

# WARRIOR MEDIC

## MONTHLY

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### Chairman Tells Troops It's OK to Get Help



From a Tricare News Release

FALLS CHURCH, Va., May 7, 2010 - The chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff wants servicemembers to know it's OK to get help for behavioral health-related conditions.

In a new video spotlighting The Tricare Military Health System's behavioral health care benefits, Navy Adm. Mike Mullen sends a strong message to servicemembers struggling with feelings of stress, anxiety or depression.

"If you feel as though you or a close family member need help, please don't wait. Tell someone," Mullen said. "Asking for help may very well be the bravest thing you can do."

In the four-minute video, Mullen urges troops to tell someone in their chain of command if they're having difficulties working through stress from deployments or the demands of military life. These are issues all servicemembers may have at one time or another, Mullen said, and by ignoring them they can hurt not just themselves, but also their family, friends and fellow servicemembers.

"The truth is, many people are reluctant to seek counseling because they fear the stigma attached to psychological or emotion problems," Mullen said.

To avoid that, Tricare's new mental health options allow beneficiaries to seek help in a more private manner. The Tricare Assistance Program brings short-term professional counseling assistance straight into the home. Beneficiaries with a computer, a webcam and the associated software can speak "face to face" with a licensed counselor over the Internet at any time, day or night.

The Tricare Assistance Program is available in the United States to active duty servicemembers, those eligible for the Transition Assistance Management Program and National Guard and Reserve members enrolled in Tricare Reserve Select. It is also available to their spouses of any age and to other eligible family members 18 years of age or older.

The video also features Marine Corps Sgt. Josh Hopper, who shares his experiences with seeking help for post-traumatic stress disorder after two deployments to Iraq. More of his story is available, along with the stories of other servicemembers who have sought help, on the "Real Warriors" website.

### Troops' Opinions Matter in 'Don't Ask, Don't Tell' Review

By Army Sgt. 1st Class Michael J. Carden  
American Forces Press Service



FORT BRAGG, N.C., June 3, 2010 - Servicemembers' opinions are "absolutely critical" in implementing policy for a repeal of the law that bans gays and lesbians from openly serving in the military, the nation's top military officer said here yesterday.

"Your view and opinion of [gays and lesbians serving openly] is absolutely critical to address those issues," Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Navy Adm. Mike Mullen told 18th Airborne Corps soldiers during a town hall meeting.

Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates directed a military-wide review of the impact of the repeal, including town hall meetings with servicemembers and their families. The review is to be completed by the end of December.

Gates and Mullen want to ensure troops are ready to make the change and can do so without hurting unit cohesion, military readiness, military effectiveness, and recruiting and retention.

"One of the reasons the study and review is so important is because there isn't any subjective data out there, particularly from you and those who will be most effected," the admiral told the soldiers.

"Part of my testimony said how important the review Secretary Gates put in place is," he added, speaking to remarks he made before Congress last week. "That review continues to be critical; it continues to be one we will work our way through over the next

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many months.”

Allowing gays and lesbians to serve openly, Mullen said, is a direction the military needs to move forward on.

“The law needs to change,” he said. “Fundamentally, it’s an issue of our values. It’s very critical for us as an institution, and I’m hard-pressed not to support policy and a law that forces individuals to come in and lie everyday.”

Mullen’s remarks on the topic were sparked by a senior non-commissioned officer’s question. The soldier expressed his concern for the possibility of hate crimes and increased cases of sexual harassment if the law changes.

Mullen told the soldier that disciplinary issues regarding sexual harassment have nothing to do with the change in the law and should not be tolerated, period.

“Certainly any change in the laws is not an excuse for anything like that to ever happen,” the admiral said. “We are a disciplined force. We have standards. Maintaining those standards, sustaining that discipline is our job, no matter what happens.

“I have every expectation that not only we will do this, but we will lead in a way [so] it gets done,” Mullen continued. “[But] that doesn’t mean we won’t have challenges.”

Ultimately, he said, troops and leaders need to have a greater understanding of the impact openly gay and lesbian servicemembers will have on the military.

“I want to understand what the possibilities are ... what it’s going take to implement this and, in that regard, address the leadership challenges and implementation with expectations that at the small-unit level, not exclusively, it will be led and led well,” Mullen said. “I have a lot of faith in you that that’s doable.”

## ‘Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell’ Online Inbox Goes Live



American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON, May 5, 2010 - A new online inbox that enables servicemembers and their families to comment anonymously about the impact of a possible repeal of the “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” law has gone live.

The inbox will enable servicemembers and families to offer their thoughts about how a repeal of the law that prohibits gays and lesbians from openly serving in the military might affect military readiness, military effectiveness and unit cohesion, recruiting and retention, and family readiness, a defense official explained.

Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates

created an intradepartment, interservice working group to conduct a fair, objective, comprehensive and dispassionate review of these issues, the official said. The online inbox is one method the group will use to systematically engage with the force and their families.

A non-Defense Department contractor will monitor comments made through the inbox and eliminate any identifiable information inadvertently submitted to ensure anonymity, the official said.

**The inbox is posted at <http://www.defense.gov/dadt>**

**Respondents must possess an official Common Access Card to provide input.**

## Program Links Troops With Career Resources



By Sarah Lifshin  
American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON, May 18, 2010 - As the United States’ economic crisis lingers, returning veterans are finding it harder to translate

the skills they have learned on the battlefields onto a resume, but some employers are working with the military to bridge the gap.

The Employer Partnership Office of the Armed Forces is providing the resources needed to help enlisted soldiers, veterans, retirees and spouses secure employment after their tours of duty end.

The program -- formerly known as the U.S. Army Reserve Employer Partnership Initiative -- was created in 2008 as an initiative under the leadership of Army Lt. Gen. Jack C. Stultz, chief of the Army Reserve. It offers candidates a jump start into the private sector through partnerships with employers worldwide.

“Through employer partnerships, we can further cultivate an affordable operational reserve force by sharing our men and women with selected civilian employers, who, in turn, will help us to develop and maintain talents, capabilities and skills that are essential on the battlefield,” Stultz wrote in the January/February issue of “The Officer.”

“Participating employers see the skills our soldiers bring as value added to their enterprises, while we see employers’ contribution in maintaining the skills the nation needs as value added to our force,” Stultz added.

As of this spring, the office has recruited more than 1,000 employment partners, including 480 of the Fortune 500 compa-

nies. More than 500,000 jobs are currently listed on the employer partnership website.

Job seekers are matched with such employers as Wal-Mart, General Electric and Con-way. These companies respect servicemembers’ experience and understand the skills and background they can bring to the job, officials said.

Servicemembers provide the necessary qualified and trained human capital needed to fill a variety of positions, defense officials said. Through their experience in the armed forces, they acquire abilities in management, leadership, project execution, team building and strategic planning.

Use of the program is a cost savings for employers, who often spend thousands of dollars in recruiting and screening expenses, officials said. Prior to employment, candidates receive background checks, medical screening and aptitude testing as a result of their military backgrounds.

The partnership has made great strides in career placement, defense officials said.

Among its placement and credentialing services, candidates receive coaching, counseling and use of the program’s job search engine, among other assistance. A new website the Employer Partnership Office will introduce later this spring will include tools to help veterans and employers translate military skills to civilian skills.

Faced with the insecurity of life after military service, veterans often find the civilian hiring process daunting, as hiring managers often don’t understand how their skills will support their companies, said Dave Miller, senior vice president of global policy and economic sustainability at Con-way, a freight, transportation and logistics company.

About 3,000 of the 30,000 workers worldwide for the San Mateo, Calif.-based company have served in the military. Veteran-filled positions include service center managers, mechanics, truck drivers and administrators.

“We need to understand how to jump start their civilian careers,” Miller said. “If we are going to support the all-voluntary military, where the defense of this nation rests on the shoulders of these soldiers, we must understand how to support their civilian and military careers, because they run concurrently. Employers need to put themselves into the shoes of those who protect our rights as Americans.”

Employers often have difficulties understanding how military job skills will transition into the private sector, he added.

“If you are a colonel, you are an executive vice president,” Miller said. “Many human resources professionals don’t understand how you ran a forward unit or had a squad or company help set up a tribal village will help their companies,” he said. “These veterans have worked in the most arduous

situations and hostile environments, and they are being asked if they ever had a real job. That's demeaning."

One Con-way employee knows first-hand what it's like to cross over from the armed forces to the civilian work force, and he's using his military background to help in placing veterans into jobs.

Retired Army Lt. Col. David "Duke" Ellington now serves as Con-way's personnel supervisor in Plainfield, Ind. He said hiring managers often do not have an understanding of military job descriptions or what value recruiting veterans will bring.

"These candidates are drug-free, often have a security clearance, and [have] good work ethics – these are all advantages," Ellington said. "With their military backgrounds, they understand missions and can understand what a mission is. These analytical tools are essential in the corporate world."

## Museums Offer Free Admission to Military Families



By Elaine Wilson  
American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON, May 24, 2010 - Active duty servicemembers and their families will gain free access to hundreds of museums throughout the nation this summer, thanks to a partnership between the National Endowment for the Arts and Blue Star Families.

More than 600 museums in 50 states and the District of Columbia have signed up so far to participate in Operation Appreciation: Blue Star Museums. The program offers active duty servicemembers -- including activated Guard and Reserve -- and up to five of their immediate family members free admission to participating museums from Memorial Day through Labor Day.

"The Blue Star Museums initiative is a tangible expression of appreciation to servicemembers and their families," said Barbara Thompson, director of the Pentagon's office of family policy, children and youth. "It warms our hearts to see how other federal agencies and local communities can think creatively to recognize their sacrifice and contribution to the nation."

People can visit <http://www.arts.gov/national/bluestarmuseums/index.php> for a complete list of participating museums, which run the gamut from children's and fine arts to history and science museums. Participating museums include the Art Institute of Chicago, Dallas Museum of Art, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Please

Touch Museum in Philadelphia, Museum of Modern Art and the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City, and all of New Mexico's 14 state-run museums and historic monuments.

"This is a fantastic opportunity for servicemembers and their families to enjoy the cultural experiences that might have otherwise been inaccessible because of cost," Thompson said. "We truly appreciate the generosity of the National Endowment for the Arts and the participating museums."

While admission is free of charge, some special or limited-time exhibits may not be included in the program, according to a Blue Star Museums news release. People should contact the museum directly for specifics.

"There have always been wonderful examples of partnerships between museums and military installations, but the scale of this gift from the museum community to military families is thrilling," Kathy Roth-Douquet, chairman of Blue Star Families, said in a news release. "Military families work hard for this country, and it is gratifying for us to be recognized for that."

"We anticipate that thousands of military families will participate in the program and visit museums this summer -- many of them for the first time," she continued. "Blue Star Families will work hard to help our military families make the most of these opportunities."

A group of military spouses formed Blue Star Families in December 2008 to raise awareness of the challenges of military family life in partnership with civilian communities and leaders, according to the organization's website. The nonprofit group has grown to include spouses and families from all services and walks of life, including National Guard and Reserve, as well as veterans and civilians.

## Are You Medically ready?



By Col. Stephen Palte, 81st RSC Soldier Readiness Preparedness Team

When you log into AKO, this statement greets you in the upper right hand corner. What is medical readiness and what does green or red mean?

In the upcoming series of articles, I plan to go over many aspects of medical readiness and try to dispel myths and clarify a lot of confusing issues.

AR 40-501, Standards of Medical Fitness, states that medical readiness is the responsibility of the Soldier. So how do we know what to do and how to do it?

Over the last few years, the US Army Reserve initiated many programs that assist us in achieving these goals. Many of you are

familiar with terms such as RHRP, FED-HEALS, LHI but what do they mean and how can they help the individual Soldier.

