[348]

According to DMDC, approximately 72 active-duty servicemembers were permanently assigned to Niger as of March 2024.[349] As of June 2024, the White House stated that "approximately 700 United States military personnel are currently deployed to Niger … however, the Department of Defense is in the process of withdrawing United States military personnel from Niger, and the withdrawal will be completed over the next several months."[350]

British Overseas Territory of Saint Helena, Ascension Island, and Tristan da Cunha (Ascension Island)

Ascension Island, part of the British Overseas Territory of Saint Helena, Ascension Island, and Tristan da Cunha, hosts U.S. Air Force and Space Force facilities and personnel at Ascension Island Auxiliary Airfield. AFRICOM has stated that this base is one of two "enduring Forward Operating Sites in Africa" (the other being Camp Lemonnier).[351] According to the Space Force, in 2023 DOD completed a "$352.6 million, full-depth rebuild of the remote runway" at the base.[352] DOD has stated that its presence at Ascension Island supports air logistics operations and space launch tracking.[353]

[346] C. Todd Lopez, "U.S. Resumes ISR Flight Operations in Niger," *DOD News*, September 14, 2023.

[347] See CRS In Focus IF12464, *Niger*.

[348] Eric Schmitt, "U.S. and Niger Announce Withdrawal of American Personnel by September," *The New York Times*, May 19, 2024.

[349] Defense Manpower Data Center, "Military and Civilian Personnel by Service/Agency by State/Country," March 2024, available for download at https://dwp.dmdc.osd.mil/dwp/app/dod-data-reports/workforce-reports.

[350] The White House, "Letter to the Speaker of the House of Representatives and President pro tempore of the Senate regarding the War Powers Report," June 7, 2024, https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/presidential-actions/2024/06/07/letter-to-the-speaker-of-the-house-of-representatives-and-president-pro-tempore-of-the-senate-war-powers-report/.

[351] Statement of General Michael E. Langley before the Senate Armed Services Committee," March 16, 2023, https://www.africom.mil/document/35173/africom-cleared-fy24-sasc-posture-hearing-16-mar-2023pdf.

[352] U.S. Air Force, "AFIMSC completes largest runway construction project in years," May 10, 2023, https://www.patrick.spaceforce.mil/News/Article-Display/Article/3391377/afimsc-completes-largest-runway-construction-project-in-years/.

[353] U.S. Air Force, "Atlantic runway reopens, increases U.S., British military capabilities," September 8, 2022, https://www.afimsc.af.mil/News/Article-Display/Article/3152849/atlantic-runway-reopens-increases-us-british-military-capabilities/; and "Small island, big mission – Ascension Island supports 45 SW," U.S. Space Force, February 6, 2019, at https://www.patrick.spaceforce.mil/News/Article-Display/Article/1749916/small-island-big-mission-ascension-island-supports-45-sw/.

According to DMDC, approximately three active-duty servicemembers were permanently assigned to the "British Atlantic Ocean Territory" (which appears to be identical with the British Overseas Territory of Saint Helena, Ascension Island, and Tristan da Cunha) as of March 2024.[354]

Senegal

Senegal provides U.S. forces with access "for exclusive use" to Captain Andalla Cissé Air Base (located in the capital, Dakar), as well as access "for joint use" to Thiès Air Base (located in the town of Thiès) and Admiral Faye Gassama Naval Base (located in Dakar).[355] According to the U.S. State Department, access to these facilities supports U.S. operations in the region, which may include security assistance activities as well as humanitarian response, evacuation support, or logistical activities.[356]

According to DMDC, approximately 22 active-duty servicemembers were permanently assigned to Senegal as of March 2024.[357]

Somalia

According to DOD, Somalia hosts "a small, persistent U.S. military presence" that supports the "training, advising and equipping [of] partner forces to five them the tools they need to disrupt, degrade and monitor al-Shabab." The locations at which these forces are deployed are unclear from publicly available sources, but Baledogle and Kismayo have been identified by U.S. government sources as locations hosting indeterminate numbers of U.S. troops.[358] In June 2024, the White House stated that "United States military personnel conduct periodic engagements in Somalia to train, advise, and assist regional forces, including Somali and African Union Transition Mission in Somalia forces, in connection with counterterrorism operations."[359]

According to DMDC, approximately 60 active-duty servicemembers were permanently assigned to Somalia as of March 2024.[360] However, media reports suggest the total number of U.S. servicemembers present in Somalia may be between 100 and 500.[361]

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[354] Defense Manpower Data Center, "Military and Civilian Personnel by Service/Agency by State/Country," March 2024, available for download at https://dwp.dmdc.osd.mil/dwp/app/dod-data-reports/workforce-reports.

