

Privatization of Army Lodging is coming to a post near you

Staff Sgt. Corey Baltos

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Dec. 9, 2011 -- For most of us PCSing means a stay at a post lodging facility. At Fort Polk this means staying at a Holiday Inn Express.

In August of this year, Fort Polk and 10 other Army installations privatized temporary lodging as part of an Army wide initiative to privatize all Army Lodging by 2013.

According to www.pal.army.mil, website, 80 percent of Army lodging needs to be repaired or replaced outright. This would cost the Army nearly \$1 billion and nearly 20 years to complete. Privatization would allow for long-term sustainment of the facilities as well as lower the cost of the rooms to the consumer.

“The Army is excited to extend the monumental success that we have had with housing privatization to our hotel products. Soldiers will now be offered the same brands of hotels as are available outside the gate, with comparable levels of services and an even better location,” stated Rhonda Hayes, chief Army Capital Ventures Directorate.

Under the Privatization of the Army Lodging program the Army transferred their existing lodging facilities with a 50-year lease to Actus Lend Lease and InterContinental Hotels Group (IHG) to build, renovate, operate and maintain adequate and affordable lodging.

“We are excited to be able to offer military and government travelers an improved lodging experience and are looking forward to continuing to do so in the future,” said Marc Sierra, managing director for Actus.

“IHG has been providing guests with quality accommodations and a great hotel stay experience for over 60 years and we are excited to do so for the guests visiting IHG Army Hotels,” said Angela Brav, chief operating officer, North America, IHG. “We bring the convenience and consistency of our hotel brands, like Holiday Inn Express, while providing a guest experience specially tailored for Army travelers.”

Requisite real estate and environmental work is currently underway at the remaining 21 to-be-privatized installations. When completed Army lodging hotels will be a mix of well recognized and well respected IHG brands such as: Candlewood Suites, Staybridge Suites, and Holiday Inn Express, and renovated historic facilities.

According to a paper published by www.pal.army.mil, many of the renovated facilities will be converted to Holliday Inn Express hotels, and IHG Army Hotels will offer enhanced guest services including complimentary breakfasts, pet-friendly rooms and the IHG Priority Club frequent-stay program.

Carlisle Barracks is scheduled to have its lodging privatized in the near future. Next month a PAL team will visit the installation to set up the preliminary requirements for the change-over.

“We are hopeful that the privatization will bring modernization of our Army Lodging,” said Lt. Col. William McDonough, Carlisle Barracks garrison commander. “We have been unable to reinvest dollars into the furnishings and comfort items of the rooms and such standardization should assist us in this endeavor.”

Carlisle Barracks on-post lodging currently includes 45 rooms for official travelers and visitors to the post.

“During fiscal year 2011 we had nearly 14,000 guests,” said Wendi Kent, Carlisle Barracks Lodging business manager. “Most of our guests stayed with us in a TDY capacity.”

Upon completion, the privatized portfolio will span 42 installations (15,500 rooms) with more than \$1 billion dollars of private capital reinvested in the facilities.