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- * Joint Base San Antonio will assist City
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- * New "Military City USA Radio" program on KLUP
- * Town Hall meetings address concerns
- * Centennial of military flight
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BAMC construction reaches next phase

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers FORT SAM HOUSTON, Texas -- The Base Realignment and Closure project to expand Brooke Army Medical Center is moving into an accelerated phase of construction with the completion of the structural steel frame of the hospital's seven-story addition.

To celebrate, a "Topping Out" ceremony was held Feb. 25 to mark the placement of the last steel girder needed at the top of the addition to finish the frame.

The final beam was signed by several members of the San Antonio military community including Maj. Gen. Russell Czerw, commander, Fort Sam Houston and Army Medical Department Center & School and U.S. Army Garrison Commander Col. Mary Garr.

Several coins were also affixed to the beam representing a variety of military commands.

The completion of the structural steel frame allows the project's focus to shift toward finishing exterior walls, plumbing and electrical components.

The seven-story addition will expand BAMC by approximately 760,000 square feet and provide space for 200 more beds, a Level 1 trauma center, operating rooms, clinical and administrative space, and an extension of BAMC's

internationally-acclaimed burn center.

The next phase of construction is expected to more than double the roughly 500 construction workers currently on site and increase the pace of construction as the project moves toward its completion deadline in 2011.

Already, more than one million labor hours have been devoted to the project.

In total, between 2006 & 2013, the Department of Defense is currently planning to spend more than \$3.38 billion on construction/renovation projects at San Antonio military bases.

All BRAC actions must be complete by September 15, 2011.



Army Col. Mary Garr, garrison commander, signs her name to the last steel girder to be placed in the new construction expanding BAMC during a Topping Out" ceremony February 25. (Photo by Kari Thresher)



Brooke Army Medical Center (San Antonio Military Medical Center—North) Consolidated Tower



Brig. Gen. Leonard Patrick, 502nd Air Base Wing commander, addresses military and city leadership during a Defense Support to Civil Authorities briefing at the San Antonio Emergency Operations Center at Brooks City-Base. Seated at right is District Fire Chief Nim Kidd, emergency management coordinator for the City of San Antonio. (Photo by Brent Boller)

Joint Base San Antonio will help in times of need

by Brent Boller
502nd Air Base Wing OL-A Public Affairs -- When disaster strikes in Texas or neighboring states, San Antonio and its military resources are frequently called into action.

Hurricane Katrina in 2005 and Hurricanes Gustav and Ike in 2008, are stark reminders of the human and material costs inflicted by these ferocious and capricious forces of nature.

During Katrina and the 2008 hurricane season, local military bases were called upon to provide major support in evacuee and aircraft sheltering, transportation, medical care and myriad other activities. Now, Bexar County and city officials will find leveraging those resources much easier thanks to the Joint Base San Antonio structure mandated by the 2005 BRAC.

City, county and area base representatives met recently at the San Antonio Emergency Operations Center at Brooks City-Base to receive a briefing on the procedures for requesting local military aid during natural or man-made

disasters.

"Civil authorities now have one point of contact for requesting help, and that's the 502nd Air Base Wing," said Brig. Gen. Len Patrick, 502nd ABW commander. "In the past they had to contact each base," he said. "This is the next logical step in how the military works with the city – it's an exciting time." General Patrick commands the support assets at Lackland Air Force Base, Randolph Air Force Base and in late April, Fort Sam Houston. "Today's meeting was historic," the general said. "Not only did we have leaders from The 502nd ABW units on Lackland and Randolph AFBs, we also had representatives from the 59th Medical Wing, the Garrison at Fort Sam Houston, Army North and the city. I can't remember a pre-hurricane meeting here in San Antonio that was so comprehensive. We usually meet for the first time during the work up to a hurricane," he said.

District Fire Chief Nim Kidd, emergency management coordinator for the City of San Antonio, echoed the

General's enthusiasm for the refined process. "We now have one button to push when it comes to military help. I think we're finally there," the chief said.

