

FORT SAM HOUSTON News Leader

"One Team, Supporting Military Missions and Family Readiness!"

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BRAC construction on Fort Sam Houston brings transformation on, off post

In 2008, the 2005 Defense Base Closure and Realignment actions on Fort Sam Houston brought with it challenges and countless opportunities.

Challenges include, managing traffic and parking headaches, movement of heavy equipment, and designated work zones; it also brought with it opportunities that will benefit the military's mission and aid in the economic growth and revitalization of San Antonio and the communities surrounding Fort Sam Houston.

Twenty-eight projects worth about \$1.2 billion in construction contracts were awarded in Fiscal 2008 and the San Antonio Base Realignment and Closure construction program continues to carry its momentum into Fiscal 2009.

Three construction contracts worth more than \$101 million have been awarded for BRAC projects at Fort Sam Houston, Randolph Air Force Base and Port San Antonio, formerly known as Kelly Air Force Base. These contracts concern the construction of dormitories, renovation of two buildings, and

modifications to a hangar, which is all being done to prepare for the arrival of new military missions and the realignment of existing missions in accordance with BRAC mandates.

Some projects slated for Fort Sam Houston in 2009 are:

- Tri-Service Laboratory a 181,000 square foot building that will be used to house research efforts that examine the health and safety effects of exposure to a variety of stressors in the field;
 - Medical Education and Training Campus, Medical Instructional Facility #5, a 39,032 square foot, multi-story medical instruction facility that will provide general and applied instructional space, administrative areas, and automation-aided classroom space for METC students; and
 - METC Physical Fitness Center.
- In addition, several renovation projects are slated for Installation Management Command, Headquarters Buildings 2264 and 2266.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Fort Worth District,



Courtesy photo

Construction is in progress on the Medical Education and Training Campus, Medical Instructional Facility #5, a 39,032 square foot, multi-story medical instruction facility that will provide general and applied instructional space, administrative areas, and automation-aided classroom space for METC students.

awarded the largest of these contracts for construction of a 1,200-person dormitory that will be part of METC on Fort Sam Houston.

The \$73.4 million contract went to the Hensel Phelps Construction Company, which has a district office in Austin, Texas and is based in Greeley, Colo. This dormitory is the third of three dorms being built for METC.

METC will consolidate the enlisted medical training programs of all branches of the U.S. military. In addition to the dorms, METC's 1.9 million square feet of facilities will also include classrooms, labs, a physical fitness center and an 80,000 square foot dining facility.

BRAC and related military construction projects involve

See CONSTRUCTION P10



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Community Covenant San Antonio leaders pledge support of Soldiers, Families

By Esther Garcia
Fort Sam Houston Public Affairs Office

Leaders from the San Antonio and Fort Sam Houston communities joined Lt. Gen. Thomas Turner, commanding general, Army North, in an Army Community Covenant signing ceremony July 27 at the gazebo on Staff Post Road.

The covenant recognizes the support of the local community, associated with sustaining Army missions in San Antonio and welcoming Army Soldiers and their Families as members of the community.

Turner, host for the ceremony, said, "Today we will sign a covenant that pledges the support of the San Antonio

"Today we will sign a covenant that pledges the support of the San Antonio community to the Soldiers and Families of Fort Sam Houston."

Lt. Gen. Thomas Turner
Commanding general, U.S. Army North

community to the Soldiers and Families of Fort Sam Houston."

The nation has been at war since Sept. 11, 2001. The burden that has been asked of Soldiers and their Families has endured for nearly seven

See PLEDGE P7

Continued commitment



Photo by Jeff Crawley

Wounded warrior Staff Sgt. Jason March signs the Army Warrior Health-Care Covenant Nov. 13 at Fort Sam Houston as his wife, Sandra, holds the covenant steady. The Marches represented all Warriors in Transition and their Families at the signing ceremony. Army Surgeon General Lt. Gen. Eric Schoemaker was the first to sign the covenant, which reaffirmed the Army's commitment to provide world-class health care to wounded, injured and ill Soldiers and their Families.

ARNORTH looks back at 2008

By Sgt. Joshua Ford
U.S. Army North Public Affairs Office

In 2008, U.S. Army North was dealt its fair share of curve balls, from wildfires burning in California, to back-to-back hurricanes targeting the southern United States, to standing up a consequence management response force.

Even through moments of intense operational tempo, the command stood strong as it performed its mission and transformed into the U.S. Northern Command's Joint Forces Land Component Command.