[355] U.S. Department of State, "Agreement between the United States of America and the Republic of Senegal on Defense Cooperation," May 2016, https://www.state.gov/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/16-812-Senegal-Defense-Cooperation.pdf.

[356] U.S. Department of State, "Integrated Country Strategy—Senegal," April 11, 2022, pp. 9-10, https://www.state.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/ICS_AF_Senegal_Public.pdf.

[357] Defense Manpower Data Center, "Military and Civilian Personnel by Service/Agency by State/Country," March 2024, available for download at https://dwp.dmdc.osd.mil/dwp/app/dod-data-reports/workforce-reports.

[358] Master Sgt. Brok McCarthy, "Fallen Soldier Memorialized at Contingency Locations," AFRICOM, June 2, 2020, at https://www.africom.mil/article/32903/; and "June 21, 2023 Press Release," U.S. Embassy Somalia, June 21, 2023, https://so.usembassy.gov/africom-command-gen-langley-visits-somalia/.

[359] The White House, "Letter to the Speaker of the House of Representatives and President pro tempore of the Senate regarding the War Powers Report," June 7, 2024, https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/presidential-actions/2024/06/07/letter-to-the-speaker-of-the-house-of-representatives-and-president-pro-tempore-of-the-senate-war-powers-report/.

[360] Defense Manpower Data Center, "Military and Civilian Personnel by Service/Agency by State/Country," March 2024, available for download at https://dwp.dmdc.osd.mil/dwp/app/dod-data-reports/workforce-reports.

[361] Charlie Savage and Eric Schmitt, "Biden Approves Plan to Redeploy Several Hundred Ground Forces Into Somalia," *The New York Times*, May 16, 2022, https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/16/us/politics/biden-military-somalia.html.

Latin America and the Caribbean

U.S. overseas basing in Latin America and the Caribbean is established and governed by bilateral executive agreements (DCAs/EDCAs, MOUs, Strategic Framework Agreements, etc.)—except in the case of Cuba, where U.S. forces are present pursuant to diplomatic agreements that the current Cuban government does not consider legitimate.[362]

Aruba and Curaçao (Constituent Countries of the Netherlands)

Aruba hosts a cooperative security location at its Reina Beatrix International Airport, and Curaçao hosts a cooperative security location at its Hato International Airport.[363] Both bases are managed by the Air Force and support counter-narcotics missions.[364] Aruba and Curaçao are each constituent countries of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, meaning that the Dutch government handles their foreign and defense policies.[365]

According to DMDC, no active-duty servicemembers were permanently assigned to Aruba or Curaçao as of March 2024.[366]

The Bahamas

The United States maintains the Atlantic Undersea Test and Evaluation Center (AUTEC) in the Bahamas. AUTEC primarily supports U.S. Navy research, development, test, and evaluation activities, particularly those relating to submarine and anti-submarine warfare, and includes a number of underwater and "in-air" test facilities.[367]

According to DMDC, 63 active-duty servicemembers were permanently assigned to the Bahamas as of March 2024.[368]

Cuba

The United States maintains Naval Station Guantanamo Bay in Cuba. The base includes a facility that has been used to detain U.S. military prisoners, including some captured during the Global War on Terror; according to the Navy, it also "support[s] unified, inter-agency joint operations, and training."[369] Compared to other overseas basing relationships, that between the United States

[362] For more information, refer to the entry for "Cuba" below.

[363] SOUTHCOM appears to sometimes refer to both sites as a single cooperative security location, although they are located in different countries.

