



News Release

UNITED STATES AIR FORCE

437th AIRLIFT WING PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE
102 East Hill Blvd., Rm. 223, Charleston AFB, S.C. 29404-5154
Phone: (843) 963-5608, 5588 or 5589 Fax (843) 963-5604

PAO email: edmund.memi@charleston.af.mil
After duty hours, call the base operator or
command post (963-2531) & ask for a PA rep

Release No. 09-08
September 28, 2001

\$11.5 MILLION COMMISSARY TO BE BUILT

CHARLESTON AIR FORCE BASE, S.C. – The first step towards constructing a new commissary here got underway when an \$11,575,000 contract was awarded Sept. 25 to Medlin Construction of San Antonio.

The project was awarded using the Air Force streamline source selection procedures where offerors' proposals for this project were evaluated to determine which offer provided the best overall value to the government.

The project provides for over 89,000 square feet of total floor area compared to the present commissary, which has only 26,312 square feet. The completed project will include 452 total parking spaces (8 handicap parking spaces). The project provides for a modern merchandising format and will use the latest Defense Commissary Agency interior décor scheme, according to DeCa officials.

"The exterior of the building has been designed to match our existing architectural style at Charleston. It will have a flat roof instead of the standard standing seam roof, but will use the same brick and pre-cast concrete seen throughout the base," said Warren May, 437th Civil Engineer Squadron base project manager for the new commissary.

The site for the new building is located adjacent to the existing commissary and just south of the existing Base Exchange. The existing commissary will eventually be demolished, after the majority of the new facility is completed, and a new parking lot will be constructed in that space. Hazardous material abatement will also be required in the demolition of the existing commissary. The new commissary entrance will face Dorchester Road.

The project will require phased construction. May explained that construction will start first in the parking lot next to the Base Exchange and Shopette. After the warehouse is constructed in that spot, then the old warehouse will be torn down and the new commissary sales area will be built in it's place. Once the sales area is transferred into the new facility, the rest of the building will be torn down and the new parking lot will be completed.

"There may be some loss of parking during construction, but the phased approach should avoid any major hurdles," said May. The phased approach will also allow the commissary to remain open for business."

The present commissary does about \$2.1 to \$2.5 million dollars of business a month, which includes sales of items as part of the defense overseas commissary program that supports more than 30 countries. The old commissary was built in 1972 and had a minor renovation in 1992.

"The new commissary will be more spacious, have wider aisles, energy efficient refrigeration, and built to more modern standards," said Eddie Williams, base commissary manager. "It will be a tremendous improvement compared to our present, antiquated facility." Williams added that service will continue uninterrupted throughout the construction phase. "As the project comes to an end, we'll start to diminish some stock. But don't expect a big deficit in the quality of service. Our motto is quality first, people always." Williams added that the Charleston AFB commissary is the busiest one in the local area.

The Architect and Engineering firm managing the project is the Jenkins Group, Itsca, Ill. "My biggest challenge was ensuring the new commissary design met our standards and it does," May said. He said design for the project was completed in the spring 2001 and the base will have an inspector to help the A&E firm in managing the project.

Construction on the project is expected to start November 2001 and is scheduled to be complete around February 2003.

-end-

NOTE TO THE EDITOR: *Interviews are available with the base's civil engineer project manager. Please call 963-5582/5589. A digital image of the new design is available for use.*