"Knowing names and faces is a real plus," he said. Chief Kidd said the city's emergency operations center activates 5 to 7 days prior to a hurricane strike and it's advantageous for the military to plug in as soon as possible.

Chief Kidd noted that hurricanes are not the only threat, but they're the most frequent. In fact, the Atlantic hurricane season officially begins on June 1. The 2010 season is more likely to resemble 2008 than the relatively benign 2009 season along the U.S. east and gulf coasts, according to Accuweather.com and chief hurricane forecaster Joe Bastardi.

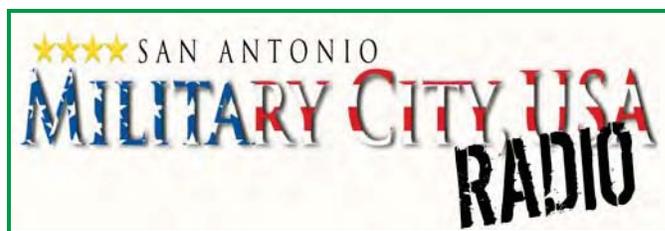
General Patrick is pleased that Joint Base San Antonio and the city are well out in front of it this year. "Now we have a formal opportunity rather than the 'come as you are' situation we had in the past," the general said.



From left to right: Brig Gen Patrick pictured with Mr. John Thurman, Co-host of "Military City USA Radio". (Photo by Brent Boller)

Brig. Gen. Patrick is a guest on new radio program

Brig Gen Leonard Patrick, Commander of the 502nd Air Base Wing along with Mr. Mike Novak, Tri-Chair of the San Antonio Military Transformation Task Force (MTTF) participated in the taping of new radio program in San Antonio called "Military City USA Radio" on News Talk 930 AM KLUP. The program aired at 8 a.m. CST Saturday, February 20th. Future programs can be heard via the internet at www.klup.com by clicking on the "Listen Live" button. The show is co-hosted by Mr. Mark Frye and Mr. John Thurman.



METC and Tri-Service Training

by Steven G. Brewster, LT, MSC, U.S. Navy Logistics Officer for the Transformation and Integration Office, Medical Education & Training Campus, FORT SAM HOUSTON, Texas -- How exactly does someone take 3 Naval Schools of Health Science, the 882nd Training Group of the Air Force and the Army's Academy of Health Sciences and blend/merge/integrate them into one functional unit? The BRAC law did not require the three services to become one training unit. Rather, it directed co-location. OK. We'll all just be neighbors in base housing, so to speak. But that doesn't make much sense – if we are not going to change our concepts of operation and integrate to some degree, why are we moving in the first place? Are we not supposed to find efficiencies, economies of scale and ways of working together?

In the world of individual augmentations and heavy deployment tempos, why not train together? Why not learn how it is done in other services? We work together in combat, so why not train together? Some would argue that because we don't deploy together and have differing missions while deployed, there is no reason to "cross train" to other service requirements.

I'm stepping out on a very thin limb here, but I would posit that anyone who still maintains that view has not yet deployed to Iraq or Afghanistan. In that environment, as all members of each service who have done time in those combat zones know - you either already know how to, or rapidly figure out how to work with each other. We are not afforded the luxury of depending on our own service at all times – we learn rapidly to

step out of our "comfort zones and vernacularisms" out of a sheer need to survive. And drilling down another layer: medical is medical – we all breathe and bleed the same, regardless of the uniform, including enemy forces.