[364] U.S. Consulate in Curaçao, "U.S. Cooperative Security Location Welcomes New Commander," June 27, 2023, https://cw.usconsulate.gov/u-s-cooperative-security-location-welcomes-new-commander/.

[365] Government of the Netherlands, "Responsibilities of the Netherlands, Aruba, Curaçao and St Maarten," https://www.government.nl/topics/caribbean-parts-of-the-kingdom/responsibilities-of-the-netherlands-aruba-curacao-and-st-maarten.

[366] DMDC's March 2024 report lists Aruba and Curaçao as the "Netherlands Antilles." Defense Manpower Data Center, "Military and Civilian Personnel by Service/Agency by State/Country," March 2024, available for download at https://dwp.dmdc.osd.mil/dwp/app/dod-data-reports/workforce-reports.

[367] U.S. Navy, "AUTEC Information," https://www.navsea.navy.mil/NUWC_Newport/AUTEC/. See also "Atlantic Undersea Test and Evaluation Center (AUTEC) Backgrounder," Holland & Knight LLP (on behalf of the government of the Bahamas), 2022, https://efile.fara.gov/docs/3718-Informational-Materials-20220722-7.pdf.

[368] Defense Manpower Data Center, "Military and Civilian Personnel by Service/Agency by State/Country," March 2024, available for download at https://dwp.dmdc.osd.mil/dwp/app/dod-data-reports/workforce-reports.

[369] According to a letter sent by the Biden Administration to congressional leaders in June 2024, Guantanamo Bay held (continued...)

and Cuba is unique. The U.S. government holds that DOD's presence at Guantanamo Bay is authorized by diplomatic agreements (two 1903 executive agreements and one 1934 treaty) concluded prior to the 1958 Cuban Revolution, while the current Cuban government views these as illegitimate and claims that the United States "illegally occupies" the base.[370]

According to DMDC, 616 active-duty servicemembers were permanently assigned to Cuba as of March 2024.[371]

El Salvador

El Salvador hosts Cooperative Security Location Comalapa, a Navy base located in Comalapa, El Salvador. According to SOUTHCOM, it supports efforts to combat transnational organized crime, particularly the detection and interdiction of illegal narcotics.[372]

According to DMDC, 54 active-duty servicemembers were permanently assigned to El Salvador as of March 2024.[373]

Honduras

Honduras hosts Soto Cano Air Base, an Army base located in near the town of Comayagua. According to SOUTHCOM, it is the only forward operating site in Central and South America.[374] Soto Cano supports Joint Task Force-Bravo, a SOUTHCOM task force intended to "counter transnational organized crime, [provide] humanitarian assistance/disaster relief efforts and the development of partner capacities, [and promote regional cooperation and security in Central America, South America and the Caribbean."[375] The 1st Battalion, 228th Aviation Regiment operates from Soto Cano with assets including UH-60L Black Hawk, CH-47F Chinook, and MEDEVAC HH-60L helicopters.[376]

30 detainees. The White House, "Letter from Joseph Biden, President of the United States, to Speaker of the House and President pro tempore of the Senate," June 7, 2024, https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/presidential-actions/2024/06/07/letter-to-the-speaker-of-the-house-of-representatives-and-president-pro-tempore-of-the-senate-war-powers-report/U.S. Navy, "Naval Station Guantanamo Bay - Mission and Vision," https://cnrse.cnic.navy.mil/Installations/NS-Guantanamo-Bay/About/Mission-and-Vision/.

[370] For more information, see CRS Report R44137, *Naval Station Guantanamo Bay: History and Legal Issues Regarding Its Lease Agreements*. For reporting on the Cuban government's position, see Dan Lamothe and Thomas Gibbons-Neff, "Cuba Wants Back the 'Illegally Occupied' Base at Guantanamo," *The Washington Post*, March 21, 2016, https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/checkpoint/wp/2016/03/21/cuba-wants-back-the-illegally-occupied-base-at-guantanamo-the-u-s-isnt-budging/.

