

WARRIOR MEDIC

MONTHLY

An Army Reserve Medical Command Publication



Gates Approves Plan to End Army's Involuntary Extensions

By Jim Garamone
American Forces Press Service



WASHINGTON, March 18, 2009 - The Army will phase out use of the so-called "stop-loss" program between now and January, Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates said today.

Since the beginning of his term as defense secretary, Gates has called on the services to eliminate their dependence on the controversial program that allows the involuntary extension of servicemembers' active duty past the scheduled end of their term of service.

The Army currently has 13,000 soldiers whose active duty status was extended through the program so they could deploy with their units. The Army is the only service using the program.

"We have the legal authority to do it," Gates said during a Pentagon news conference. "But ... I felt, particularly in these numbers, that it was breaking faith. It wasn't a violation of the enlistment contract. But I believe that when somebody's end date of service comes up, to hold them against their will, if you will, is just not the right thing to do."

The secretary said there will always be the need to hold a few people in the service,

but it should be a small number. "I would like to get it down to scores, not thousands," he said.

The secretary's decision will eliminate the use of stop-loss for deploying soldiers.

"Effective this August, the U.S. Army Reserve will no longer mobilize units under stop-loss," Gates said. "The Army National Guard will stop doing so in September, and active Army units will cease employing stop-loss in January."

The goal is to cut the number of soldiers remaining in the Army under stop-loss by 50 percent by June 2010 and to near zero by March 2011. "We will retain the authority to use stop-loss under extraordinary circumstances," Gates said.

The Army will put in place a number of incentives to encourage soldiers to voluntarily extend their enlistments to mitigate the impact the decision will have on unit cohesion and strength. Starting this month, the Army will pay stop-lossed soldiers \$500 a month. The program is retroactive to Oct. 1, which was when Congress passed the law permitting the payments.

While there is some risk, Gates said, he wants to do everything to make sure "soldiers are not unnecessarily forced to stay in the Army past their end of service date."

Army leaders spoke to the secretary recently on the proposal, and they are putting in place the directives and regulations to make it work, Army officials said.

"I think that the way the Army is approaching this mitigates those risks, so I

feel comfortable with this plan," Gates said.

The Army is able to make this move because of three reasons, Army officials said: the changing conditions in Iraq, a new unit rotation program that is being put in place, and the increase in the size of the Army. Over the next 18 months, the draw-down in Iraq will far outnumber the increase in Afghanistan, Gates said.

The Marines used stop-loss early in the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. A total of 3,389 active-duty Marines served beyond their terms of service. About 5,000 Marine reservists were stop-lossed, but only 443 of them were mobilized, Marine Corps officials said. The Marines stopped using the program May 12, 2003.

The Air Force used the program sparingly in 2001, 2002 and 2003. It implemented stop-loss for 43 officers and 56 enlisted airmen for Operation Iraqi Freedom, and ended it on June 23, 2003.

The Navy has not used the program since the spring of 2003, and then it was for medical corpsmen to serve with the Marines, Navy officials said.

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Do you have a story to tell? The goal of the Army Reserve Medical Command's Public Affairs Officer is to feature stories in this publication that represent units from all over our command's region of responsibility. We are always seeking stories that would be of interest to our readers. Contributions are welcome. **Story ideas as well as written articles and photos for consideration should be submitted to ARMEDCOMPAO@usar.army.mil., or call 1-877-891-3281, extension 3730.**

'Operation Purple' Offers Summer Fun to Military Kids

By Sharon Foster
American Forces Press Service



WASHINGTON, March 26, 2009 - The National Military Family Association will host more than 9,000 military children at "Operation Purple" youth camps across America

this year.

These free, week-long, overnight camps are meant to bring children of deployed servicemembers, ages 7 to 17, together for an exciting and memorable experience. Camps will be held in 62 locations and 37 states and territories across the United States.

"We understand these are trying times for our youngest heroes," Michelle Joyner, NMFA's director of communications, said. "Operation Purple Camps bring together kids in similar situations and teach them coping skills to better deal with their feelings. At the same time, the camp helps build their confidence by introducing new experiences like learning to be stewards of the environment."

Military children experience a wide range of activities at the camps from horseback riding and canoeing to rock climbing and swimming. Each camp creates a "Wall of Honor" in which campers are asked to bring a photo of their parent to be posted. Campers also are given an opportunity to talk about their parent during this event. A military-themed activity day allows campers to work with their local military community on a joint project.

A military guest speaker also is invited to speak with campers.

"Outside of the traditional outdoor activities, campers are given the chance to learn more about what the deployment is really like," Joyner said.

The Operation Purple program was created by NMFA, headquartered in Alexandria, Va., in 2004 as a way to help military children struggling with the stresses of war. The program includes traditional summer camps, teen camps, teen leadership camps, family retreat camps and day clinics in overseas locations.

"This year, we're excited to offer three Operation Purple Teen Leadership Camps for military teens who are role models and leaders in their community," Joyner said. "These leadership camps last a bit longer, 10 days, and include travel expenses to and from camp. After camp, teens return home armed to make a difference in their community."

Registration for this year's camps will

be open until midnight EST on April 20. Priority will be given to military children with a parent deployed or deploying anytime between September 2008 and December 2009 and who have not had the opportunity to attend an Operation Purple camp in the past.

Thanks to the support of the Sierra Club, a grassroots environmental organization, camps are free to all participants.

"Sierra Club is proud to be working with the National Military Family Association to connect our nation's youngest heroes with the healing benefits of the outdoors," Brittany McKee, Sierra Club's national military representative, said. "Operation Purple camps empower military children and provide a much-needed respite from worries about their deployed parent."

Since Operation Purple Camp's inception, NMFA has sent more than 20,000 military kids to camp for free.

Please direct questions regarding Operation Purple camp to operationpurple@nmfa.org.

Related Sites:

www.nmfa.org/site/PageServer?page-name=camp_locations

Troop Support Group Helps Vets, Military Families Find Jobs

By Sharon Foster
American Forces Press Service



WASHINGTON, March 19, 2009 - Military veterans and spouses in the New Jersey area are getting help finding jobs from a troop support group.

The G.I. Go Fund will join forces with New Jersey Sen. Robert Menendez and the city of Newark to host its first Veterans and Military Family Job Fair on March 21 at the New Jersey Institute of Technology.

Nearly 40 government and private employers are scheduled to participate in the job fair, including the Secret Service, FBI, U.S. Marshals, Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, Prudential, Coca Cola, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services.

"We decided to host this job fair in response to the growing number of unemployed veterans reaching out to our organization for assistance in finding jobs" Alexander E. Manis, deputy director of the G.I. Go Fund, said.

Manis stressed that the event is more than just a job fair. "We are working with

government agencies and other nonprofit organizations in providing outreach to our veterans and their families."

Classes will be held that will focus on foreclosure prevention, Veterans Affairs home loans, and help from the Small Business Administration and Helmets to Hardhats, a group that works to employ veterans.

Agencies conducting these classes include the VA Department, the New Jersey Department of Military and Veterans Affairs and the Library for the Blind and Handicapped.