The Reserve Health Readiness Program (RHRP) is the program that is in place to assist us in becoming medically ready. In turn, RHRP contracts with Logistics Health Incorporated (LHI), formerly known as FED\_HEALS to provide medical readiness services. I will refer to LHI repeatedly as it is the means by which many of our goals are achieved.

To get back to medical readiness, what does "green" refer to? All Soldiers are referred to as Fully Medically Ready (FMR) or not. Soldiers who are FMR are ready to deploy; those that are not, are not ready to deploy. FMR is comprised of 8 categories and in order to be FMR, you have to be a go in all 8 -- if you miss 1, you are not FMR. This seems unfair (and a new medical ready classification is about to be implemented) but for now, if we concentrate on FMR, we will transition to the new classification and still be ready to deploy. The categories are as follows:

**Pregnancy:** If you are pregnant, this is marked "red". Males will default to "green". It is important that pregnant Soldiers inform their chain of command once they are no longer pregnant so that this can be adjusted.

**MND (Medically Non Deployable):** This refers to anyone who has a permanent 3 or 4 profile and has not been found fit for duty by the board process

either MMRB or MEB/PEB).

**DNA:** All Soldiers should have a DNA on file which is usually done at basic training. If this field is blank, please contact the Surgeons office and we can instruct you on how to get this accomplished. This is a simple test and can be performed by any medic.

**Dental:** Dental exam is an annual requirement and readiness is further classified into four classes:

Class 1: Dental exam on file and no major dental concerns.

Class 2: Dental exam on file and minor dental concerns identified that are not expected to cause a problem in the next 12 months.

Class 3: Dental exam on file but major dental problems exist.

Class 4: Dental exam not current Class 1 and 2 are deployable (green), 3 and 4 are not (red). Dental exams can be performed at a mass event at the unit level, requested through a voucher in the auto-mated voucher system (AVS -- an application in MEDPROS that all unit administrators have access to) or by going to a private dentist and having them complete a DD2813 and faxing to LHI (example below). If the exam identifies a Class 3, LHI will contact the Soldier and arrange a treatment plan at a contracted dentist in their local area. Once

the treatment is complete, they will up-date the record to a Class 1 or 2. This treatment is at no cost to the Soldier.

**HIV:** This requirement is every 5 years for non deploying Soldiers and within 6 months for deploying Soldiers. This can be scheduled by the unit administrator through AVS.

**Immunizations:** All non deploying Soldiers need to have completed their hepatitis A and B series of immunizations; MMR (measles, mumps and rubella) and seasonal influenza (influenza season is defined as December 1 to May 31 each year). Therefore, if a Soldier is green for immunizations on Nov 30, they will become red on December 1 until their seasonal influenza is administered. Note that although H1N1 immunization is mandatory, this does not currently factor into the red or green status on immunizations. Immunizations will

be updated at a unit mass event, when a Soldier goes to a PHA or by faxing in proof of immunization from a civilian provider to LHI (1-888-888-8476).

**No LDP (Limited Duty Profile):** This category is green unless the Soldier is in the hospital, on convalescent leave or has a temporary 3 profile.

**PHA (Periodic Health Assessment):** This is also an annual requirement and can be accomplished 1 of 2 ways: mass unit event or by going into AKO and clicking on the medical readiness icon at the top of the page – this will then direct you to the medical readiness page and PHA is on the left hand side. By clicking on the PHA link, a PHA questionnaire will appear and once all questions are complete and the questionnaire submitted, a toll free number for LHI will appear on the screen – this number can be called 24/7 – if an operator is not available, they will call back and schedule a face to face interview with a provider in the Soldier's local area. The PHA is not complete by merely completing the questionnaire.

For these processes to work, a few prerequisites are required:

Ensure your contact information is correct. You can check this by going to <https://www.hrc.army.mil> logging in and editing your information on "My Re-serve Record".

Keep appointments made for you by LHI. The Army pays for no shows and there are limits to the number of re-schedules allowed. Furthermore, the medical readiness indicator does not get updated.

In future articles, these medical readiness issues will be addressed further. Please direct any questions or suggestions for further topics to my office.

I may be contacted by calling my office at (803) 751-3321 or by email

## Obama Signs Veterans, Caregivers Legislation



By Jim Garamone  
American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON, May 5, 2010 - President Barack Obama signed legislation today to improve health care for veterans and to recognize the important role that family caregivers play in the recovery of wounded personnel.

Obama recognized retired Army Sgt. Ted Wade and his wife, Sarah, during his remarks before signing the Caregivers and Veterans Omnibus Health Services Act during a White House ceremony.

A roadside bomb wounded Wade when he served in Iraq in 2004, and his wife was an important reason why the sergeant made it through, Obama said.

The legislation expands mental health counseling and services for Iraq and Afghanistan veterans, including reserve-component servicemembers.

"We're authorizing the [Veterans Affairs Department] to utilize hospitals and clinics outside the VA system to serve more wounded warriors ... with traumatic brain injury," the president said before signing the bill.

The new law also increases support for veterans in rural areas with the transportation and housing needed to reach VA hospitals and clinics. It also expands health care for women veterans to meet their unique needs, including maternity care for newborn children, and it allows VA to launch a pilot program to provide child care for veterans receiving intensive medical care.

The legislation also eliminates co-payments for veterans who are catastrophically disabled, and it helps veterans who are homeless.

"We're expanding support to homeless veterans, because in the United States of America, no one who has served this nation in uniform should ever be living on the streets," Obama said.

The president said the legislation marks a major step forward in America's commitment to families and caregivers who tend wounded warriors every day.

"They're spouses like Sarah," he said. "They're parents, once again caring for their sons and daughters. Sometimes they're children helping to take care of their mom or dad.

"These caregivers put their own lives on hold, their own careers and dreams aside, to care for a loved one," he continued. "They do it every day, often around the clock. As Sarah can tell you, it's hard physically and it's hard emotionally. It's certainly hard financially. And these tireless caregivers shouldn't have to do it alone."

The law gives caregivers a stipend to care for a severely injured veteran from Afghanistan or Iraq. They also will receive lodging allowances and get the training they need to care for their loved ones.

"If you need counseling, you'll receive it," Obama said. "If you don't have health insurance, it will be provided. And if you need a break, it will be arranged? up to 30 days of respite care each year."

The president said the new law recognizes the obligation Americans have for those who served.

"Just as we have a responsibility to train and equip them when we send them into harm's way," he said, "we have a responsibility to take care of them when they come home."

The president said his administration has dramatically increased funding for veterans' health care, especially for those with the signature wounds of today's wars: post-traumatic stress and traumatic brain injury. He also mentioned that VA has received its largest budget increase in history last year.

## What Is Comprehensive Soldier Fitness?



The focus of this article is to capture the work and intent of the Chief of Staff of the Army, General George W. Casey Jr.; BG Rhonda Cornum, Director, Comprehensive Soldier Fitness Program; Dr. Karen Reivich, Dr. Martin Seligman, and the staff and faculty at the University of Pennsylvania; and the work of many Leaders on the Army Staff. This document serves to pull together all the published pieces of information on the Comprehensive Soldier Fitness program that are relevant and needed by a Company/Troop/Battery Commander and First Sergeant, their junior officers and NCOs.

Comprehensive Soldier Fitness (CSF) is a holistic program focused on developing the five dimensions of strength validated by the World Health Organization. These five dimensions of strength are Physical, Emotional, Social, Spiritual, and Family. The Chief of Staff of the Army established the Army's CSF program in 2009 with the intent to increase strength, resilience and enhance performance in all of our Soldiers, Family members, and our Department of the Army (DA) Civilians. The program focuses on assessing the current strengths of the individual across all 5 dimensions, and then provides the training and education to increase strength and resilience. This program is tied to the life-long learning principles of our professional military education system, starting in initial entry officer and enlisted

courses. This program focuses on building strength in each of the five dimensions of strength over an individual's service with the Army.

We use daily physical training to strengthen our bodies in preparing for the rigors of combat and the daily physical demands of our occupational specialties. We want Soldiers to experience growth and development from each physical training activity throughout their Army career. Physical training today is part of our daily lives and our culture. The intent of the CSF program is to expand our focus on fitness by strengthening our bodies and minds across all five dimensions of strength. Every Soldier, Army Civilian and Family member will face adversity; physical, emotional, social, Family and spiritual, in many forms throughout their lives. We want the members of our team to do more than just "cope" with adversity; we want them to grow from their life experiences. As an example, two different Soldiers both experience similar traumatic events (divorce, loss of a comrade, bankruptcy, etc). One Soldier falls into deep depression, drinks heavily, work performance suffers, and finally destroying their Army career. The second Soldier goes through a period of grieving and like a runner, gains a second wind and moves forward in their life stronger and more focused than before. We want all the members of our team to be like Soldier number two.

Reflecting on the past eight years of war and our deployment experience in Afghanistan and Iraq, we can now begin to understand the individual health and resilience problems associated with our deployment tempo. We know the large majority of Soldiers who deploy to combat experience an individual growth; a strengthening in their physical and mental resilience. As an example, deployed Soldiers adapt to living in austere conditions, face their fears of combat, adapt to long work hours 7 days a week, and physically strengthen their bodies throughout the deployment. These Soldiers return from a deployment stronger and more resilient.

However, we also know there is a smaller percentage of Soldiers who return from deployment suffering from non-battle associated injuries. Non-battle associated injuries can include muscular and skeletal injuries like a torn rotator-cuff or a torn meniscus in the Physical dimension of strength; nightmares or feeling depressed in the Mental dimension of strength; difficulties in establishing friends or working with others in the Social dimension of strength; feelings of isolation and not feeling part of something greater than yourself in the Spiritual dimension; and not reintegrating back into a normal Family lifestyle in the Family dimension. CSF is intended to build resilience across all five dimensions of strength start-

ing from day one in a Soldier, DA Civilian, or Family member's service, and continuing as a life-long process throughout their military service.

The CSF program is not a new name for an existing program or initiative, it is not something we do after a critical event during a deployment, and it is not a new method to screen Soldiers for physical or psychological issues. Likewise, CSF is not a substitute nor can it replace the need for good small-unit leadership. CSF is a holistic program aimed at comprehensively equipping and training our Soldiers, Family members, and Army Civilians to maximize their potential and face the physical and psychological challenges of sustained operations. CSF is a prevention program that enhances resilience and coping skills, enables individuals to grow, thrive in the face of challenges, and bounce back from adversity.

The CSF program consists of four pillars; the Global Assessment Tool (GAT), Comprehensive Resilience Modules (CR), Master Resilience Trainers (MRT), and initiatives to include this education in all levels of Professional Military Education (PME) for Soldiers and DA Civilians. Each of these four pillars requires varying degrees of individual and leader involvement to successfully institutionalize CSF within the Army culture. We want CSF activities to become a part of our daily lives just as we do physical training every day to build and strengthen the Physical dimension of CSF. The first two pillars of the CSF program target every individual, are self-initiated, and are confidential to eliminate stigma surrounding an individual's performance. The third and fourth pillars focus on providing commanders the subject matter experts they need within their organizations, and providing education to all individuals during their PME throughout their career.

The CSF program begins with the GAT. When a Master Fitness Trainer (MFT) or personal trainer in the fitness center sets out to develop a personalized fitness program for a new client, the development of a workout program must begin with an assessment of the client's current strengths and weaknesses. Similarly, the GAT provides every individual with a confidential and personalized assessment of their strengths and weaknesses in the other four dimensions of fitness; Emotional, Social, Spiritual and Family. The GAT provides every individual with an understanding and roadmap of how to begin building strength and resiliency in these four dimensions. The GAT includes 105 questions and takes approximately 15 to 20 minutes to complete. Individual results or scores are neither reported to nor made available to the chain of command or responsible leadership. Commanders do receive unit participation results so they can monitor completion and align training pro-

grams. The GAT is mandatory for Soldiers and voluntary for Family members and DA Civilians.

