

# Air Force GeoBase Program: More than a CE Map

Scott Ensign  
AFCEC/CPAB  
Richard Updike, P.E.  
AMC/A7ZD

To an engineer, GeoBase provides standards and processes to manage and visualize infrastructure data, from manhole covers to building floor plans. For planners it is a tool provided by a platform that integrates and analyzes infrastructure, business and operational information. To an F-16 pilot concerned about flight obstructions on final approach or the C-17 flight crew who is equally concerned about the length of a deployed location's airfield, GeoBase is a flight safety planning resource. To a base commander, GeoBase is a common operating picture used to coordinate on-base emergency responses from first responders, security forces and public affairs. In the future, GeoBase could be a secure phone app employed by new airmen to get directions or find building numbers during in-processing.

More than a map, GeoBase continues to provide unique value to different people via standards, business processes and assorted products. A decision at the 2000 Fall CORONA established GeoBase. Substantial evidence continues to validate the program, including the comprehensive 2007 Rand study "Installation Mapping Enables Many Mission." The study corroborates that sharing installations and environment geospatial data between installation management, homeland defense, emergency response, environmental management and warfighting provides benefits such as significant costs savings and enhanced performance.

## Program Leadership

When the question of who should lead the effort was posed to the 2000 CORONA assembly, four leaders raised their hands to champion the effort: Installations and Logistics; Security Forces; Communications; and Intelligence. These mission leaders each felt GeoBase was integral to their respective domains and they were all correct. Installations and Logistics, now known as Air Force A4/7, was awarded primary responsibility for GeoBase with the Civil Engineer assigned to lead the change agenda. Today, the Civil Engineer continues to lead this Air Force program that not only shares maps, but also integrates diverse mission data.

## Air Force Information Integration

Capabilities that benefit multiple organizations need a single program element code associated with a single functional sponsor. The Air Force acquisition process naturally narrowed the scope of GeoBase implementation to Civil Engineer needs rather than the larger enterprise. Today GeoBase is largely associated with "One Base, One Map" and the Civil Engineer community. But joint efforts must continue to uncover Air Force, not just Civil Engineering, requirements where GeoBase may be applied to increase real returns for the Air Force. New mandates for asset accountability, such as financial investment and auditability readiness and the need to rightsize installation capacities, make the need for GeoBase today more compelling than ever. The Air Force GeoBase program managers and the Civil Engineer community share responsibility for inventorying and managing installations built and natural infrastructures to fulfill basing needs.

## Conclusion

Any organization's culture is simply "the way things get done around here," and as evidence demonstrates, the GeoBase culture continues to expand to satisfy numerous needs of the Air Force. In many circles GeoBase has been defined as the common installation picture, or CIP, a limited tool providing a few layers on top of an electronic map. But documentation and experience shows it is not this simple. GeoBase is an Air Force program led by the CE community, supporting a broad spectrum of functional and operational mission requirements. It is a program comprising people, policy, procedures, processes data standards, business rules and tools enabling unity of effort. It is a culture of sharing information and a way of thinking steeped in information resource management principles. It is much more than a CE map.

As diminished budgets drive senior leaders to choose which mission capabilities contribute more value to the mission, the CE community may take pride in knowing the Air Force GeoBase program remains the most cost-effective means to providing situational awareness to all installation missions.

*Mr. Ensign is the Geospatial Integration Officer, Air Force Civil Engineer Center, JB San Antonio, Texas, and Mr. Updike is the Geospatial Integration Officer, Headquarters Air Mobility Command, Scott AFB, Ill.*