"Computer terminals will also be available with access to USAjobs.gov Web site so veterans and their spouses can learn about and apply for government employment," Manis said.

The G.I. GO Fund is a New Jersey-based group that works to provide a smooth transition for veterans of the Iraq and Afghanistan wars re-entering civilian life. The group expects as many as 300 veterans and family members to participate in the job fair.

Manis said he would like to encourage other troop support-groups to plan and sponsor veterans job fairs across the country.

"As the growing unemployment rate among veterans is not localized in New Jersey, but is found throughout the country, we all should be encouraged to do something for our veterans," Manis said.

"Although these are tough economic times, there are employers that are hiring and looking for the values and dedication to hard work that veterans have."

Related Sites: The G.I. Go Fund
www.gigofund.org/aboutus.html

Mail Must be Addressed to Specific Servicemembers, Military Says

By Samantha L. Quigley
American Forces Press Service



WASHINGTON, March 23, 2009 - A recent increase in mail addressed to "Any Servicemember" has prompted the Military Postal Service Agency to remind the general

public not to send mail or care packages addressed in such a manner.

"Mail to 'Any Servicemember/Any Wounded-Recovering Warrior,' deposited into a collection box and erroneously accepted at a United States Postal Service post office will not be delivered," MPSA

officials said in a news release. "This restriction applies to all classes and types of mail."

The Defense Department suspended the "Any Servicemember" and "Operation Dear Abby" programs in 2001 following the terrorist attacks. The policy was adopted as a way to bolster force protection.

"Even though these programs may provide an excellent means of support to deployed personnel and wounded-recovering warriors, they also provide an avenue to introduce hate mail and hazardous substances or materials into the mail system," MPSA officials said in the release.

The Dear Abby program, founded by the newspaper advice columnist, delivered mail to U.S. servicemembers overseas during the holiday season for 25 years. "Any Servicemember" mail grew out of operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm.

Since shortly after the start of recent operations in the Middle East, many grassroots organizations have made sure servicemembers know they're remembered. Those interested in writing to servicemembers can visit the Defense Department's Community Relations Web site and click the "Citizen Support" link on the right side of the page to find groups that support troops with letters.

Pay Incentives Help Military Avoid Nursing Shortage

By Sara Moore
American Forces Press Service



WASHINGTON, March 20, 2009 - The Army, Navy and Air Force nurse corps are highly trained, capable and critical to the wartime mission of each service, the corps' leaders told a congressional committee this week.

The Senate Appropriations Committee's defense subcommittee heard testimony March 18 from the services' nursing chiefs. Each reported a healthy force that plays a vital role in maintaining the health of America's servicemembers and saving lives on the battlefield.

Despite a nationwide nursing shortage, all three services have had success in recruiting and retaining nurses, the leaders said. New incentive and training programs will help boost those numbers even further, they noted.

The active-duty Navy nurse corps is staffed at 96 percent and made its accession goal for the third year in a row, Navy Rear Adm. Christine M. Bruzek-Kohler, director of the Navy nurse corps, told the commit-

tee. The Reserve component met 107 percent of its recruiting goal in 2008, she noted, but deficits from the three previous years have led to challenges filling junior officer billets.

Several new initiatives, including incentive pay for critical specialties, targeted recruiting efforts, and professional development programs for federal civilian nurses will help maintain its success and bolster retention, Bruzek-Kohler said.

"Built upon a solid foundation of clinical skills, Navy nursing encompasses clinical specialization via advanced education and certification, operational readiness, and leadership development," she said. "When combined, these yield clinical nursing leaders and future executives for Navy medicine who are business savvy, operationally experienced, and clinically adept. These nurses can and will impressively lead our people and organization into the future."

After establishing a brigade in 2007 to focus on recruiting nurses, the Army last year exceeded its goal for active-duty nurses by 147 percent, Army Maj. Gen. Patricia D. Horoho, chief of the Army nurse corps, told the committee. Incentive pay also has helped to encourage nurses to stay on active duty, she said.

The Army deploys 400 to 500 nurses a year, so maintaining a robust force focused on specialties like emergency care and intensive care unit skills is important, Horoho said.

"Army nurses are a corps of seasoned combat veterans that are highly trained, highly skilled and highly committed," she said.

The Air Force also has had success in recruiting nurses, particularly novice nurses, Air Force Maj. Gen. Kimberly A. Siniscalchi, chief of the Air Force nurse corps, told the committee. Accession bonuses, loan repayment programs, scholarships and incentive special pay programs will help the Air Force continue its recruiting success and boost retention, where it has been lacking, she said.

"The key to successful peacetime and wartime nursing operations is a robust nursing force, a force with the right numbers, right experience and the right skills," Siniscalchi said. "Recruiting experienced nurses continues to be a significant challenge."

All three leaders praised their nurses' performance during deployments. Bruzek-Kohler noted the many Navy nurses she has spoken to after they return from deployments who talk about how positive their experiences were and express a desire to go back.

"A maturity, sense of personal fulfillment, and confidence of having done some-

thing that their peers have not done is readily identifiable among my nurses returning from these unique deployments," she said. "From the way they act, talk and perhaps even the swagger in their walk, one can tell that they have returned with experiences far and ... many, accomplished goals unrealized in the past, and matured in a way years could never have provided."

Through their many deployment experiences, Army nurses have been able to apply lessons learned and improve services, Horoho said. She cited the example of flight nurses who have decreased the incidents of hypothermia among medical evacuation patients from 20 percent to fewer than 5 percent.

"On my recent trip to Iraq, I was absolutely humbled to see the level of care that is provided to not only our servicemembers, but to coalition forces, contractors and the detainee populations that we served," Horoho said.

Army nurses are partnering with Iraqi nurse leaders to rebuild their profession, she noted, and the nurse case management program at Camp Cropper and Camp Bucca has provided specialized care for more than 1,000 detainees.

Siniscalchi recalled several stories of heroics by Air Force nurses, including one who treated a colleague's son and was able to let him speak to his father on the phone before undergoing surgery, and the delivery of the first Afghan baby at Craig Joint Theater Hospital in Bagram, Afghanistan.

"Our warriors and their families deserve the best possible care we can provide," she said. "It is the nurses' touch, compassion and care that often will a patient to recovery or softens the transition from life to death. There has never been a better time to be a member of this great Air Force nursing team."

Operation "Give a Hug"



Providing military children a way to hug their deployed parents until they can do it for real

At any one time, more than 500,000 children have at least one parent deployed overseas in support of the Global War on Terrorism. Having a parent deployed to a war zone for an uncertain amount of time is among the most stressful events a child can experience.

Operation Give a Hug is a non-profit, all-volunteer program established in 2004 to help comfort military children by giving them special dolls, often referred to by children as their daddy or mommy doll. Read Maddie's story to learn about the important

role this doll played in her young life. Each doll provides a place to put the photo of the deployed parent and gives a child a tangible way of relating to that parent.

The goal of Operation Give a Hug is to give dolls to military children throughout the world who are missing Mom or Dad during the long deployments.

If you are a military organization and would like to request dolls for children, email: requests@operationgiveahug.org

Give A Hug Dolls are only available for ARMY families: Active Duty, National Guard, or Army Reserve.

