

GENERAL JOHN W. HANDY

5 NOVEMBER 2001 TO 7 SEPTEMBER 2005

Air Force General John W. Handy brought clear-cut visions to both USTRANSCOM and Air Mobility Command (AMC). Consequently, USTRANSCOM experienced more change, received more authorities, and launched more initiatives than at any time since its creation while sustaining a high operating tempo.

USTRANSCOM was already engaged in two contingencies: Operations Noble Eagle (homeland defense) and Enduring Freedom (combat operations against al-Qaeda terrorists and the Taliban regime in Afghanistan). In March 2003, the United States launched Operation Iraqi Freedom to oust Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein. To meet requirements, General Handy activated a portion of the Civil Reserve Air Fleet for just the second time in the program's 50-year history.

During General Handy's tenure, USTRANSCOM moved nearly 2.5 million passengers, 6.7 million short tons of cargo, and 5,245 battle casualties in support of the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. Simultaneously, USTRANSCOM supported relief efforts following typhoons in Guam, earthquakes in Iran, four hurricanes and wildfires in the United States, and a tsunami in the Indian Ocean; peacekeeping operations in the Balkans, Liberia, and Haiti; and security for the 2002 Winter Olympics.

In 2002, General Handy reorganized much of the command. He also obtained a political advisor, assembled an interagency group of representatives from the Department of Defense (DOD) and other government agencies, and inactivated the Defense Courier Service and absorbed its functions into the USTRANSCOM staff.

General Handy took the Strategic Distribution Management Initiative to the next level when Secretary of Defense Donald H. Rumsfeld designated him the DOD's Distribution Process Owner (DPO) in 2003. He gained responsibility for improving the "overall efficiency and interoperability of distribution related activities--deployment, sustainment, and redeployment support during peace and war." This was the most significant expansion of USTRANSCOM's role since 1992. The command also received oversight of the portfolio of information systems related to distribution, limited contracting authority, and a research and development budget.

As the DPO, General Handy partnered with Defense Logistics Agency, other DOD entities, and US Central Command to create a deployment distribution operations center that integrated inter- and intratheater distribution. Other DPO programs initiated included Joint Task Force-Port Opening for establishing initial port operations during contingencies; and the Defense Transportation Coordination Initiative for centrally managing DOD freight movement in the United States.



General Handy recommended to the 2005 Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) Commission that the Army's Surface Deployment and Distribution Command move to Scott Air Force Base, Illinois, and consolidate or collocate many functions performed by USTRANSCOM and its components. These ideas were included in the 2005 final BRAC report that became law in November 2005.

General Handy once said, "I'm dual-hatted to the outside world. But in my head, I am only one thing, and that is the commander of the US Transportation Command." He persuaded Secretary Rumsfeld to split the command hats. Thus, when General Handy retired, USTRANSCOM and AMC both received full-time commanders for the first time.

