

BATTLE BOOK



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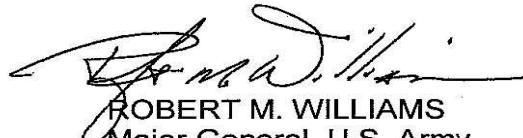
Company Commander Spouse

FOREWORD

The Company Commander's Spouse Battle Book is an excellent guide for the company command team. It offers the experience and the wisdom of serving company-level spouses and the spouses of the U.S. Army War College Class of 2010. It offers recommended solutions to many of the complex issues we face today at the company command level. We are confident that you will find it useful in building a successful command team and an environment that fully supports our Families.

This book represents the dedicated and caring work of spouses of the U.S. Army War College Class of 2010. Those dedicated spouses spent the academic year collecting and adding information from the field and agencies responsible for Family readiness and well-being. They have demonstrated the need for self reliance and the Army tradition of supporting and helping one another. The Army War College extends to them its sincere appreciation and gratitude for a job well done.

We sincerely hope this guide will be both a useful and important leadership resource for our company commander spouses as they address the major changes taking place in our Army today.



ROBERT M. WILLIAMS
Major General, U.S. Army
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PREFACE

Each year at the United States Army War College (USAWC), the spouses of the students are given the opportunity to participate in a class project. For the past years, spouse committees have chosen to write handbooks regarding information pertinent to spouses and family members in the Armed Forces.

We chose to update this particular guidebook and write BATTLE BOOK for the COMPANY COMMANDER'S SPOUSE for three reasons; use of the internet, the re-organization of the U.S. Army, and the increased deployment of units because of the War on Terror and Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom (OEF, OIF). These current developments have created change that needs to be included in a guidebook that is focused at the company level. The designating term "company" is the only term used in the book. It is inclusive of the terms "troop", "battery" and "detachment" which are used for cavalry, artillery, and smaller company level command units, respectively. The same is understood for the next higher level designating term "battalion" which is called a "squadron" in cavalry units. While the title uses the word "spouse" this guidebook is also meant for anyone who is voluntarily serving as a spouse representative for the commander.

As a committee, we were very sensitive to the fact that current information was needed from company level spouses serving, or having just recently served, in this capacity. While we had decades of experience as military and former commander spouses between us, we needed to communicate with those currently in this position and serving voluntarily. Surveys were distributed in an Army wide mailing, through all types of companies from different Army branches. A favorable response was received reflecting this diversity. Responses were sent for all the questions that covered various subjects, with a majority of the feedback concerning Family Readiness Groups (FRGs). Feminine and masculine pronouns were used, and we ask readers to adjust the language to fit their specific situation by inserting the appropriate gender word. We thank all of the company commander spouses who took time from busy lives to write the committee in both written and e-mail responses. This book was written partially by them, and particularly, for them.

We wish to thank a familiar figure here at the USAWC, Colonel (RET) Joseph "Joe" York, Deputy Director of the Military Family Programs, and the staff of the Department of Command, Leadership, and Management, for their support and enthusiasm for this project. We would also like to thank Lisa Towery and Kim Bourque for their support, encouragement, and guidance during this project.

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the “Battle Book for the Company Commander Spouse.” This handbook is meant to be a helpful guide for any Company Commander spouse or any appointed representative who agrees to assist with spouse leadership when the Company Commander is not married. It was written by our volunteer committee of spouses from The United States Army War College Class of 2010, and is an updated version of an earlier handbook 2006. The term ‘battle book’ was used in the title because it follows the title of an earlier guidebook written at USAWC for senior army spouses. Information from a company commander’s spouse survey, along with material from available military family literature was compiled and condensed to create a manageable guidebook, for a new company commander spouse. It is often reassuring to have something physically in one’s hands or that can be easily downloaded off the internet, when facing a new situation.

It is partly because of the internet that this handbook was rewritten. Websites and internet resources now need to be included with any spouse guide literature. The quantity of information and help sites from both official and unofficial sources can be confusing. This book includes reliable internet resource sites that can be of help when searching for further information not included here. Today, e-mail, instant messaging, and even VoIP (Voice over Internet Protocol) phone capability make electronic equipment the primary means of communicating when trying to disseminate information and work within a group.

Company Command is more challenging than ever before. Our Commanders have more responsibility than ever, and are managing complex situations that have become the norm. Technology has sped up all communication, decision-making, and the capacity to respond to events. In our contemporary operating environment, the need for effective unit Family Readiness Groups (FRGs) is clearer than ever, as some units serve multiple deployments, and the Army is transforming to a Brigade Based Modular Army with more flexible and more independent units. Transformation also brings greater stability and predictability for Army families; however, it also means a different pace in our garrisons following deployment. Under the Army Force Generation Model (ARFORGEN), the operational tempo of units will still be high as units go through a reset phase and return to training with new Soldiers and equipment. Family re-location support is now secondary to deployment guidance, and the accompanying challenges that arise with extended family separation.

The spouse of a Company Commander is often looked to for guidance regarding the FRG. FRGs are designed to provide information and a means to support family members, and educate them on the resources available for solving problems, while also being flexibly structured and unique to each unit. When the Company Commander is unmarried, the purpose of the FRG is best met by appointing a spouse representative and an FRG leader. However, there may be times when an unmarried Company Commander combines both roles with one person.

Determination of FRG leadership is up to the Commander. Our spouse survey revealed that FRG business was the area of greatest concern for current Company Commanders' spouses.