[371] The White House, "Letter from Joseph Biden, President of the United States, to Speaker of the House and President pro tempore of the Senate," December 7, 2023, https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/presidential-actions/2023/12/07/letter-to-the-speaker-of-the-house-of-representatives-and-president-pro-tempore-of-the-senate-regarding-the-war-powers-report/.

[372] U.S. SOUTHCOM, "Cooperative Security Locations," https://www.southcom.mil/Media/Special-Coverage/Cooperative-Security-Locations/.

[373] DMDC's December 2023 report lists Aruba and Curaçao as the "Netherlands Antilles." Defense Manpower Data Center, "Military and Civilian Personnel by Service/Agency by State/Country," March 2024, available for download at https://dwp.dmdc.osd.mil/dwp/app/dod-data-reports/workforce-reports.

[374] "Army Support Activity – Soto Cano," U.S. SOUTHCOM, https://www.jtfb.southcom.mil/Units/Army-Support-Activity/.

[375] U.S. SOUTHCOM, "Joint Task Force-Bravo: About Us," https://www.jtfb.southcom.mil/Home/About-Us/.

[376] U.S. SOUTHCOM, "1-228th Aviation Regiment," https://www.jtfb.southcom.mil/Units/1-228th-Aviation-Regiment/.

According to DMDC, 365 active-duty U.S. servicemembers were permanently assigned to Honduras as of March 2024.[377]

[377] Defense Manpower Data Center, "Military and Civilian Personnel by Service/Agency by State/Country," March 2024, available for download at https://dwp.dmdc.osd.mil/dwp/app/dod-data-reports/workforce-reports.

Appendix B. Selected U.S. Overseas Bases

Table B-1. Selected U.S. Overseas Bases

Overseas Bases Covered by this Report

No.	Base	Country/Territory	Region	Persistent U.S. Military Presence?[a]
1	U.S. Army Garrison Kwajalein Atoll	Marshall Islands	Indo-Pacific	Yes
2	Camp Zama	Japan	Indo-Pacific	Yes
3	Shariki Communications Site	Japan	Indo-Pacific	No
4	Kyogamisaki Communications Site	Japan	Indo-Pacific	No
5	U.S. Fleet Activities Yokosuka	Japan	Indo-Pacific	Yes
6	U.S. Fleet Activities Sasebo	Japan	Indo-Pacific	Yes
7	Naval Air Facility Atsugi	Japan	Indo-Pacific	Yes
8	Marine Corps Air Station Iwakuni	Japan	Indo-Pacific	Yes
9	Yokota Air Base	Japan	Indo-Pacific	Yes
10	Misawa Air Base	Japan	Indo-Pacific	Yes
11	Kure Pier 6	Japan	Indo-Pacific	Yes
12	U.S. Army Garrison Okinawa	Japan	Indo-Pacific	Yes
13	U.S. Fleet Activities Okinawa	Japan	Indo-Pacific	Yes
14	Marine Corps Base Camp Butler	Japan	Indo-Pacific	Yes
15	Marine Corps Air Station Futenma	Japan	Indo-Pacific	Yes
16	Kadena Air Base	Japan	Indo-Pacific	Yes
17	Camp Humphreys	South Korea	Indo-Pacific	Yes
18	Army Garrison Daegu	South Korea	Indo-Pacific	Yes
19	Army Garrison Yongsan-Casey	South Korea	Indo-Pacific	Yes
20	Fleet Activities Chinhae	South Korea	Indo-Pacific	Yes
21	Marine Corps Installation Camp Mujuk	South Korea	Indo-Pacific	No
22	Osan Air Base	South Korea	Indo-Pacific	Yes
23	Kunsan Air Base	South Korea	Indo-Pacific	Yes
24	Command Post Tango	South Korea	Indo-Pacific	Yes
25	Antonio Bautista Air Base	The Philippines	Indo-Pacific	No
26	Basa Air Base	The Philippines	Indo-Pacific	No
27	Fort Magsaysay	The Philippines	Indo-Pacific	No
28	Lumbia Airport	The Philippines	Indo-Pacific	No
29	Benito Ebuen Air Base	The Philippines	Indo-Pacific	No
30	Naval Base Camilo Osias	The Philippines	Indo-Pacific	No
31	Lal-lo Airport	The Philippines	Indo-Pacific	No
32	Camp Melchor Dela	The Philippines	Indo-Pacific	No

