

## **NEWS RELEASE**

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## **Crear Challenges Mississippi Valley Division Senior Leaders to Lead into Next Phase of Transformation**

VICKSBURG, MISS., November 23, 2004 – Brig. Gen. Robert Crear, commander of the Mississippi Valley Division, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, challenged his senior leaders to begin the hard work of the next phase of the transformation of the Corps at its recent Senior Leaders Conference.

The meeting was conducted in New Orleans November 16-18, 2004, and involved senior leaders from all Corps offices in the Mississippi Valley Division stretching from St. Paul, Minn., to New Orleans. Over 80 senior leaders and additional emerging leaders attended the two-day conference to shape the path of the division in the coming months and years.

“The old way of doing business under what I call the Legacy phase where we operated as one division headquarters with six independent districts is over,” Crear told the senior leaders. “We are now in the interim phase involving a regional perspective with District Support Teams (DSTs) and Regional Integration Teams (RITs), regional workforce management and the establishment of regional rates all under a Regional Business Center. We must move now towards the Objective phase, a Regional Business Center that involves six interdependent districts.”

Corps Transformation, more commonly known as “USACE 2012,” is the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers’ plan to move its organization towards a single headquarters with entities called Regional Business Centers that manage work throughout their geographical area, leverage regional communications and relationships, plan strategically, manage the workforce across the region, operate a regional acquisition strategy and are supported by regional support functions.

“The Regional Business Center is not a place, a structure or an organization,” said Crear. “But its goals are clear. To be successful, it must meet customer’s needs by leveraging regional resources when needed; raise project quality by using best business practices; and by bringing total regional resources to bear on a customer’s project.”

And it doesn’t matter whether that customer is within the region encompassing that particular Regional Business Center as the Corps has shown through its recent work in support of the Global War on Terrorism with Corps assets in Iraq and Afghanistan. Given the Corps’ high level of expertise in a variety of different fields, operating regionally can be relative.

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“All one has to do is look at our engineering efforts in the theater of operations where over 400 U.S. Army Corps of Engineer employees are leveraging their regional skills into one unified workforce,” Crear added. “Whether it is a hydrologist from the Mississippi Valley region, a structural engineer from the North Atlantic region, or a contracting specialist from the South Pacific region, we’re proving that leveraging the workforce into interdependent teams is successful.”

“And now we’re going to use those best business practices to make us successful at home.”

Crear challenged each of his senior leaders to find the best ways to operate in the region in support of transformation. Some recommendations included work-sharing, regional centers focused on specific fields or Communities of Practice, virtual regional centers, and to work with other regions to capitalize on best practices.

“Three important success factors remain for us to meet expectations,” Crear told his senior leaders. “Those are, each of us must take off our blinders and move in the right direction. We must help each other find solutions. And we must become one region with interdependent districts.”

Crear concluded the conference by assuring the senior leaders that operating as a Regional Business Center is a reality today and that we will change to meet the needs of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers’ stakeholders, the Armed Forces and the nation.

Participants left the conference having developed specific objectives and set suspense dates for a number of accomplishments. The senior leaders will meet again in April to continue the journey.



Before dinner, following the day's team-building exercise, Mississippi Valley Division Commander Brig. Gen. Robert Crear thanks the New Orleans District for their hard work as hosts for the conference.



Conference participants take a tour of the Bayou Sorrel Lock project. This New Orleans District project will solve the deficient portion of the levee system at the lock and will significantly increase navigation efficiency.