As a Company Commander spouse or appointed representative, thank you for reading this guidebook and for taking a leadership role in assisting the spouses and family members in your Commander's company. You are working with people, and that always means giving some of your time. We hope this handbook provides information useful to you and to other family members who ask for your assistance while you serve in this capacity.

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I. Operational Security and Talking to the Media

General Washington was quoted as saying, "Even minutiae (minor or incidental details) should have a place in our collection, for things of a seemingly trifling nature, when enjoined with others of a more serious cast, may lead to valuable conclusion."

George Washington, our first president, was a known OPSEC practitioner.

Your Role in Operations Security (OPSEC)

Do you realize that having a “Half of my Heart is in Iraq,” a #15 Lakeview Football, Molly cheers for Madison!, and a Mary Kay car magnet just identified you as a spouse of a DEPLOYED soldier, a mom of a football player and where he attends school, the mom of Molly who attends Madison, and a self-employed business owner who probably has cash in the house? Criminals use these markers to tag their next victims; it could be car vandalism to the kidnapping of your children or you being sexually assaulted. In addition, terrorists/spies use these markers when identifying high value targets for kidnapping. YOU HAVE TO BE CAREFUL! Did you know that satellite photographs on the night we invaded Iraq showed the Pentagon parking lot was almost completely full and the local pizza restaurants noticed a higher delivery rate than normal. We handed the enemy information and did not even realize it. YOU HAVE TO BE CAREFUL!

As Soldiers deploy, they will relay news and events to family and friends at home, and friends and family will do what they can to find out information about Soldiers, their units, and their missions. These circumstances can become troublesome for OPSEC officers, the Families, and the Soldiers. With some training and planning, everyone can overcome these problems.

Soldiers and Family members often do not know that innocent requests and news from the units can become OPSEC issues. Our enemies can easily intercept information through e-mail, phone, and internet chat sessions. Units and Family Readiness Groups (FRGs) must make Soldiers and Family members aware of possible OPSEC violations before the unit deploys. Units have been successful in establishing secure video teleconferencing and voice between deployed Soldiers and facilities on post for communication between Family members and Soldiers, greatly reducing OPSEC concerns.

Information-gathering has moved from the passive listening mode to active collection from deployed Service member's Families. There have been recent attempts to gather Family member personal information, such as social security numbers and birth dates. FRGs must make Families aware of these threats and their potential damage. Soldiers and their Families must report any OPSEC collection attempts to the post intelligence office or counterintelligence (CI) facility directly, not through the FRG or the Soldier's chain of command. Examples include the following:

- Some families of UK soldiers have been contacted by the enemy.
- Scammers who say the Soldier is hurt or killed to gain information. (Families need to know the procedures to spot scams.)

The protection of deployed Soldiers depends upon OPSEC control at both the Soldier and Family levels. All Soldiers and Family members must receive OPSEC and Subversion and Espionage Directed Against the Army (SAEDA) training before deployments. This training and increased awareness will limit threats against deployed Soldiers.

What Is OPSEC?

Operations Security, or OPSEC, is keeping potential adversaries from discovering our critical information. As the name suggests, it protects our operations—planned, in progress, and those completed. Success depends on secrecy and surprise, so the military can accomplish the mission faster and with less risk. Our adversaries want our information, and they do not concentrate only on Soldiers to get it. They want you, the Family member.

You Are A Vital Player In Our Success!

As a Family member of our military community, you are a vital player in our success, and OPSEC professionals could not do their job without your support. You may not know it, but you also play a crucial role in ensuring your loved one's safety. You can protect your Family and friends by protecting what you know of the military's day-to-day operations. That is OPSEC.

Protecting Critical Information

Even though information may not be secret, it can be what is called "critical information." Critical information deals with specific facts about military intentions, capabilities, operations or activities. If an adversary knew this detailed information, unit mission accomplishment and personnel safety could be jeopardized. It must be protected to ensure an adversary does not gain a significant advantage. By being a member of the military Family, you will often know some bits of critical information. Do not discuss them outside of your immediate Family and especially not over the telephone.

Examples of Critical Information

- Detailed information about the mission of assigned units
- Details on locations and times of unit deployments
- Personnel transactions that occur in large numbers (Example: pay information, powers of attorney, wills, deployment information)
- References to trends in unit morale or personnel problems
- Details concerning security procedures

Puzzle Pieces

These bits of information may seem insignificant. However, to a trained adversary, they are small pieces of a puzzle that highlight what a unit is doing and planning. Remember, the elements of security and surprise is vital to the accomplishment of unit goals and the collective personnel protection.

- Where and how you discuss this information is just as important as with whom you discuss it. Adversary agents tasked with collecting information

- frequently visit some of the same stores, clubs, recreational areas, or places of worship as you do.
- Determined individuals can easily collect data from cordless, cellular phones, and even baby monitors, using inexpensive receivers available from local electronics stores.
 - If anyone, especially a foreign national, persistently seeks information, notify your military sponsor immediately. He or she will notify the unit OPSEC program manager.

What Can You Do?

There are many countries and organizations that would like to harm Americans and degrade our influence in the world. It is possible, and not unprecedented, for Spouses and Family members of U.S. military personnel to be targeted for intelligence collection. This is true in the United States and especially true overseas! What can you do?

- **Be Alert:**

Foreign governments and organizations collect significant amounts of useful information by using spies. A foreign agent may use a variety of approaches to befriend someone and get sensitive information. This sensitive information can be critical to the success of a terrorist or spy, and consequently deadly to Americans.