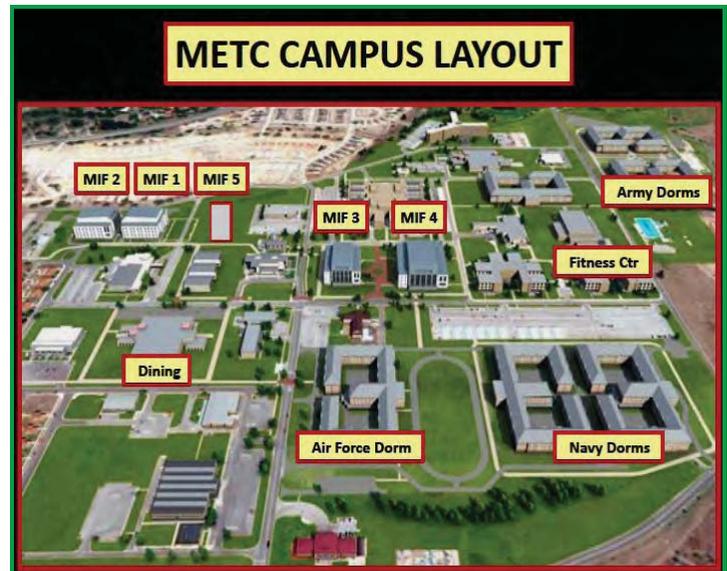
Some would challenge that this co-located training will result in one-service medic, the loss of identity and other such dilutions of service culture. The emergence of the "purple suited" medic, so to speak

When the dust settles, the entire project will have a \$950 million dollar price tag and include the latest technology in all classrooms. The team on the ground and everyone involved is committed to ensuring that this project comes in on time, on budget and on target. Frankly, we can't afford to get it wrong. The newly established METC will be the premiere showcase of enlisted military medical education! METC is our future and the next step in our combined heritage.

But our challenge does not stop there. Rather, that is where is just begins. As a young Hospital Corpsman student many years ago, I would have thought this tri-service training to be excessive, unnecessary and a waste of time. But having deployed in support of the war on terrorism, I will admit that I wish I had been exposed to this at a young age. If I had learned Army and Air Force cultures early in my career, most of my subsequent assignments would have held a far smaller learning curve in terms of integrating with those with whom I actually served.

We continue to battle the issues of integration without losing service identity. History and heritage are up to the individual owners to maintain. In this regard, maintaining

individual service culture is paramount. Yet at the same time, learning how to more closely work with sister services has never been more crucial.



Town Hall meetings address joint basing process



by **Lori Newman, Fort Sam Houston Public Affairs** -- U.S. Army Garrison commander, Col. Mary Garr hosted two town hall meetings Jan. 28 to inform Fort Sam Houston garrison employees about the progress of Joint Base San Antonio.

Joint basing, which includes Fort Sam Houston, as well as Lackland and Randolph Air Force Bases, was mandated by the 2005 Base Realignment and Closure decision made by Congress.

"Here at Fort Sam, the benefit we have from the 2005 BRAC decision is all the growth we are seeing here; the growth you are all a part of," Garr said, noting some of the new commands coming to FSH such

as the Medical Education Training Campus, Installation Management Command Headquarters and Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation Command. Garr talked about the current organizational structure and what changes that would be taking place over the next several months.

"Today we fall under the Installation Management Command, and our installation commander is Maj. Gen. Russell Czerw," she said. "Come IOC [initial operational capability] moving into FOC [full operational capability], we will be transitioning into an element under the Air Education and Training Command. That is the TRADOC [U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command] equivalent for the Air Force, commanded by a four-star general, Gen. [Stephen R.] Lorenz."

AETC oversees all the training and doctrine program-

ming for the Air Force worldwide.

"We are going to become part of that system, but as Joint Base San Antonio we will be unique in that we are not a training mission element," Garr said. "We will provide installation support services for Joint Base San Antonio."

The FSH Garrison will become part of the 502nd Air Base Wing, and the new wing commander, Air Force Brig-

adier Gen. Leonard A. Patrick, will not change or may become bilingual over time," Garr said.