"This past year was one of transition, and I believe the people of ARNORTH and our subordinate units met every challenge with great results," said Lt. Gen. Thomas Turner, commanding general, U.S. Army North.

The first test for the unit came in the spring during the National Level Exercise 2-08. In May, Army North personnel deployed to Washington State to respond to events centered on a simulated terrorist attack in the Pacific Northwest. It wasn't long after that "real-world" events took the field.

In June, thousands of lightning strikes in combination with record dry conditions sparked more than 2,500 wildfires that burned thousands of acres across Northern California. The fires triggered the deployment of military personnel to support the state of California and wildfire fighting efforts.

U.S. Army North Region X, Defense Coordinating Officer, Col. Gary Stanley and his defense-coordinating element, augmented by several ARNORTH experts deployed



Courtesy photo

Civilian firefighters fight wildfires in Northern California June 2008. In June, thousands of lightning strikes and record dry conditions in Northern California sparked more than 2,500 wildfires burning thousands of acres across the state.



Photo by Pvt. David Nye

Simulated victims urge Marines to help them from the danger zone at Leschi village May 4, 2008. Leschi village was used as the site to simulate a portion of Seattle that would have been damaged by the simulated terrorist attack. The simulation was part of the ongoing NLE 02-08 exercise.

to Boise, Idaho, to support the National Interagency Fire Center.

"Less than a week after being activated, we had to coordinate a request for our first four military helicopters with water buckets to fight the fires," Stanley said. "Within days, six Marine Corps and two Navy helicopters had made nearly 500 drops totaling more than 160,000 gallons of water."

While the fires were burning on the west coast, a storm was brewing in the Atlantic Ocean. In July, Hurricane Dolly moved onto the radar screen, prompting Army North to deploy its Region VI DCE.

The Category-two hurricane hit the southern tip of Texas just north of Brownsville July 23, causing isolated flooding and leaving thousands of people without power. The DCE, led by Col. Laverne "Bullet" Young, prepared to coordinate a wide range of capabilities, including search and rescue, evacua-

tion, transportation and medical support.

Shortly after Hurricane Dolly hit Texas, Gustav appeared, threatening to hit Louisiana with the same force as Katrina did in 2004. As Louisiana state and federal governments worked to evacuate two million people out of New Orleans and other coastline communities, Col. Young's team packed up and moved to Baton Rouge, La.

U.S. Army North's Operational Command Post 2 followed by deploying from San Antonio to Alexandria, La., ahead of Gustav, marking the first time that an OCP had deployed before the landfall of a hurricane.

If two hurricanes in just over a month wasn't enough, a third was on its way—Hurricane Ike. In preparation for the storm, Region VI, DCE moved back to Texas, and after redeploying back to San Antonio, OCP 2 was in the saddle again, this time moving up to Camp Mabry in Austin, Texas.

"Because of our rigorous training program, our DCEs, OCPs and the main command post remained ready to assist the American people," said U.S. Army North Command Sgt. Maj. George Nieves.

During the midst of these various natural disasters, the command also supported the U.S. Secret Service by providing assets to the Democratic and Republican National Conventions, and took part in a full-scale chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear and high-yield explosive consequence management response force exercise.

Exercise Vibrant Response took place at Fort Stewart, Ga. in September, and involved more than 800 servicemembers and civilians. The exercise integrated Army North's subordinate Joint Task Force Civil Support as the task force headquarters to command the CBRNE Consequence Management Response Force and garnered the attention of

See ARNORTH P6

New Warrior and Family Support Center opens

Story and photo by Cheryl Harrison
Army Community Service Marketing

What began as a dream turned into reality Dec. 1 as the keys were presented to Judith Markelz, program manager for the new 12,000 square foot Warrior and Family Support Center at Fort Sam Houston.

For five years the WFSC was located in a 1,200 square foot room in the Powless Guest House.

Two years ago Les Huffman of Huffman Developments spoke with Markelz and asked her "What do you need here?"

Markelz, a woman who speaks her mind, without timidity, had a big dream and Huffman and his brother Steve, president of Huffman Developments agreed it had to become a reality.

During the afternoon hours of Dec. 1 despite crisp temperatures and high winds, and 15 months following the ground-

breaking, the crowd of more than 500 witnessed history as the new WFSC opened its doors. With inspiring words from high profile speakers and guests, the keys to the building were turned over to the Army with a ribbon cutting ceremony.

