



US Army Corps
of Engineers
New Orleans District

News Release

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Lee becomes New Orleans district engineer

NEW ORLEANS—Col. Alvin B. “Al” Lee became the 60th district engineer of the New Orleans District, on Friday, July 20, in a formal change of command ceremony.

Brig. Gen. Robert Crear, division engineer, Mississippi Valley Division, and president of the Mississippi River Commission, placed the Corps of Engineers flag, symbolizing command of the New Orleans District, into Lee’s hands.

Also participating were Col. Richard P. Wagenaar, the outgoing New Orleans commander; Lt. Col. Murray P. Starkel, the deputy district engineer; and Ed Watford, the deputy district engineer for project management.

Lee is now responsible for a district which, in tandem with the Hurricane Protection Office, is working on appropriations exceeding \$7 billion for hurricane restoration.

“The New Orleans area and the state of Louisiana are key priorities for the Corps. As a soldier, I have come to the 'sound of the guns',” Lee said.

“As Napoleon Bonaparte said, 'Soldiers usually win the battles, and generals get the credit for them.' The soldiers in this case are the employees of the New Orleans District, and I am proud to be the one chosen to lead them for the next three years,” Lee said.

The New Orleans District’s responsibilities cover 30,000 square miles of south and coastal Louisiana. It has 973 miles of Mississippi and Atchafalaya river levees and 325 miles of hurricane levees, and also 11

operating navigation locks, six major flood control structures, and other projects to create and protect coastal wetlands.

Lee possesses experience leading a coastal district with hurricane vulnerability and an important seaport: the Charleston District, Charleston, S.C. His latest assignment before New Orleans was as a fellow in the Secretary of Defense Corporate Fellows Program, assigned to Caterpillar Inc. in Peoria, Ill.

Col. Lee's bio and photo



Col. Alvin B. "Al" Lee, the New Orleans District's 60th commander and district engineer, took command on July 20, 2007. As district engineer, Lee is responsible for a district which, in tandem with the Hurricane Protection Office, is working on appropriations exceeding \$7 billion for hurricane restoration.

The New Orleans District's jurisdiction includes 2,800 miles of navigable waterways, 1,300 miles of levees and floodwalls, 11 navigation locks, six major flood control structures, and other projects to create and protect coastal wetlands. Lee also serves as chairman of the federal-state Coastal Wetlands Planning, Protection and Restoration Act Task Force, which oversees a \$60 million annual program to protect and restore Louisiana's coastal wetlands.

Lee's previous assignment was as a fellow in the Secretary of Defense Corporate Fellows Program, assigned to Caterpillar Inc. in Peoria, Ill. He comes with district-command experience, as his assignment previous to Caterpillar was as the commander and district engineer of the Charleston District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, in Charleston, S.C.

Colonel Lee is a distinguished military graduate of Georgia Southern University and holds a masters degree in Engineering Management from St. Martins University. His military schooling includes the Engineer Officer Basic and Advanced Courses, the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, and the U.S. Army War College.

Other assignments include Operations Officer for 1st Battalion, 50th Infantry Regiment; 36th Engineer Group Assistant Operations Officer and Ranger Support Element Operations Officer; Instructor/Writer at the U.S. Army Infantry School, Fort Benning, Ga.; Deputy Resident Engineer, Alaska District, Corps of Engineers, and Deputy Commander Forward, Rocky Mountain Area Office in Colorado Springs, Col., of the Omaha District, Corps of Engineers.

Other key command and staff positions include: Company Commander, 317th Engineer Battalion, 3rd Brigade, 24th Infantry Division (Mechanized); Commander, Alaska Projects Office, Cold Regions Research Laboratory; Battalion Executive Officer of the 10th Engineer Battalion, and the Engineer Brigade Operations Officer, 3rd Infantry Division (Mechanized). Lee also served in Afghanistan during Operation Enduring Freedom as the Deputy Commander for the Afghanistan Engineer District.

His military awards include the Legion of Merit; the Bronze Star Medal; the Meritorious Service Medal, with three oak-leaf clusters; the Army Commendation Medal, with five oak-leaf clusters; and the Army Achievement Medal, with two oak-leaf clusters. He is a recipient of the Bronze de Fleury medal, and earned the Parachutist's Badge.