- **Be Careful:**

There may be times when your Spouse cannot talk about the specifics of his or her job. It is very important to conceal and protect certain information such as flight schedules, ship movements, temporary duty (TDY) locations, and installation activities, for example. Something as simple as a phone discussion about where your Spouse is deploying, or going TDY, can be very useful to our enemies.

OPSEC AND SOCIAL NETWORKING

Social Networking

Social networking sites (SNS), like Facebook® and Twitter®, are software applications that connect people and information in spontaneous, interactive ways. While SNS can be useful and fun, they can provide adversaries, such as terrorists, spies and criminals, with critical information needed to harm you or disrupt your unit's mission. Practicing Operations Security (OPSEC) will help you to recognize your critical information and protect it from an adversary. Here are a few safety tips to get you started.

SAFETY CHECKLIST

Personal Information:

Do you:

- Keep sensitive, work-related information OFF your profile?
- Keep your plans, schedules and location data to yourself?
- Protect the names and information of coworkers, friends, and family members?
- Tell friends to be careful when posting photos and information about you and your family?

Posted Data:

Before posting, did you:

- Check all photos for indicators in the background or reflective surfaces?
- Check filenames and file tags for sensitive data (your name, organization or other details)?

Passwords:

Are they:

- Unique from your other online passwords?
- Sufficiently hard to guess?
- Adequately protected (not shared or given away)?

Settings and Privacy:

Did you:

- Carefully look for and set all your privacy and security options?
- Determine both your profile and search visibility?
- Sort “friends” into groups and networks, and set access permissions accordingly?
- Verify through other channels that a “friend” request was actually from your friend?
- Add “untrusted” people to the group with the lowest permissions and accesses?

Security:

Remember to:

- Keep your anti-virus software updated.
- Beware of links, downloads, and attachments just as you would in e-mails.
- Beware of “apps” or plugins, which are often written by unknown third parties who might use them to access your data and friends.
- Look for HTTPS and the lock icon that indicate active transmission security before logging in or entering sensitive data (especially when using wi-fi hotspots).

THINK BEFORE YOU POST! Remember, your information could become public at any time due to hacking, configuration errors, social engineering or the business practice of selling or sharing user data. For more information, visit the Interagency OPSEC Support Staff's website at <http://www.iooss.gov/>.

CORRECT:

My Soldier is deployed in support of Iraqi Freedom or Enduring Freedom.

INCORRECT:

My Soldier is in XYZ Unit and is stationed at ABC Camp in XXX city in Iraq.

Give only general locations IF his unit allows it. The above incorrect statement is entirely too much information.

INCORRECT:

My Soldier's unit is returning from deployment and flying into XYZ Airport at 8 p.m. next Thursday.

Never give dates or times for troop movements. Keep in mind that “next Thursday” is a date. Troop movements include R & R dates as well as deployment and redeployment dates. Planes have been delayed for days or weeks because an excited family member made this information public.

INCORRECT:

Please pray for my Soldier. He called today and told me he is going out on a very dangerous mission tonight. They will be gone for three days and I'm very worried about him.

When our soldiers are in dangerous situations, it is natural to want to reach out to others. But the above statement puts your soldier and his unit in danger. You could have very well just alerted the enemy about their mission.

It is important to realize that putting together the bits and pieces needed to create the larger picture can be amazingly simple by using the internet. Many mistakenly believe that if they do not talk about it all at once, the information is safe. This is wrong and dangerous to assume. The internet is a wonderful tool but in regards to our military, it is a very dangerous one as well. It takes only minutes of searching online to find enough pieces of information that could potentially endanger our Soldiers.

Deployment tickers:

Many Family members like to use deployment tickers to count down their Soldier's deployment. Never have a ticker that shows XX days until he returns. If you must have a ticker, then have one with the amount of time he has been gone; however, it is best not to have this type of ticker at all.

Finally, for your own personal safety, be very aware of what you are putting on the internet or saying in conversations in public. With the internet, it is not difficult to track down an address and phone number. Do not make yourself a target by letting the world know that your husband is deployed.

PERSONAL SECURITY (PERSEC)

PERSEC like OPSEC, involves guarding the information that you know.

- Do not give out your Soldier's name along with rank.
- Black out his nametape and rank in pictures. If he is in a special operations unit, you should also black out any unit affiliation.
- Be vague about your personal information as an Army Spouse or Army Family member on the internet. You never know who is lurking and gathering information on message boards, Face Book, and MySpace pages and profiles.

This is plain common sense for everyday life—whether your Family member is in the military or not. The old saying, “loose lips sink ships” still holds true today. Keep your Soldier, your Family and the unit safe by keeping the information you know to yourself. Better safe than sorry!

DEALING WITH THE MEDIA

Family Members and Media Interviews:

Military families often become the center of news media attention as reporters try to write local and national stories. Because of this potential attention, Family members should know some important concepts when dealing with the press.

Service members and their families sometimes do not realize they can be the best (sometimes the only) sources of information for news stories about events of world and

national interest. Their individual stories are often the best way to tell the military's story, good or bad.