"Five years ago a conference room was converted to a place of respite for our wounded warriors and their Families. Today we thank you for the support of our San Antonio community, for making this building a reality and a place we can honor and serve our wounded warriors," said Maj. Gen Russell Czerw, commander, Fort Sam Houston and Army Medical Department Center and School.

Following the ceremony guests were invited to enjoy the refreshments and walk among the beautifully landscaped serenity gardens before taking a tour of the new facility.

The \$4.5 million privately funded building offers big screen TVs in virtually every imaginable spot, to include the back patio over the two way fireplace, plus a library of DVDs. A computer lab has over 20 computers to check e-mail or use the internet. The theater and game room has an assortment of XBOX games and many craft activities. Home baked refreshments are plentiful in the dream kitchen, where the coffee pot is always on. The great room offers several seating areas with leather sofas to sink into and just relax or read some of the many books and magazines.

The large open front and back porch areas are equipped for cookouts and the butterfly garden provides tranquil personal space on its pathways or by the peaceful flowing waterfall and pond.

The dream of the new WFSC facility became a reality with more than 5,500 financial contributors, 75 companies



(Front row, from left) Wounded warriors Sgt. Domingo Soto-Santana, Spc. Joey Paulk, Sgt. James Ford, and Spc. Jerry Morris assist (back row, from left) Col. Wendy Martinson, director of Strategic Communications AMEDD, Col. Mary Garr, U.S. Army Garrison commander, Brig. Gen. James Gilman, commander of Great Plains Regional Medical Command and Brooke Army Medical Center, and Judith Markelz, program director Warrior and Family Support Center, in cutting the ribbon for the new \$4.5 million privately-funded Warrior and Family Support Center Dec. 1.

that provided discounted goods or services in the construction and furnishing of the building, the hundreds of dedicated volunteers who have

served on behalf of the wounded warriors and their Families and the military staff who recognized the need and supported the mission to completion.

Center for the Intrepid celebrates first anniversary



Photo by Jen Rodriguez



Photo by Cheryl Harrison

The front entrance of the Center for the Intrepid leads directly back to an exit into a courtyard only steps away from the new Fisher Houses III and IV. The walkway displays names of contributors and is a peaceful stroll to the two new houses. A sculpture depicting a broken circle, cracked but still intact, adorns the terrace that has an overall feel of "village."

Physical therapist assistant Melisa Howard holds on to the gate belt around Pfc. Adrian Garcia's waist to assist him in maintaining his balance as he practices walking with his prosthetic legs in the Center for the Intrepid. Amputees start out walking with their feet turned backwards for additional stability – to avoid the tendency to lean backwards – before knee joints are added. The CFI, which was one year old Jan. 29, is a rehabilitation facility that treats amputees and burn victims, specifically U.S. servicemen and women who served in military operations in Iraq and Afghanistan.

BAMC parking

As parking will be very limited on the Brooke Army Medical Center Campus due to construction, we will be easing into employee satellite parking in the month of January. The transition timeline is as follows:

Jan. 6 – Parking lot A will be designated as "Patient Parking Only."

