

LEATHERNECK LEFTOVERS

QUICK STATS

- ✘ **CONFERENCE:** Spending
- ✘ **TEAM:** Department of Defense
- **FUMBLE:** \$36 million for an empty command center
- **HOW TO RECOVER THE BALL:** Require DOD to submit reports on all completed facility construction at the one-, three-, and five-year marks to certify the facility's use compared to the original construction justification

In January 2010 DOD requested \$36 million to construct a 64,000 square-foot command and control facility at Camp Leatherneck in the Helmand Province of Afghanistan. For perspective a football field including end zones is only 57,600 square feet. After awarding, designing, and building the entire project, The Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR) found in 2013 the facility was unused and obviously unnecessary.^{civ}

The SIGAR investigation found written evidence that subordinate commanders questioned the requirement for the facility but were later overruled. In the end SIGAR offered six process-improvement recommendations that included holding the decision-makers accountable. DOD only agreed with one of the recommendations (and partially agreed with two others) but chose not to hold anyone accountable. In 2014 the U.S. officially transferred Camp Leatherneck (including its \$36 million command and control facility) back to Afghan control.

For more information, please visit:

[SIGAR: \\$36 Million Command and Control Facility at Camp Leatherneck, Afghanistan: Unwanted, unneeded, and unused](#)
[Army Times: Report slams Army officers over unused \\$36M facility](#)

RECOVERY

The men and women of America's armed services have fought, bled, and died to protect freedom. If there is a resource they need to better do their job, they should have it. However, DOD should do a better job of ensuring it spends money on resources to actually help troops, not just create big empty buildings. Spending money on useless projects does not make the U.S. safer, and it is unclear how it advances American interests in Afghanistan. Congress should require DOD to submit reports on all facility construction at one-, three-, and five-year increments to certify the facility's use compared to the original construction justification. Knowing these reports will be required will cause DOD to ensure the long-term planning for facility use is complete before construction begins.