

FORMER GRIFFISS AIR FORCE BASE COMMUNITY RELATIONS PLAN

Appendix A



U.S. AIR FORCE

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Site Description

Location

The former Griffiss Air Force Base (AFB) is located in the Mohawk Valley Region of central New York State, occupying 3,502 acres in the southeast quadrant of the City of Rome, Oneida County, New York. It is bordered almost completely by Rome, with the exception of a section of the eastern side which borders the Town of Floyd. In addition, there are 17 off-base properties, or annex locations, all within a 50 mile radius of the base. An active Air Force installation for more than 50 years, Griffiss is now in the process of realignment as a result of 1993, 1995 and 2005 Base Realignment and Closure Commission (BRAC) decisions.

Adjacent Off-Base Land Use

The base is bordered on the west and northwest by commercial and residential areas, on the north and east by land traditionally classified as agricultural woodland, which has become, within the last 20 years, more suburban in nature due in large part to a demand for housing by military retirees and civilian employees of the base.

Topography

The topography is typical of the area, consisting of gently rolling hills, several streams, woodlands and wetlands. Along its southern border run State Routes 365 & 49, a major four-lane highway that acts as a connecting corridor between Rome and the other major metropolitan area in Oneida County, the City of Utica, approximately fourteen miles to the southeast. The Barge Canal, New York State's major active commercial waterway runs directly parallel to Routes 365 & 49, on the southern side of the base. The Mohawk River, a major tributary of the Barge Canal, runs adjacent to the western border of the base for several hundred feet, and eventually turns and runs parallel to the Canal to the south side of the base. The New York State Thruway, I-90, lies approximately five miles to the south.

History

Initial construction at Griffiss AFB began just before the United States' entry into World War II, when the current site was chosen as the home for the Rome Army Air Depot. News stories and local historical documents recount that the Rome site was chosen over several other possible sites in the northeast, due in part to the donation of 1800 acres of land by the Oneida County Board of Supervisors, and the offer of up to a million gallons of water per day - without charge - from the City of Rome, as well as availability of sewage treatment facilities. Still recovering from the Depression of the 1930s, and troubled by stagnation in its mainstay industry, the production of copper and brass,

Rome and Oneida County enthusiastically welcomed the presence of the military installation as a source of employment.

Additional land was acquired in 1941-1942 and flying operations on the depot airfield began on February 18, 1942. During World War II Rome Air Depot was an extremely active installation; its mission was the repair, modification and maintenance of aircraft, and the storage and shipment of supplies. After creation of the U.S. Air Force in 1947, the depot was renamed Griffiss Air Force Base in January 1948 after Lieutenant Colonel Townsend E. Griffiss, the first American aviator (and a New York State resident) to be killed in action in the European Theater of Operations during World War II. Recently, the local community elected to carry on the Griffiss name by officially renaming the former base "Griffiss Business and Technology Park".

In 1950, the Air Force announced plans to establish an electronics research and development center at Griffiss, to be known as the Rome Air Development Center (RADC), and shortly thereafter, the 49th Fighter Interceptor Squadron was assigned to Griffiss. This marked the beginning of a period of growth and development at the base, and the second and last major phase of land acquisition. By the early-1960's 12,000 people were employed in military and civilian positions at GAFB. The base was sometimes referred to locally as "the city within a city", providing housing, full-scale recreation facilities, a chapel, shopping, and medical services for its military personnel. New construction and remodeling or demolition of outdated buildings and facilities occurred continuously until 1993, when the base was slated for realignment. Although employment levels varied somewhat over the years, at the time of the BRAC decision in 1993, there were still more than 8,000 active civilian and military employees at Griffiss.

From 1950 forward, activity at the base took the form of various missions, dedicated primarily to two specific goals: (1) national defense and (2) the research, testing and development of sophisticated electronic communication systems.

National Defense

In 1950, the 49th Fighter Interceptor Squadron was added to Griffiss, and in 1958, crews of the 27th and 465th Fighter Interceptor Squadrons arrived. By 1959 the Strategic Air Command (SAC) activated the 4039th Bombardment Wing, replaced in 1963 by SAC's 416th Bombardment Wing which remained at Griffiss until the 1990s. There is long and detailed history to the presence of various Air Force defense operations at Griffiss, but generally it can be said that Griffiss' primary mission was the maintenance and implementation of both effective air refueling operations and long-range bombardment capability. To accomplish this mission, a variety of the most technologically advanced aircraft were based and maintained at Griffiss over the years. Large weapons storage

areas were built to house the most modern weapons and munitions. The 416th was the first SAC wing to receive Air Launched Cruise Missiles.