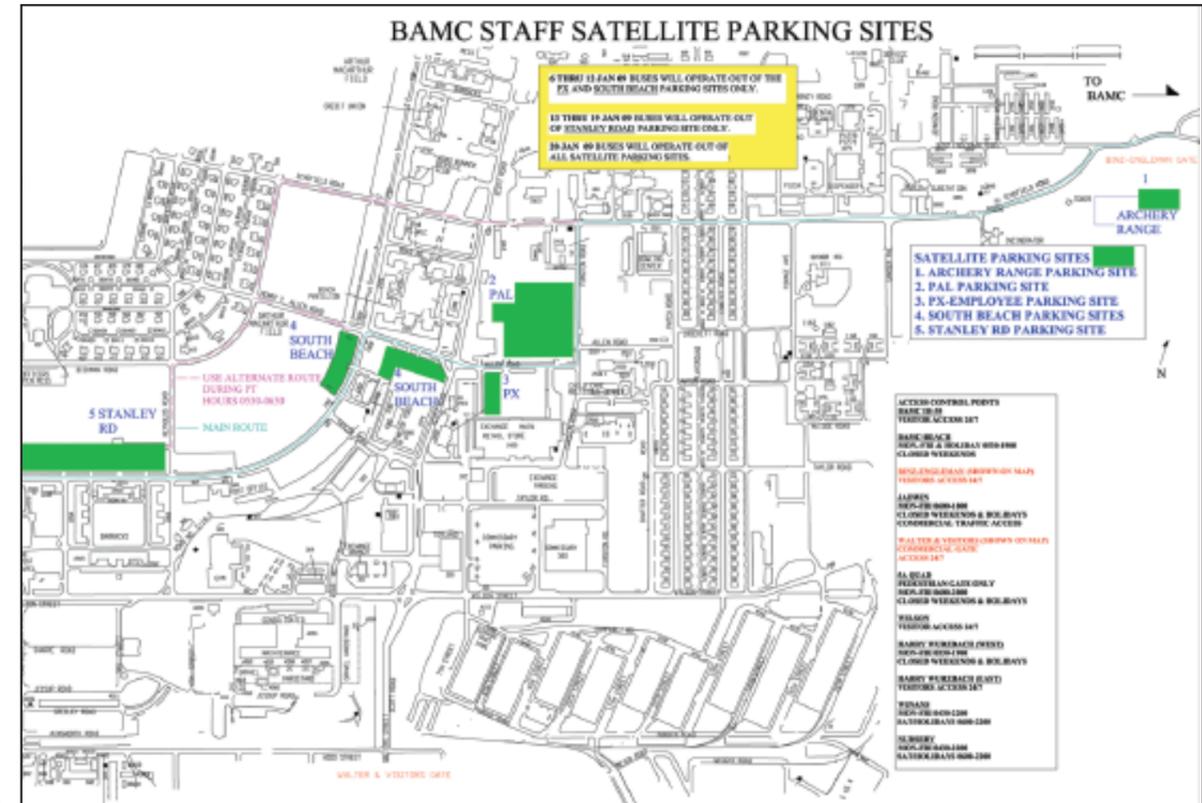
Jan. 6 to 12 – Buses operate out of the Post Exchange and South Beach lots only.

Jan. 13 – Parking lot B will be designated as "Patient Parking Only."

Jan. 13 to 19 – Buses operate out of Stanley Road parking lot only. The Post Exchange and South Beach lots will be closed at this time.

Jan. 20 – Parking lot D will be designated as "Patient Parking Only" and Parking lot F will be "Carpool Parking and Visitors Parking Only."

Jan. 20 – all buses will be in full operation during the surge hours of 5 to 8 a.m. Monday through



Friday and 3:30 to 6:30 p.m. Monday through Friday and four buses will operate during non-surge hours. All satellite parking lots will be open at this time.

Jan. 27 – Parking lot G will be designated as "Vendor

and Visitors Parking Only." Parking lot E will remain available for staff until closed by the contractor for the construction bubble in mid-February.

(Source: BAMC Public Affairs)

Change in leadership



Photo by Minnie Jones

J. Randall Robinson (left) director, U.S. Army Installation Management Command-West Region; Col. Mary Garr (left, front), incoming commander, U.S. Army Garrison Fort Sam Houston; Col. Wendy Martinson (center) outgoing garrison commander; and Maj. Gen. Russell Czerw (far right), commanding general, Fort Sam Houston and Army Medical Department Center and School, perform a symbolic tour of the garrison before the change of command ceremony July 29 at the post's main flagpole.

ARNORTH from P3

America's top Soldier — Army Chief of Staff, Gen. George Casey.

Casey watched, listened and asked questions as Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and

Marines walked through how they might fly search and rescue missions, extract casualties and decontaminate those affected by a catastrophic nuclear attack in the nation's heartland.

As the year was beginning



Photo by Patti Bielling

Lt. Col. Travis Grigg and Matt Hopper of Army North's responding Defense Coordinating Element work to capture video of localized flooding from the team's emergency response vehicle.

to draw to a close, there was room for one more exercise.

Exercise Vigilant Shield tested the command's ability to perform civil support missions in the wake of a simulated 7.8-magnitude earthquake. In the scenario, the quake struck Southern California, killed and injured thousands of people, left millions without power and broke the southern portion of the state's infrastructure.

Whether it's real-world or an exercise, U.S. Army North continues to build on what they know, and ultimately, the American people get the best support possible.

"What I'm most impressed with is that through everything this past year, we built strong relationships with the Department of Homeland



Photo by Staff Sgt. James Harper Jr.

Glaveston Island, Texas, after Hurricane Ike made landfall Sept. 13, 2008.

Security, FEMA and the National Guard leadership of many states," Turner explained. "It is critical that these relationships continue, since these are the people at the tip of the spear during times of natural or man-made disasters to whom we provide support if required."

Support is what Army

North is about, and the mission is never complete. "Our goal has been and always will be to take this command from good to great. What that means to me is that we can never be complacent in our planning and preparation for each and every mission we may be handed," Turner emphasized.