"We want to ensure that the services we provide today will be continued under the joint base," the colonel said. Army-specific programs and activities such as Casualty Affairs, Survivor Outreach Services, Army Continuing Education System, the Sexual Assault and Response Program, the Soldier Family Assistance Center, the Warrior

and Family Support Center, tactical vehicle maintenance, privatized Army housing and Army Lodging, and other Army-unique functions, will fall under the Army Support Activity which will be established between the April and October. Garr and Meg Reyes, from the Air Force Personnel Center, also addressed how

the changeover from Army to Air Force would affect employee personnel status.

"Your pay is not going to change. Your benefits are not going to change," Garr said. "Your duty location will not change unless you decide to take a job elsewhere.

"What will change is your employing agency, today you are proud Department of the Army civilians; on 1 October, most of you will be proud Department of the Air Force civilians," the colonel added.

"1 October 2010 is not an end state. We will continue to evolve and refine Joint Base San Antonio over time to ensure we meet the needs of the people, units and missions of Fort Sam Houston. We need everyone on the team to help ensure success," Garr said. "We are one military, one team."

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"We want to ensure that the services we provide today will be continued under the joint base."

COL Mary Garr, Garrison commander, Ft. Sam Houston



Gen. Leonard A. Patrick, will become the installation commander.

The 502nd ABW stood up July 28 and Patrick moved into temporary quarters on FSH in August. Under the 502nd ABW, there will be three mission support groups: the 502nd MSG, currently Fort Sam Houston Garrison; the 902nd MSG at Randolph AFB; and the 802nd MSG at Lackland AFB.

Lackland and Randolph started operating under their new designations Feb. 2. FSH Garrison will become the 502nd MSG sometime in April, Garr said.

Joint Base San Antonio will become fully operational Oct. 1 and FSH Garrison employees will become Air Force employees Oct. 10.

Because our mission supports mostly Army personnel, most program names will not change, such as Army Community Service. "Our signage

Town Hall meetings address joint basing process

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Army employees will transfer into the Air Force system "as-is." Most people will retain their current jobs; pay plan, series and grade; and benefits.

National Security Personnel System employees will be transferring back into the Government Service system, not because of joint basing, but because it was directed by the DoD, but the transfer date has not yet been determined.

"There are certain positions that are going to ASA, the wing staff or other areas within the garrison," Reyes said.

"But, if you are postured to come to the wing staff, you will come as you are. There are a few instances where it will change, but we are working through those individuals right now."

People's supervisory chain, job title and/or duty location may change as the mission warrants.

"The official date of joint

basing is Oct. 1, when everything has been signed," Reyes said. "We are trying to lessen the impact to the employees, so we are looking at transitioning on Oct. 10 which is a pay period beginning date."

"Can I tell you that all of you are happy about transitioning? Can I tell you this is the best thing? No, I know you have some concerns and challenges that you are facing," Reyes added.

She identified some of the major differences between being an Army civilian employee and an Air Force civilian employee.

Some changes include: The Civilian Personnel Advisory Center will become the Air Force Personnel Center. Pay dates will change. Army civilians are paid on the second Thursday after a pay period begins; the Air Force is paid the first Friday after a pay period begins.

New Common Access Cards will be issued, but it is

still unclear when that process will take place.

The Army currently uses a resume system. The Air Force uses "skills-coding" to identify job experience. Skills-coding is a career brief the Air Force Personnel Center generates for employees where codes represent duties performed.

"For Army employees who are interested in being considered for Air Force positions after they transition at FOC, we will make sure they are skill-coded if we have a resume," Reyes said.

"We are asking for resumes 90 days ahead of time, on a volunteer basis. Once we receive them we will submit them to [Air Force Manpower Agency] for skills-coding. That's only if we don't go to a resume-based system by that time."

"We are in the process of seeking a resume-based application similar to what the Army does now," Reyes added.

Historic theater on Ft. Sam will receive new life

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, FORT WORTH, Texas -- After sitting vacant for more than two decades, one of the first dedicated movie theaters built by the U.S. Army in the United States is about to begin a journey back in time. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Fort Worth District has awarded a \$16.9 million contract to RKJ Construction, Inc. to renovate and build an addition to the 75-year old main post theater on Fort Sam Houston. RKJ is based in Lampasas, Texas.