Other Service Members can request Give A Hug Dolls through the Operation Give A Hug website. www.operation-giveahug.org

Defense Department Announces Expedited Disability Evaluation System Process For Combat Wounded

From DoD Press Release



WASHINGTON - Defense Department Announces Expedited Disability Evaluation System Process For Combat Wounded

The Department of Defense announced today, in collaboration with the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), a process designed to expedite a service member seriously injured in combat from military to veteran status, by waiving the standard Disability Evaluation System (DES), resulting in receipt of benefits in three to four months, compared to a recovery and standard DES process that would normally take much longer.

"This new policy should allow service members and their families to focus on the essentials of recovery, reintegration, employment and independent living, with the combined assistance from DoD and VA," said Acting Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness Michael L. Dominguez. "The policy supports our belief that there must be a distinction for those who incur devastating disabilities in combat."

The expedited process applies to service members whose conditions are designated as "catastrophic" and whose injuries were incurred in the line of duty as a direct result of armed conflict. A catastrophic injury or illness is a permanent, severely disabling injury, disorder, or disease that compromises the ability to carry out the activities of

daily living to such a degree that a service member or veteran requires personal or mechanical assistance to leave home or bed, or requires constant supervision to avoid physical harm to self or others.

Service members who participate in the expedited process will be rated by DoD at a combined rating of 100 percent, and the VA will identify the full range of benefits, compensation and specialty care offered by the VA. Dominguez emphasized that the new process is optional for qualifying service members.

"Service members and their families will be empowered to decide, after counseling on the options and potential concerns and benefits, the most appropriate choice for their situation," said Dominguez.

The policy provides special consideration and exception for members who retire under the expedited DES process to reenter the service with a waiver, should they subsequently request reentry to the service after recovery and rehabilitation.

The expedited policy differs from the DES pilot program, currently underway to test a new process design eliminating the duplicative and time consuming elements of the current standard disability processes at DoD and VA. Key features of the DES pilot include one medical examination and a single-sourced disability rating. To date, more than 1,000 service members have participated in the pilot during the last 14 months.

Foundation Gives Spouses Chance to Become Financial Counselors

By Samantha L. Quigley
American Forces Press Service



WASHINGTON, March 4, 2009 - Through its investor education foundation, the Financial Industry Regulatory Authority, or FINRA, is helping military spouses become accredited as

financial counselors.

The foundation's "Military Spouse Fellowship Program" has been providing military spouses the means to earn the accredited financial counselor designation since 2006, John Gannon, the foundation's president, said.

Military spouses who are accredited financial counselors can be a wealth of financial information for servicemembers and military families as the country faces a challenging economy, Gannon noted.

"What we're trying to achieve with our spouse fellowship program is ... [to] provide an additional resource for military families to go to get counseling on financial matters," he said. "A secondary thing is it helps military spouses, who have historically been underemployed, take on skills that may lead to future employment in the financial services area."

The fellowship program, which the FINRA foundation administers in partnership with the Association for Financial Counseling and Planning Education and the National Military Family Association, is offered at no cost to the participants.

"We cover the costs associated with becoming an accredited financial counselor, and in turn, [we] ask the spouse who receives the fellowship to provide a certain number of hours of financial counseling to other military families," Gannon said. "To date, participants in the program have logged more than 95,000 hours of service back to the military community. That's all pro bono."

The program is competitive; more than 2,000 military spouses applied for 200 openings in 2006. The second year saw only slightly fewer applicants, Gannon said.

The online program is appealing to military spouses because it can be tackled wherever they're living, as long as they have access to a computer and the Internet, he said. In fact, 33 percent of the 189 spouses who began the program last year were overseas.

While the program is self-paced, it's designed to be completed in two years. But foundation officials realize that situations can change, Gannon said.

"Because of the combination of the self-paced nature of the course work [and] the need to get a certain number of pro bono hours, it can take a couple of years to complete the program," Gannon said. "We've tried to be lenient with spouses, because we realize that due to changes in their situation, ... sometimes things come up that make it much more difficult to complete the program."

FINRA officials try to make it easier by helping fellows find opportunities to fulfill their pro bono requirements. Sometimes those opportunities are with FINRA.

When fellows do complete all the requirements and become accredited financial counselors, they are equipped to help educate servicemembers and their families, Gannon said.

"One of the things that we've tried to do to our overall military financial education program is to really provide resources for the military on credit issues, especially now because of the tightening of the markets," he said. "It's even more important than it

was just a short time ago that people have really good credit scores so that they can get a mortgage to buy a house, or even a car loan.

"[Fellows] can help on that issue by working with military families to understand the importance of good credit and a good credit score," Gannon added.

They're also qualified to fill positions in defense federal credit unions, financial aid offices and community centers.

Officials try to maintain service diversity among the fellows, Gannon said -- Army spouses represented 33 percent of all the fellows, the Air Force 23 percent, the Navy 22 percent and the Marine Corps 11 percent -- but also try to give the fellowships to the best-qualified candidates.

The application process for the 2009 Military Spouse Fellowship Program has not yet opened. When the information does become available, it will be posted on the FINRA Investor Education Foundation's Web site, <http://www.saveandinvest.org>, Gannon said.

The program is open to spouses of active duty, reserve or retired Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, Coast Guard, and Army and Air National Guard servicemembers. The spouses of U.S. Public Health Service Commissioned Corps and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration professionals also are eligible, Gannon said.

Related Sites: FINRA Investor Education Foundation; <http://www.saveandinvest.org>; **Association for Financial Counseling and Planning Education,** <http://afcpe.org/>; **National Military Family Association,** <http://nmfa.org>

Thrift Savings Plan Provides Retirement Nest Eggs

By Gerry J. Gilmore
American Forces Press Service



WASHINGTON, March 19, 2009 - About 614,000 servicemembers are saving for retirement in the federal Thrift Savings Program, which was opened to military members in

2002, a senior Pentagon official said here today.

The TSP, explained Chuck Witschonke, assistant director of military compensation for economic analysis, is a U.S. government-managed, 401(k)-type payroll-deduction program designed to provide tax-deferred retirement nest eggs for servicemembers and federal civilian employees.

"You can contribute pre-tax dollars, and all the money in your plan earns money, tax-deferred, until you take the money out when you're nearing retirement," Witschonke said in an interview with the Pentagon Channel.

Federal civilians have been eligible to use TSP since 1986, when Congress established the program, Witschonke said.

Today, about 614,000 servicemembers, he said, have money distributed among the TSP's investment-fund programs. They include:

- Government Security Investment, or G Fund, which consists of treasury bonds and other federal-backed investments. It is considered among the most stable of the five TSP investment choices.

- Common Stock Index Investment, or C fund, which consists of stocks of major established corporations. This option, along with the Fixed Income Index Investment, or F fund; the Small Capitalization Stock Index Investment, or S fund; and the International Stock Index Investment, or I fund, offer riskier investment strategies, but higher potential yields.

- The Lifestyle Fund option, or L fund, which allocates money among the five funds and changes how they're distributed over time. The L fund automatically places money in the more risky, but higher potential yield funds early on, and later moves them to more secure, conservative investment options as the participant nears retirement.