The operational component of the Northeast Air Defense Sector (NEADS), which was responsible for monitoring the skies over 500,000 square miles of the northeast, became fully functional at Griffiss in 1983, and remains at Griffiss, having been transferred to the New York Air National Guard (NYANG) by BRAC.

The runways remained in use by the Air National Guard for the deployment of troops and equipment from the U.S. Army's 10th Mountain Division, located at Fort Drum, approximately 80 miles to the north. These runways were used for this purpose until adequate runways were constructed at Fort Drum.

In 1950, the U. S. Congress authorized the establishment of an Air Force Electronic Development Center at Griffiss AFB, and immediately thereafter, the operations of the Watson Laboratories (formerly the U.S. Army Signal Corps Radio Laboratory) were transferred to Griffiss from New Jersey. This was the core of what was to become the Air Force's center of expertise for research and development of command, control, communications, computers, intelligence and related technologies. In 1951, the Air Force officially established the Rome Air Development Center (RADC), which for the next 40 years was an Air Force center for research on a variety of projects, including the Ballistic Missile Defense Early Warning System (BMEWS), the Distant Early Warning (DEW) Line, the Semi-Automated Ground Environment (SAGE) system, and the Airborne Warning and Control System (AWACS). RADC scientists helped develop the technology that resulted in the first intercontinental voice transmission sent via satellite.

In 1990, the Air Force realigned 14 laboratories and research centers into four "super" laboratories. One of these became what is now known as Rome Laboratory, and remains at Griffiss, with approximately 1,100 military and civilian employees. Rome Lab is currently the Air Force's lead agency for research and development of photonics technology, and is considered the foundation upon which the newly formed Griffiss Business and Technology Park will be built into a private sector hub of high technology businesses dedicated to the development and provision of state-of-the-art technological goods and services.

In 1993, Griffiss AFB was on the list of bases slated for realignment and/or closure under BRAC. Approximately 136 acres has been retained by the DoD for use by the NY Air National Guard (NYANG), Northeast Air Defense Sector (now named Eastern Air Defense Sector (EADS)), Defense Finance & Accounting Services (DFAS) and Rome Labs.

The Air Force Real Property Agency (AFRPA) is responsible for properly disposing of the remaining installation property that is available for reuse. AFRPA assists communities in the conversion of closing and realigning bases from military to civilian use, providing civilian reuse transition planning, caretaker services, environmental compliance and restoration. The local redevelopment authority, the Griffiss Local Development Corporation (GLDC), is the single entity responsible for base reuse planning activities at Griffiss, serving as the community's point of contact for all matters relating to redevelopment.

Environmental Actions

As a result of the various national defense missions carried out at the former Griffiss AFB since 1942, hazardous and toxic substances were used and hazardous wastes were generated, stored, or disposed of at various sites on the installation. The defense missions involved the procurement, storage, maintenance and shipping of war material; research and development; and aircraft operations and maintenance.

The U.S. Department of Defense Installation Restoration Program has conducted numerous studies and investigations to locate, assess, and quantify the past toxic and hazardous waste storage, disposal, and spill sites.

These investigations included a records search in 1981, interviews with base personnel, a field inspection, compilation of an inventory of wastes, evaluation of disposal practices, and an assessment to determine the nature and extent of site contamination; Problem Confirmation and Quantification studies (similar to what is now designated a Site Investigation) in 1982 and 1985; soil and groundwater analyses in 1986; a base-wide health assessment in 1988 by the U.S. Public Health Service, **Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR)**; base-specific hydrology investigations in 1989 and 1990; a groundwater investigation in 1991; and site-specific investigations between 1989 and 1993. ATSDR issued a Public Health Assessment for Griffiss AFB, dated October 23, 1995, and an addendum, dated September 9, 1996.