We want all new Soldiers joining the Army to take the GAT during their Initial Entry Training. Just as we begin physical training assessments on day one in the Army, we want new Soldiers assessing their weaknesses and seeking out self-development modules to build strength and resilience in all dimensions of fitness. Soldiers in the Army will take the GAT annually throughout their career. In addition to the annual requirement, Soldiers will take the GAT between 80 – 120 days post deployment. These windows of opportunity to revisit the GAT maintain a level of awareness for every individual of their strengths and weaknesses, especially if there is a change towards the negative in any specific area. Soldiers, DA Civilians and Family Members can access the GAT at [www.sft.army.mil](http://www.sft.army.mil).

The Second pillar of the CSF program is the Comprehensive Resilience Modules (CRM), which are short, web-based training packages designed to develop a particular skill associated with CSF. Just as the GAT provides the individual assessment of strengths and weaknesses, the CRM now provide the individual with a self-paced means to strengthen and build resiliency in the dimensions needing the most improvement. Based on the strengths and weaknesses of every individual, training is tailored based on the individual's performance level. The CR modules will be mandatory for Soldiers in the months ahead and voluntary for Family members and DA Civilians. Presently the number of available modules is limited but this capability will continue to grow in the weeks and months ahead. Additionally, because the CRMs are web-based, they provide the Army a means to rapidly update the content as we learn new and more innovative methods to build resilience and strength in each dimension.

The Third pillar is the Master Resilience Trainer (MRT) who will serve the commander as his/her subject matter expert for teaching and developing CSF initiatives within the unit. The MRT is the core of the CSF program and we must get this right. The MRT is the Master Gunner or Master Fitness Trainer of the CSF dimensions. The selection of the right individuals within an organization to attend the 10-day course at the University of Pennsylvania in the short-term, or the TRADOC MRT course when initiated at Fort Jackson at the end of FY10, is critical for unit success. The qualifications for an MRT include: SSG to CSM, WO2 to WO5, CPT to LTC, GS-9 to GS-15. All individuals selected to attend training must be in good standing within their units, no flags and no pending disciplinary action.

As an additional duty, all individuals should hold a duty position that allows them

to periodically provide training to Soldiers and Families, and advise the commander on the unit's CSF program. The focus of the MRT course is to develop leaders based on the qualification criteria above, to teach CSF and train other leaders and members within an organization. Therefore, an individual selected to attend this course must already possess very good communication skills, have an outgoing likable personality that can connect with a target audience of Soldiers, DA Civilians or Family members. Leaders selecting individuals to attend the MRT course should look for the following recommended competencies:

- Self Awareness – Has the ability to identify thoughts, emotions, behaviors, and patterns in thinking of individuals.
- Self Regulation – Has the ability to control impulses, emotions and behaviors in order to achieve goals.
- Optimism – Has the ability to look for what is good, remains realistic, maintains hope and has the ability to instill confidence in self and others.
- Mental Agility – Has the critical thinking skills to visualize and understand attitudes and other perspectives.
- Strengths of Character – Has the ability to capitalize on individual strengths and utilizes them to achieve and meet mission objectives and goals.
- Connections – Demonstrates the ability to have strong relationships, positive and effective communication, demonstrates empathy, and demonstrates a willingness to ask for help and help those they lead.

From the selection criteria above for choosing a leader to attend the MRT course, a MRT upon return to their unit must;

- Live the skills they learned in the MRT course.
- Use the skills they learned in the MRT course during formal and informal counseling.
- Teach the skills they learned in the MRT course:
  - Periodically provides the unit with structured CSF classes identified by commanders on unit training schedules.
  - Integrates CSF concepts into training events whenever able.
  - Provides deployment-specific CSF classes as needed by the commander in preparation for a unit deployment.
  - As needed, educates leaders, Soldiers, DA Civilians and their Families about the CSF program.
  - Serves as the Commander's principal advisor for total fitness and resilience training.
  - Knows when to recommend referring Soldiers for professional counseling to behavioral health providers, chaplains or other appropriate resources.

Unit leaders who select the very best individuals to attend the MRT course receive

in return the very best education and training for their unit members; and an advisor to the commander who knows how to best improve the resiliency and strengths of their organization. The MRT skills provided to the command upon return focus on identifying and developing strengths in individuals and groups, sustaining the levels of strength and resilience within an organization preparing for a deployment cycle, and enhancing the strengths of all individuals across the organization. The immediate population density for the development of the MRT across the Army is one per battalion by the end of FY 10. The allocation of seats is presently very controlled and focused on those units getting ready to deploy, therefore leaders must select wisely those they send to this course.

The Fourth pillar focuses on institutionalizing CSF training across the Army by incorporating this education into all phases of PME for Soldiers and DA Civilians. From Initial Entry Training which includes Basic and Advanced Individual Training, Soldiers will receive resilience and strength training across all five dimensions, incorporated into all types and phases of training and education. Each phase or level of PME for all Soldiers will include strength and resilience training integrated throughout and where applicable in each curriculum or program of instruction. TRADOC will tailor the course materials taught is tailored to the level of professional development that the particular PME targets. For example; a Specialist attending the Warrior Leader Course learning how to serve as a Team Leader needs a different level of focus in CSF, than the SSG or SFC attending the Senior Leader Course. While CSF focuses on building strength and resilience of the individual from day one in the Army, Soldiers serving in positions of increased responsibility need the education to lead their respective formations, including the application of CSF across the populations of Soldiers, DA Civilians and Families they supervise and over-watch.

The CSF program is rapidly becoming a part of our Army culture; it is part of what we do every day as Soldiers and Leaders. Just as we perform physical training frequently to strengthen our bodies, we must frequently work to strengthen our minds and outlook on life in the other four dimensions of fitness. All of us serving in leadership positions must commit ourselves to study and understand the principles, the dimensions and the pillars that comprise this program. Only then can a leader effectively "live" the principles each day and by our own example, and teach our junior leaders "what right looks like" for themselves and their Soldiers.

Kenneth O. Preston  
Sergeant Major of the Army

## Talking To The Media For Soldiers 101



The media is a large and ever-present partner in the midst of military operations and they are here to stay. The media has to go through steps to be allowed to speak with and interview members of the armed forces. The American public has a vested interest in what their Service members are involved in, and the media plays a big part in telling the story. Therefore the media professionals have many very detailed, and often in-depth, questions to ask about what we're doing and how we're doing it.

Some Soldiers, or even leaders, may feel a little uneasy about being part of an interview. However, knowing a few key points and facts about the do's and don'ts of interviewing can not only help aid in our mission, but can also distribute key messages that will assist in keeping America informed.

When it comes to dealing with the media, the attached set of guidelines is the best path to a mutually successful interview. Clicking here <<https://www.us.army.mil/suite/doc/22759451>> will help you follow some tried and true tips on conducting an interview, as well as some helpful steps and procedures.

Remember, media training is not only helpful, but it is also a requirement. To find out more about media training, and to get more information, go to <https://www.us.army.mil/suite/doc/22759453> .

Keeping your Soldiers well-trained, educated, and informed can turn an awkward interview into a positive command message opportunity.

For more information, contact LTC William Ritter at: 727-563-3730 or e-mail: [william.ritter@us.army.mil](mailto:william.ritter@us.army.mil)

## Officials Warn of 'Phishing' Scams Targeting Troops



By Lisa Daniel  
American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON, May 10, 2010 - U.S. Strategic Command officials are urging renewed vigilance against Internet-based identity theft after detecting a widespread "phishing" expedition against servicemembers.

Phishing is a term used to describe deceiving people into divulging personal information such as passwords or account numbers over the Internet.

Beginning as early as May 2009 and lasting as late as March 2010, numerous

fraudulent e-mails were sent to financial customers of USAA and Navy Federal Credit Union, Stratcom officials said in a recent news release.

The e-mails, which appear to originate from USAA and the credit union, ask the recipient to provide or verify personal information such as name and rank, account numbers, date of birth, mother's maiden name, address and phone numbers, online account user name and password, credit card numbers, personal identification numbers for automated tellers, and Social Security numbers.

"While these e-mails may appear to be legitimate, it's important to remember USAA and Navy Federal Credit Union will never ask for [personal identification] or to verify financial institution data via e-mail," the Stratcom release says.

Although the e-mails have official-looking logos, headers and signature blocks, "these are all common cyber espionage 'spear-phishing' tactics used to trick recipients," it says.

USAA posted a notice on its website May 4 warning of the phishing attempt.

Phishing scams can reach servicemembers not only through personal e-mail accounts, but also through their official e-mail. Air Force Gen. Kevin P. Chilton, Stratcom commander, told the House Armed Services Committee in March that every commander needs to focus on keeping networks secure.

"It should be the focus of every commander in the field, the health and status of their networks, just as they're focused on the health and status of their people, their tanks, their airplanes, their ships, because the networks are so critical," he said. "So, changing their conduct, training them and then holding people accountable for their behavior on the network is important."

The Defense Department is home to some 7 million computers and more than 15,000 local and regional area networks, Stratcom officials said. The networks are scanned millions of times per day and probed thousands of times per day, with a frequency and sophistication that is increasing exponentially, they said.

The intrusions come from a variety of sources with different intentions, from individual hackers intent on theft and vandalism, to espionage by foreign governments and adversaries, they said.

"This is, indeed, our big challenge in U.S. Strategic Command as we think about how we're going to defend and secure the networks," they said.

Stratcom officials offered these suggestions to keep your personal information safe:

- Always protect your personal identification and be cautious whom you provide it to, especially by phone or Internet;

- Be suspicious of any unsolicited e-mail, pop-up, website or phone call in which

you are asked to provide personal information;

- Cross-reference information with the official sites, looking for the "https" secure connection.

- Do not click on any link provided in a suspicious e-mail, and take caution in opening e-mail attachments or downloading files, regardless of who sends them;

- Keep your personal computer's anti-virus, anti-spyware, firewall and other security software running and up to date;

- Regularly review your bank statements for suspicious activity.

## Pentagon Channel Starts Mobile Streaming Service



By David Silverstein, The Pentagon Channel

WASHINGTON, May 13, 2010 - Mobility solutions and content aggregator uVuMobile has partnered with the Pentagon Channel

to deliver live programming to military personnel and civilian employees around the world with video-enabled mobile phones.

The Pentagon Channel is the broadcast vehicle for the latest Defense Department news.

The uVuMobile VXStream platform, which allows the Pentagon Channel to offer comprehensive suites of rich media to consumers, is providing soldiers on the move, and even loved ones at home, a new way of keeping up to date on news and programming that affect their daily lives.

"We are delighted to add this feature to our arsenal of distribution options," said Brian Natwick, the Pentagon Channel's general manager. "In order to serve our viewers, they must first be able to get our content. This 'TV everywhere' opportunity is just another way we can give our servicemembers what they need."

Members of the military community, including the Pentagon Channel's audience of more than 2.6 million members of the U.S. armed forces, will be able to access live broadcasts of military news and information through their cell phones any time of day and in any worldwide location with a cellular connection. Thanks to this partnership, news updates and programming from the channel can be viewed at home and overseas on most video-enabled phones – including BlackBerrys, Palms, Google's Nexus One, and Windows Smartphones.