TSP participants may change their investment options at any time, Witschonke said, noting changes can be made on the system's Web site.

Participants may withdraw some TSP savings, and then pay it back with interest, into the account, Witschonke said. However, he emphasized, participants should view TSP as a way to save for future retirement.

"This is long-term retirement savings. It's not savings for something that you might need in the near future," Witschonke said. "It's not where you should put money if you're saving for a car, or saving for a vacation."

Funds invested in TSP accounts "is money that you can afford to put away now that will be available to you in 20, 30, maybe even 40 years, when you're reaching retirement age and want some money to supplement your income," Witschonke said.

Related Sites: Thrift Savings Plan <http://www.tsp.gov>

First Lady Brings Military Family Issues to Front Burner

By Donna Miles
American Forces Press Service



WASHINGTON, March 13, 2009 - First lady Michelle Obama, having just returned from a meeting yesterday with military families at Fort Bragg, N.C., reiterated today on ABC-

TV's "Good Morning America" her commitment to ensuring they get the support they deserve.

Obama said she chose Fort Bragg for her first trip outside Washington as first lady to turn the spotlight on "a huge need out there" that she conceded most Americans are "pretty oblivious" to.

Obama admitted she had no idea of the outstanding needs before taking on the military family cause during her husband's presidential campaign. "I just assumed that if we care about our troops and we send them to war, that naturally, we'd be taking care of their families," she said.

Most Americans probably don't realize how many times military families move or how expensive those moves can be, she said this morning. They disrupt children's school schedules and cause spouses to scramble to find new jobs and quality child care, and to transfer school credits.

Also not widely understood, she said, is how many young, enlisted families are living "right at the poverty line because the pay isn't enough."

That's particularly troubling, she said, when their loved ones are deployed into harm's way in Iraq or Afghanistan.

"It hurts. It hurts," she said. "These are people who are willing to send their loved ones off to, perhaps, give their lives -- the ultimate sacrifice. But yet, they're living back at home on food stamps. It's not right, and it's not where we should be as a nation."

President Barack Obama's proposed 2.9 percent military pay raise will offer a start toward helping these families, she said. But she conceded it's only "a down payment on what we need to do."

A strong military depends on the support of military families, and the country can't expect to get that support if it doesn't demonstrate that it values what families contribute, she said.

"If, when it's time to re-enlist, they look around and they can't find a life for themselves, I can assure you that spouse will say, 'Let's go. Let's call it a day. Let's pull down our tent and move on to something else,'" she said.

"And we lose support that we desperately need as a nation."

Yesterday, during an emotional meeting at Fort Bragg's community center, the first lady told military families in person the United States owes them more.

"Our soldiers and their families have done their duty. They do it without complaint," she said. "And we as a grateful nation must do ours and do everything in our power to honor them by supporting them."

Rallying the country around military families' challenges isn't difficult, she said today. "People understand it, once the issue is brought to their attention. And they're ready to do whatever they can."

"Military Saves Week" and "Military Saves 2009" - What is it?



The Defense Department designated Feb. 22 to Mar. 1, 2009 as Military Saves Week to encourage Soldiers to establish savings goals for emergencies and additional financial considerations. The Department of Defense has expanded Military Saves over the entire year with quarterly themes:

- Save and Invest (Jan., Feb., Mar.)
- Military Youth Month For Savers (April, May, June)
- Debt Reduction (Jul., Aug., Sep.)
- Retirement (Oct., Nov., Dec.)

On Jan. 16, 2009, Dr. David S. C. Chu, under secretary of defense, wrote to all departments urging their participation in the Military Saves Program, which is part of the DOD Financial Readiness Campaign.

How important is this to the Army?

The key words are "mission readiness."

Military Saves promotes the habit of saving regularly, which can eliminate the need for high-cost, short-term loans and ensure long-term financial security, particularly through such programs as the Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) and the Savings Deposit Program (SDP).

Military Saves 2009 is an opportunity to encourage, motivate and educate servicemembers and military families to increase personal savings, decrease debt and develop financial fitness habits that lead to improved personal financial stability and ultimately, to mission readiness.

What is the Army doing?

Commands and installations are encouraging servicemembers and their families to establish savings goals for the things they want and set aside money for emergen-

cies and other needs. During Military Saves Week and during ongoing events during Military Saves '09, Soldiers will be encouraged to do something positive about their finances. Soldiers can sign up for free financial advice at the Military Saves Web site .

Goals of the program include:

- Increase Soldier participation in the Thrift Savings Program.
- Increase junior enlisted participation in deployment savings program from 15 percent to 25 percent.
- Promote behavior change allowing Soldiers to build wealth through savings and investments.

Resources: Military Saves Web site <http://www.militarysaves.org/>; **Army One Source Web site** <https://www.myarmylife-too.com>

Army Publishes First Reserve Retirement Guide

By Laura Paul



WASHINGTON (Army News Service, March 4, 2009) -- The Army has created a Retirement Guide just for Army Reserve Soldiers and their families.

The 26-page Army Reserve Non-regular Retirement Information Guide was written specifically to cover the unique circumstances of Reserve retirement.

The Guide is the result of a collaboration between the Army G-1 Retirement Services Division, part of the G-1's Human Resources Policy Directorate, and the Army Reserve Command.

"Publishing this Guide represents a big step forward in helping to ensure that Reserve Soldiers and their families receive the Army's full support before and after retirement," said John Radke, chief of Army G-1 Retirement Services. "My team now includes an Army Reserve liaison officer, Lt. Col. Robert Hagan, who is spearheading our initiative to support this vital population."

One only needs to open a newspaper or turn on the television to understand the tremendous contributions the reserve-component Soldiers are making every day in support of Army missions literally across the globe, Radke said.

"We know these Soldiers are serving with distinction. We owe it to them and their families to make sure they're ready to retire," Radke said.

Publishing this guide will make it much easier for reserve-component Soldiers to

understand the chronological steps they need to take before their actual retirement.

The Guide is in the process of being distributed through the Reserve. In the meantime, it's available online on both the Army G-1 Retirement Services homepage at <http://www.armyg1.army.mil/retire>, under the "What's New" tab and on the special Army Knowledge Online site for Army Retirees at <https://www.us.army.mil/suite/page/559734>

DigiGirlz Programs High Tech Camp



Microsoft is proud to offer technology programs specifically for youth. One of their signature programs, DigiGirlz High Tech Camp for girls, works to dispel stereotypes of the high-tech industry. They continue to look for opportunities to give young people a chance to experience, firsthand, what it is like to develop cutting-edge technology.

Microsoft's DigiGirlz programs give high school girls the opportunity to learn about careers in technology, connect with Microsoft employees, and participate in hands-on computer and technology workshops.

Young ladies must be 13 at time of application and in grade 7-10 in the 2008-2009 school year.

For additional information:

<http://www.microsoft.com/about/diversity/programs/digigirlz/hightechcamp.aspx>

Care Packages for Troops



"Support Our Troops" sends out about 215 boxes each week to U.S. military units in Iraq, Afghanistan, Kuwait, Qatar, and Kyrgyzstan. On a daily basis they receive wish lists from the troops either via email or through their families or friends. They do their best to fulfill those requests. The basic items we take for granted here can make a real difference in the quality of life our service personnel experience when deployed in combat zones and remote locations. Receiving an unexpected box of goodies can be a tremendous morale booster for those far from home.