Pursuant to Section 105 of CERCLA, 42 U.S.C. § 9605, Griffiss AFB was included on the **National Priorities List (NPL)** on July 15, 1987. On August 21, 1990, the Agencies entered into a FFA under Section 120 of CERCLA, 42 U.S.C. § 9620. Two thousand nine hundred (2,900) acres of the three thousand five hundred and fifty two (3,552) acres at the former Griffiss AFB were removed from the NPL on March 20, 2009. Under the terms of the FFA, the Air Force is required to prepare and submit numerous reports addressing investigation and remedial activities required under CERCLA.

Thirty seven (37) CERCLA sites and nine (9) petroleum sites are included in the Federal Facility Agreement (FFA), including sites requiring long-term monitoring (LTM). Two (2)

Records of Decisions remain. The ROD completions are targeted 2012. The Soil Vapor Intrusion (SVI) issue impacting all New York installations was impacting completion of the Records of Decisions and property disposals. All SVI issues have been resolved except for two (2) sites. The remaining two pending RODS will complete resolution of the SVI issues. Draft Proposed Plans for both sites have been submitted for regulatory review.

Two Performance-Based Remediation contracts (PBR) are currently in place and both expire in 2015 at which time all sites will be incorporated into one basewide PBR contract.

Community Background

The central New York area - known as the Mohawk Valley - was originally settled in the mid-1700s, and was an important strategic frontier area during the Revolutionary War. One of that war's most famous battle sites, Fort Stanwix, lies less than two miles from Griffiss AFB, and is now a National Park Service Historic Monument site. The Stars & Stripes, the flag of the thirteen original colonies, was flown for the first time during the Battle of Fort Stanwix.

The Mohawk Valley, stretching from the foothills of the Adirondacks at the north to the southern border of Oneida and Herkimer Counties, runs along a relatively straight east-west geographic line formed by the Mohawk River. It is an area of small towns, generally rural in character, with two larger cities, Utica and Rome. There are a number of colleges and universities in the area, including three State University of New York (SUNY) Colleges: Mohawk Valley Community College, in Utica & Rome; Herkimer County Community College, in Herkimer, and the SUNY College of Technology at Utica-Rome, in Marcy. There are two private colleges, Hamilton College, and Utica College (affiliated with Syracuse University). In addition, Colgate University lies 40 miles to the south and Syracuse University about 40 miles to the west.

The Mohawk Valley is approximately 220 miles from New York City, and 100 miles from the International Bridge to Canada, located to the north of the U.S. Army's Fort Drum. The area experiences severe winter weather and fairly temperate summers. The New York State Thruway, with three exits within 15 miles of the base, provides easy access to other parts of the state. The Oneida County Airport is located on the Griffiss Business and Technology Park, with a larger airport in Syracuse, 40 miles away.

Griffiss AFB is situated in the southeastern quadrant of the City of Rome, adjacent to the Town of Floyd. The Town of Floyd was incorporated in 1796, and the City of Rome some years later. The Mohawk River, and later the Erie and Barge Canals, provided cheap and easy transportation from New York City to the western frontier, leading to the growth and prosperity of towns and cities in the Mohawk Valley area. Rome was the site of the first cheese manufacturing plant in the nation, and by the early 1900s had become one of the nation's major industrial centers for the production of copper and brass. Utica, historically the largest city in Oneida County, was a center for the manufacture of cotton and woolen woven goods until the 1930s. The other primary economic activity in the area was, and continues to be, agriculture.

Community Involvement Overview

The Air Force recognizes the concerns of the Oneida County community, and believes that good communication between AFRPA and the community will help to insure that Griffiss enjoys a positive relationship with the community during the IRP and realignment process.

Understanding of the components of an environmental cleanup program, and reinforcement of the Air Force's previously stated commitment to a thorough cleanup process, should assure both local residents and public officials. Factual information as to the progress of work, and the involvement of the USEPA and New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC), should assuage any concerns regarding the processes involved in the actual cleanup or its ultimate outcome.

