

US Forces Move to Safer Location

Washington announced July 31 that DoD will move air operations and 4,000 troops from Dhahran and Riyadh to a more remote location within Saudi Arabia to improve security from terrorist attacks.

The US forces will move to Prince Sultan AB in Al Kharj, a remote desert base about fifty miles from Riyadh.

Three Patriot antimissile batteries in Dhahran will remain there, but their crews—some 500 US personnel—will move from the Khobar Towers apartment complex to the King Abdul-Aziz compound, the Saudi military base near the towers. Another three Patriot batteries will remain in Riyadh, but DoD officials said personnel will be consolidated in a more secure area.

A joint US-Saudi statement released July 31 said that the “moves will be initiated immediately and completed on an urgent basis without interrupting ongoing operations.”

The relocation, expected to be completed this month, will cost approximately \$200 million. The US and Saudi Arabia will share the cost equally, according to DoD officials.

DoD also announced that it was sending about 750 family members home from Saudi Arabia. Approximately 1,000 of the 5,000 US personnel in the region had been serving on accompanied tours, but Secretary Perry told reporters last month that number would decrease “significantly.”