The packages they send out contain a variety of items popular with the troops, including coffee, snack foods, batteries, DVD's, and personal toiletries. Some of

these goods are donated by local businesses and organizations; others we must purchase to meet the need. They are delighted to work with any company or organization interested in having a drive to collect items to send to our troops or to raise funds for postage.

This is an on-going project for us so we must continue to seek help with our increasing postage expenses. The cost to ship one box can range from \$20 to \$45, depending on the contents and the APO or FPO address to which it is sent. Their postage costs alone run over \$8,000 each month. They always have boxes packed up and ready to ship out, but often lack the necessary funds to send them.

To request a care package for your troops or to donate goods or money to the program, contact "Support Our Troops," P. O. Box 7560, Wesley Chapel, Florida 33544.

American Patriot Freedom Scholarship



Applications for the 2009 American Patriot Freedom Scholarship are currently being accepted.

ELIGIBILITY: The American Patriot Freedom Scholarship is available to dependent children of military service members between the ages of 17 to 21, who will be pursuing a postsecondary educational degree at a fully accredited college, university, technical, or vocation educational institution, in the fall of 2009 or spring of 2010, and who also meets one of the following criteria:

- Children of active duty Service Members. Active Duty is defined as any Service Member who is currently serving in the United States armed forces. This includes activated or deployed members of the National Guard and Reservists.

- Children of disabled Service Members. Disabled is defined as any Service Member whose disability is the direct result from injuries sustained during a military operation while serving our country.

- Children of fallen United States Armed Forces Service Members. Fallen is defined as any Service Member who was killed in action (KIA) during a military operation while serving our country.

- Children of retired Service Members. Retired is defined as any Service Member who retired from the United States armed forces with an honorable discharge.

SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS: A total of twenty-five individual \$1,000.00 scholarships will be awarded. Winners will be noti-

fied via email and on the organization's website on Monday, May 18, 2009 at 12:01 AM PDST.

Applications must be postmarked by Friday, April 24, 2009

Related sites: <http://www.homefrontamerica.org/oohrahhome.htm>

Eligible for the Health Professional Loan Repayment Program (HPLR)?



The Army Reserve has a new Soldier self-service web site for HPLR starting 1 May 2009.

If your entitlement month is May or later, you will receive an email 60 days prior to your

HPLR entitlement date reminding you to initiate your HPLR repayment claim on-line.

New HPLR-entitled Officers will receive an email informing them of the web site and actions they must take to record their loans on-line.

Log on the Web-Enabled Education Benefit System (WEBS) at <https://rcms.ocar.army.pentagon.mil/Education> and select My Loan Repayment (SLRP/HPLR) Home Page for more information.

Soldiers should use the Submit Inquiry function on the web site to submit questions concerning SLRP/HPLR and the web site.

RecruitMilitary Aids Soldiers, Families with Civilian Employment



RecruitMilitary is a veteran-owned and operated firm that matches military veterans and military spouses with the vast opportunities America has to offer.

They are dedicated to helping you achieve your dreams: educational opportunities, job and career choices, new business and franchise ownership, training, and much more.

More than 1,275 organizations attended 147 RecruitMilitary Career Fairs in 2007 and 2008. Their Career Fairs have generated national coverage by ABC, CBS, NBC (Video), FOX, The Wall Street Journal, and USA TODAY, in addition to significant local media coverage.

RecruitMilitary provides great opportu-

nities to military personnel as they look for hourly and salaried positions.

RecruitMilitary can connect you with more employers seeking veterans with your skill sets.

In addition to corporate recruiters and representatives of educational institutions, franchisors will be there to talk to you about great business opportunities. Becoming a businessperson is an excellent way to advance your career - and your income. Franchisors typically offer veterans discounted costs and favorable financing.

Related sites: <http://www.recruitmilitary.com>

Army Creates Suicide Prevention Task Force During 'Stand Down'

By Gary Sheftick
Special to American Forces Press Service



WASHINGTON, March 6, 2009 - The Army has created a suicide prevention task force as part of its month-long "stand-down" to address suicides among soldiers, the service's

vice chief of staff said yesterday.

Maj. Gen. Colleen McGuire, the Army's director of senior leader development, has been selected to head up the task force, Gen. Peter W. Chiarelli told military bloggers and online journalists at a Blogger's Roundtable hosted by the Defense Media Activity.

"Suicide is a multi-dimensional problem and, as such, will take a multi-disciplinary approach to dealing with it," Chiarelli said.

In keeping with the complexity of the problem, the task force will have members from a range of staff sections and functional areas. "My charter is ... to look across all disciplines so... commander[s] can have a menu of tools and training programs and experts and know how to best deploy them," McGuire said.

The task force will include representatives from the Army's offices of personnel and human resources, the provost marshal's office, and the medical department, and it will coordinate closely with the chief of chaplains, Lt. Col. Leo Ruth, a task force member, said in an interview with Army News Service.

The task force will examine all of the Army's recent suicides and try to find commonalities, Ruth said.

"The whole idea ... is to identify a common theme," he said. "We may not find a trend," but he added that the task force "owed it to leadership" to examine demo-

graphics such as age and deployment history to see if any trends exist.

The task force will report to Secretary of the Army Pete Geren. Its recommendations first will be looked at by a senior officer steering group, Ruth explained. The ultimate product, he said, will be a suicide prevention campaign plan.

The task force will only form the genesis of the campaign plan, Ruth said, stressing that the task force is a temporary organization. The Army also has partnered with the National Institute of Mental Health for a long-range study to determine the causes of suicide in the Army.

An Armywide "stand down" for suicide prevention training continues through March 15 whereby commands and individual units take part in four-hour training sessions on how to recognize and try to prevent suicides.

The centerpiece of the training is an interactive video called "Beyond the Front" that Chiarelli told online journalists is "some of the best facilitation for training that I've seen in 36 years in the Army." He said the purpose of the video is to reduce the stigma of seeking help, to teach soldiers to recognize the signs of suicide and how to provide help to a buddy.

It's especially important for junior officers and noncommissioned officers to train with the video and be able to offer intervention to soldiers at risk, Chiarelli said.

The stand-down will be followed by a "chain" teaching program, which is intended to be leader-led training, cascaded across the entire service and completed by July 15.

"Unfortunately, suicide is touching every segment of our force -- active, reserve and National Guard, officer and enlisted, deployed and non-deployed, and yet-to-be-deployed," Chiarelli said.

In the last fiscal year, 138 soldiers committed suicide, Chiarelli said, and five additional cases are being reviewed as possible suicides. In January, 12 soldiers committed suicide with another 12 cases under review. In February, two soldiers committed suicide and another 16 cases are being reviewed.

"As a soldier and a leader, I'm deeply saddened every time a soldier loses his or her life," Chiarelli said, "but it's especially troubling when a soldier commits suicide."