Key Community Concerns

Historically, key community concerns revolved around the economic impact of the base closure. Since then, the Air Force has successfully transferred 3,310 acres to the Griffiss Local Development Corporation with a full base transfer expected by the end of 2012. The GLDC is responsible for redevelopment and created the Griffiss Business and Technology Park resulting in the attraction of 70 employers with over 5,800 employees from 17 countries. Additionally, the Air Force Research Laboratory-Rome, Defense Finance and Accounting Service Center and Eastern Air Defense Sector (EADS) are located on site. GLDC has faced recent criticism for being too secretive in its operations, which it has countered by emphasizing its open board meetings and sharing of information. An examination of recent media coverage shows that moving forward, the biggest concerns continue to revolve around the economic potential of the asset transferred to the GLDC and less so on contamination on site.

With regards to contamination, Soil Vapor Intrusion has been an issue on site; however, the USEPA and the Air Force continue to work on resolving the issues in support of protection of human health and the environment.

Recommended Community Involvement Approach

Given the current status of the clean-up efforts, strategies recommended for the former Griffiss AFB include those appropriate for the Proposed Plan, Record of Decision, Remedial Design/Remedial Action, Operation & Maintenance, and ultimately Deletion from the National Priorities List.

	Information Repository	Administrative Record	Fact Sheets	Newsletters	Open Houses, Poster Board Sessions, and Site Tours	Public Notices	News Releases/Media Relations	Neighborhood Notices/Flyers	Public Meetings	Public Comment Period	Responsiveness Summary	Speaking Engagement/Outreach Mtgs
Proposed Plan (PP)	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Record of Decision (ROD)	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Remedial Design (RD)/ Remedial Action	●	●	●	●	●		●					●
Operation & Maintenance (O&M)	●	●		●		●	●			●	●	●
Deletion from the National Priorities List	●	●				●	●			●	●	●

For guidelines on each of these community relations strategies please see the main document. Base-specific recommendations are detailed below.

Information Repository

The Information Repository is maintained online on the Administrative Record (AR) database.

The online AR database is available at <https://afarpaar.lackland.af.mil/ar/docsearch.aspx>

If possible, the Information Repositories and Administrative Record should be reviewed once a year to ensure contents are complete and current. Further, there should be a process in place to incorporate the names of interested individuals into the stakeholder mailing list. With regards to the Administrative Record, a Quick Start instruction sheet should be developed so new staff are aware of the AR, its contents, and how and when to incorporate new documents.

Fact Sheets/Newsletters

Fact sheets should be developed on an as needed basis. A fact sheet around Soil Vapor Intrusion is recommended. While it is not recommended that a newsletter be started

this close to full base transfer, an enhanced fact sheet could be distributed in its place to make stakeholders aware of on-going clean-up activities at the former Griffiss AFB.

Public Notices/Open Houses/Public Meetings/Public Comment Period

Public notices are published any time a public meeting or event is scheduled or in relation to a public comment period. Open houses and public meetings are scheduled as needed and tied to specific decision-making points in the process. For example, input from the public is solicited when considering selected remedies. Public comments are then considered in the Air Force's final remedy selection.

Meeting Location

Previous meetings have been held at:

GRIFFISS INSTITUTE
725 DAEDALIAN DRIVE
GRIFFISS BUSINESS AND TECHNOLOGY PARK
ROME, NY

Media Relations/Flyers

These strategies are specifically useful for advertising upcoming meetings or events. An updated media list is attached for distribution purposes. Flyers should be available in both a print and electronic format. The electronic version can be emailed to stakeholders and to community partners for further distribution. They can also be posted to social media sites to help reach a larger audience.

Speaking Engagement/ Outreach Meetings

In cases where changes or impact are tied to a specific geographic area, rather than the entire community, it may be more appropriate to conduct one-on-one meetings or to present at meetings for existing organizations. This approach provides a low-cost option to target specific stakeholders.