No.	Base	Country/Territory	Region	Persistent U.S. Military Presence?[a]
33	Balabac Island	The Philippines	Indo-Pacific	No
34	Navy Region Center Singapore	Singapore	Indo-Pacific	Yes
35	Robertson Barracks	Australia	Indo-Pacific	No
36	RAAF Base Darwin	Australia	Indo-Pacific	No
37	RAAF Base Tindal	Australia	Indo-Pacific	No
38	NCS Harold E. Holt	Australia	Indo-Pacific	Yes
39	Momote Airport	Papua New Guinea	Indo-Pacific	No
40	Lombrum Naval Base	Papua New Guinea	Indo-Pacific	No
41	Nadzab Airport	Papua New Guinea	Indo-Pacific	No
42	Lae Seaport	Papua New Guinea	Indo-Pacific	No
43	Port Moresby Jacksons Int'l Airport and Seaport	Papua New Guinea	Indo-Pacific	No
44	Naval Support Facility Diego Garcia	British Indian Ocean Territory (United Kingdom)	Indo-Pacific	Yes
45	Pituffik Space Base	Greenland (Denmark)	Europe	Yes
46	Naval Air Station Keflavik	Iceland	Europe	Yes
47	Joint Warfare Center	Norway	Europe	Yes
48	RAF Lakenheath	United Kingdom	Europe	Yes
49	RAF Mildenhall	United Kingdom	Europe	Yes
50	RAF Alconbury/Molesworth	United Kingdom	Europe	Yes
51	RAF Croughton	United Kingdom	Europe	Yes
52	RAF Menwith Hill	United Kingdom	Europe	Yes
53	U.S. Army Garrison Benelux	Belgium	Europe	Yes
54	Kleine Brogel Air Base	Belgium	Europe	Yes
55	U.S. Army Garrison Stuttgart	Germany	Europe	Yes
56	U.S. Army Garrison Ansbach	Germany	Europe	Yes
57	U.S. Army Garrison Bavaria	Germany	Europe	Yes
58	U.S. Army Garrison Wiesbaden	Germany	Europe	Yes
59	Spangdahlem Air Base	Germany	Europe	Yes
60	Ramstein Air Base	Germany	Europe	Yes
61	Geilenkirchen Air Base	Germany	Europe	Yes
62	USAG Vicenza	Italy	Europe	Yes
63	Camp Darby	Italy	Europe	Yes
64	Naval Support Activity Naples	Italy	Europe	Yes
65	Naval Support Activity Naples Detachment Gaeta	Italy	Europe	Yes
66	Naval Air Station Sigonella	Italy	Europe	Yes

No.	Base	Country/Territory	Region	Persistent U.S. Military Presence?[a]
67	Ghedi Air Base	Italy	Europe	Yes
68	Aviano Air Base	Italy	Europe	Yes
69	Naval Station Rota	Spain	Europe	Yes
70	Morón Air Base	Spain	Europe	Yes
71	Lajes Field	Portugal	Europe	Yes
72	Naval Support Facility Redzikowo	Poland	Europe	No
73	Camp Kosciuszko	Poland	Europe	No
74	Żagań	Poland	Europe	No
75	Powidz Air Base	Poland	Europe	No
76	Lask Air Base	Poland	Europe	No
77	Camp Herkus	Lithuania	Europe	No
78	Šiauliai Air Base	Lithuania	Europe	No
79	Lielvārde Air Base	Latvia	Europe	No
80	Ämari Air Base	Estonia	Europe	No
81	Pápa Air Base	Hungary	Europe	No
82	Kecskemét Air Base	Hungary	Europe	No
83	Camp Turzii	Romania	Europe	No
84	Naval Support Facility Deveselu	Romania	Europe	No
85	Mihail Kogalniceanu Air Base	Romania	Europe	No
86	Novo Selo Training Area	Bulgaria	Europe	No
87	Graf Ignatievo Air Base	Bulgaria	Europe	No
88	Camp Bondsteel	Kosovo	Europe	Yes
89	Larissa Air Base	Greece	Europe	No
90	Stefanovikeio Air Base	Greece	Europe	No
91	Naval Support Activity Souda Bay	Greece	Europe	Yes
92	Izmir Air Station	Turkey	Europe	Yes
93	Incirlik Air Base	Turkey	Europe	Yes
94	RAF Akrotiri	Cyprus	Europe	No
95	Camp Arifjan	Kuwait	Middle East & Central Asia	Yes
96	Camp Buehring	Kuwait	Middle East & Central Asia	Yes
97	Al Jaber Air Base	Kuwait	Middle East & Central Asia	Yes
98	Al Mubarak Air Base	Kuwait	Middle East & Central Asia	Yes
99	Ali Al Salem Air Base	Kuwait	Middle East & Central Asia	Yes