About a third of those soldiers were deployed, Chiarelli said. Another third had returned from a deployment, and the last third had never deployed.

"The rational person might think, the more deployments, the more likely you are to commit suicide," Chiarelli said. "But we saw just the opposite."

"A certain resiliency" seems to grow in soldiers that have completed multiple

deployments, he said.

Chiarelli said the task force will look across multiple disciplines ? from personnel to medical ? to try and discern the root causes of suicide and synchronize solutions.

There's no single solution to the problem, he said, characterizing it as "very, very complicated."

About half of the soldiers who committed suicide last year sought treatment from mental-health care providers, Chiarelli said.

Only 5.4 percent of the suicide victims had been diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder, said Col. Elspeth C. Ritchie, a psychiatrist who serves as director of strategic communications for the Army Medical Department. She said 17 percent had problems with substance abuse.

At least 60 percent of those who committed suicide had relationship problems, said Col. Thomas Languirand of Army G-1. Some also had compounded legal problems, financial problems, or work problems, he said.

On Wednesday, Chiarelli participated in a two-hour video teleconference with commanders across the Army whose units have been affected by suicides. Commanders in Iraq, Korea and other locations shared feedback. The video teleconference is to be followed by a written report.

Also on Wednesday, Chiarelli spoke to more than 100 chaplains from across the Army who gathered for a suicide-prevention "summit" meeting.

Many of the chaplains came from brigade level and lower and deal with soldier problems on a daily basis, said Col. Dave Reese, director of ministry initiatives for the Army's Chief of Chaplains Office, and a planner of the summit.

Reese said the chaplains broke into four groups to discuss suicide prevention across four domains: life skills training, intervention and crises, fostering hope, and engaging grief and recovery. The initiatives will eventually comprise what Reese termed a renewed "holistic approach" to suicide prevention for chaplains.

Pentagon Plans Sexual Assault Prevention Campaign

By Army Staff Sgt. Michael J. Carden
American Forces Press Service



WASHINGTON, March 6, 2009 - Just as the armed forces paved the way for integration more than 60 years ago, the

Defense Department is working to prevent sexual assault, not only in the military, but also throughout the nation, the department's top prevention expert said here today.

"It is our goal to develop a sexual assault prevention program that can be a benchmark for the nation," Kaye Whitley, director of the department's sexual assault prevention and response program, told members of the House Armed Services Committee's military personnel subcommittee.

The department's prevention efforts really only began in 2007, and its success will take more than just good ideas, Whitley said. Through joint efforts with private-sector experts and collaborative studies, the department realized that programs supported by legitimate research will ensure the best results, she added.

Those experts, Whitley said, have determined three points from the past year's research they think will improve prevention and response:

- Implementing lasting prevention measures by using a framework that takes action at all levels of military society;
- Using social marketing campaigns to link all of its efforts to prevent sexual assault; and
- Focusing on using bystander intervention techniques to complement its efforts.

"The department believes that prevention can only occur with an organized, comprehensive approach that is based on research," Whitley said, noting that each of the services used these points to develop their own sexual assault prevention programs.

The department's strategy is built on what officials call the "spectrum of prevention," she said, a nationally recognized framework that has been used in other campaigns throughout the country.

"The spectrum of prevention suggests that social harm can only be prevented by taking multiple actions at every level of society," she explained. "The levels range from improving individual skills at the lowest levels to influencing policy at the highest."

The department will launch a marketing campaign featuring two public service announcements in April during Sexual Assault Awareness Month. Whitley said she hopes the campaign will persuade people to "behave in ways that improves their own personal welfare and that of society."

"The campaign makes it very clear that each military member has a moral duty to step up and take action to prevent sexual assault," she added.

The initial campaign is designed to inform military members about the sexual assault prevention and response programs and to demonstrate key points in the bystander intervention approach. The strategy will require commitment, cooperation, time and patience, she said.

Whitley said she hopes the sexual assault prevention strategy will have similarly positive effects as that of campaigns against drunken driving. As the program progresses, she added, she expects the number of reports to increase as bystander intervention improves and culture changes.

"As the comprehensive strategy takes hold over the years," she said, "we look forward to the day that those numbers decrease, not because of fear or stigma of reporting, but because sexual assault is being systematically prevented."

Today's hearing was the second in a three-part series the House Armed Services Committee is holding on sexual assault prevention, awareness and response programs and strategies in the Defense Department. The first occurred in January, and the third will take place later this year.

Related Sites:

Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Office <<http://www.sapr.mil/>>

Sesame Workshop Reaches Out to Military Families

By **Samantha L. Quigley**
American Forces Press Service



WASHINGTON, March 18, 2009 - Sesame Workshop continues to find unique and creative ways to reach out to the very youngest in military families, Deputy Defense Secretary

William J. Lynn III said here today during a sneak preview of a new primetime Sesame program.

"There are few characters more beloved than the Sesame Street friends, and through Elmo and Rosita, military kids can better grasp how to reconnect with their loved ones after redeployment," Lynn said. "They will see that they are not alone in feeling confused or anxious, and that they and their families can learn new ways of ... supporting one another."

"Coming Home: Military Families Cope with Change," is scheduled to air April 1 on PBS at 8 p.m., in conjunction with the start of the Month of the Military Child. The show, which features Queen Latifah, musician John Mayer, and of course, Elmo, allows viewers to step inside a few military

families' lives and learn how they've coped with life-altering changes.

With some help from Elmo's friend Rosita, the trio talks with real military families who have faced changes because of a loved one's injuries, which can be either external and visible or internal and invisible.

And Rosita can relate to the military children. Her father's legs "don't work any more," and he uses a wheelchair. He finds that just like her father and her, the military families are adapting to changes in the same way: together.

The relationship between Sesame Workshop and the military, which produced "Talk, Listen, Connect," an initiative providing support and resources for military families facing deployments or changes due to combat, began several years ago, Lynn said.

"The program we are celebrating today is a terrific effort to help those families," he said. "Many of our servicemembers will tell you they fight for our country, but they also fight for our kids and they fight for their kids."

"I know they appreciate groups like Sesame Workshop that are looking out for their interests at home," Lynn added.

The initiative offers some of what Veterans Affairs Secretary Eric K. Shinseki said men and women in uniform deserve for their service.

"Those who serve our country in uniform deserve the very best nurturing we can provide, and that includes helping their precious children learn to live with a mom or dad who may not be quite the same person they watched go off to war," Shinseki said. "We are grateful to Sesame Street for bringing the sensitive subject to the wider American audience through this TV special and its accompanying educational materials."

Since the inception of Talk, Listen, Connect two years ago, the initiative has grown and evolved, Sesame Workshop's president and chief executive officer said today.

"[It] has struck a chord, we've noticed, with a military community in a way that we never could have expected," Gary Knell said. "Through this project, we're helping kids and families unite and find reassurance that they are not alone in their journey."

"Who would have thought Elmo and Rosita could help these families find ways to grasp and to cope with their changing circumstances?" he added.

That's exactly what is happening, however. Sammy Cila, 9, who participated in the new special with his family, said the one thing he'd like other military kids to know is there are other kids going through this, too.