By using the growing popularity of live video streaming to cell phones, this partnership furthers the Pentagon Channel's mission, officials said. The channel, which was designed by the Defense Department to enhance timely communications for mem-

bers of the armed forces, provides 24-hour information and media to viewers, which include 1.4 million active duty service members, 1.2 million members of the National Guard and Reserves, and the department's 650,000 civilian employees.

"We are excited to be working with the Pentagon Channel to deliver its programming to mobile phones worldwide and to play a role in ensuring our troops are informed with the latest military news on a real-time basis," said Richard Seifert, uVuMobile's president and CEO. "Our VX-Stream platform will ensure a high-quality and robust experience to the millions of military and civilian personnel who view this valuable resource."

Subscribers to the video streaming service will have access to the entire slate of Pentagon Channel programming, including Defense Department news briefings, daily news updates, "Fit for Duty," "The American Veteran," "The Grill Sergeants," "Pacific Report," interviews with top Defense officials and short stories about the work of U.S. servicemembers.

Users can access the new service by going to <http://www.uvumobile.com/tpc> on their mobile phone. Pentagon Channel programming also streams live at <http://www.pentagonchannel.mil>, where video on demand and both audio and video podcasts also are available.

## Maintain Your Medical Readiness



By Col. Zach Wheeler, DIMA Director, Medical Capabilities Integration Center

Do you think wounded soldiers are concerned if the medical personnel providing them care are from the Army Reserve or National Guard? The obvious answer is no, what they care about is the skill and dedication of these care givers. With that said it is imperative that each and every reservist maintain and improve their clinical and military skills.

Since members of the reserve components have limited training time, other options are required for personal development. To assist all soldiers, including reservist, the Army has developed a number of Warfighter Forums (WfF). These forums provide "warfighter's a link to a new dimension of collaboration and information sharing with the aim of learning faster and adapting more rapidly than our adversaries."

The Army Medical Department (AMEDD) Center and School is working hard to provide such resources to our soldiers. A great resource is the Medical Warfighter Forum (MedWfF). The web

page description states that the MedWFF supplies “the information and knowledge you need to help perform your job more effectively. Quick access to Clinical Practice Guidelines, UpToDate Continuing Medical Education Army enterprise subscription, Lessons Learned, Deployment Resources and collaborative technology.”

Reservists have proven their capabilities in all conflicts and resources such as the Medical Warfighter Forum will only serve to better these capabilities. This site is available through the AMEDD Center and School homepage at <http://www.cs.amedd.army.mil/>.

## Golf, Life Lessons Available to Military Children



By Elaine Wilson  
American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON, April 30, 2010 - It's tee time for children from military families, thanks to The First Tee Military Affiliate

Program.

The program offers free golf instruction to children from National Guard and Reserve families geographically separated from a military base at The First Tee's 200 chapters across the nation.

School-age children at all skill levels, from beginner to advanced, are invited to hone their golf game with the help of trained coaches. The goal is to welcome at least 6,000 participants, defense officials said.

The program not only sharpens children's skills on golf course greens and fairways, but it also provides life skills. Along with basic golf instruction, The First Tee coaches teach children interpersonal communication, managing emotions, goal-setting and overcoming obstacles.

“The First Tee youth development program gets kids outside in fresh air and sunshine, engages them in meaningful activity, and provides the opportunity for individual skill building with group camaraderie,” said Barbara Thompson, director of the Defense Department's office of family policy, children and youth. “The First Tee core values mirror the core values of their parents, including honesty, integrity, respect, courtesy, responsibility and perseverance.”

To sign up, parents can visit a First Tee chapter in their community or download a coupon for free instruction by visiting The First Tee website, <http://www.thefirsttee.org/military>. The site also includes a listing of chapter locations.

“We are excited to have this program as an option for military children in or near their communities,” Thompson said.

Military children on or near a base, both stateside and overseas, also can benefit from free golf instruction through The First Tee. Some local chapters have teamed up with stateside military youth programs to offer the program to military children.

First Tee officials also are working with some overseas installations to implement its program. The First Tee provides the curriculum and training so the program can run without a nearby chapter.

Military families should contact their local youth center to determine if The First Tee program is in place or coming their way. “We recognize that military children have many interests, and for that reason, we continue to look for a wide variety of opportunities that offer a positive learning experience along with the opportunity for personal growth,” Thompson said. “We know also that if it's an activity for children, these opportunities need to include an element of fun.”

The First Tee, an initiative of the World Golf Foundation, was created in 1997 as a way of bringing golf to youth who otherwise would not be exposed to the game and its positive values, according to The First Tee website.

**Related Sites: The First Tee, [www.thefirsttee.org/military](http://www.thefirsttee.org/military)**

## What is a Traumatic Brain Injury?



A traumatic brain injury (TBI) is the result of a blow, or jolt, to the head, or a penetrating head injury that disrupts the function of the brain.

Not all blows or jolts to the head result in a TBI. The severity of such an injury may range from “mild”—a brief change in mental status or consciousness—to “severe,” an extended period of unconsciousness or amnesia after the injury. The terms “concussion” and “mild TBI” are interchangeable.

**What Causes TBI?** In the Military, the leading causes of TBI are: bullets, fragments, blasts, falls, motor vehicle-traffic crashes, and assaults. Blasts are a leading cause of TBI for active duty military personnel in war zones.

**Symptoms of Mild TBI/Concussion:** Headaches, dizziness, excessive fatigue (tiredness), concentration problems, forgetting things (memory problems), irritability, balance problems, vision change, and sleep disturbance.

**Some Tips to Help Recover From TBI:**

1. Get plenty of sleep at night and rest

during the day.

2. Until you are better, avoid activities that can lead to a second brain injury such as contact or recreational sports. Remember to use helmets and safety belts to decrease your risk of having a second brain injury.

3. Don't drink alcohol; it may slow your brain recovery and it puts you at risk of further injury.

4. If you are easily distracted or having difficulty concentrating, try doing only one thing at a time in a quiet, non-distracting environment.

5. If you feel irritable, then remove yourself from the situation that's irritating you or use relaxation techniques to help manage the situation.

Irritability is worse when you are tired, so rest will help.

Be patient! Healing from a brain injury takes time.

Symptoms of mild TBI or concussion often resolve within hours to days and almost always improve over 1 - 3 months. However, if symptoms persist without improvement, medical treatment should be sought.

This information is not intended as a substitute for the medical advice of your physician. Consult your doctor regularly about matters concerning your health, particularly regarding symptoms that require diagnosis or immediate medical attention.

**For more information,** consult your nearest medical professional.

You can also visit the Defense and Veterans Brain Injury Center: <http://www.dvbic.org>

Defense and Veterans Brain Injury Center: 1-800-870-9244 or: 202-782-6345

## Libraries Offer Children's Summer Reading Program



By Elaine Wilson  
American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON, June 14, 2010 - Defense Department libraries have embarked on their first departmentwide summer reading program in hopes of encouraging military children to keep their reading skills sharp during the summer.

More than 250 base libraries soon will set off on “Voyage to Book Island,” an activity-packed reading program in which children are asked to complete four to six books over the course of the summer, said Nilya Carrato, program assistant for the Navy General Library Program.

While service and installation libraries have sponsored their own programs in the past, “Voyage to Book Island” marks the first departmentwide summer reading pro-

gram, Carrato noted. This consistency pools resources and enables military children who move this summer to pick up the program where they left off at their new installation, she added.

“Especially with all the movement, we want to make sure kids get as much of an advantage as everyone else,” Carrato said. “Plus it’s fun.”

Most programs will run for eight weeks with open enrollment throughout the summer, according to a program news release. Activities will range by location and include everything from a tropical pool party to the SS Sigonella Storytime. Incentive prizes include bookmarks, T-shirts, stickers and puzzles.

Children who participate are asked to complete the books on their own or, for younger children, with the help of a parent, Carrato said. Book choice is left to the reader’s discretion, she added, noting that they can read a variety of fiction and nonfiction or even the same book several times if they’d like.

Some libraries will offer an online log to track reading progress, while others will use a handwritten log. The libraries with online tracking capabilities offer an added bonus: reserve-component access, Carrato noted. No matter the distance, Reserve and Guard families can participate in the program by e-mailing [dodsumread@navy.mil](mailto:dodsumread@navy.mil), and they’ll be put in touch with a base with online program capabilities, she added.

The program is worth pursuing, Carrato emphasized, especially since reading practice is vital to young learners. Studies show that children who don’t practice reading over the course of the summer may be two to three months behind at the start of the school year, she said. And this effect can be cumulative.

“By the time you leave sixth grade, you could be up to a year behind in reading,” she said. “If you keep engaged, you’ll be ready to move forward instead of playing catch up.”

And for young children, being read to can be just as helpful as practicing reading themselves, she noted.

For installations without a library, Carrato suggested parents check with their local child and youth program or local summer camp to see if they’re participating in the program.

Carrato also pointed out a few of the other programs military libraries have to offer this summer, including reading groups, story times, reading program parties, online books, downloadable audio books for car rides, online study guides for summer school attendees and access to Tutor.com, a site that offers free tutoring services 24/7 to military members and their families.

## Helmets Recalled



On June 9, 2010, the Department of the Army initiated a recall message for ESAPI manufactured by ArmorWorks, contract number SPM1C1-08-D-1023 (Design Codes: “DD3V2” and “MP2” ONLY) which failed to meet Army specifications.

Subordinate commands are inspecting ESAPI items for their assigned personnel. This message is intended to identify and gain control of any defective ESAPI in the possession of Army Reserve personnel.

This document: <https://www.us.army.mil/suite/doc/23387561> provides guidance on how to identify ESAPIs produced under contract number SPM1C1-08-D-1023 (Design Codes: “DD3V2” and “MP2” ONLY).

No later than July 19, all personnel with ESAPI will inspect their plates. Refer to the document for procedures. Report any affected plates via e-mail to the USARC POCs below. Following the initial inspection, AR

G-4 will provide disposition/replacement guidance for identified ESAPI.

Pending replacement, identified ESAPI should not be used to deploy into an imminent danger area.

## Update on potential loss of personal information



In mid-May, the Army Reserve began alerting Soldiers that computers containing personally identifiable information (PII) for potentially all Army Reserve Soldiers and some Family Members were stolen from an Army Family Programs contractor. Since then, military and local law enforcement authorities have been working closely to investigate the theft and recover the missing computers. To date, there have been no reported cases of misuse of this information.

The Army Reserve Command’s top priority is to protect our Army Reserve Soldiers and Family Members from potential misuse of this information, so we wanted to provide you with an e-mail update on our actions and information you can use to protect yourself:

1. The Army Reserve Command has initiated an internal investigation led by a general officer, in accordance with Army Regulation 15-6. We have alerted the chain of command to redouble their efforts to emphasize computer and property security measures and appropriate management of PII, in accordance with applicable regulations.

2. The Army Reserve Command has initiated a command information effort to educate Soldiers and Family Members on how best to protect them from identity theft. The Chief, Army Reserve has sent a personal letter to all Soldiers providing background and information useful to protect them against identity theft. Much of this same information is available from the Army Reserve website:

<http://www.usar.army.mil/arweb/soldiers/SafeguardYourPII/Pages/default.aspx>

3. For specific tools for military personnel to use to protect themselves from identity theft and to protect credit and bank account information, visit this Federal Trade Commission Website:

<http://www.ftc.gov/bcp/edu/microsites/idtheft/military/index.html>

4. Army Reserve Soldiers and Family Members can get free fraud alert monitoring from the three major credit bureaus for 90 days or up to a year if you are mobilized. Details on the fraud alert monitoring and how to request it are at this link:

<http://www.ftc.gov/bcp/edu/pubs/consumer/alerts/alt150.shtm>

Soldiers and Family Members can also consider further options listed on the credit bureau websites that may require a fee for service to provide broader protection options.