ATTACHMENT 1: Stakeholder Database

BRAC'ed Base	Senator	Congressman	Governor	Mayor	City Council Members
Griffis AFB Rome, New York	<p>Charles Schumer (D) 780 Third Avenue, Suite 2301 New York, NY 10017 Phone: (212) 486-4430 Matt House matt_house@schumer.senate.gov</p> <p>Kirsten Gillibrand (D) 780 Third Avenue, Suite 2601 New York, New York 10017 Phone: (212) 688-6262 Anna Widdowson anna_widdowson@gillibrand.senate.gov</p>	<p>Richard Hanna 110 Genesee St., Suite 110 Auburn, NY 13021 Phone: (315) 252-6700 Renee Gemela Phone: (202) 225-3665 renee.gemela@mail.house.gov</p>	<p>Andrew M. Cuomo Governor of New York State NY State Capitol Building Albany, NY 12224 Phone: (518) 474-8390 Press Office press.office@exec.ny.gov</p>	<p>Joseph R Fusco Jr. Mayor (City of Rome) 198 North Washington Street Rome, NY 13440 Phone: (315) 339- 7677 Fax: (315) 339- 7667</p> <p>Kathleen Perry Assistant to the Mayor Phone: (315) 339- 7676</p>	<p>John Mazzaferro President Phone: (315) 838-1731</p> <p>Ward 1: John Sparace Phone: (315) 336-2886</p> <p>Ward 2: John B. Mortise Phone: (315) 527-4056</p> <p>Ward 3: Kimberly Rogers Phone: (315) 336-3142</p> <p>Ward 4: Ramona Smith Phone: (315) 337-4327</p> <p>Ward 5: Frank Anderson Phone: (315) 337-0711</p> <p>Ward 6: John A Nash Phone: (315)-337-6655</p> <p>Ward 7: Louis DiMarco Phone: (315) 339-2056</p>

Additional Stakeholders

Michael F. McDermott, Co-Chairman
Program Manager AFCEE/EXC-Griffiss
428 Phoenix Drive Rome, NY 13441

Mark Reynolds, Co-Chairman
Sr. V-Pres, Planning & Development
Griffiss Local Development Corp.
584 Phoenix Drive
Rome, NY 13441

John Buczek
Town Supervisor – Town of Floyd
8299 Old Floyd Road
Rome, New York 13440

John Fitzgerald - President
Rome-Floyd Resident's Assoc
7101 North Street
Rome, NY 13440

Malcolm Didio
Town of Floyd Representative
8136 Caniroden Road
Rome, NY 13440

Frank Tallarino
Commissioner of Public Works
City Hall
Rome, NY 13440

Jessica Breiten
Oneida County Env. Management
& Water Quality Council
Planning Dept Union Station
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Utica, NY 13501

Peter Taylor, Regional Spill Engineer
NYSDEC
Div. of Remedial Remediation-Region 6
317 Washington Street
Watertown, New York 13601

Patricia Anken
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Rome, New York 13440

Heather Bishop
NYSDEC
Bureau of Eastern Remedial Action
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Albany, NY 12233

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USEPA - Region II
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Gayle Jones Director
Oneida County Health Dept.
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Rome, NY 13440

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NYSDEC
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Utica, NY13501

Mr. Mark Tibbe
NYSDEC
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Utica, New York 13502

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Environmental Health
Oneida County Health Dept.
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Utica, NY 13501

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Buffalo, NY 14204

Chad Lawrence
Acting Commissioner of Aviation
Griffiss International Airport
592 Hangar Road
Rome, NY 13441

ATTACHMENT 2: Media List

Former Griffiss AFB

Radio Station	POC	Position	Phone	E-mail
WRVO 90.3 FM	Fred Vigeant	Operations	(315) 312-3690	fred@wrvo.fm
WSYR 570 AM		Newsroom	(315) 472-9797	wsyrnews@clearchannel.com
WRVN 91.9 FM	Fred Vigeant	Operations	(315) 312-3690	fred@wrvo.fm
WIBX 950 AM		Newsroom	(315) 768-9500	news@wibx950.com
WFBL 1390 AM	John Carucci	Promotions	(315) 635-3971	j.carucci@lmgiradio.com

TV Station	POC	Position	Phone	E-mail
WKTV/NBC2		Newsroom	(315) 733-0404	newslink2@wktv.com
WSYR News 9		Assignment Desk	(315) 446-9999	assignmentdesk@9wsyr.com
WUTR/ABC		Newsroom	(315) 797-5220	news@wutr.tv

Newspaper	POC	Position	Phone	E-mail
Syracuse New Times		Events Department	(315) 422-7011	events@syracusenewtimes.com
Post-Standard	Mike Connor	Executive Editor	(315) 470-6397	mconnor@syracuse.com
Rome Sentinel		Newsroom	(315) 337-4000	release@rny.com
Observer-Dispatch	Elizabeth Cooper	Reporter	(315) 792-5000	ecooper@uticaod.com