"There's no need to be worried about it," he said. "It's actually great [to know] that there's other families that are going through

the same thing."

Sammy's father, Army Sgt. Sebastian Cila, who was serving in Iraq when his left arm was severely injured, sang the prime-time program's praises, too.

"I believe it will help families tremendously. I was thrilled with the project, [and] I think they did a great job," Cila said. "It just kind of gives some insight and some behind-the-scenes of what families go through with injuries and disappointments."

Cila's wife, Anna, agreed. "They did a really nice job portraying the situations that the families are going through," she said. "It's true to my heart that what we saw today is something good; something really good is going to come out of it."

About 800,000 Talk, Listen, Connect kits have been distributed in the two years of the initiative's existence. Each contains DVDs and print materials to help military families cope with different aspects of deployment, change and even loss.

More than 1.3 million kits have been produced and are being distributed at no cost to families, schools, family support programs, hospitals and rehabilitation centers. The kits, produced in both English and Spanish, also are available for download from the Sesame Street Web site.

Defense, VA Reform Evaluation System for Seriously Injured Vets

By **Army Staff Sgt. Michael J. Carden**
American Forces Press Service



WASHINGTON, Feb. 23, 2009 - Two years is much too long to determine service disabilities, especially when the injuries obviously qualify a servicemember for full benefits and compensa-

tion, a senior Defense Department official said here today.

Until recently, that's how long it took all military members to reach 100-percent-disabled status in terms of their disability compensation and medical benefits through the departments of Defense and Veterans Affairs. Regardless of the severity of the injuries, all went through multiple medical evaluations and screenings first with the military, only to go through the same process again with VA, Air Force Maj. Gen. Keith W. Meurlin, acting director of the Defense Department's transition policy and care coordination office, explained.

Often, it can take up to two years to complete the evaluations and another nine months to start receiving benefits, Meurlin added.

"Why put [seriously injured combat veterans] through a two-year process when you basically know the outcome -- that they're going to be 100-percent disabled?" Meurlin said. "And why wait two years to get their VA benefits to them?"

Now, veterans seriously wounded in combat and identified as "catastrophically wounded" go through an expedited disability evaluation process that lasts about 100 days to begin receiving benefits. If veterans are recognized as fitting into that category, they will forego the redundancy of separate Defense and VA medical evaluations and go through the VA process only, the general said.

"We've taken a two-year process and reduced it to three months," he said. "We think it's a lot better for the individual and their family to make it shorter when you understand what the conclusion to the process is anyway."

The expedited process applies to servicemembers whose conditions are designated catastrophic and whose injuries were incurred in the line of duty as a direct result of armed conflict, Meurlin explained. A catastrophic injury or illness is a permanent, severely disabling injury, disorder, or disease to such a degree that a servicemember or veteran requires personal or mechanical assistance to leave home or bed, or requires constant supervision to avoid physical harm to themselves or others.

"We are talking about somebody who has been so badly injured that they cannot take care of [themselves] in daily life operations," he said. "The injury has to be combat-related, and it is a condition that makes the activities of daily life almost impossible for him."

Eventually, all servicemembers transitioning to veteran status may benefit from the changes the expedited disability evaluation system offers. The current system may be completely reformed to a one-year process by cutting out the military evaluation altogether, much like the expedient version. The pilot program for such a process is under way, but no decisions have been made yet, Meurlin said.

"The whole disability system is going through a number of reviews right now," he said. "Within our ability, we're taking the disability system, shrinking it down and making it more efficient."

Today's disability system is really a product of World War II, the Korean War and Vietnam War, and is well overdue for an update, Meurlin said. The current system doesn't fit well with the injuries military members suffer and the high survival rate they've endured during today's wars, he added.

"I think we're recognizing in this war, with the body armor and the improved vehicles, that we're having a whole different kind of injury," Meurlin said, noting the significance post-traumatic stress and traumatic brain injuries are having on troops. "We're getting a new type of injury and survival rate. We're bringing a lot of people home today that before we would've lost on the battlefield [in earlier wars]."

"It's important to get them the right set of benefits as early as we can and deliver them expeditiously and as fairly as we can," he added.

Psychological Health, Traumatic Brain Injury Outreach Center Opens

From DoD Press Release



The Department of Defense today announced the opening of a 24-hour outreach center to provide information and referrals to military service members, veterans, their families and others with questions about psychological health and traumatic brain injury.

The new center, which is operated by the Defense Centers of Excellence for Psychological Health and Traumatic Brain Injury (DCoE), can be contacted around the clock, 365 days a year, by phone at (866) 966-1020 and by e-mail at resources@dcoe-outreach.org.

"We're providing 24/7 support to assist callers with questions regarding psychological health and traumatic brain injury," said Brig. Gen. Loree K. Sutton, M.D., director of DCoE. "Getting the best possible information and tools, hassle-free, will empower and strengthen warriors and their families to successfully manage what can be confusing and disturbing circumstances."

The center can address everything from routine requests for information about psychological health and traumatic brain injury, to questions about symptoms a caller is having, to helping callers find appropriate health care resources.

DCoE promotes resilience, recovery and reintegration of service members facing psychological health and traumatic brain injury issues, and works to advance research, education, diagnosis and treatment of these conditions.

"If we need to research a question, we'll do the legwork and quickly reconnect with callers," Sutton said. "We welcome feedback on how we can better meet the needs of those we are so privileged to

serve."

The DCoE outreach center is staffed by behavioral health consultants and nurses, most with master's degrees. In addition to answering questions, staffers refer callers to contact centers in other parts of the Department of Defense, other federal agencies, and outside organizations when appropriate. Other contact centers also refer callers to the DCoE outreach center.

The center serves members, leaders and healthcare providers of the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines, Coast Guard, National Guard, Reserve and all uniformed services, along with veterans of all the services. The families of service members and of veterans are also served by the new center.

More information is available at
<http://www.dcoe.health.mil>

Strong Bonds Program

As members of the world's premier fighting force, Army Soldiers sacrifice for our country every day, and so do their loved ones. Military life places extreme hardship on relationships, especially in wartime, so the Army – backed by Congress – has committed unprecedented resources to help Soldiers build stronger relationships through the Strong Bonds Program.

Strong Bonds has specialized programs for single Soldiers, couples and families. Those Soldiers being deployed or redeployed can also learn special coping tactics.

Strong Bonds empowers Soldiers and their loved ones with relationship-building skills, and connects them to community health and support resources. It is a holistic, preventative program committed to the restoration and preservation of Army families, even those near crisis. The program is initiated and led by the Army Chaplains. More than 90% of those who have attended the program rate it positively.

With Strong Bonds, participants not only bond with their loved ones. They bond with other Army families, chaplains and the Army community as a whole. In turn, our Soldiers realize that they're not in this alone. They have an entire Army of support, both on duty and off.

For details on events, dates, and locations, visit:

<http://www.strongbonds.org/skins/strongbonds/display.aspx>

ARMY RESERVE MEDICAL COMMAND

Celebrates
2009 - The Year of the NCO



FEATURED
AR-MEDCOM NCO...