News is an extremely competitive business, and reporters go to great lengths to "get the story" before their competitors do. Family members should keep the following guidelines in mind when interacting with media:

- You have the right to say **NO** to an interview request. Some reporters have coerced Family members into submitting to an interview by emphasizing the public's "right to know" and "freedom of the press," but your right to privacy always takes precedence.
- News media do a job vital to democracy. It is **NOT** harassment if they call your home or stop you at the supermarket to ask for an interview. It **IS** harassment if they infringe on your privacy or persist after being told "no".
- Your home is your property. No one, reporter or otherwise, has a "right" to enter your home or be on your property unless you grant them that privilege.
- If you do decide to talk with the news media, you should establish some ground rules before the interview. Prior understandings are for your protection, and responsible, professional reporters will work with you.
- Know with whom you are talking. Before answering questions, get the reporter's name, organization and phone number—especially if you are going to decline the request. Your caution will discourage the reporter from persisting.
- If you do consent to an interview, you may not want your full name to be used. You should always ensure that your address is not used. Television pictures of your house are not a good idea.
- Explain to reporters that your wish to maintain privacy at your home will help protect your Family from harassment by a wide range of people who could learn through press coverage where the Family lives.
- When you agree to an interview, remember that you give away some of your privacy. Always keep in mind the Family's best interest when dealing with the news media.
- Use the reporter's first name instead of "Sir" or "Ma'am".
- The phrases "what I can tell you", "what you should consider", "what's important to realize", etc... are important when you are trying to either block or bridge a question. **Sample:**

Q. "Do you think the U.S. should stay in Iraq?"

A: "That's a question for our nation's leaders; what I will tell you is that Soldiers here at Fort Hood are trained and ready to perform any mission they are called on to do."

- Appearing on television or being written about in the newspaper could identify you as a target for unscrupulous salespersons, crank calls, a burglary, or a rape. Be especially cautious if your phone listing includes your Spouse's rank and your address.

- Know who will hear you. Family members often have information that would be useful to an enemy. Always think OPSEC.
- Know your limits. Talk only about what you know firsthand. It's okay to answer with "I don't know." Take your time: formulate the answer in your mind before speaking.
- Never make comments or answer questions that talk about what might happen or could have happened. Do not make anything up or speculate.
- Know what to keep to yourself. If your Spouse calls or writes with news about casualties, where the unit is, or when it might deploy, keep such information to yourself. Deployments spawn rumors, and some of what you might hear could be wrong, sensitive, or subject to change.
- If you desire, contact your PAO for assistance. PAOs have a working relationship with the media and can provide advice that will help protect your privacy, yet allow the news media to report the story.

II. Entering the Unit

Self-trust is the first secret of success.

Ralph Waldo Emerson

Your spouse is about to take command! This is a very exciting time in your spouse's career, as this is his/her first command opportunity. It is very important for you and your spouse to keep the lines of communication open. Decide together on where you will place your priorities and be sure to coordinate your calendars. You and your spouse may be experiencing feelings from nervousness and anxiety to excitement and anticipation. One thing is certain, you are both about to make lifelong memories and develop lifelong friendships. As the Change of Command (CoC) approaches there are a few things you will need to consider.

If possible, meet with the outgoing spouse, (if the outgoing Commander is married), days or weeks prior to the change of command. If getting together is not feasible, consider both phone calls and/or e-mail, as the outgoing spouse will be a great resource to you. This spouse hopefully will be able to provide you with telephone trees, upcoming events/dates, rosters and Family Readiness Group (FRG) information (for more on FRGs see *Organizing the Family Readiness Group* chapter in this book). It is important for you to remember that during this time of transition, the outgoing commander and spouse may be feeling a sense of loss and sadness as the change of command approaches. It is important that through all your interactions and communications that you be aware of and respect these feelings.

Approximately one month out from the CoC, you will want to provide addresses of your guests for the ceremony. Your spouse will provide your invitation list to the unit for mailing. Make sure you identify those guests, which you would like to have reserved seating at the ceremony, as well as any special considerations.

CoC ceremonies are usually held outside. Consider the probable weather conditions when planning what you and your children will wear. This is a great family photo opportunity! Ask your spouse to bring home a copy of the sequence of events for the ceremony so you are aware of such things as when you should stand, sit, put your hand on your heart and songs that will be played during the ceremony.

It is customary that your spouse purchase the flowers you will be presented with during the ceremony; however, the unit will order the flowers and have them at the ceremony. Although spouses traditionally receive flowers, a male spouse may prefer to receive cigars or a bottle of champagne. If your spouse decides to make presentations to your children (unit coins, flowers...) they too will be your spouse's responsibility. Ideally, you should communicate with the outgoing command team, (Commander and Spouse), so the presentations parallel each other. Ask about any local customs or protocol within the unit that you should be aware of as they pertain to the ceremony.

You will also want to make plans for the reception that will follow the ceremony. This reception is hosted and paid for by you and your spouse for your guests and members of the unit in celebration of this day. Receptions always include a cake and often include some light food and drinks. There are often norms within organizations so it is best to ask those currently in the unit and plan your reception to fall within these organizational norms. It is important to remember that the reception is usually

immediately after the CoC ceremony, so a reception that doesn't require much last minute preparation may be best.

Prior to the CoC is a perfect time for you to think about any traditions you would like to establish. There will be weddings, births and people entering and leaving the unit that you may want to recognize with a small gesture. This is a wonderful idea but do consider the cost and frequency of such happenings, as this will be an out of pocket expense for you. Before you do anything, consider what the FRG does and for whom, and what your higher headquarters units do and for whom. This information could prevent you from duplicating efforts. Above all, it is imperative that regardless of what you decide to do, you be consistent and never leave anyone out. What you do for one you should do for all!

