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Fort Bragg upgrade project improves quality of life for Soldiers

By Debra Valine

When Soldiers returned to Fort Bragg, N.C., from an overseas deployment, they returned to newly upgraded barracks, thanks to the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act and the U.S. Army Engineering and Support Center, Huntsville.

Huntsville Center's Utility Monitoring and Control Systems program completed the nearly \$3 million ARRA project – one of 12 UMCS projects ongoing at Fort Bragg – to upgrade equipment in the building in six months to have the building ready for the returning Soldiers.

The Huntsville Center awarded 35 ARRA UMCS projects in FY09 for a total of \$3,762,400. In FY10, that number is 48 ARRA UMCS projects awarded for a total of \$25,339,781.

Total ARRA projects awarded to date by Huntsville Center include 135 projects for a total of more than \$192 million, including the UMCS contracts.

The task order was to survey, analyze field data and prepare engineering design drawings and specifications to install equipment or complete repairs at building H5454 on Fort Bragg. The contractor, Johnson Controls Inc. of Huntsville, Ala., was to furnish materials and labor required for inspecting and upgrading heating, ventilation and air conditioning equipment and direct digital controls.

Total cost of the project: \$2,957,684, ARRA funds. The contract was awarded Sept. 30, 2009, and the project was completed May 10. The project upgraded to code fan coil units, fire suppression sprinkler system, controls for the building and various HVAC equipment.

“It was an accelerated project because it was mission critical,” said Matthew Morelan, professional engineer, project manager for UMCS. “The project needed to be finished before troops returned from an overseas deployment. “Equipment in the building was outdated and failing,” Morelan said. “The old equipment was replaced with state-of-the-art equipment to bring it up to standards and improve the quality of life for the Soldiers who would be living there.”

These upgrades complemented other work being done under separate contracts to improve the quality of the barracks. “We also replaced kitchen cabinets and sinks, and added a two-burner cook top with exhaust system,” said David Taylor, contracting officer representative at Fort Bragg. “We replaced the lighting in the rooms and stairwells to

improve energy, appearance, safety and occupant satisfaction. We also went to a four-pipe fan coil HVAC (heating, ventilation and air conditioning) system that allows for better cooling, heating and humidity control.

“This project took a great deal of planning and execution between Fort Bragg, Johnson Controls and the Huntsville Center,” Taylor said. “A tremendous amount of work, to include weekends, was expended to complete this project in such a short period of time.

Johnson Controls and Huntsville Center are also completing an associated project, replacing three failing boilers at the central boiler plant serving heating hot water to the barracks, Taylor said.

“The new boilers will have a different design which will increase the life of the equipment and be more energy efficient,” Taylor said. “Converting the hot water delivery to medium temperature will eliminate the requirement for additional shell and tube heat exchangers and allow for a single control valve to be installed at each building, reducing pumping requirements, simplified operation and reduced maintenance for 95 buildings.”

Huntsville Center’s UMCS is the mandatory center of expertise for the Corps of Engineers. It was established in response to recurring problems in the design and installation of UMCS projects throughout the Department of Defense. The MCX has maintained a consistent approach to UMCS design, procurement and installation of UMCS projects and has provided technical assistance to all field operating activities, Army major commands and other government agencies.