



REPLY TO:
ATTENTION OF

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
UNITED STATES ARMY COMBINED ARMS SUPPORT COMMAND
SUSTAINMENT CENTER OF EXCELLENCE
2221 ADAMS AVENUE
FORT LEE, VIRGINIA 23801-2102

August 26, 2010

Dear Concerned Citizens:

Soldiers from Fort Lee routinely train at Fort A. P. Hill. Effects of the Base Realignment and Closure Laws of 2005 have increased the number of Fort Lee soldiers training at Fort A. P. Hill. Thus far, Soldiers have been transported by bus. Each movement between installations uses between nineteen and twenty-five buses, plus two tractor trailers for cargo. Interstate-95 is the most expeditious route, and the distance between Fort Lee and Fort A.P. Hill is approximately seventy-five miles. Removing the large number of convoys from Virginia highways will prove to be a safer means of transportation for our soldiers, and result in safer use of I-95 and adjoining routes for the general public.

This additional volume of traffic along I-95 is a safety concern for Army leadership, not only for the soldiers, but for the public as well. Given the concern for safe execution of training, a research study was conducted to determine the feasibility of rail transport in lieu of road. According to data published by the Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles and the Federal Railroad Administration, rail transport between Fort Lee and Fort AP Hill is considered safer than road transport. Safety is first and foremost for Army Soldiers and the general public. The use of Army-owned passenger rail would be considerably safer, and comparable in cost, to the large convoys of buses and semi-trailers.

The Combined Arms Support Command leadership has directed action to change the current mode of transport from Fort Lee to Fort A. P. Hill from buses, to a passenger train. The bus and truck convoy will be replaced by one (six to ten car) passenger train, two advance party buses, and will include a local shuttle of buses onto Fort A.P. Hill.

The passenger train will be a Chartered, Special Movement Train, operated under contract to the Army by AMTRAK. An average of 800 passengers (and high of 1100) will be transported to Fort A. P. Hill and return to Fort Lee approximately forty times a year (approximately three times a month). The primary purpose for this procedural change is safety. A passenger train is a safer way to transport large numbers of soldiers

The passenger train will be home stationed on Fort Lee, VA. The train will average six passenger cars and two locomotives, and it will offload and park at one of several privately owned sites under consideration in the vicinity of Milford, VA. Current plans are for the train to depart Fort Lee on Sunday afternoon and arrive in Milford the same day. The passengers will be transported by shuttle buses from the rail site to Fort A. P. Hill. The train will remain at the Milford rail yard until training ends four or five days later, when shuttle buses will return the soldiers. The train will return to Fort Lee for storage, refueling, and replenishment for the next trip.

The Milford site will serve as the passenger drop off point, and train parking area. No refueling will be accomplished. Small emergency repairs, such as light bulb changes or fluid replacement may be done on the Milford site. Fort Lee will be the "home" station where refueling and routine maintenance will be accomplished. Any major maintenance will be conducted off site at one of several maintenance facilities that are currently in operation for such purposes.

The Army conducted a comprehensive suite of Air Quality, Environmental forecasts that confirm an overall negligible impact on regional air quality for this proposed action. All Air Quality, Environmental projections and analyses comply fully with the Clean Air Act and the National Environmental Policy Act. The Army expects that this rail service would ultimately yield the following environmental benefits: reduction in certain acid-rain pollutants; reduction in fuel usage; reduction in ozone-forming chemicals by using advanced coatings systems for rail cars; and reduction in ozone depleting chemicals through usage of ozone-friendly refrigerants.

The Army has determined that the project will be categorically excluded from further National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) analysis in accordance with 32 CFR Part 651.29. A copy of the Record of Environmental Consideration (REC) and associated Air Quality Analysis is attached. All activities associated with this action will comply fully with local, state, and federal laws and regulations.

This will be Army owned equipment, and other Federal agencies may, on occasion, request to use the train. These requests will be evaluated for economy and environmental impact on a case by case basis.

Questions on this action may be sent to: Fort Lee Public Affairs Office, 1321 Battle Drive, Fort Lee, VA 23801-1521 or keith.desbois@us.army.mil.

Sincerely,



DAVID J. KOLLEDA
Deputy to the Commandant
U.S. Army Transportation Corps