This is also a good time to inquire about educational opportunities at your local installation Army Community Services (ACS) such as Army Family Team Building (AFTB) and personal growth and development courses tailored to unit-level spouse leaders. These courses may take up to a week of your time, but could be invaluable to you!

THE DAY OF THE CEREMONY

You and your spouse may need to drive separately to the ceremony depending on whether or not your spouse will need to go early. If this is the case, and you will be arriving on your own, arrive at least 15 minutes early. Remember that the unit will be honoring the outgoing couple; this should not make you feel slighted, as it is simply the natural course of events. You will be seated in the front row along with the outgoing spouse. The Battalion Commander's spouse traditionally sits next to the outgoing spouse.

The ceremony could last up to 30 minutes, so depending on the age of your children you may want to ask a friend or relative to be prepared to tend to your children's needs during the ceremony so that you are better able to enjoy the moment! The ceremony usually begins with a presentation of flowers to the spouses. Your flowers will be presented to you by a soldier on behalf of the unit. It is respectful to stand when receiving them.

Naturally, you will want to take pictures and/or video tape the ceremony. It may be a good idea to ask friends or relatives to do this for you so you can enjoy the ceremony. After the ceremony, it is important that you quickly link up with your spouse and get over to your reception so you are there to receive your guests upon their arrival.

THE GUIDON HAS BEEN PASSED

Now that the CoC ceremony has passed, it is time to write thank you notes to anyone who has helped you with this transition. You may want to thank the outgoing commander and spouse, and anyone else in the unit who helped you.

If you haven't already done so, you and your spouse may want to take note of your financial situation. Company command may present many opportunities to entertain as well as many social opportunities. The costs can add up as does babysitting and any cards or small gifts you may decide to purchase.

Soon after the CoC, you will want to meet with the current unit FRG leader (See Chapter 5, Organization of a Family Readiness Group, at the company level sometimes the Commander's spouse assumes both the advisor and leader role based on the Commander's decision). Keep in mind that in all probability the CoC will not be the only change within the unit. The volunteers in the unit will often take this opportunity to transition. If the current FRG leader has stepped down, you and your spouse may need to discuss the option of you fulfilling this position.

This is not your father's Army. Many spouses choose to have a career. Do not let the guilt factor cause you to take on more than you can handle. There are many options when it comes to running an FRG. It is a commander's program and he can appoint anyone to run the FRG. It is important to show your support of the FRG by attending the meetings, getting to know the family members and above all listening to their cares and concerns. Remember, there is no rank at an FRG meeting, introduce yourself by your first name only and do not note your spouses' position and/or rank. They will know soon enough, and leader or not, you are a *member* of the FRG. Given your experiences, you will be a great resource!

Ask your spouse to keep you informed of all unit functions such as soldier promotions and award ceremonies, as well as, other company-level changes of command. Your presence at such events will show your interest and support of the soldiers, their families and the unit as a whole.

By now, you have a wealth of information but it is important that you don't make immediate changes. Take some time to watch, listen and gather information. Change and transition is difficult for us all so give the spouses of the unit time to accept this change/transition and get to know you.

You cannot go wrong if you just remember to be yourself and be sincere!

ESTABLISHING RELATIONSHIPS

Your Spouses' new position will open you to numerous new relationships. Some will turn into lifelong friendships while others will be for the benefit and enhancement of the Company and its Family Members. These successful relationships will encourage camaraderie and unit cohesiveness as well as enrich your life...you too will touch more lives than you will know.

- **Spouse/Family** - Your relationship with your Spouse and Family must come first. Keep a continual dialogue with your Spouse. Discuss your priorities, goals and plans often, from entertaining to the extent of your own involvement

and presence. Your Spouse has a lonely position; be a good listener and guard the confidence and trust of your relationship. Always save time for each other and for your Family.

- **First Sergeant (1SG) Spouse** - Often 1SGs and their Spouses have been associated with the Army for more years than you have and the 1SG will normally serve in the company 1SG position for a longer period of time than your Spouse will serve in the company command position. Tap into this wonderful experience base, but realize that a company command may seem like a sprint and a 1SG position seem like a marathon in comparison. Given this, the Spouse may not have the same excitement or high energy level as you. The 1SG Spouse is your partner and your teammate. This can be of great comfort knowing that you are not alone! The 1SG Spouse is the senior Spouse of the enlisted soldiers' Spouses just as you are the senior Spouse of the officers' Spouses. Your roles parallel each other. The 1SG Spouse could be the primary connection between you and the NCO/enlisted Spouses. If possible, meet periodically to keep each other informed and to maintain a working relationship that could very well develop into a friendship. A strong partnership will facilitate your joint efforts during high stress times that may arise in the company. Remember, the 1SG Spouse is a volunteer just like you. If the 1SG Spouse would like to maintain an inactive role in the company, respect this, but ask for another senior enlisted Spouse to take on this important role. As a courtesy though, continue to keep the 1SG Spouse informed unless asked otherwise. Your relationship with the 1SG Spouse will foster an atmosphere in the company that inspires teamwork, camaraderie and cohesiveness among other Spouses in the company.
- **FRG Leader** - The Family Readiness Group is an official entity of the company and a program that is one of your Spouse's command responsibilities. It is imperative that you support the FRG Leader with attendance at meetings and functions, sharing of ideas and experiences and above all communication. Your Spouse will need to meet with and have frequent communication with the FRG Leader.
- **Lieutenant Spouses in the Company** - Usually the Company experience is the first Army experience a Lieutenant's Spouse will have. You too may be or feel like a relatively new Army Spouse, but know that the Lieutenants' Spouses will be looking up to you. The Lieutenants' Spouses in your company will be invited to the same social functions as you and are usually close in age to you, so it is likely that you could develop friendships with each other.