We take the management of PII very seriously and will take lessons learned from this incident and the results of ongoing investigations to review policies, procedures and training and make any necessary changes to ensure our Soldier and Family Member information is properly protected and safeguarded at all times.

Army Reserve Soldiers and Family Members with questions or concerns can contact the Army Reserve Command at telephone 1-800-359-8483 (Option 7).

## “Individual Medical Readiness is the Soldier’s Responsibility”



In recent months, the periodic health assessment (PHA) has become a subject of IG interest. The intent of this article is to provide additional training and emphasis on Soldier’s responsibility for accomplishing this annual requirement. The usual scenario is the Soldier who was selected for promotion comes knocking on our door asking for IG assistance because his or her promotion orders are being held up due to an expired PHA and the Soldier insists that he completed a PHA, but it hasn’t been documented in MEDPROS.

Another common problem is the Soldier who is coming up for promotion gets turned down for a Professional Development Education (PDE) school because his PULHES reflects a "P3 or P4" and he hasn't been boarded. Unfortunately, the problem is often brought to the IG's attention much too late to resolve in a positive outcome for the Soldier. To keep similar type issues off the IG's desk or better yet, prevent these issues from placing a Soldier in promotion peril, here are answers to some frequently asked questions. The information may be found in AR 40-501, Standards of Medical Fitness, dated 14 December 2007; USAMEDCOM Policy and Implementing Guidance for PHAs, 14 November 2006; and AR-MEDCOM OPOD 08-100 (Periodic Health Assessments) 081700ZMay 2008.

**What is a PHA and when is it required?** Directed by the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs on 16 February 2006, an annual PHA will be performed for all members of the Active Component (AC) and the Selected Reserve (SELRES). The PHA is a Commander's program that focuses on optimizing the health and wellness of Soldiers. The annual PHA replaced the requirement for a periodic 5-year physical exam, but is not a physical exam in itself. The PHA is preventive medical screening designed to improve reporting and tracking of Individual Medical Readiness (IMR). The annual PHA decreases the time between health assessments allowing leaders to more effectively identify and process medically disqualified Soldiers. Medically disqualified Soldiers have a direct impact on the Army Reserve's (AR) ability to meet operational and theater support requirements. Generally, Soldiers will perform the PHA during a mass Soldier Readiness Processing (SRP) Level 1 event at their unit or individually within 12 months of their last PHA. Records of the PHA will be maintained electronically in the Medical Protection System (MEDPROS) database. Commanders will be held responsible through the Unit Status Reporting (USR) process for ensuring their Soldiers complete the PHA annually.

**What are the components of a PHA?** A PHA includes a self-reported health status, a review of current medical issues, a symptom directed physical exam as appropriate, and clinical preventive services (counseling and interventions) recommended by age and gender.

The PHA is conducted in two parts: Part 1, the questionnaire, is conducted at a Soldier Readiness Processing (SRP) site (level 1), in a clinic, or physical exam section. The PHA questionnaire is also available online by logging into AKO and clicking on the Individual Medical Readiness block. Part 2 of the PHA is the review by a credentialed provider (physician, nurse practitioner, or physician assistant) at the Soldier's

primary care clinic, mobilization, or SRP site who will perform a focused physical exam to address concerns identified in Part 1. All Soldiers will have a current optometry exam, hearing test, dental screen, and given required immunizations. Soldiers over 40 years of age will undergo a fasting blood sugar, serum cholesterol testing, and EKG.

**What happens if I get a P3 or P4 profile in my PULHES?** Here's where Soldiers need to pay close attention to the box checks and comments. Many Soldiers do not realize that their responses to the questions on the questionnaire could trigger a "red flag" and they could walk away from the SRP site with a P3 or P4 profile, and not know it. For example, if you check the box "No" indicating that you cannot lift or carry equipment weighing over 20 lbs, this will trigger a PULHES permanent profile indicator of "P3" that will be evaluated by a credentialed provider and ultimately entered in MEDPROS and Soldier Management System (SMS). Permanent profiles affect your deployability and may impact your advancement in your military career in terms of acquiring certain military schooling. A P3 or P4 profile requires two signatures by two separate military physicians (including the RSC Surgeon) and then the Soldier is referred to a medical review board held at an Army MTF. The burden of proof is on the Soldier to provide all medical documentation (both diagnostic and treatment records). The board then makes a fitness for duty determination. Don't be alarmed and rush to the Inspector General's office after you suddenly learn that your record reflects a P3 or P4 profile. Understand that the presence of a PULHES P3/P4 indicator is dependent on how you answered the questions.

**How is the PHA administered?** The PHA will be administered to the Army SELRES Troop Program Unit (TPU) or Individual Mobilization Augmentee (IMA) through the Reserve Health Readiness Program (RHRP), formerly known as the Federal Strategic Health Alliance (FEDS\_HEALS) and to Active Guard Reserve (AGR) Soldiers through supporting Medical Treatment Facilities (MTFs). The medical portion of annual SRP Level 1 or pre-deployment processing will serve as an opportunity to complete any unfulfilled PHA requirements and document completion of the PHA in MEDPROS. Always bring with you a copy of any current profile(s), either temporary or permanent, including the letter from the medical board that determined your fitness for duty, as applicable. Also, bring a copy of your yellow shot record; and if you wear corrective lenses, bring your eye glasses on the day of the examination. Vision testing with contact lenses is not allowed.

**I'm an AGR Soldier, can I go to an Air Force Base MTF, MEPS or VA to obtain my PHA?** According to AR 40-

501, paragraph 10-17b (1-2), AGR/other full time duty Soldiers will obtain fitness for duty examinations only at Active Army MTFs. If an Army MTF is not within a reasonable commuting distance, the AGR Soldier may be placed on travel orders and referred to the next closest Army MTF to his or her duty station. The AR-MEDCOM Surgeon has made special provisions with the contractor, Logistics Health Institute (LHI) for all Soldiers (AGR and TPU) to complete their PHA at a mass SRP level 1 unit event. If you have a permanent profile that was issued at a place other than an Army MTF, the profile must be submitted to the overseeing Army MTF together with all pertinent examination and treatment records, for review, approval, and translation to Army standards. Also, it is important for all AGR Soldiers, after having obtained a dental exam at a place other than an Army DENTAC, to remember to get a signed copy of their DD Form 2813 (DoD Active Duty/Reserve Forces Dental Examination) and turn in to the Surgeon's office, unit administrator, or your unit medical readiness coordinator to update MEDPROS with the current dental readiness classification.

**How do I obtain a referral to complete my PHA?** There are two ways to accomplish this task: If you attended an SRP level 1 mass event, the unit medical readiness coordinator will submit a list to the LHI PHA coordinator, who will in turn, contact the soldier to schedule an appointment. If you miss the mass event, then it is your responsibility to schedule an individual event with LHI. In either case, the LHI coordinator will locate a network provider, usually within 50 miles radius of Soldier's home of record, and schedule the appointment for the screening test(s). After the appointment is confirmed, LHI will send a letter of instruction and an official voucher for service to the Soldier to present to the provider for signature after services are completed. At present, TPU Soldiers may be paid two RMAs (one for the dental exam and one for PHA screening test). You must have a signed DA Form 1380 to get paid for the RMA. Don't forget to turn in your DA Form 1380 and appointment slip to your unit or you won't get paid. Note: you will not be reimbursed for travel (mileage). Also, you need to turn in the signed PHA voucher for services rendered to the AR-MEDCOM Surgeon's office or to your unit medical readiness coordinator as proof that you kept your appointment and also to update MEDPROS. Remember, if it isn't properly documented, it never happened and you won't get the credit for following through on your appointment.

**When is my PHA considered complete?** The PHA is only considered complete when the following information is entered into MEDPROS: Permanent

PULHES, Temporary PULHES plus the date of profile expiration (if the Soldier has a temporary profile), date of the PHA, and YES or No (Can the Soldier be made medically ready to function in an austere environment within the next 6 months?)

### How can I check the status of my PHA and can I get a copy of the report?

Yes, you can log into your AKO and check the status of your IMR. The portal is "My Medical Readiness Status" and from there you can access the 8 FMR categories, obtain a copy of your PHA questionnaire, view your PULHES, or click on the evaluation tab to view your cholesterol and other lab results. If lab results are abnormal (out of the normal range), it is the Soldier's responsibility to follow up with his or her primary care physician. Finally, if you see anything other than a "green traffic light" in any of your FMRs, click on the status link to determine why it is amber or red. When in doubt or if you have any questions, contact your unit medical readiness coordinator.

This article was written after consultation with the AR-MEDCOM Surgeon's office. Points of contact are Col. Zieres at (727) 563-3638 or Lt. Col. Huggins at (727) 563-3775.

## Survey to Determine the Quality of Medical and Physical Evaluations



This is a reminder to participate in the Army Medical Review Process program evaluations if you have not already done so.

Thank you to those who have already shared their experiences and perceptions of the Army medical review process. Your insight will help the Army better understand the needs and perceptions of service members who are in the medical review process or are having difficulty navigating the complexity of the medical process. We also encourage you to complete program evaluations outside of normal business hours to allow for optimal processing as you answer each question.

If you would like to participate in this survey please click on one of the following applicable links.

The evaluation is divided in four groups:

1. **Soldiers** who have a medical condition, dental or behavioral health condition that affects quality of life or readiness:

[HTTP://WWW.DEAN.USMA.EDU/SE/SELECTSURVEYASP/TAKESURVEY.ASP?SURVEYID=8JK65341582KG](http://www.dean.usma.edu/SE/SELECTSURVEYASP/TAKESURVEY.ASP?SURVEYID=8JK65341582KG)

2. **Family Members** assisting a Soldier with a medical, dental, or behavioral health condition that affects quality of life or readi-

ness:

[HTTP://WWW.DEAN.USMA.EDU/SE/SELECTSURVEYASP/TAKESURVEY.ASP?SURVEYID=352NP340M7641](http://www.dean.usma.edu/SE/SELECTSURVEYASP/TAKESURVEY.ASP?SURVEYID=352NP340M7641)

3. **Leaders** who assist Soldiers through the medical process. Examples of leaders include, but are not limited to: commanders, first sergeants, platoon sergeants, first line leaders, squad leaders, and platoon leaders:

[HTTP://WWW.DEAN.USMA.EDU/SE/SELECTSURVEYASP/TAKESURVEY.ASP?SURVEYID=42I7P34MM952I](http://www.dean.usma.edu/SE/SELECTSURVEYASP/TAKESURVEY.ASP?SURVEYID=42I7P34MM952I)

4. **Administrators** assisting Soldiers through the medical process. Examples of administrators include, but are not limited to: J1/G1/S1, health readiness coordinators, health system specialists, military personnel officers, unit administrators, unit readiness NCOs, and deputy state surgeons:

[HTTP://WWW.DEAN.USMA.EDU/SE/SELECTSURVEYASP/TAKESURVEY.ASP?SURVEYID=L5M5P34L4P9MG](http://www.dean.usma.edu/SE/SELECTSURVEYASP/TAKESURVEY.ASP?SURVEYID=L5M5P34L4P9MG)

Thank you in advance for your participation, and thank you for making the Army a positive return on investment for America.

## Combating Soldier Suicides



For the first time in recent history, the number of Soldier suicides in the Reserve Component has exceeded those of the Active Component. As of May 6th, the Task Force is tracking 93

Total Army confirmed and pending suicides. Forty-six of them were Active Army Soldiers. Forty-seven of them were Reserve Component Soldiers.

