



**JOINT READINESS TRAINING CENTER
AND FORT POLK
Brig. Gen. Jason K. Kamiya
*Statement***



May 10, 2002

Bayou Theater, Fort Polk, La.

Statement by Brig. Gen. Jason K. Kamiya to employees regarding Commercial Activities Study Decision

I have asked you here today so that I could personally inform you about the commercial activities study decision. I feel that is important that you hear this news straight from me. I also want to talk to you about what's ahead as we move forward to implement this decision.

As I said, the purpose of this meeting is to inform you of the decision. I don't plan to get into a question and answer session today. We will begin a series of questions and answer sessions with you within the next few days. We wanted to first give you a chance to absorb this decision and to think about the questions you might have.

We have been notified that a contractor has been selected and awarded a conditional contract to provide the support functions here at Fort Polk.

The name of the commercial firm that won the contract is AECOM Government Services, Inc. Their adjusted bid was \$197,696,595, which was \$54,431,110 less than the MEO bid of \$252,127,705.

A public viewing of cost comparison documents and appeal filing period will begin May 20 and continue through July 1. There are various appeal avenues and periods that must be exhausted before this decision becomes "final." We anticipate a final decision and award will be made in the October timeframe.

In the meantime, we will begin transitioning to the contractor in September with full implementation of contract performance by 1 March of next year.

Documents relating to this decision will be available for review by appointment at the Directorate of Contracting Training Room. The point of contact for public review of the documents is Mr. Henry Victor at 531-2135.

We were all hoping that the employee bid would be selected. You are a great work force and an important part of our team. I know that doesn't make this decision any easier but I want you to know how much we appreciate the great work that you do.

The Commercial Activities study was directed in accordance with the Office of Management and Budget Circular A-76 to ensure that our Army receives the most efficient support services for Fort Polk. It is a unique opportunity to redesign the support organization to meet the mission requirements now and in the future. The process was fair and objective.

I also want to assure you that the Reduction in Force process will be fair. We will follow all of the procedures to protect your rights and benefits. The number of positions that will be eliminated is approximately 638. Initially there were 355 permanent employees identified for involuntary separation. However, due to a number of successful strategies to minimize the impact of the reduction in force, including optional retirements, the use of temporary and term employees, and the possibility of VERA/VSIP, we anticipate about 200 involuntary separations. We expect RIF notices to go out in December of this year and be effective February 28, 2003.

Although the appeal period is pending, we must move forward with plans to implement this decision. Our efforts will be focused on helping you through this transition. Within the next couple of days, we will begin a series of question and answer sessions within each directorate and organization. My staff will be available to answer general questions about the decision and the Reduction in Force procedures that we will follow. The schedule of these meetings will be available within each organization. These question and answer sessions will be for questions of a general nature. We will deal with specific questions about the personal impact on you individually as we move forward with the Reduction in Force process and identify employees who will be affected.

We will launch an all out effort to assist you in the days and months ahead and I am committed to providing you the best assistance possible to minimize the difficulty of this transition.

In addition to Department of Defense and Army placement programs, the Army Career and Alumni Program will be available to provide you with a wide variety of assistance. This includes job interview preparation, resume assistance, job application assistance and transitioning counseling. The ACAP center is located at Building 2155 at the intersection of 16th Street and Alabama Ave. Hours of operation are 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. The ACAP program will also host a series of Job Fairs to help those seeking new employment. The first Job Fair will be held May 22 from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. at the Warrior Club. We are expecting approximately 20 companies with a variety of job opportunities for prospective employees. Another job fair is planned for the first week of February prior to the implementation of our Reduction in Force.

We have also set up an employee hot line at 531-4708. You will be able to go to the Fort Polk web page for a link with information about the CA study decision

and employee assistance. The Guardian and the Polk Channel will also serve as a resource for information to assist employees.

I have also spoken personally with the Louisiana Secretary of Labor, Garey Forster, and his department stands ready to assist employees affected by this decision. Our Civilian Personnel Advisory Center is working with Louisiana Department of Labor in regard to unemployment insurance benefits and Workforce Investment Act Training Programs that offer job related training assistance.

We have also applied for Voluntary Separation Incentive Pay (VSIP) and Voluntary Early Retirement Authority (VERA). Both programs can help eligible employees financially. VSIP is offered to encourage employees to voluntarily retire or resign from federal service and can result in a lump sum payment of up to \$25,000. VERA will allow employees to retire earlier than otherwise eligible to reduce the adverse impact of a Reduction in Force. To be eligible for VERA, you must have at least 20 years of creditable service and be at least 50 years old or have 25 years of creditable service at any age.

There will be a lot more information in the days ahead. I want to encourage you to take advantage of all of the information and assistance that we will make available to you.