RELATIONSHIPS IN THE BATTALION

- **Battalion Commander Spouse** - The Battalion Commander's Spouse is a great source of information and will be able to link you to valuable Brigade and installation level resources. You will have many opportunities to interact with the Battalion Commander's Spouse usually in official and unofficial settings.

- **Other Field Grade Spouses In The Battalion** - There are usually 2-5 Field Grade Spouses within a Battalion other than the Battalion Commander's Spouse. These spouses are role models that you can solicit advice from and you may find that these spouses are easier to access than the Battalion Commander's spouse.
- **Company Commander Spouses/Peers** - You are not alone! You will be able to share ideas with and find support from the other Company Commander Spouses.
- **Chaplain** - The Chaplain usually has his/her finger on the pulse of the company. The Chaplain is a trained professional whom you can turn to in confidence and who is very knowledgeable of all resources, from within the Chaplain's office, the unit, the installation and Army-wide.

RELATIONSHIPS ON THE INSTALLATION

- **Army Volunteer Corps Coordinator (AVCC)** - Most installations have an AVCC who serves as the single point of contact for volunteerism on the installation. The AVCC can assist you in learning about volunteer opportunities on your installation and sometimes has information about volunteering in the civilian community. This will be your installation point of contact who will guide you through the process of registering and recognizing the volunteers within the company. *You may find AVC (Army Volunteer Coordinator) and AVCC (Army Volunteer Corps Coordinator) used interchangeably.
- **Army Community Services (ACS)** - ACS assists Commanders in maintaining readiness of individuals, Families, and communities within America's Army by developing, coordinating, and delivering services that promote self-reliance, resiliency, and stability during war and peace. Visit your installation's ACS to familiarize yourself with the numerous programs and resources available to you and the Families of the company.
- **Red Cross** - Today's American Red Cross is keeping pace with the changing military. Using the latest in computer and telecommunications technology, the Red Cross sends communications on behalf of Family members who are facing emergencies or other important events to members of the U.S. Armed Forces serving all over the world. Locate the Red Cross serving your installation for current contact information, classes and volunteer opportunities.
- **Installation Spouses' Club/Community Spouses' Club** - Each installation will likely have a spouses' club that you may choose to join. This is a great venue for you to meet other Spouses outside the Unit, socialize and/or volunteer if you choose. (For more information, see the Being Social chapter.)

KEY RELATIONSHIPS TO CULTIVATE

- **State/Regional Family Programs Office** - In each state/region, the National Guard/Reserve has a Family Program Office that can provide assistance with and guidance on Guard/Reserve issues and community resources for Families. To locate your Family Programs Staff log on to www.jointservicessupport.org and your state or www.arfp.org to find your listing. Some key positions helpful to you personally and as a resource for your unit Family Readiness Group and Individual Families are:
- **Family Assistance Centers (FAC)** - Set up as a one-stop shop where Families can get information and assistance from a diverse range of agencies. Staffed by Family Assistance Center Specialists (FAS).
- **Family Assistance Center Specialists (FAS)** - Number of Specialists vary by State. FAS provide assistance to any and all Service Members and their Families during times of need regardless of deployment status or branch affiliation. Professionally trained staff can assist with: TRICARE, DEERS, ID cards, financial and legal matters, Service and Family member employment/re-employment and crisis intervention and referral. Typically, there is a hotline number in each state to cover crises and emergencies 24 hours/day. Check www.jointservicessupport.org for the number in your state.
- **Family Readiness Assistant (FRA)** - Responsible for training all volunteers, educating Soldiers & National Guard Family Members on all aspects of Readiness. Provides training and resources to Commanders and Rear Detachment Commanders on their roles in regard to Family Readiness Groups.
- **Family Readiness Support Assistant (FRSA)** – For a detailed description of their role and function please see the Family Readiness Groups chapter.
- **Joint Family Support Assistance Program Counselors (JFSAP)** – A compilation of Military One Source Center outreach programs which provides professional support to Service Members and their Families (individually or in groups) on a wide range of topics, from anger management, financial counseling, children and youth issues, problem solving, and throughout the deployment cycle. States have a range of numbers of Counselors available: Military Family Life Consultants, Personal Financial Consultants, Operation Military Kids Consultants, Military One Source Consultant, and an American Red Cross Representative.

III. Meeting Management Tips

A meeting moves at the speed of the slowest mind in the room. (In other words, all but one participate will be bored, and all but one mind underused.)

Dale Daute

Meeting Planning and Management

As a Company Commander Spouse, you will probably begin to plan and conduct meetings. To hold successful meetings you will need to have a basic understanding of meeting management and group dynamics. Army Community Service (ACS) or State/Family Programs offers an in depth class on Meeting Management through Army Family Team Building (AFTB) Level III. Also included in AFTB Level III are classes on Communication, Leadership, Conflict, and Building Cohesive Teams. If local classes are not available in your area, you can take them on line through Army One Source <http://www.myarmyonesource.com/default.aspx>. AFTB is located under the Family Programs and Services Tab, then under Family Programs, then AFTB and Online Training. The knowledge you gain in these classes can give you confidence in your role as a Company Commander Spouse. The information provided in this chapter is basic information to get you started in the right direction.

