



NEWS RELEASE

U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS

BUILDING STRONG.

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U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Pacific Ocean Division changes command

FORT SHAFTER –Service members, families, government civilians, and friends gathered for a change of command ceremony held Friday, on historic Palm Circle, here, to bid farewell to Brig. Gen. Mark W. Yenter, departing commander and division engineer of the Corps of Engineers Pacific Ocean Division, and to welcome Col. Edward J. Kertis, incoming commander.

Lt. Gen. Robert L. Van Antwerp, U.S. Army chief of engineers and commanding general, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, praised Yenter for his strategic leadership during his two-year tenure in the Pacific.

“Mark is a strategic thinker,” who “led the Corps in many areas,” said Van Antwerp.

Under his (Yenter’s) unyielding stewardship, the division’s military construction program grew from \$850 million to \$1.2 billion, which led the Corps enterprise-wide execution rate for “ready-to-advertise” and project awards, said Van Antwerp.

His visionary leadership provided the path for long-range planning, garnering the fiscal support for the more than \$15 billion multi-year Japan Defense Program Realignment Initiative. The division commander forged strong working relationships with the Government of Japan, U.S. Forces Japan, service components and installations that resulted in effective resourcing, master planning, programming and scheduling for delivery of “Troop-Ready” facilities.

Yenter directed the significant advancement of the \$12.8 billion Korea Transformation Program, which will relocate U.S. troops from various bases in Korea to an expanded U.S. Army Garrison-Humphreys in the Republic of Korea.

Under Yenter’s leadership, the division awarded 94 American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) projects totaling about \$140 million in economic stimulus dollars that helped put local contractors to work in Alaska and Hawaii, contributing to the nation’s economic recovery.

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U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS – PACIFIC OCEAN DIVISION

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CHANGE OF COMMAND 2-2-2

Yenter also led the Corps' execution of the U.S. Pacific Command's Overseas Humanitarian, Disaster, and Civic Air Program grew from 23 projects totaling \$7.5 million to 127 projects totaling \$36 million.

The chief of engineers described Yenter's leadership as "inspirational, innovative, and visionary."

Van Antwerp presented Yenter with the Distinguished Service Medal for his "exceptionally meritorious service" as commander and division engineer of the Pacific Ocean Division.

Yenter, who led the Pacific Ocean Division since July 29, 2008, was quick to credit the leadership and men and women throughout the division and districts.

"It's not talking about statistics but it's actually what you do that counts," said Yenter. "The empowered work force of the Pacific Ocean Division is passionate about delivering construction projects that meet the end users requirements and assure enduring quality."

Yenter will now step into his new role as the United States Forces Afghanistan Director of Engineering and Commander of the Corps' Transatlantic Division (Forward-Afghanistan).

Yenter's replacement, Col. Kertis, has more than 25 years of experience in the Army. He most recently commanded the Corps of Engineers' Savannah District, in Georgia.

"You're (Kertis) here because you're exactly the right guy to take this job," said Van Antwerp. "Ed (Kertis) is an exceptional leader. We couldn't have picked a person with more credentials, more 'know how.'"

Kertis is responsible for leading 1,800 military and Department of Army civilian engineers, technicians and other professionals in the annual execution of a \$2 billion program. He executes a mission that includes engineering design, construction and real estate management for the Army in Hawaii, Army and Air Force in Alaska, and for all Department of Defense agencies in Japan, the Republic of Korea, and Kwajalein Atoll, Marshall Islands.

The division also administers the Corps' federal water resource development and regulatory programs governing water and wetland work in Alaska, Hawaii, American Samoa, Guam and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

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