Soldiers, Family members, Civilians and Leaders, we all MUST work together to combat this very real and alarming threat. This is our Army, our friends, our family. We must do all that we can to prevent Soldier suicide.

Here are some things that you can use as tools to build a defense against this serious suicide epidemic:

1. If you see your friend or family member in distress, get help. Sometimes doing the right thing means breaking the silence. Even if they tell you not to say something, if you think they could harm themselves, you need to speak up. You're protecting your friend or loved one, and there does not have to be a limit to how far you'd go to save them from themselves.

2. If you start feeling distressed, depressed, hopeless, or otherwise disheartened, seek help. There is NO SHAME in talking to someone. Whether it is your Chaplain, your NCO, your XO, a counselor, or even a friend or family member, getting help is important. Making sure you're mentally and physically sound is what every Soldier needs

to do, so getting help IS in following with the Army regulations and guidelines.

3. Needing help does not make you a coward. Asking for help is a brave thing to do, and the door should always be open for you to do that. Do not feel like you are a failure for needing help. You're not alone, and you don't have to face this alone. You are a part of the Army community, and we are here to help, protect and defend each other. Just like in combat, we're here for each other, fighting against a very real and often unseen enemy.

The loss of a Soldier, ANY Soldier, to suicide is a devastating tragedy to family, to their command, and to the Army community. As members of the Army Reserve community, we must do EVERYTHING we can to stop this now. A life lost to suicide is one life too many.

**For more information, contact the Army Suicide Prevention Program Office: 703-571-5576 or the Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1-800-273-TALK (8255) or e-mail: G1suicide@conus.army.mil** You can also go to the Military One Source website by clicking here: [www.militaryonesource.com](http://www.militaryonesource.com)

## Army Reserve Fields Recovery Care Coordinators



Today the requirements placed on Army Reserve Soldiers and their Families demand much more of us than ever before in our careers. While serving our country, all too often Army Reserve Soldiers become wounded, injured, or ill.

Unfortunately, the challenges Army Reserve Soldiers face in obtaining appropriate medical treatment and support services are often compounded by geographic dispersion. To help all members of the AR work through the unique challenges associated with geographic dispersion, Army Reserve Family Programs added 19 staff members to ensure we address the needs of our wounded, ill, and injured Warriors and their Families.

These new staff members are called Recovery Care Coordinators (RCCs). RCCs are contractors located throughout the Army Reserve footprint to assist wounded, ill, and injured Army Reserve Soldiers, IRR Soldiers, Army Reserve Veterans and Retirees, and their Families during the healing process. The RCCs can assist with a wide variety of non-medical needs, ranging from assisting a Soldier with filing a Veterans Affairs (VA) claim to connecting a Family member with a state's Department of Labor for employment.

If an AR Soldier requires further medi-

cal treatment, RCCs also provide referrals to the Army Reserve Warrior and Family Assistance Center, which can guide the Soldier through the process of obtaining further medical treatment from either a civilian, military, or VA medical treatment facility.

A wounded, ill, or injured Army Reserve Soldier who might need some of these services may self-refer him/herself to an RCC. Similarly, medical or other support personnel, commanders, Warrior Transition Unit personnel, and Family members may also refer Soldiers needing assistance.

Upon enrollment, the RCC analyzes the needs of the recovering wounded, ill, and injured Army Reserve Soldier and his/her Family. Based on these needs, the RCC works with the Soldier and Family to develop a patient-centered Comprehensive Recovery Plan, which identifies the Soldier's personal and professional goals, the services and resources needed to achieve them, and any other support the Family might require.

If you desire more information about the services provided by Recovery Care Coordinators, or if you would like to refer someone for enrollment and care, please contact the Army Reserve Warrior and Family Assistance Center at 1-866-345-8248 or <mailto:ar-wfac@usar.army.mil>

## Official Equates Financial, Military Readiness



By Army Sgt. 1st Class Michael J. Carden  
American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON, May 19, 2010 - Through outreach and a robust system of educating servicemembers, Defense Department officials are working to keep troops financially fit to fight and protected from predatory lenders, a Pentagon official said today.

Since the downward turn of the credit market in recent years, Defense Department officials and lawmakers have grown more concerned with servicemembers falling into bad financial standing, said Marcus Beauregard, a senior program analyst for the Pentagon's military community and family policy office said.

Officials hope Congress soon will pass legislation that puts auto dealers under the scrutiny of a proposed watchdog agency that also would oversee banks and lending institutions, Beauregard said.

Poor financial situations among troops can greatly affect military readiness and the ability of servicemembers to accomplish their mission, he noted.

"Financial stability helps servicemembers [and the Defense Department]," he said. "If they're paying more attention to their financial concerns, they're paying atten-

tion less to their primary mission and their primary jobs."

Commanders have voiced concerns to defense policy makers, making them more aware of issues troops have had in buying automobiles and repaying short-term loans, Beauregard said. Leaders also have learned certain products perpetually have caused problems for their servicemembers, he added, and they hope to prevent issues from becoming problems, he added.

A Defense Department study showed that finances are behind only career and mission issues as the top stressors among servicemembers, Beauregard said. Noting the busy tempo and numerous requirements placed on the lives of troops today, he said it's important to the department that troops sustain good financial standing and learn how to avoid being burdened by obligations they may not be able to handle.

Educating troops is the best way to ensure their readiness and financial situation remain intact, Beauregard said. The Military OneSource website, unit advisors, installation financial counselors and legal assistance advisors are great sources of information, he said.

"[The Defense Department] is looking for opportunities and protection that will support our servicemembers," he said. "Anything that will help a servicemember to do their job better and feel more prepared for their duty in taking care of their finances is certainly beneficial."

Beauregard urged troops to be wary of companies and businesses that claim to be military-friendly. He also stressed that they shouldn't sign documents unless they completely understand the contract, and that they avoid short-term loans.

"The most important thing we can do is to educate servicemembers and their families, make them aware of things they may be a problem, [and] make them aware of how to deal with transactions," he said. "That's certainly their body armor that's going to keep them in good standing."

Defense officials work closely with financial regulators at the local, state and federal levels to ensure those institutions are aware of the needs of servicemembers and what's going in the marketplace, he said.

"It's that communication, that ability to let [regulators] know that servicemembers need to be looked after as part of their community," he said. "There's now a greater awareness within the general community that finances are an important part of the servicemember's life and can impact that servicemember in terms of the preparedness and readiness to do their job."

Together, our goal is to keep our Army Reserve - Army Strong!

## New Systems Make Military Moves More Efficient



By Donna Miles  
American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON, June 15, 2010 - With the busiest season for permanent-change-of-station moves under way, officials at U.S.

Transportation Command are encouraging servicemembers to take advantage of new systems designed to make the process more convenient and efficient.

Transcom launched the new Personally Procured Move, or PPM, system to better compensate servicemembers who personally move their household goods on military orders, said Dolly Davidson, a change management outreach specialist at Transcom. PPM replaced the old "Do It Yourself," or DITY, move system.

Under PPM, servicemembers can receive up to 95 percent of what it would cost the government to move their goods using a commercial carrier. They can hire a commercial mover if they choose, move some or all of their goods themselves, and pocket any savings they receive.

While converting to PPM, Transcom also introduced a new system, the Defense Personal Property System, to process and manage household moves.

DPS is a computerized management system for moving the household goods of military members and Defense Department civilians, Davidson explained. It automates many steps involved in military moves: pre-move counseling, scheduling, tracking, invoicing and claims-filing for household goods shipments.

This eliminates the need for servicemembers to schedule appointments at their base to arrange their household goods moves face-to-face, she said, allowing them to make arrangements anywhere, any time.

"In DTS, you can go in 24/7, you can counsel yourself, you can put in your shipment and move arrangements, and everything else is done automatically," she said. "You can do it from your laptop, from your work station, even your living room couch. And you can also track your shipments online, too."

And unlike the legacy paper-based system it replaces, DPS is equipped to process moves servicemembers make themselves - which constitute the vast majority of moves.

Aside from convenience, DPS is a big money-saver for the government, not only reducing PCS processing costs, but also generating lower cost estimates from many moving companies, said Roland Amos, chief of the DPS functional and requirements branch at Transcom.

That's a big factor for the military, which spends about \$2 billion a year for

more than 550,000 household moves, Transcom reported.

With all these factors in DPS' favor, Transcom officials are encouraged by the dramatic increase in its use since the Personally Procured Move rollout.

"The services and the servicemembers have definitely embraced it," Davidson said. "[Usage] went up to about 50 percent right from the get-go."

Now, Davidson added, with the legacy system expected to remain operational until December along with DPS, her mission is to encourage servicemembers to choose DPS to process their moves. With more than half of annual moves occurring between May and August, Davidson is particularly interested in getting that word out now.

"We really want them to understand the advantages, and why it's best for them," she said.

Transcom officials also encourage servicemembers to register their household-move experiences through a new online customer service survey found at <http://www.move.mil>. The results will be used to help the command select the best-performing moving companies for future military moves, Davidson said.

## Joint Qualification System (JQS) for Army Reserve Officers



The Joint Qualification System (JQS) website (<https://www.dmdc.osd.mil/appj/jmis/JQS-LoginMain.do>) provides Army, Navy, Air Force and Marine

Corps officers an opportunity to nominate their past assignments or duties for consideration as "joint experience" and accumulate points toward achieving the various levels of joint qualification. The JQS website is available to officers in the current grades of O-1 through O-6.

Effective 1 October 1, 2010, the JQS website will not accept joint experience(s) dated earlier than September 30, 2009 for active duty officers. Active duty officers who believe they have some type of joint experience(s) between the periods of September 11, 2001 and September 30, 2009 must submit their joint experience(s) via the JQS website no later than September 30.

**However, Army Reserve officers will have until 2013 to file for JQS credit dating back to 1986.** In some cases, Reserve officers may also receive joint credit for attending joint military education courses. After 2013, Reserve Component officers will have a maximum of one year after completion of their joint-related assignment to submit their self-nomination application into

JQS.

Gaining JQS approval is a time-intensive process that culminates in a quarterly Joint Staff J1 panel. The J1 panel reviews and approves the JQS point award and provides the results to Human Resources Command (HRC), normally within 45 days after the panel convenes. Before the panel convenes, HRC reviews the officer's submission to ensure that an accurate and complete packet goes before the board. The timeline for processing is currently affected by a backlog of almost 2,000 records pending review.

The current backlog may take up to a year to fully complete.

JQS points can be awarded in total or incrementally based upon the officer's service. Traditionally, joint qualification has been a long-term process taking years to achieve the required 36 total points. After the officer attains 36 points and has competed AJPME or the equivalent (JPME II or SSWC), HRC submits the packet to OSD for approval of JPMD III. This process normally takes up to 2-3 months to complete.

The JQS point of contact at HRC for Army Reserve officers is MAJ Michael Mayes, 502-613-9948, or e-mail at [michael.mayes@us.army.mil](mailto:michael.mayes@us.army.mil)

## Federal Employees' Same-Sex Domestic Partners Gain New Benefits

By Donna Miles  
American Forces Press Service



WASHINGTON, June 3, 2010 - President Barack Obama has extended new benefits to same-sex domestic partners of federal employees, including those within the Defense Department.

Obama issued a presidential memorandum yesterday that directs federal agencies to move immediately to make changes needed to extend to same-sex partners the same benefits afforded opposite-sex spouses, wherever permitted by law.

Federal agencies must report their findings to the Office of Personnel Management within 90 days.

These benefits would include access to day care for children of employees' domestic partners, travel and relocation allowances and access to employee assistance programs. Additional benefits could include gym and credit union memberships, access to career and other counseling and assistance services and government medical facilities and lodging allowances, according to implementing guidance the Office of Personnel Management issued to federal agencies.