Planning Guidelines:

After you have decided to conduct a meeting, basic steps and guidelines should be considered. Utilizing these broad guidelines may help you plan a more effective meeting; however, you may not use every guideline every time. Again, these are broad, general guidelines. Remember, too, that you will want to lead or facilitate the meeting...not boss it!

Before a Meeting:

- Decide on a purpose.
- Create an Agenda: Send out! Be specific! Be creative! Use ACTIVE voice, not passive voice!
- Brief attendees in advance.
- Prepare an opening statement or introductory remarks.
- Gather and disseminate information.
- Invite SME's (subject matter experts) or speakers.
- Arrange resources, including location, keys, Agenda, handouts, materials, A/V equipment, etc.
- Plan physical arrangement of meeting location: name tags on table, arrangement of folders and/or paper, chairs at table.
- Be there early and come prepared!
- Plan course of meeting and time limits.
- Utilize personal notes on individual agendas.

During a Meeting:

- Elicit additions to agenda, if necessary,
- Create proper atmosphere (friendly and open).
- Give introductory remarks.
- Watch group dynamics.

- End on time and watch your time
- Be aware of your “hats” or roles.
- Make sure all materials are there.
- Use props, if appropriate.
- Acknowledge distractions.
- Set, review, and enforce group/meeting norms.
- Stick to decisions/group votes.
- Assign tasks with target due dates.
- Keep written records (minutes of the meeting).

After Meeting:

- Engage in personal reflection (positive and negative).
- Provide informal support.
- Follow up.
- Be available.
- Send out meeting minutes ASAP.
- Encourage completion of tasks.
- Deal with unfinished business.

Planning the Agenda

Shown below is a sample Agenda with explanations for each item. Your Agenda may be different, depending on the needs of your unit or organization. This is just a guideline. A ready to use Sample Agenda is located in the Resource section of this chapter.

AGENDA

Company Name, BN or Organization Name

Date

Time

Location

1. **Call to Order:** Call the meeting to order on time. This is a courtesy to your attendees. Make any short introductory remarks, invocation, welcomes, introductions or opening statements after the Call to Order. This ensures that this information is included in the minutes.
2. **Introductory Remarks:** Welcome the members to the meeting. You may want to introduce any special guests in attendance. Some groups have an invocation. Keep these remarks brief.

- 3. Approval of Last Meeting's Minutes:** Minutes should be read and approved by motion, second and vote. A motion, second, and vote to accept the minutes as printed is sometimes used instead of a reading. The Chair should ask if there are corrections to the minutes. Corrections are noted and the minutes can be approved as corrected by motion, second and vote. When minutes are read, the group should be aware of and note any unfinished business that should be addressed.
 - 4. Reports:** Each of the elected or appointed positions gives a report of business they conducted. The Secretary may read correspondence received. The Treasurer gives a report on the budget, monies spent or received. This report does not need approval by the members. Committee Chairs or other positions give reports if necessary. You may know ahead of time who will give reports and may list them on the Agenda. Reports from Chairs or positions not listed on the Agenda may arise during the meeting.
 - **Secretary**
 - **Treasurer**
 - **Committee Chairs (Welcome, Hospitality, Special Events, Volunteers, Programs etc.):**
 - 5. Old Business:** Unfinished business tabled from previous meetings is addressed here. The group may have been waiting on information or approval from others before making decisions. The group may discuss and vote on issues that need to be decided or may table issues until the next meeting. You may list topics of Old Business on the Agenda. Other Old Business not listed on the Agenda may arise during the meeting.
 - 6. New Business:** This is business that the group has not previously addressed. Based on anticipated new business, allow plenty of time for discussion and voting. Be sure to keep the discussion controlled so that you can end the meeting on time. You may need to refer new business to committee or individuals to accomplish. You may list items of New Business on the Agenda. Other New Business not listed on the Agenda may arise during the meeting.
 - 7. Calendar and Announcements:** This is a time to announce upcoming dates and events that are important to the unit or organization. Also decided here will be the date or potential dates for the next meeting. This information may be listed on the Agenda. Additional calendar items or announcements not on the Agenda may arise.
 - 8. Adjournment:** A motion to adjourn is made, seconded and voted.
-

Planning for Problems: Anticipating and being aware of problems that may arise in meetings can allow you to plan ways to avoid them! Meeting myths, traps, and difficult behaviors are areas for you to consider.

