

maneuvering and traffic patterns to support some 400,000 operations per year in all branches of the Armed Forces.

About 400 aviators complete the program at Truax Field each year through Training Air Wing Four. It also is home to a squadron of Sea Dragon helicopters that sweep the seas for mines.

NAS Corpus Christi is one of the largest employers in the region and has a significant impact on the economy. It provides many jobs for civilians, mostly in aircraft maintenance, that generally pay better wages than the private sector, Demieville says.

About 9,000 people total are employed at the Naval Air Station, including 5,800 civilians and civilian contractors and 3,200 military personnel, according to the Department of Defense.

Also located at the NAS is the Corpus Christi Army Depot, the Army's largest full-service helicopter repair, overhaul and maintenance center. It's the largest industrial employer in South Texas, with 3,405 civilian employees in fiscal year 2005 and a \$248 million payroll that accounts for a quarter of its \$1.1 billion budget.

The Army Depot spent nearly \$40

million in procurements in 2003, up from \$24 million in 1997, with contracts ranging from less than \$25,000 to more than \$1 million.

The depot also serves as a training base for active duty Army, National Guard, Reserve and foreign personnel, and provides worldwide on-site aviation maintenance service.

"The military is still a significant employer here and a significant site of air training for all the Armed Forces," Demieville says. "It's quite evident here that this is a military town."

— Jeannie A. Naujeck



The Army's largest full-service helicopter repair, overhaul and maintenance center, is located at NAS Corpus Christi.