The building will become the new home of the Family, Morale, Welfare and Recreation Command's (FMWRC) Army Entertainment Division, which is relocating to Fort Sam Houston from Fort Belvoir, Virginia as part of the 2005 Base Realignment and Clo-

sure (BRAC) mandates. This division stages a touring musical production called the U.S. Army Soldier Show, featuring active duty soldiers who are selected by audition from throughout the Army. The renovated 14,700 square foot theater will serve as the rehearsal hall for the cast of the annual production, while an 18,000 square foot addition will provide space for offices, recording studios, and equipment storage.

The project will alter the building's original movie theater configuration to accommodate theatrical productions. The work will involve extending the existing stage and modifying the rear portion of the building to incorporate the 80-foot-tall rigging necessary to raise and lower stage sets. The balcony seating will be

removed to make room for lighting and sound equipment, reducing the theater's seating capacity from 1,100 to 800.

Many of the theater's architecturally distinctive elements will be retained as part of the renovation effort. The theater was built in 1935 in a Spanish Colonial Revival style with a white stucco exterior, arched entryways, and a bell tower reminiscent of Spanish missions. The building's historic appearance and character will remain intact through the preservation of a number of features, including original light fixtures, wooden banisters, exterior lamp posts, the heavy wooden front doors, carved wooden ceiling beams, frescoes and wall murals,



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Historic theater on Ft. Sam will receive new life

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and the original ticket booth in front of the main entrance. Plans also call for replica film posters to be mounted on the interior walls when the project concludes. The project is expected to be finished by the fall of 2011.

This contract is one of 28 that are expected to be awarded in fiscal year 2010 for BRAC and other military construction projects in San Antonio. The projected value of these con-

tracts exceeds \$379 million. During the past two fiscal years, contracts worth almost



\$2 billion have been awarded through the San Antonio BRAC and military construction program. The construction contractors that receive

contracts continue to hire many subcontractors from the San Antonio area to help complete their projects.

The rapid pace of construction has put the San Antonio BRAC program on track to complete several projects in 2010. By the end of the fiscal year in September, it is anticipated that more than 20 facilities will have been made ready to begin supporting military missions and personnel that are coming to San Antonio from other parts of the country.

CENTENNIAL OF MILITARY FLIGHT CELEBRATION ON FT. SAM



Wright "B" Flyer Inc. volunteer pilots Rich Stepler and Don Stroud performed a demonstration flight of their "Brown Bird" over Ft. Sam Houston's MacArthur Parade Ground during the Centennial of Military Aviation event on March 2, 2010. (U.S. Air Force photo/Lance Cheung)



BRAC "VIEWS FROM THE TOP"

The San Antonio Joint Program Office (SAJPO) features BRAC "Views From the Top." Each month, we highlight a key BRAC leader in San Antonio and bring you their comments.

In this edition, we feature U.S. Air Force Maj. Gen. Erwin (Erv) Lessel III who retired from the Service in March after serving as Director of the San Antonio Joint Program Office at Randolph AFB, Texas.



Q1. Sir, what is your role in the San Antonio BRAC process?

Since 2007, I have served as the Director of the San Antonio Joint Program Office with responsibility for integrating and coordinating the 2005 BRAC-directed actions affecting San Antonio. The job has been made quite easy due to excellent cooperation between local government leaders and organizations and local military organizations. Leading this office and coordinating so many activities has been both fun and challenging. The best part has been working with Army and Air Force leaders and civic officials who have been dedicated to making BRAC a success.

Q2. Obviously, you have been in the center of all BRAC actions and transformation in your position. What have been some major challenges?