The new policy does not extend health insurance benefits under the Federal Employee Health Benefits Program or retirement benefits to same-sex partners. That would require legislative changes, such as those being proposed in the Domestic Partnership Benefits and Obligations Act, which Obama supports.

Obama stipulated in signing the memorandum that as federal agencies extend new benefits, they provide same-sex partners the same coverage provided to opposite-sex spouses, to the extent the law permits.

"This is another major step forward for gay and lesbian federal employees," said OPM Director John Berry. "But it's also a good business practice. This will help us retain valuable employees and better compete with other employers for top talent."

More information about the policy changes is available on the OPM Web site.

## Military Pay Competitive With Private Sector

By Lisa Daniel  
American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON, April 28, 2010 - Military compensation is competing well against the private sector, as evidenced by the high rate of recruitment and retention, a Defense Department official told a Senate subcommittee today.

Therefore, the department is focusing on targeted special pays and bonuses as an efficient means to give incentives for people to sign up for hard-to-fill and hard-to-retain specialties, William J. Carr, deputy under-secretary of defense for personnel policy, told the Senate Armed Services Committee's personnel subcommittee.

Using regular military compensation? basic pay combined with housing and food allowances and federal tax advantages - as a comparison, military members are paid higher than 70 percent of their private-sector peers of similar education and experience, Carr said.

A \$340 million investment in such pays could provide \$30,000 bonuses to more than 11,000 servicemembers the military especially needs, Carr said, while the same amount would buy only a 0.5 percent across-the-board basic pay raise for all servicemembers. At the same time, however, it is important to ensure regular compensation remains competitive, he said, noting the department's request for a 1.4 percent across-the-board pay increase for next year.

Carr called specialty and incentive pays "essential," especially for special operations forces and people with medical, dentistry, mental health, aviation and nuclear skills.

The services paid out \$6.4 billion in specialty pays last year, comprising 4.4 percent of the personnel budget. The department is requesting \$5.6 billion for 2011.

The decrease does not mean such targeted incentives are less important, Carr said. Rather, he explained, it reflects less need to use them during the slow economic recovery.

When recruiting and retention dropped in the strong job market of the late 1990s, Congress and Defense Department officials reacted quickly, Carr said. Since 2002, pay has risen 42 percent, housing allowance has gone up by 83 percent, and the subsistence allowance has grown by 40 percent, he said, compared to a 32 percent rise in private-sector salaries.

Three outside military experts - Brenda Farrell of the Government Accountability Office, Carla Tighe Murray of the Congressional Budget Office and James Hosek of the RAND Corporation think tank's national security division - testified with Carr and agreed that the overall military compensation package compares well against the private sector, with some studies placing military compensation equal to or greater than 80 percent of their civilian counterparts.

Virginia Sen. Jim Webb, a former Navy secretary who chairs the subcommittee, said military pay has risen dramatically in the three decades of the all-volunteer force.

## NSPS Transition Well Under Way, Official Tells Congress

By Donna Miles  
American Forces Press Service



WASHINGTON, June 9, 2010 - The transition of Defense Department civilian employees from the National Security Personnel System is proceeding, with 75 percent of the workforce expected to be transferred into the General Schedule classification and pay system by late September, the defense official overseeing the effort told Congress today.

More than 53,000 defense civilian employees who had been enrolled in the NSPS system have been shifted to the GS system, John H. James, Jr., director of the Pentagon's NSPS Transition Office, told a subcommittee of the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee.

About 170,000 remaining NSPS employees will transition to the GS or other pay and personnel systems by Jan. 1, 2012, the congressionally mandated deadline, James reported.

Congress directed a repeal of the NSPS system in the 2010 Defense Appropriations

Act and set the timeline for its completion.

Congress also mandated that no employee lose pay due to the transition.

Of transitions completed so far, 71 percent of the employees actually received pay increases - an average of almost \$1,400, James told the committee. That's because their NSPS pay levels put them between steps on the GS pay scale, which qualified them for the higher step, he explained.

Eight percent of the employees maintained the same pay level because their NSPS salary matched a step within their new GS grade, James said.

The other 21 percent of the employees earned salaries under NSPS that exceeded the Step 10 pay level for their GS grade. They, too, retained their full pay level as they converted to the GS system, James explained. However, they will receive only one-half of any future pay raises until their pay reaches parity with the high end of their GS pay level.

The military services and Defense Department components have launched information and education campaigns to ensure their workers understand how the NSPS transition will affect them, James told the committee. In addition, the NSPS Web site is updated regularly to provide employees the most up-to-date reference materials and training modules on the GS system and performance management basics.

James noted the challenges associated with transferring employees between two fundamentally different classification and pay systems.

NSPS is based on broad pay bands that encompass a broad range of duties and responsibilities and allows employees to advance within a single pay band based on performance. In contrast, the GS system tightly defines duties and responsibilities in discrete pay grades based on a position's difficulty, responsibility and qualification requirements.

While overseeing the NSPS transition, James' office also is charged with coming up with a plan for an enterprise-wide performance management system that provides hiring flexibilities and a workforce incentive fund.

He assured the committee the Defense Department will make the process as open, transparent and inclusive as possible. "We have a strong desire to build an effective relationship and fully participative process with labor organizations in developing these new authorities," he said.

"Transitioning approximately 226,000 employees from NSPS to the appropriate statutory non-NSPS pay and personnel system is a very high priority for the department," James said.

The Defense Department, he said, is "committed to open, ongoing communication about NSPS transition and development

of the DoD-unique performance management and hiring authorities" provided in the 2010 National Defense Appropriations Act.

## Recalled Helmets No 'Direct Risk' to Soldiers



By Army Master Sgt. Doug Sample  
Army News Service

WASHINGTON, May 17, 2010 - The Army recall of 44,000 Advanced Combat Helmets that were issued to soldiers in Iraq and

Afghanistan is the result of a Department of Justice investigation as well as independent tests that show the helmets do not meet Army standards, military officials said today.

Army officials say the recalled helmets are not a "direct risk" to soldiers.

Army Brig. Gen. Peter Fuller told reporters today that while the helmets failed to meet Army standards, there is no evidence that any soldier was ever harmed from their use. The recalled helmets provided a safe degree of protection, Fuller said, but they were "just not up to our standards." The Army, he said, is withdrawing the helmets from the field.

Fuller heads up Program Executive Office-Soldier, a Fort Belvoir, Va.,-based organization that oversees the development and testing of Army equipment.

The recall involves about 4 percent of about 1.6 million Advanced Combat Helmets that are in the Army's inventory, PEO-Soldier officials said.

Fuller said the Army issued a May 13 directive to combatant commanders in Iraq and Afghanistan calling for the immediate turn-in of helmets manufactured by Armor-Source, the contractor.

The recall, Fuller explained, is the result of a Department of Justice investigation, and individual tests conducted at Aberdeen Proving Ground, Md., which proved the helmet did not meet Army standards. The general said he could not elaborate on the DOJ findings because of the ongoing investigation.

"Our number-one mission is to ensure every soldier's lethal survivability equipment can survive in any environment, and a helmet is a personal piece of equipment that provides that survivability," Fuller said. "We want to make sure they never have any question as to whether or not this will be able to stop what it needs to stop."

Fuller said the Army began the recall process immediately upon notification of the DOJ investigation and after the results of independent testing revealed flaws in the ballistic capability of the helmet. In January, the Army was notified by the DOJ of the investigation after the paint on some helmets

began peeling. The helmets were then subjected to further tests by the Army, which determined the ballistic defect.

The recall notice was issued as a precautionary measure, Fuller said.

So far, none of the recalled helmets have been found at the Bagram Airfield Central Issue Facility, the main supply hub for troops deployed in Afghanistan, PEO-Soldier officials said.

Mike Brown, the director of supply for Army logistics, said helmet inspections are currently underway in Iraq and Afghanistan. Recalled helmets are being turned in, he said.

Army Command Sgt. Maj. Bernard C. McPherson, the PEO-Soldier senior enlisted advisor, said the Army is working at every level to ensure all affected helmets are accounted for.

"Helmets in the field will be detected during pre-combat checks and inspections by sergeants and [other] leaders," McPherson said.

Army Col. William Cole, the project manager for Soldier Protection and Individual Equipment, said ArmorSource had manufactured roughly 102,000 of the Advanced Combat Helmets. Of that number, he said, 55,000 helmets remain in the warehouse supply system, with about 3,000 having been issued to other services through the Defense Supply Center, Philadelphia.

The Army is committed to finding and obtaining all of the defective helmets, Cole said. "That's why we are doing this through diligence, right now, to find them," he said.

The Army has three other helmet manufacturers. They are: MSA North America, BAE Systems, and Gentex Corp.

## First Lady Announces Military Family Review

From a White House News Release



WASHINGTON, May 12, 2010 - President Barack Obama has directed the national security staff to lead a 90-day review aimed at developing a federal government wide approach to supporting military families, First Lady Michelle

Obama announced here today.

"With just 1 percent of our population -- our troops -- doing 100 percent of the fighting, our military families are being tested like never before," the first lady said during an address to the National Military Family Association's summit.

"This government wide review will bring together the resources of the federal government, identify new opportunities across the public and private sectors, and lay the foundation for a coordinated approach to supporting and engaging military families

for years to come," she said.

The review will build on work conducted by the departments of Defense, Homeland Security and Veterans Affairs, and it will encompass nearly 20 federal agencies, as well as the White House domestic policy and national economic councils and the offices of the vice president, the first lady and Dr. Jill Biden, the wife of Vice President Joe Biden.

The review is slated to:

- Set strategic military family priorities for the next 10 years and identify key military family concerns and challenges;
- Review a cross-section of public and private programs to identify the most-promising ideas and programs that positively support military families;
- Develop options for departments to integrate military family matters into their strategic and budgetary priorities;
- Examine opportunities for federal policies and programs to stimulate new and support existing state and local efforts that are achieving military family readiness goals and meeting military family priorities;
- Identify opportunities to leverage the skills and experience of military family members in national and community life; and
- Strengthen existing feedback mechanisms for military families to voice their concerns and views on the effectiveness and future direction of relevant federal programs and policies.

## Official Urges Reserve Component Funding, Predictability

By Donna Miles  
American Forces Press Service



WASHINGTON, May 12, 2010 - Emphasizing the critical role the reserve components play in U.S. national defense, the senior Pentagon reserve affairs official emphasized to Congress today the importance of adequately funding the force and providing predictability about deployments.

"As we reinforce policies, implement strategies and continue to call on our reserve components, we must remember that 'judicious use' is still the watchword," Dennis M. McCarthy, assistant secretary of defense for reserve affairs, said in his prepared statement to the Senate Armed Services Committee's personnel subcommittee.

McCarthy was joined by the six reserve component chiefs at his first hearing before the panel since his confirmation in June.

He told the panel he's committed to implementing policies Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates has approved to ensure

proper use of the Guard and Reserve, reducing the operational burden on them and ensuring adequate notice about call-ups. These changes, recommended by the Commission on the National Guard and Reserves, ultimately will help to increase the strategic capacity of the total force, he said.

Defense Department officials have written mobilization policies that institutionalize "judicious use" as the core principle of reserve-component participation, McCarthy told the panel. These policies also provide the foundation for predictability within the operational reserve about upcoming deployments, he said.

McCarthy also expressed support for the so-called "continuum of service" concept that enables servicemembers to transfer between components -- active, Guard, Reserve or civilian -- during their military careers.

"The COS program provides greater flexibility and predictability for retaining valuable skills over a lifetime of service to the nation," he said. "In the future, [the Defense Department] will seek necessary legislative changes to assist in duty status reform."

