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UNITED STATES GENERAL ACCOUNTING OFFICE
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20548

PROCUREMENT, LOGISTICS,
AND READINESS DIVISION

B-211095

APRIL 20, 1983

The Honorable G. William Whitehurst
House of Representatives



Dear Mr. Whitehurst:

Subject: Allegations Concerning Irregularities in
Maintenance and Repair Work at Fort Lee
and Fort Belvoir, Virginia (GAO/PLRD-83-68)

In response to your November 3, 1982, letter, we have reviewed allegations of irregularities concerning three maintenance and repair projects at Fort Lee and Fort Belvoir, Virginia. Your letter stated that the alleged irregularities dealt with installing doors, windows, and siding on one project; installing and then reinstalling windows on another project; and installing and then reinstalling doors and windows on a third project.

We talked with, reviewed the files of, and obtained documents from representatives of the Army Corps of Engineers, Norfolk and Baltimore Districts, and representatives of the facilities engineers at both bases. We also visited the work-sites and observed examples of the work done on each project. The information we obtained from the Corps and the Army facilities engineers at both bases for the three projects is included in enclosure I.

As we advised you in our January 26, 1983, meeting, the Bayport Construction Corp. did the work on all three projects. Corps representatives and the facilities engineers at both bases felt that the work was satisfactory and that the installation and then reinstallation of windows and doors was not due to poor contractor performance. As discussed in enclosure I, some doors and windows recently added to buildings at the two bases had to be removed and reinstalled because the Army subsequently decided to do additional work on these buildings. Therefore, rather than being cases involving poor workmanship, the installation and then reinstallation of doors and windows resulted from the way different projects were planned and funded by the Army.

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We discussed the planning of these projects with the facilities engineers and Corps officials. Basically, we were told that the source and amount of funds received, the timeliness of the receipt of funds, and the ongoing work at the time of receipt can and do cause maintenance planning and scheduling problems. We did not pursue these issues because we are covering them, along with other issues, in a current broader review. We will provide you a copy of the report resulting from that review as soon as it is issued.

As your Office agreed, we did not obtain Army comments on matters discussed in this report and we are sending copies of this report to the Secretaries of Defense and the Army. We are also sending a copy to Bayport Construction Corp.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Donald J. Horan".

Donald J. Horan
Director

Enclosure

INFORMATION OBTAINED FROM CORPS
AND ARMY FACILITIES ENGINEERS FOR THE
THREE PROJECTS REVIEWED

FORT LEE, CORPS CONTRACT DACA-65-81-C-0103

Contract information

Operation and maintenance funds, \$2.3 million (to date), awarded on September 29, 1981, to Bayport Construction Corp.

Scope of work

Install vinyl siding on temporary buildings.

Circumstances

This contract required that existing storm windows on temporary buildings (which had been installed under previous contracts in 1978 and in 1981) be removed and reinstalled in order to install aluminum trim around the window frames. According to Corps officials, 490 storm windows were removed and reinstalled at a total cost of \$3,861 (490 x \$7.88 each). In addition, Corps officials said this contract provided that about 40 percent of all windows be permanently covered over as an energy conservation measure. According to Fort Lee and Corps officials, about 500 storm windows were removed and not reused. The contractor was allowed to sell these windows for scrap. Furthermore, Corps officials said that 303 of the remaining primary and storm windows would be replaced in 1982 and 1983 with thermopane windows because tenants do not always close storm windows, adversely affecting energy conservation efforts.

FORT LEE, CORPS CONTRACT DACA-65-81-C-0019

Contract information

Energy Conservation Investment Program funds, \$1.1 million, awarded on March 11, 1981, to Bayport Construction Corp.

Scope of work

Energy conservation improvements to family housing units, primarily storm windows.

Circumstances

According to the Corps, no "double work" was done by the contractor on this project, which involved adding glazed panels

to existing windows, installing storm windows, and replacing casement windows. Corps officials stated that there was a moisture collection problem (fogging) on some windows but that this was not attributable to the contractor's work. They said it was a design problem resulting from the installation of an additional pane of glass to existing windows in order to provide an air seal. According to the Corps, it was not technically feasible to hermetically seal the space between the panes and it was not economically feasible to replace the existing windows with double glazed windows.

FORT BELVOIR, CORPS CONTRACT
DACA-65-81-C-0039

Contract information

Energy Conservation Investment Program funds, \$1.2 million, awarded on April 8, 1981, to Bayport Construction Corp.

Scope of work

Install French storm doors, storm windows, thermostats, and automatic furnace ignitions in family housing units.

Circumstances

As part of this April 1981 contract, Bayport installed French storm doors on family housing units between November 1981 and February 1982. In September 1981, the Fort Belvoir facilities engineers unexpectedly received operation and maintenance funds and awarded a contract to another contractor to replace the primary French doors on some of the same units on which Bayport had installed French storm doors. During July and August 1982, this contractor installed primary French doors on 62 units containing storm doors which Bayport had installed between November 1981 and February 1982. To install the primary doors, the contractor had to remove and reinstall the storm doors at a unit cost of \$74, or a total cost of \$4,588 (\$74 x 62). Facilities engineers at Fort Belvoir told us they could not have Bayport wait to install storm doors until after the installation of primary doors because Bayport could then have a claim against the Government for delay of performance under the April 1981 contract. Also, the new primary doors contain thermopane glass, which raised the question of whether there was a need to replace the storm doors. Corps officials said that the storm doors, which contain a screen insert, were still needed so occupants could open the primary doors in the spring and fall for natural ventilation. In September 1982, the Fort

Belvoir facilities engineer awarded another contract to replace the French primary doors on the remaining units. He said an additional 62 storm doors will be removed and reinstalled under this contract.