The 2005 BRAC legislation set in motion very complex actions involving every aspect of the military in San Antonio. Nineteen of more than 200 BRAC directed actions impacted San Antonio and Ft Sam Houston, Randolph AFB, Lackland AFB, Camp Bullis and DoD components at Brooks City-Base. The biggest challenges are typical of any large, complex project: communication, alignment, resources and schedule. Fortunately, none of these have been show stoppers and the team work has turned these challenges into minor bumps. I have to say that once all the

players understood the tasks at hand, we've all moved together to make the vision a reality. As you can tell if you look around Joint Base San Antonio, we're making great progress.

Q3. In many ways, San Antonio is leading the charge in its BRAC implementation efforts compared to other BRAC affected locations. What are some reasons for this?

When you hear the term BRAC, you think of closure. However, for San Antonio, BRAC 2005 means growth and growth presents new win-win opportunities for both our military and the community. The easiest point of comparison is looking across DoD's twelve joint bases. Joint Base San Antonio is the largest and most complex of all joint bases and, as a result, we're one of the last to achieve full operational capability and have had the advantage of observing the challenges and best practices of others. Another key to our success has been great teamwork, communication and support from the many military and civilian players involved in JBSA for the past five years. Whether through our Executive Integration Oversight Board or the Military Transformation Task Force, the identification and resolution of issues has been very proactive and effective. I guess the bottom line is that we have great people involved in the process who want to make Joint Base San Antonio a model for success.

Q4. Some people reading this may not know about your extensive public relations background. How has that experience and other experiences throughout your career helped you in this massive undertaking?

As I've mentioned, effective communication is vital to the success of any endeavor. My background leading public affairs and strategic communication efforts for the Air Force in Washington, DC and for Multi-National Forces - Iraq in Baghdad, has given me a great understanding of both the importance of open communications and how to effectively use communication tools. Consequently, we've taken extensive steps over the past few years to ensure both the public and our internal audiences understand what we're doing and why. We've used town hall meetings, public briefings, TV and radio programs, videos, newsletters, press releases and much more to ensure everyone stays informed. The city also understands and appreciates the power of communication and has contributed with the highly successful Embrace BRAC campaign. There's nothing better than good, open communications to gain understanding and support.

Q5. Many people ask the question if we will meet the required BRAC deadline of 15 September 2011. Are you confident we will meet the deadline?

I have high confidence that we will meet the BRAC-imposed

deadline. Even with over \$2.4B in construction projects, we'll meet the intent of BRAC in every case. Our biggest challenge remains the enormously complex, expensive and challenging construction program at Brooke Army Medical Center -- soon to be the San Antonio Military Medical Center (SAMMC) -- North. While some of the renovation won't be complete by September 2011, we are confident that we will meet the BRAC requirement of moving inpatient medical care from Wilford Hall by that deadline.

Q6. It was announced recently you plan to retire. What have you enjoyed about your position related to BRAC and serving in the United States Air Force?

Yes, I'm retiring from the Air Force after enjoying 31 years of service. My career started with pilot training and attending T-37 Pilot Instructor Training here at Randolph AFB and I've been blessed to enjoy my final assignment here in Air Education and Training Command. I can't think of a better way to end my career than serving on the AETC staff, living in San Antonio, and sharing the sense of accomplishment that everyone working BRAC is experiencing as we near completion of this monumental effort, the impact of which will be felt in San Antonio for many years to come. As I depart military service, I wish all of those who continue to serve the very best for continued success and thank the community for supporting their military and making San Antonio Military City USA.

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Q7. Finally, what would you say to all the teams involved in BRAC implementation about their dedication to make BRAC happen on time?

There is only one thing to say -- thanks. There have been thousands involved in making BRAC implementation a success and every one of them deserves credit. I do owe a special thanks to my deputy, Dr CEM Maxwell. He's a total professional who lives and breathes BRAC every day and will continue leading this effort after my departure. Even though it will be a sprint to the 15 September 2011 finish line, we have the team that will make it happen!