PELDGE from P2

years. This covenant reaffirms the community support of Soldiers and their Families.

Invited to sign the covenant included Louis Stumberg, civilian aide to secretary of the Army; Tommy Adkisson, Bexar County Commissioner Precinct 4; Councilwoman Sheila McNeil, City Council District 2; Councilwoman Diane Cibrian, City Council District 8; Richard Perez, president, The Greater San Antonio Chamber of Commerce; Maj. Gen. Russell Czerw, commanding general, Fort Sam Houston and Army Medical Department Center and School; J. Randall

Robinson, director, U.S. Army Installation Management Command-West Region; Col. Wendy Martinson, commander, U. S. Army Garrison; Gail Siller, superintendent, Fort Sam Houston Independent School District; and retired Army Maj. Gen. Alvin Schofield, United States Army Reserve ambassador.

The signing ceremony included the signing of a 5-foot-tall covenant by all the participants. The poster-size covenant will be on display at various locations on Fort Sam Houston.



Photos by Esther Garcia

(From left) Maj. Gen. Russell Czerw, commanding general, Fort Sam Houston and Army Medical Department Center and School; Richard Perez, president, Greater San Antonio Chamber of Commerce; and Lt. Gen. Thomas Turner, commanding general, Army North, sign the Army Community Covenant during a ceremony July 27 in front of the gazebo on Staff Post Road.

News Leader survey online

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Events To Remember

Sgt. Ivette Hernandez and Spc. Shaquisha Stewart, Fort Sam Houston; Master Sgt Jesus Valdez, Lackland Air Force Base; Senior Airmen Jennifer Booth, Randolph Air Force Base; and Staff Sgt Brandis Van Iterson, Air Force Intelligence Surveillance Reconnaissance Agency, wave to the crowd at the annual Veterans Day Parade. Members of the military participate in several parades throughout the year supporting San Antonio and surrounding communities.



Photo by Esther Garcia

Disabled American Veterans Leonard Ruiz, Harold Williams and Percy Spence salute the colors during the Veterans Day ceremony Nov. 11 at the Fort Sam Houston National Cemetery. Several hundred people attended the two-hour observance, which featured 10 servicemen and women becoming U.S. citizens, the dedication of a new Purple Heart postage stamp and wreath layings.



Photo by Jeff Crawley



Photo by Esther Garcia

Soldiers dressed in period uniforms representing the Revolutionary War to Operations Enduring and Iraqi Freedom carry the Army's 178 streamers during the Army's 233rd birthday celebration June 13. The streamers represent the different campaigns and wars that the Army has fought over the years since 1775. Each silk streamer is 2 and 3/4 inches wide and 4 feet long with an inscription and date of each campaign, except for the last four campaigns.



Photo by Esther Garcia

Members of the U.S. Army Garrison Salute Battery fire a cannon salute July 4 as the names of the 50 states are called out in the order in which they joined the union celebrating 232 years of independence. Fort Sam Houston celebrates the Fourth of July with a simple but patriotic ceremony at the post flagpole.



Photo by Esther Garcia

Country superstar Tim McGraw signs an autograph for Warrior in Transition Staff Sgt. Allan Annaert. McGraw met with several wounded warriors and their families backstage before the concert to thank them for their sacrifice. McGraw performed a free concert for about 25,000 service members and their families Sept. 11 at MacArthur Parade Field.



Photo by Minnie Jones

Promoting Down Syndrome Awareness, thousands gathered at Fort Sam Houston Sept. 28 at the MacArthur parade field for the annual Buddy Walk. Thousands of adults and children came together to celebrate and walked a mile around the track at MacArthur Parade Field to support the Annual Buddy Walk.



Photo by Elaine Wilson

U.S. Senator John Cornyn greets Ella Cepeda and Diana Cepeda (far left) before presenting the Gold Medal of Remembrance to Ella's children, 8-year-old Aaron Jr. and 4-year-old Journee, May 26 during the Memorial Day ceremony at the Fort Sam Houston National Cemetery. The medal honors children who lost a parent in service to the nation. Their father, Marine Sgt. Aaron N. Cepeda Sr., died in Iraq on May 7, 2005. The Cepedas honored his memory by wearing a picture of him on their T-shirts.

Victoria Barker, 7, crosses the finish line of the 28th annual Combat Medic Run Oct. 18 with her uncle, Ross. Barker, who competed in the 1 to 14 years-old category, finished in third place with a time of 30:08 in the 5K run. About 1,000 runners competed in the run and wellness walk held on post. The run was part of the Fall Fest activities.