No.	Base	Country/Territory	Region	Persistent U.S. Military Presence?[a]
100	Al Udeid Air Base	Qatar	Middle East & Central Asia	Yes
101	Al Dhafra Air Base	United Arab Emirates	Middle East & Central Asia	Yes
102	Jebel Ali	United Arab Emirates	Middle East & Central Asia	No
103	King Faisal Air Base	Saudi Arabia	Middle East & Central Asia	No
104	Prince Sultan Air Base	Saudi Arabia	Middle East & Central Asia	No
105	Muwaffaq Salti Air Base	Jordan	Middle East & Central Asia	No
106	Naval Support Activity Bahrain	Bahrain	Middle East & Central Asia	Yes
107	Sheikh Isa Air Base	Bahrain	Middle East & Central Asia	No
108	Erbil Air Base	Iraq	Middle East & Central Asia	No
109	Al Asad Air Base	Iraq	Middle East & Central Asia	No
110	Al Tanf Garrison	Syria	Middle East & Central Asia	No
111	Rumalyn	Syria	Middle East & Central Asia	No
112	Duqm	Oman	Middle East & Central Asia	No
113	MFO South Camp	Egypt	Middle East & Central Asia	No
114	Camp Lemonnier	Djibouti	Africa	Yes
115	Chabelley Airfield	Djibouti	Africa	No
116	Baledogle	Somalia	Africa	No
117	Mogadishu	Somalia	Africa	No
118	Kismayo	Somalia	Africa	No
119	Manda Bay	Kenya	Africa	No
120	Mombasa	Kenya	Africa	No
121	N'djamena	Chad	Africa	No
122	Ascension Island Auxiliary Airfield	British Overseas Territory of Saint Helena, Ascension Island, and Tristan da Cunha	Africa	Yes
123	Atlantic Undersea Test and Evaluation Center	Bahamas	Latin America & the Caribbean	Yes

No.	Base	Country/Territory	Region	Persistent U.S. Military Presence?[a]
124	Guantanamo Bay	Cuba	Latin America & the Caribbean	Yes
125	Soto Cano Air Base	Honduras	Latin America & the Caribbean	Yes
126	Cooperative Security Location Comalapa	El Salvador	Latin America & the Caribbean	No
127	Cooperative Security Location Reina Beatrix International Airport	Aruba	Latin America & the Caribbean	No
128	Cooperative Security Location Hato International Airport	Curaçao	Latin America & the Caribbean	No

Source: CRS analysis, for additional information see "Methodology" section of this report.

Note:

a. Defined as continuous DOD use/control for least 15 years (for more information, refer to the "Overview and Methodology" section of this report).