Maj. Gen. Erwin F. "Erv" Lessel III is the Director of Plans, Programs, Requirements and Assessments, and Director of the San Antonio Joint Program Office, Headquarters Air Education and Training Command, Randolph Air Force Base, Texas. He is responsible for command supervision of planning, programming, mission and system requirements, studies and analyses, and management improvement actions affecting almost 100,000 military and civilian personnel located at 13 bases. Additional responsibilities include development and implementation of future learning concepts and the integration of Balanced Score Card, Air Force Smart Operations 21, and Program Objective Memorandum initiatives and actions. As the SAJPO Direc-

tor, he is responsible for oversight and implementation of Base Realignment and Closure decisions in San Antonio. These actions, requiring more than \$2 billion of construction, collocate Department of Defense medical training, consolidate trauma care research, realign military health care in San Antonio, and establish the largest joint base in DOD, supporting 90,000 people at Fort Sam Houston, Lackland AFB and Randolph AFB.

General Lessel graduated from the U.S. Air Force Academy in 1979. He has commanded an operations support squadron, operations group, air refueling wing and an airlift wing. He served as the Deputy Chief of Staff for Strategic Communications and military spokesperson for Multi-National Forces - Iraq. A graduate of the National War College, General Lessel has held positions on the staffs of Air Force Materiel Command, Air Mobility Command, U.S. Air Forces in Europe, the Air Staff and the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Prior to his current assignment, General Lessel served as the Director of Communication, Office of the Secretary of the Air Force, Washington D.C.

General Lessel is a command pilot with more than 4,000 flying hours in airlift, air refueling and training aircraft.

FLIGHT INFORMATION

Rating: Command pilot
Flight hours: More than 4,000
Aircraft flown: T-37B, C-141B, C-12C, C-5A/B, KC-135R/T and C-130E

MAJOR AWARDS AND DECORATIONS

Distinguished Service Medal
Legion of Merit with oak leaf cluster
Bronze Star Medal
Defense Meritorious Service Medal with oak leaf cluster
Meritorious Service Medal with four oak leaf clusters
Air Medal
Joint Service Commendation Medal with two oak leaf clusters
Air Force Achievement Medal with oak leaf cluster
Humanitarian Service Medal



Last Month in BRAC News

BRAC NEWS STORIES POSTED ON THE SAJPO PORTAL

- 02.25.2010 -- Eaton wins electrical component contract—SA Business Journal**
- 02.25.2010 -- Councilman predicts continued success for LSBA - SA Communities**
- 02.22.2010 -- Nonprofit to showcase Wright 'B' Flyer - Dayton Business Journal**
- 02.17.2010 -- Merging bases turns out to be not so simple - Stars & Stripes**
- 02.17.2010 -- Army plans to spend \$5B to build barracks, more - Army Times**
- 02.17.2010 -- Councilwoman Taylor looking to help revitalize SA - SA Communities**
- 02.11.2010 -- Filling in urban S.A. not so easy - SA Express News**
- 02.07.2010 -- Town hall meetings address joint basing - Ft. Sam Houston PA**
- 02.05.2010 -- Misplaced activism hurts East Side - SA Express News**
- 02.04.2010 -- Officials zero in on Fort Meade roads - Hometown Annapolis.com**
- 02.03.2010 -- Money for BRAC construction allocated - Dayton Daily News**
- 02.03.2010 -- BRAC Continues To Move Ahead - KTSA**
- 02.01.2010 -- Budget includes millions for S.A. bases - SA Express News**

Upcoming Events

Event	POC	Date
Executive Integration Oversight Board - Medical	Ron Rogers	3/18/2010
Military Transformation Task Force Meeting	James Henderson	3/19/2010
SAJPO Communications Team Meeting	Ron Rogers	3/30/2010
MTTF Economic Development Committee Meeting	Michele Parlett	4/2/2010
San Antonio Community - Military Council Meeting	Mona Vollmer	4/13/2010

SAJPO Communications Team

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embrace
san antonio brac

Building Relationships
Around Community

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A source for BRAC News in
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