Photo by Esther Garcia



Photo by Esther Garcia

Dancers from the KaZamba Drum and Dance Group perform for a cheering crowd April 20. Fort Sam Houston joined in on the city-wide festivities by opening its gates to the San Antonio community for a Fiesta celebration of its own. The KaZamba Drum and Dance Group specializes in Brazilian, African and Caribbean-influenced world rhythms.

CONSTRUCTION from P1

building and renovating 78 major facilities that amount to approximately 6 million square feet of space. The facilities being constructed or remodeled include living quarters, clinics, hospital facilities, classrooms, laboratories, a bridge, field training areas and offices.

The anticipated peak of construction activity is expected to occur in the summer of 2009, when as many as 2,200 workers will be spread across the various BRAC project sites. The

total cost of the San Antonio BRAC Program is projected to exceed \$2 billion over the course of five fiscal years, which include 2007 through 2011.

Bolstering Readiness

The two largest projects are the San Antonio Military Medical Center (SAMMC) and the Medical Education and Training Campus (METC).

The Medical Education and Training Campus is being constructed on Fort Sam Houston

to consolidate the enlisted medical training programs of all branches of the U.S. military. Medics, corpsmen, nuclear medicine technologists, and other specialists will be trained there. The METC complex will encompass approximately 1.9 million square feet of facilities, including dorms, classrooms, laboratories, a physical fitness center, and an 80,000 square foot dining facility that is believed to be the largest in the U.S. Army's entire inventory. The campus is expected to accommodate an

average daily student enrollment of more than 9,000, making it the largest institution of its kind in the world.

The changes to BAMC will add almost 760,000 square feet to the existing hospital, expanding the facility by roughly 50 percent. A multi-story addition will house a Level 1 trauma center, operating rooms, clinical and administrative space, and an extension of BAMC's internationally acclaimed burn center. A 5,000 space parking garage will also be built, as well as a central energy plant. About 288,000 square feet of the existing BAMC facilities will be renovated. The renovations to Wilford Hall Medical Center will convert the hospital into an ambulatory care clinic. The work will cover almost 146,000 square feet across three floors and the basement.

When the SAMMC project is finished, SAMMC-North will be one of the largest inpatient facilities in the Department of Defense, and SAMMC-South will be the DoD's largest ambulatory outpatient clinic.

Other BRAC Projects

Another primary component of the BRAC Program concerns medical research facilities. The 150,000 square foot Joint Center of Excellence for Battlefield Health and Trauma Research that's being constructed next to BAMC will bring together tri-service research teams to enhance the delivery of combat casualty care. The nearby Tri-Service Research Laboratory is a 181,000 square foot structure designed to house research efforts that examine the health and safety effects of exposure to a variety of stressors in the field.

As many as 20 historic structures on Fort Sam Houston, most of which are 75 or more years old, are being refurbished to make way for BRAC-related administrative movements. These remodeled buildings will provide office space for the Army's Installation Management Command; Army Environmental Command; the

Army Contracting Agency; the Family Morale, Welfare and Recreation Command; and the Network Enterprise Technology Command.

BRAC-related construction activity also is occurring at Camp Bullis. A 201,000 square foot Armed Forces Reserve Center is being built to provide permanent facilities for 23 Army Reserve units and four Texas Army National Guard units. Another 63,000 square feet of space on Camp Bullis is also being developed as a field-training complex for students from METC.

Economic Gains and Opportunities

The use of local contractors, sub-contractors, and vendors is expected to bring millions of dollars into the economy. The value of the construction contracts awarded in Fiscal 2008 amounted to more than \$1 billion. The contracts scheduled to be awarded in the 2009 fiscal year are projected to total more than \$500 million. The normal level of expenditures for military construction in the San Antonio area historically has been between \$65 and \$100 million a year.

A study by the City of San Antonio's Economic Development Department found that the military's annual economic impact is \$13.3 billion. According to the study, Department of Defense activities and related services directly and indirectly contribute to the employment of approximately 195,000 individuals in the San Antonio area, making the military the top overall generator of jobs in the city.

Beyond these figures, the study projects that BRAC will produce a \$5.7 billion economic impact through 2011 and generate more than 57,000 direct and spin-off jobs during this same time period. The growth that BRAC is bringing to San Antonio is expected to lay the groundwork for further opportunities, as more governmental organizations show interest in relocating to San Antonio to complement BRAC-related missions.