



S M D C / A R S T R A T
Headquartered on Redstone Arsenal, Alabama



**CSM Eagle Column
May 2008**

This month I've decided to use my column to focus on the overall accomplishments during our annual Senior Enlisted Leaders Training Conference (SELTC) conducted March 23-26, 2008, at Vandenberg Air Force Base, Calif. We'll continue discussing "Selfless Service" as our next subject on Army Values next month.

I would like to express my appreciation for the outstanding contributions put forward by Sgt. Maj. Randall Williams (G-3 Operations Sgt. Maj.), brigades and battalion command sergeants major, primary staff, first sergeants and other senior noncommissioned officers. It's their efforts during the numerous in-progress reviews via video teleconference, site surveys, and intense coordination that this year's SELTC was an overwhelming success.

The purpose of the conference was to provide a forum for senior enlisted leaders to meet in order to enhance their professional development through interaction with one another by sharing experiences, exchanging ideas, and discussing lessons learned. The SELTC was attended by former SMDC/ARSTRAT Command Sgts. Maj., National Guard and Reserve Component Sgts. Maj. of the Army, senior enlisted leaders of the National Guard Bureau, Air Defense Artillery, Signal and Intelligence Regimental Command Sgts. Maj., Joint Functional Component Command senior enlisted leaders, and SMDC/ARSTRAT senior noncommissioned officers.

The conference kicked off with a golf scramble followed by an icebreaker hosted at the Pacific Coast Club on Vandenberg, Air Force Base. Lt. Gen. Kevin T. Campbell attended these events and was "quite impressed with the overall turn-out and outstanding support by our senior enlisted leaders and distinguished guests," he said.

Gen. Campbell also provided opening remarks on the first day of the conference. He thanked our senior enlisted leaders for giving him the honor of opening their conference and thanked them for their excellent turn out. Gen. Campbell quickly noted the SELTC belongs to the senior enlisted leaders and it provides an excellent opportunity for us to join together to discuss professionally relevant topics and to grow professionally. He stressed that our active participation in the conference is important to the future of the command and to the Army, as we continue to fight an adaptive enemy during an era of persistent conflict.

Sgt. Maj. of the Army Kenneth O. Preston, who was also impressed by the attendance at the SELTC, spoke next. As the keynote speaker, he discussed the Army's Transformation, plans to increase personnel in our Army by 70,000 Soldiers by 2010, efforts to provide stability and predictability to deployments, and the ongoing recruiting and retention efforts. SMA Preston concluded his speech by expressing his thanks and appreciation for all we do for our Army and nation.

Overall, the conference was a resounding success! This is due to the hard work, professionalism, commitment to excellence and selfless service of our entire SMDC/ARSTRAT team. I want to express my thanks and appreciation to our G-Staff, DOD civilians and contractors, keynote speakers, senior enlisted leadership and many others who contributed, assisted and supported this year's SELTC.

Special thanks to the 14th Air Force (Air Force Strategic-Space), 30th Space Wing and the entire installation staff for their generous support and hospitality in hosting their facilities during our conference.

I'll close by providing quotes from senior enlisted leaders who attended the conference.

"Outstanding conference, very informative, offsite was excellent, transportation and housing was well planned out and functioned very well. Value added knowledge base for the senior leadership at SMDC; recommend we continue to promote this type of conference." 1st Sgt. Usef Simmons, HHC, 53rd Signal Battalion.

"Vandenberg served as an excellent venue for the Conference. It's great that the command emphasizes the need to have the senior enlisted leaders to come together. The ever-changing Army requires leaders to share more information and experiences so that we can provide Soldiers with current information and the most relevant leaders." Sgt. 1st Class Robert Lewis, HHC, 53rd Signal Battalion.



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"I was thoroughly impressed by the list of briefings provided at the SMDC Senior Enlisted Leaders Training Conference. I came away from the conference with a wealth of knowledge and was able to pass on some great information to the unit. It was obvious that an enormous amount of preparation went into this event. The accommodations at Vandenberg were great and my only regret was that we couldn't spend more time on the coast. I especially enjoyed the off-site tour at the Boeing Satellite Facility. SMDC will surely have a hard time topping this event next year." Master Sgt. Keese E. Pond, HHC, 1st Space Battalion.

"The Senior Enlisted Training Conference at Vandenberg Air Force Base was a great opportunity for us to break away from the daily grind. The Information regarding Defense Integrated Military Human Resources System (DIMHRS) will help leaders at all levels manage training and Soldier information." Sgt. 1st Class Mike Queen, HHC, 1st Space Brigade.

"I think the 2008 SMDC Senior NCO Conference was a complete success. It was the perfect forum to meet fellow senior NCOs throughout the command and discuss missions, training and common challenges that we all face. The briefings were top-notch and two of the highlights for me were SMA Preston's presentation of the Army's force structure/timeline and Command Sgt. Maj. Capel's 82nd Airborne Division war fighter briefing. I hope this is an annual event and I look forward to the 2009 conference." 1st Sgt. Douglas Bram, 4th Space Company.

"The 2008 SMDC Senior NCO Conference was a first class event. The facilities at Vandenberg Air Force Base, Calif., were excellent and the presentations were relevant, interesting, and professionally rewarding. I hope that it becomes an annual event." Command Sgt. Maj. James Ross, 1st Space Battalion.

"The Senior NCO conference was very informative because it allowed Senior NCOs to increase their situational awareness of the Space and Missile Defense Command's mission, learn from past and present Army and organizational leaders, and share common experiences with personnel within the SMDC community. This conference is a must have for Senior NCO development." 1st Sgt. Kenneth Mackey, United States Army Kwajalein Atoll.

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