Appendix C. DOD Definitions and Methodological Issues

DOD divides its overseas bases into two broad categories: *enduring locations*, which support U.S. military activities on an ongoing basis, and *contingency locations*, which provide temporary support for combat missions and other contingency operations.[378] Enduring locations fall into one of three categories, depending on the degree of U.S. presence:

- **Main operating base.** Defined by DOD as "a facility outside the United States and its territories with permanently stationed operating forces and robust infrastructure."[379]
- **Forward operating site**. Defined by DOD as "a scalable location outside the United States and its territories intended for rotational use by operating forces."[380]
- **Cooperative security location**. Defined by DOD as "a facility located outside the United States and its territories with little or no permanent United States presence that is maintained by periodic Service, contractor, or host nation support."[381]

Similarly, DOD sorts its contingency locations into categories based on the timeframe of their intended use: (1) initial locations (immediate need); (2) temporary locations (1-24 months); or (3) semipermanent locations (24-60 months).[382]

Despite these official definitions, in practice there exists some ambiguity in the ways DOD and other U.S. government (USG) organizations consider overseas basing. The distinctions between DOD's three categories of enduring locations are sometimes unclear. For instance, although the department's definition of forward operating sites states that they support "rotational use," senior officials have also indicated that some individual forward operating sites support a "permanent" presence of U.S. forces.[383] Additionally, DOD's official taxonomy does not appear to be consistently used across the department. For instance, although DOD defines a cooperative security location as a type of enduring location located outside U.S. territory (and thus, an overseas base), some DOD organizations have published material suggesting that cooperative

[378] Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, "Joint Publication 4-04," January 2019, p. vii, https://www.jcs.mil/Portals/36/Documents/Doctrine/pubs/jp4_04.pdf. In addition, 10 U.S.C. §2687a defines *enduring locations* and *contingency locations* in language consistent with the definitions used by DOD. See also *DOD Dictionary*, May 2023, p. 68.

[379] *DOD Dictionary*, May 2023, p. 121.

[380] Ibid., p. 80. Also note, the DOD Dictionary draws a distinction between "Forward Operating Site" and a "Forward Operating Base" the latter of which the DOD Dictionary it defines as "an airfield used to support tactical operations without establishing full support facilities."

[381] Ibid., p. 44.

[382] CJCS, Joint Publication 4-04, January 2019, pp. II-2-II-3.

[383] As an example, Camp Kosciusko—a U.S. Army forward operating site in Poland—has been described by senior executive branch officials and multiple DOD sources as a "permanent forward headquarters," a "permanent garrison," etc. See Mark Heeter, "Army Establishes Permanent Garrison in Poland," U.S. Army, March 21, 2023, https://www.army.mil/article/265027/army_establishes_permanent_garrison_in_poland. See also Spc. David Klegan, "Easternmost Army base in Europe now named after Polish-American hero," *Defense Visual Information Distribution Service*, July 30, 2022, https://www.dvidshub.net/news/426178/easternmost-army-base-europe-now-named-after-polish-american-hero#.

security locations should not be considered overseas bases.[384] Officially defined terms may also be used inconsistently in colloquial or casual descriptions by U.S. or foreign officials and other stakeholders.

DOD real property accounting methods may further compound uncertainty. To meet its statutory reporting requirements, every fiscal year (FY) the Department publishes a "Base Structure Report" (BSR).[385] Despite its title, this document does not report real property by base, but rather by *site*.[386] According to the "Summary" section of the FY2023 BSR (the most recent publicly available report), DOD maintains 511 overseas sites.[387] However, this figure does not appear to be a reliable proxy for the number of overseas bases as defined by this report, for two reasons. First, multiple sites are sometimes reported for a location that DOD's stated definitions suggest should constitute a single base.[388] Second, there are some active military sites that meet the criteria for overseas bases, but do not appear on the BSR.[389]

DOD also maintains a classified "Enduring Location Master List (ELML") which it uses to "identify, validate, and document locations that represent an enduring, strategic U.S. security interest for the foreseeable future."[390] As this document is classified, its contents were not used in the preparation of this report.

