



Friday, February 29, 2008

Alamo WorkSource is doing its homework to prepare for BRAC

San Antonio Business Journal - by [Catherine Dominguez](#)

The Alamo WorkSource is working to complete two studies by August that will assess the effect of the 2005 Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) action on the local workforce.

The studies, one called the Fort Sam Houston Expansion Study and the other The BRAC Workforce Study, are being funded through a \$446,000 National Emergency Grant the nonprofit group received late last year.

"(The studies) will give us a better perspective as to what we are going to need to fill jobs and provide training," says Charlie Moke, business services director with the Alamo WorkSource. "These are two very important studies."

Moke says the studies are critical in preparing for the workers moving into the city due to BRAC who will not have military related jobs, such as spouses, as well as for civilians who do not plan to relocate out of the city when their jobs are realigned at other military bases. He says his organization will help by providing training and assistance in finding employment for these target groups.

The Alamo WorkSource is a nonprofit group funded primarily through the state that provides job-placement and employment services to more than 40,000 businesses and more than 2 million residents in San Antonio and the surrounding 12-county region.

The BRAC action is spurring more than \$2 billion worth of new construction in San Antonio, most of that centered around Fort Sam Houston, and will affect more than 11,000 people, both military personnel and their families.

Study areas

The Fort Sam Houston study will focus on three different areas. The total cost of the study will be \$100,000.

"The study will be very comprehensive," says Eva Esquivel, spokeswoman for the Alamo WorkSource.

The first area of focus will look at several different factors, including in-coming population, types of military jobs available, the impact on the spouses of military personnel and the impact the additional population will have on the surrounding neighborhoods and school districts.

The second area the study will focus on is the workforce development at the installation. It will identify programs available to assist people in looking for employment and identify the types of workers and number of those coming to Fort Sam Houston.

The last area the study will look at is business opportunities, such as how to contract for work related to the BRAC action and determining if the Alamo City has an adequate workforce to handle the \$2 billion in construction associated with the action.

On a broader scope, The BRAC Workforce Study will use the information from Fort Sam Houston combined with workforce information gathered from Brooks City-Base, which is being downsized due to BRAC. That study will cost about \$200,000 to complete.

"Because of the number of dislocated workers at Brooks City-Base," Esquivel says, "we are preparing for those individuals, too, and want to include that information in the study as well."

The study will also look at opportunities for companies to relocate to San Antonio due to the medical research and development activities at Fort Sam Houston.

The BRAC Workforce Study will examine workforce opportunities available for the spouses of military personnel and identify the talent pipeline to fill any gaps caused by the BRAC action.

"We want to transition quickly," Esquivel says.

Providing assistance

The remaining grant funds will be used for marketing purposes, including developing a Web site for those coming into San Antonio who will need to find employment. The site, Esquivel says, will provide information ranging from what jobs are available in the city to demographic information about the community.

"Part of this transformation is to provide information to the in-coming population," she says. "We will have an outreach and marketing component, and it will be focused on early public awareness and about what job and business opportunities are available due to BRAC."

The Web site, Esquivel says, will be a key part of the effort.

"The Web site is going to be critical because people who aren't here may not know what is here," she says. "It's going to allow us to utilize our partnerships with the city and the county."

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