*Staff Sgt. Yanira Constance,
UA & NCO for the
369th Combat Support Hospital
(CSH) Puerto Nuevo, P.R.,*



***"Army NCO —
No One is More
Professional than I...."***

*"Even though she has only been the UA for a short
period of time, you can see the difference she is making,"*

*Command Sgt. Maj. Jose R. Vazquez,
Command Sgt. Maj. for the 369th*

*"I have known her since she joined the unit as a
private and has always been an outstanding Soldier.
Now, she is an outstanding NCO training
new outstanding Soldiers."*



United States Army Medical Research Institute of Chemical Defense, Aberdeen Proving Ground, Maryland



Hospital Management of Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear & Explosive Incidents Course

Will you know what to do if you are faced with mass casualties from a catastrophic event?



FOR INFORMATION ONLY: See your training officer, NCO for the availability of funds and training days if you interested in attending these courses. Contact the schools directly, at the number above, for more information.



HM-CBRNE Course Date • 3 - 7 August 2009

- Expert Classroom Instruction
- NIMS, NRF, HICS
- Multistation Practical Exercise
- Group Activities & Discussions
- Multi-Hospital Mass Casualty Tabletop
- Equipment Demonstrations
- Hands On Training Exercises

We would like to present to you an advanced-level education opportunity from the US Army, the HM-CBRNE course. It offers healthcare professionals state-of-the-art instruction that may save lives in a major WMD incident. Designed for civilian and military healthcare managers and providers, it is presented by some of the nation's leading authorities in biological, chemical, and radiation incident management.

This course was developed with hospital level objectives – clinical and non-clinical. It features interactive seminar discussions and dynamic exercises. The HM-CBRNE course is intended to help mitigate the existing gaps in support of hospital operations during a major WMD event. Additionally, it benefits all other routine and crisis hospital operations. It also provides a great opportunity to meet other professionals from across the nation who faces the same challenges you do.

To join us or to learn more about this opportunity, contact the Chemical Casualty Care Division. CME/CNE/CEU available.

Attention To All:

- Hospital Management
- Emergency Planners
- Emergency Responders
- Public Health Officials
- Physicians
- Nurses

US Army Medical Research Institute of Chemical Defense
 3100 Ricketts Point Road, Aberdeen Proving Grounds, MD 21010-5400
 Commercial Phone: 410-436-2230 Fax: 410-436-3086 DSN: 584-2230
<https://ccc.apgea.army.mil>

Hasbargen's Hit List

To all Commander, CSMs, FTUS,
First Line Leaders...

*We must do a better job taking care of
our "Warrior Medics"*



G-1 Personnel

- ★ Foster a climate of taking care of soldiers. This includes....
- ★ Timely submission of deserved awards.
- ★ Completing evaluations on time plan ahead be proactive.
- ★ Ensuring Line of Duties are completed for soldiers.
- ★ Take care of soldiers issues before they become Congressional. If they do, answer the Congressional in a timely and accurate/factual manner.
- ★ Get away from the inflexibility, think outside the box, preventing non participants is easier than recovery.
- ★ All Soldiers should attempt to recover non participant soldiers.

G-4 Logistics

- ★ Commanders need to schedule equipment inventories and put them on a training schedule.
- ★ Serviceability of Equipment - While conducting inventory check if the piece of equipment can perform the mission.
- ★ Recon Supply Transactions - Have the supply sergeant tell you what they have ordered.
- ★ Reporting - There are regulatory reporting times that are mandated by DA. Have your supply and maintenance brief you on your readiness.
- ★ ARMY Food Management Information System (AFMIS) - Input your units requirements 90 days in advance and close the transactions monthly.
- ★ Bulk Fuel Credit Card - Submit your report and only use the type of fuel authorized.
- ★ Lodging In Kind - Talk to the soldier about the program so they can use it.
- ★ Logistic Planning - Start planning your needs ahead of the event NOT the day before.
- ★ Government Purchase Cards - You can be held liable for illegal procurements. Learn the do's and do not's or if you have a question call the Program Manager.
- ★ Kentucky Logistics Operations Center (KYLOC) - Is a clothing program that supports the soldiers. Abuse it and we will loose it.
- ★ Mission Success is Dependent Upon Logistics.

G-7 Training

- ★ Maximize training opportunities and resources.
- ★ Mentor Junior Officers and Enlisted Soldiers.

G-8 Finance

- ★ Timely submission of orders for pay for TPU Soldiers. If the orders are not submitted and certified for pay in the system by the UA, then no other orders can be paid for other Soldiers. This means that one Soldier not submitting for pay can hold up pay for 50 other Soldiers.
- ★ Timely submission of travel vouchers in DTS. Soldiers need to submit their voucher NLT 7 days from end of duty. This is not happening and it leads into delinquencies in the government travel card.
- ★ Soldiers need to ensure that split disbursement is utilized to ensure that the government travel card is paid on time.

- ★ Maximize training during Battle Training Assemblies.
- ★ Schedule necessary MOS/ASI schools for your Soldiers.

Safety Office

- ★ Complete mandatory online safety training.

Staff Judge Advocate (SJA)

- ★ Investigate allegations of misconduct early. Appoint smart people to conduct them. Make the investigation a priority.
- ★ Prepare notifications of administrative separations expeditiously. Notify the Soldier and process the action through the chain of command for disposition as quickly as the regulations allow.
- ★ Report high profile incidents of misconduct through the chain of command to the AR-MEDCOM SJA Office immediately. Don't let your commanders be blind sided.

Surgeon's Office

- ★ Physical Health Assessments (PHA) MUST BE 100% in 2009. All Soldiers are required to have a PHA annually.
- ★ Improve Dental Readiness. Command Statistics currently are at only 65%.
- ★ Improve Post Deployment Health Re-Assessment (PDHRA). USARC goal is 100% of all Soldiers mobilized and deployed. WE ARE NOT THERE!

Deputy Commander Readiness (DCR)

- ★ Commanders and leaders must develop an Individual Training Plan (ITP) on every Soldier who is not DMOSQ. The ITP provides the roadmap for each Soldier to fit into the structure for mobilization readiness.
- ★ Commanders and leaders must become directly involved in effective recruiting to build their "Go-to-War" team. Direct involvement means that you know recruiting leaders within your 50 mile radius and are engaging them for your readiness needs.
- ★ Readiness metrics are important indicators or leaders doing their job. Identify your high priority readiness measures and hold subordinate leaders to the same standard. This is called "power-down" "measure-down". Accountability is a key enabler to improving readiness.

Inspector General (IG)

- ★ The solution to your problem starts with your Chain of Command.
- ★ Take care of your family issues before you deploy.

Public Affairs Office (PAO)

- ★ Help promote Command Information - Keep you Soldiers informed as to what is going on in the Army Reserve that effects them.
- ★ Help promote Community Relations - Get your Soldiers and units involved with community events. It promotes understanding and support amongst the community.
- ★ Help promote Media Relations - Get your Soldiers and units coverage in the local media. Get your story out there! Tell the public about the great things your Soldiers are doing.



**These are all essential for retention and morale. It's all about
talking care of our Soldiers and Readiness. Get it done!**

Maj. Gen. James A. Hasbargen, Commanding General, AR-MEDCOM