

Fort Hood's \$25.3B impact

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Fort Hood's economic impact climbed to \$25.3 billion statewide last year, according to a Texas comptroller's study released Thursday.

The largest single-site employer in Texas, Fort Hood was responsible for generating more than \$18.58 billion in disposable income spent by employees, workers for in-state industries that do business with the Army post, and employees of Texas companies that meet consumer needs of soldiers, employees and defense contract workers.

"Fort Hood's importance to Texas goes beyond the significant role it plays in our nation's security," Comptroller Susan Combs said in a statement. "Fort Hood is an economic engine that helps growth in Texas. Projects at the installation and surrounding communities help bring investment and jobs to the Central Texas region. Those communities also benefit from services and industries that cater to the large number of soldiers and their families who call Fort Hood home."

Employees at Fort Hood include active-duty military, federal civilian workers contract personnel and Killeen Independent School District workers.

According to the report, 68,942 Fort Hood jobs support 79,454 family members. The report also states Fort Hood was indirectly responsible for an additional 214,344 jobs throughout Texas.

The job numbers were far from the only increases indicated in the report. In 2008, the comptroller released a report indicating Fort Hood had just under an \$11 billion impact on the Texas economy in fiscal year 2007. Comptroller spokesperson Lauren Willis provided three reasons why the latest report indicates almost a 150 percent increase compared to the 2008 report.

"Part of it is we have more comprehensive data this time," Willis said. "We had more time to put the report together this time. We had a larger sample size of data than we did last time. (Fort Hood) has grown a lot since 2007. So a lot of it is organic growth."

Willis said the third factor is Carl R. Darnall Army Medical Center and other ongoing construction projects.

"We took a very comprehensive approach to capturing the requested data for fiscal year 2011 to include construction projects such as the new (\$550 million) Carl R. Darnall Army Medical Center and the (\$14.1 million) Fort Hood Stadium, retiree annuitants and current Fort Hood

contracts,” Deputy Garrison Commander Andy Bird said. “We strongly believe Fort Hood is an economic engine that helps growth across Texas, to include the Temple-Belton area.”

Workforce

Fort Hood active-duty military personnel and civilian workers received \$3.14 billion in wages in fiscal year 2011. Contractors received more than \$514 million, and veteran retirees received \$3.86 billion.

Temple Economic Development Corp. President Lee Peterson said the available workforce of former soldiers and their family members is an asset in attracting new industries and companies.

The comptroller’s report showed that more than 250,000 retirees and their families remained within traveling distance of the post and received services from Fort Hood last year.

“Always in economic development, there are lots of factors, but workforce ends up being No. 1 about 90 percent of the time,” Peterson said. “Having a supply of people with skills, leadership capabilities, (and) who know how to learn, all those kinds of things are assets that soldiers have. That is a huge benefit for companies looking for a sustainable, educated workforce.”