Other shifts in DOD's approach to overseas basing may also complicate the question of what constitutes an overseas base. Compared to basing during the Cold War, DOD's current posture relies to a larger extent on defense infrastructure owned and operated by allied and partner nations. Some of these sites are not associated with any locations designated in official DOD or USG documentation as overseas bases, yet routinely host deployed U.S. forces and/or receive upgrades to real property funded by the services' military construction (MILCON) appropriations.[391]

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[384] The U.S. Southern Command website, for instance, states that cooperative security locations "are not bases … they are tenant activities on existing airfields whose purpose is to support [U.S.] missions." U.S. SOUTHCOM, https://www.southcom.mil/Media/Special-Coverage/Cooperative-Security-Locations/. Conversely, one general officer described Naval Base Manda Bay in Kenya as being one component of a broader CSL. DOD, "Department of Defense Press Briefing on U.S. Africa Command Investigation of Jan. 5, 2020, Al-Shabaab Attack at the Cooperative Security Location in Manda Bay," Kenya, March 10, 2022, https://www.defense.gov/News/Transcripts/Transcript/Article/2963240/department-of-defense-press-briefing-on-us-africa-command-investigation-of-jan/.

[385] 10 U.S.C. §2721 requires the Secretary of Defense to maintain records of fixed property and installations. For more information, refer to the "Relevant Statutory Authorities" section of this report.

[386] Recent BSRs define a site as "a specific geographic location that has individual land parcels or facilities assigned to it." The FY2023 BSR purports to include all sites that occupy 10 acres or more, and/or have a "plant replacement value" of $10 million or more. "FY2023 Base Structure Report", DOD, 2023. Available for download at https://www.acq.osd.mil/eie/BSI/BEI_Library.html.

[387] Despite the listing of 511 overseas sites in its "Summary," the FY2023 BSR's "Federal DOD Main Report" section only provided information for 379 of these. Ibid.

[388] The BSRs are published as a tool for tracking DOD real property and infrastructure; these reports account for different types of sites separately. For example, the FY2023 BSR lists eight separate sites for Aviano Air Base in Italy, which include one identified simply as "Aviano AB" and others identified variously as housing complexes, storage facilities and a headquarters building.

[389] For example, the FY2023 BSR does not include any sites associated with Saudi Arabia despite the presence of thousands of U.S. servicemembers in the country.

[390] For more information on the ELML, see DOD, *DOD Instruction 3000.12 Management of U.S. Global Defense Posture*, May 8, 2017, p. 11, https://www.esd.whs.mil/Portals/54/Documents/DD/issuances/dodi/300012p.pdf#page=11. For reference to classification, see DOD, *DOD Instruction 4165.14 Real Property Inventory and Reporting*, September 8, 2023, p. 20, https://www.esd.whs.mil/Portals/54/Documents/DD/issuances/dodi/416514p.pdf#page=20.

[391] As an example, Ämari Air Base in Estonia has hosted recurrent U.S. fighter squadron deployments and received (continued...)

MILCON appropriations for infrastructure improvements, yet CRS was not able to locate its designation in any USG documentation (e.g., DOD BSRs) as an overseas base.

A final factor for consideration is the political significance—both domestically and internationally—of characterizing locations as overseas bases. The executive branch generally, and DOD specifically, may choose not to apply the term to sites that otherwise meet their criteria in order to minimize public or congressional scrutiny of politically, diplomatically, or militarily sensitive executive branch actions.[392] They may also avoid the term out of deference to host-nation sensitivities, or to minimize risks from regional state or non-state actors that might seek to target U.S. forces.[393]

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[392] In 1985, for instance, domestic controversy surrounding U.S. military involvement in Central America led the executive branch to deny that it had established, or sought to establish, "bases or any other permanent facilities in Honduras," even though DOD site survey and construction activities in Honduras were documented as early as August 1983. For more information, see *Report of the Delegation to Latin America of the Committee on Armed Services House of Representatives*, 99th Cong., 1st sess., April 1985, p. 34; and U.S. Southern Command, 1983 Historical Report, p. 14, https://digital.lib.washington.edu/researchworks/bitstream/handle/1773/45384/17-CV-01854_19840629__Doc.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y.

[393] For example, media reports suggest that a 2024 basing deal with Qatar was not publicly announced due to either Qatari or U.S. sensitivities. See Alex Marquardt and Natasha Bertrand, "U.S. Quietly Reaches Agreement with Qatar," *CNN*, January 2, 2024, https://www.cnn.com/2024/01/02/politics/us-qatar-agreement-largest-base-middle-east/index.html.