McCarthy cited progress toward that goal as the department implements 53 recommendations from the Commission on the National Guard and Reserves that Secretary Gates approved in November 2008.

Among the recommendations' high points are improvements in the oversight of equipment readiness and the transparency of reserve component procurement funding, McCarthy told the panel. He also noted the establishment of the Yellow Ribbon GI Enhancement Program that enables colleges and universities to supplement tuition expenses paid under the new Post-9/11 GI Bill.

McCarthy also noted that the fiscal 2011 budget request provides about \$50 billion for pay, training, equipment and facilities to support the reserve components, providing tremendous value.

"The funds provide about 43 percent of the total military end strength for 9 percent of the total base budget," he said.

Providing the proper funding, policies and support programs is essential to ensuring that the National Guard and Reserve are postured to remain a critical, mission-ready element of U.S. national security strategy, McCarthy said.

"Working together, we can ensure that the reserve components are trained, ready and continue to perform to the level of excellence that they have repeatedly demonstrated," he said.

## Program Eases Adoption Expenses for Military Families

By Elaine Wilson  
American Forces Press Service



WASHINGTON, June 28, 2010 - For many people, \$2,000 doesn't add up to much money in the long haul; it won't, after all, buy a new car or a house.

But for Air Force Master Sgt. Kipp M. Bourgeois and his wife, Christina, the money was just enough to fulfill their long-term dream: a family.

The couple received the money through the Defense Department's adoption reimbursement program to help in defraying their adoption costs.

While successful in the end, the couple's path to adoption was a rocky one that took more than a decade, said Bourgeois, resource advisor for the 5th Maintenance Squadron at Nellis Air Force Base, Nev. He and his wife, together for 21 years this month, spent the first 12 years of their marriage exploring every option - from fertility drugs to surgery - in a quest to conceive a child of their own. But Christina's battle with endometriosis made it difficult for her to get pregnant, he explained.

They moved to Nellis in 2000 and were referred to a fertility specialist, who told the couple their only hope was in vitro fertilization. But as a staff sergeant, Bourgeois couldn't swing the cost at \$15,000 a try and, as the doctor pointed out to him, only a 30-percent success rate.

Up against a financial brick wall, the couple decided to look into adoption and honed in on a special-needs adoption through the state. "Dealing with special needs wasn't an issue for us," Bourgeois said.

They set their sights on two siblings, Emalie and Kameron, who were ages 4 and 3, respectively, at the time. The state considered the children as having special needs due to attention deficit hyperactivity disorder and allergies. But the couple didn't think twice about their special needs or the fact that they would be accepting two children into their home rather than one.

"My wife fell in love with both of them, just based on their picture," Bourgeois recalled. "They just looked like they fit in our family."

Since it was a state special-needs adoption, Nevada picked up most of the adoption costs. The couple considered themselves lucky, since adoption funding varies from state to state.

Still, the couple had to pay about \$2,000 out of pocket for fingerprinting, training

classes and a lawyer to finalize the adoption. The couple turned to the Defense Department's adoption reimbursement program for financial help, joining thousands of other military couples who have received compensation through the program since its inception in 1991.

The program reimburses servicemembers for certain adoption expenses such as agency and placement fees, legal fees and medical expenses, Defense Finance and Accounting Service officials said. Servicemembers who serve continuously on active duty for at least 180 days can receive up to a maximum of \$2,000 per child, but can't exceed \$5,000 per calendar year.

In 2009, the program distributed nearly 650 payments throughout the services, totaling more than \$1 million. For the Bourgeois family, the money covered their out-of-pocket expenses almost entirely after the adoption was finalized in 2003.

They again turned to the program for help on their next adoption, three years later. But this time, they didn't seek out the adoption. They were sought out.

Bourgeois was working with the birth mother and father at the time. When the birth mother found out she was pregnant, she was distraught, knowing her family wouldn't approve since she wasn't married, he said. Knowing they had adopted before, she called and asked the couple if they would take the baby.

"My wife wanted a newborn and jumped at the chance," he said.

Since this adoption was private, it was more costly this time, adding up to roughly \$13,000, Bourgeois said. But between the department's reimbursement program and IRS tax credits, their out-of-pocket expenses were minimal. Emalie and Kameron are now 14 and 12, and their youngest, SkylarRae, is 3.

Bourgeois said he and his wife haven't ruled out a future addition. But in the meantime, he's content with the three they now have. "The kids know they're adopted," he said. "But as far as we're concerned, we're Mom and Dad. We're their family."

Bourgeois encouraged other military couples to look into resources such as the reimbursement program when considering adoption. The department also offers servicemembers who adopt up to 21 days of nonchargeable leave to be used in connection with the adoption.

While Bourgeois said he remains grateful for the resources that aided his family, "The love that [my children] return makes the money not even a thought in the end."

### Related Sites:

Adoption Reimbursement Program

[www.dfas.mil/militarypay/adoptionreimbursement.html](http://www.dfas.mil/militarypay/adoptionreimbursement.html)

## Online Program Helps Military Families Vote Absentee

By Lisa Daniel  
American Forces Press Service



WASHINGTON, June 28, 2010 - The Defense Department today launched an Internet-based program to help servicemembers and other Americans living overseas vote more easily in November's

elections.

The new, online voting assistant at [www.fvap.gov](http://www.fvap.gov) will make the registration and absentee ballot application process "quick, easy, seamless and intuitive," Bob Carey, federal voting assistance program director, said today during an interview with The Pentagon Channel and American Forces Press Service.

Americans living abroad previously had to research a 290-page manual to figure out their state requirements for absentee voting, including where and how to send in their applications, Carey said.

"One of the things we found from the 2008 elections was that voters found the process very complex, very laborious and not very intuitive," he said. "With this, a voter doesn't have to have a master's in election law to figure out the process."

The site asks prospective voters to identify themselves either as a military member or family member, or other citizen living outside the United States, then answer fewer than 10 questions, including voting residence and how a ballot should be sent to them, Carey said. The process takes between two and 10 minutes, he said.

The program automatically determines the voter's election jurisdiction, and the proper questions to ask to meet specific state and local registration and absentee ballot requirements. Once the questions are answered, the voter prints off a form in PDF format, signs it, and submits it by mail, fax or e-mail, depending on state requirements, Carey said.

The online assistant does not store the information after the form is complete, and the information is purged from the server, he said.

The program is expected to increase the number of ballots counted for servicemembers, who are known to vote at a higher rate than the general public, Carey said. In 2008, it is believed that roughly 5,000 servicemembers' ballots couldn't be counted

because forms were inadequate, incomplete or mailed to the wrong jurisdiction, he said. An even bigger problem was that ballots didn't make it to voting officials in time to be counted, he said.

The online assistant was released as part of Armed Forces Voters Week and Overseas Citizens Voters Week, which runs June 28 through July 7. Americans living overseas — some 6 million voters — are encouraged to use the site to register for absentee ballots in July.

"If it's August, they're starting to push it," Carey said. "If it's September, they're going to have problems."

## Obama Calls for Federal Government Hiring Reform



By Elaine Wilson  
American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON, May 11, 2010 — President Barack Obama signed a memorandum today calling for a sweeping overhaul of federal

government recruitment and hiring practices and creating a "historic opportunity" for the Defense Department to revamp its outdated hiring system, a defense official said.

"To deliver the quality services and results the American people expect and deserve, the federal government must recruit and hire highly qualified employees, and public service should be a career of choice for the most talented Americans," Obama said in the memo. "Yet the complexity and inefficiency of today's federal hiring process deters many highly qualified individuals from seeking and obtaining jobs in the federal government."

The memorandum calls for, in part, the elimination of lengthy application processes, including essay-style questions for initial applicants; a reduction in the time it takes to hire mission-critical and commonly filled positions; and a greater involvement by managers in the hiring process.

"Americans must be able to apply for federal jobs through a common-sense hiring process, and agencies must be able to select high-quality candidates efficiently and quickly," the president wrote. "The ability of agencies to perform their missions effectively and efficiently depends on a talented and engaged work force, and we must reform our hiring system to further strengthen that work force."

Clifford L. Stanley, undersecretary of defense for personnel and readiness, repre-

sented the Defense Department at an Office of Personnel Management news conference today where the details for the new initiative were announced, including the widespread impact on the department.

The hiring reform is a "historic opportunity" for the department to eliminate an outdated, bureaucratic hiring system, said Marilee Fitzgerald, the Pentagon's acting deputy undersecretary of defense for civilian personnel policy.

"Not since 1978, with the Civil Service Reform Act, has there been such an opportunity to acquire and develop our talent with alacrity and contemporary hiring and development practices," Fitzgerald said in an American Forces Press Service interview.

"We have marvelous talent, and they can't figure out how to get to us because we have all of these rules and a proliferation of hiring authorities," she added. "All of these things distract our applicants from coming to us."

The department is one of the largest civilian employers in the world, Fitzgerald said, hiring more than 100,000 employees every year. This reform is vital to meet the department's goals of attracting and retaining the highest quality talent, she added.

The hiring reform will spur extensive changes throughout the Defense Department, she noted, with impacts to the hiring process at every step.

For job seekers, changes include:

- An enhanced website at <http://www.usajobs.com> that will provide job seekers a single, easy-to-use entry point to federal job opportunities;

- The use of a simple resume and cover letter to apply for a job instead of pages-long resumes that bog down selection processes;

- Modern assessment tools with simple, quick questionnaires rather than assessments that require long essay responses;

- Application status feedback at a minimum of four points: receipt of application, qualification determination, referral status and result;

- Streamlining of job announcements from 10 to 12 pages down to about three pages. And rather than department jargon, the announcements will be written in simple, easy-to-understand terms; and

- Enhancement of the Student Training and Academic Recruitment Program, known as STAR, in which college students are hired to assist the department with its entry-level recruitment needs, offering peer-to-peer, on-site information.

For managers, the reform will put the focus on partnering with human resource practitioners to develop staffing plans, with the overall aim of reducing hiring timelines

and providing access to the highest-quality candidates.

Nothing is more disappointing, Fitzgerald noted, than waiting for a referral list and then discovering none of the applicants fits the bill. "Often," she said, "the lack of qualified candidates is a function of not planning for the requirement on the front end."

Human resources specialists now will work with managers two to three years out from a job opening to examine job requirements and create accurate job descriptions, Fitzgerald said. And when the opening is at hand, they will encourage managers to begin planning immediately to position themselves for making a quick hire. Managers can take care of administrative functions such as preparing interview questions and arranging hiring panels up front, she explained.

On the human resources side of the house, officials are looking at how they can reduce timelines on tasks such as candidate assessments and referral list development. Contemporary assessment tools, for instance, will help experts weed through applicants quicker and more effectively, Fitzgerald explained.

The department's goal, she noted, is to reduce the time it takes to hire new talent from the current 155-day average down to 80 days. "And the shorter the better," she added.

Fitzgerald projected the new assessments could be operational by as early as the end of the year.

In the meantime, the department has launched a new hiring reform website -- [http://www.cpms.osd.mil/hiring\\_reform](http://www.cpms.osd.mil/hiring_reform) -- that includes easy-to-digest information customized for managers, applicants and human resources specialists.

The timing is right for these comprehensive changes, Fitzgerald noted.

"Certainly, the complexities of the department's engagements at home and abroad demand a work force with the right mix of expertise at hand to properly address these emerging opportunities and to thwart potential threats that face us," she said. "A work force with a broad portfolio of capabilities with maximum versatility is a mission imperative for the Department of Defense."

The next printed Warrior Medic Magazine will be in the homes late July, early August.



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