- Myths: There are meeting myths that you should recognize as false: 1) The leader is responsible for the success of the group; 2) the leader needs to have tight control; 3) everyone must participate in all circumstances; and if everyone is courteous enough, the meeting is bound to be a success. These simply are not true. The group leader should do everything possible to ensure an effective meeting and the group should be responsible for its own behavior.
- Traps: In addition to meeting myths, you should recognize meeting traps. Falling into these traps may cause your meeting to be ineffective. In your planning phase, consider how you can avoid these traps:
 - No understanding or thought for the participants.
 - Same meeting, same place, same time, same agenda.
 - Unbriefed resource person or speaker.
 - Too much planned for too little time.
 - Long introductions or long, drawn-out speakers.
 - Failure to deal with the feelings of the participants at the meeting.
 - Neglecting to carry the group into the future, relate it to the real world, follow up on post-meeting assignments or plan the next meeting.
- Difficult Behaviors: At times people may exhibit difficult behaviors in your meetings. While there is no absolutely effective way to deal with difficult behaviors, understanding them can help you know how to react when they occur. Described below are common difficult behaviors and possible ways to deal with them.
 - Superior Attitude: High self esteem (although appearances can be deceiving); successful; goal oriented; see self as powerful and better than others; know-it-all; exploits connections; need to be center of attention; rigid in opinions
 - Show respect.
 - Do not use sarcasm.
 - Be assertive.
 - Do not use “side glances”.
 - Be assertive – not aggressive.
 - Demonstrate confidence.
 - Bring THEM into the process.
 - Overly Dependent Attitude: Expect others to solve all of their problems; make angry demands; become irritated at delays; ask questions about everything; exhibit exaggerated concern and fear; demand staff attention:
 - Tolerate unrealistic behaviors.
 - Be specific about what can be done and how long it will take.
 - Be assertive in dealing with their demands.
 - Give them attention to let them know that you are aware of them and their needs.
 - “Superman/Superwoman” Attitude

- Pride themselves on being independent, capable, and strong; play down illness (sometimes too long); poor in following directions; fear of losing control over themselves; loss of control results in sense of hopelessness
- Do not tell them how much they need help.
- Do not show them pity.
- Bring them into the process.
- Aggressive/Hostile Attitude: Defensive; suspicious; blaming, discourteous, and attacking; over sensitive; and pessimistic
 - Use assertive approaches.
 - Be specific.
 - Do not argue.
 - Do not accept direct abuse.
 - Maintain eye contact.
 - When you are speaking, do not let him/her interrupt.
 - Refer to group norms decided on by the group.

Planning for Change

If you are a participant in or a leader of ineffective meetings, you do have choices. There are steps you can take to plan for change. If you are a participant and have meeting management skills, you can utilize them to move the meeting along. If you are the leader, you can improve your meeting leadership behavior by learning meeting management skills. You can conduct evaluations through feedback forms, analyze the results, and implement changes. You can discuss and analyze the meetings openly with the members and then devise and implement solutions.

The planning guidelines, planning the agenda, planning for problems, and planning for change are just the basics. They can help you have effective, successful meetings; however, you are encouraged to take additional training on meeting management and group development to further develop and enhance your meeting management skills.

Planning for Successful FRG Meetings

Asking and/or surveying FRG membership periodically to identify issues and activities of interest is important to finding out what needs to be done at FRG meetings (and other activities). When FRG members are given the opportunity to provide input, then they will feel more involved and engaged in the FRG. Further, when FRG meetings meet membership's needs, FRG members are more likely to view FRG meetings as worthwhile and thus be more inclined to participate. Both are critical to sustaining the FRG. Some things to consider:

- Identify whether there are any issues of concern that need to be addressed; consult with Company leadership as appropriate prior to the meeting to determine how this issue will be addressed by the Company or FRG.

- Assess FRG needs (e.g., discuss need for volunteers; brainstorm to get input from participants on topics or activities of interest to FRG membership).
- Identify FRG activities to be publicized (e.g., vFRG, newsletter, holiday party).
- Establish the purpose of the meeting.
- Discuss and define the FRG Norms that the group agrees to.
- Develop an agenda
- Determine how long the meeting will be and establish a timeline for the different segments of the meeting (e.g., welcome, guest speaker, announcements, concluding remarks).
- Determine what resources will be needed (e.g., interpreters, child care, food, pens and other supplies, music, equipment, transportation, parking).
- Determine what the “social” component will be (e.g., potluck dinner, award ceremony, time set aside for people to talk among themselves).
- Select a location.
- Publicize the meeting.
- Identify what materials will be distributed or need to have on hand (e.g., Family readiness information forms, FRG newsletter, sign in sheets, community resource directory, door prizes if desired).
- Arrange for company or military leadership to speak, if desired or a guest speaker, if needed.

Proper Procedures for FRG Meetings

Most official meetings are conducted using basic parliamentary procedure and most use Robert’s Rules of Order or Robert’s Rules of Order Newly Revised as a reference. These books are usually available at a local library or may be found at local or online bookstores. You may want to purchase your own copy for handy reference. The website <http://www.robertsrules.org/> has basic information about parliamentary procedure and terminology. The website <http://www.parlipro.org/index.html> is another good resource.

Most of the meetings you will conduct and attend will not be that formal but utilizing proper procedure provides common rules so that that the group can conduct business in an orderly, effective way. Following strict parliamentary procedure would be difficult for a smaller group; however, following the basics of parliamentary procedure can enable the FRG Leader to hold effective, well-managed meetings.

- The FRG SOP should state that FRG Meetings are conducted using parliamentary procedure with Robert’s Rules of Order or Robert’s Rules of Order Newly Revised as the guiding authority.
- FRG Meetings should be publicized. Notify members via email, newsletter, phone calls, or other methods used by your FRG.
- FRG meetings may require a quorum for voting. Refer to the FRG SOP.
- FRG meetings should follow the Sample Agenda outlined earlier in this chapter.

- The Minutes or proceedings from FRG Meetings are recorded by the Secretary.
- When Agenda items are being discussed, proper parliamentary procedure should be utilized.
- You may need a motion to extend, limit or end debate of hot topics.
- Only one motion can be addressed at a time.
- To present a motion:
 - A member seeks recognition for the floor.
 - FRG Leader recognizes the member (member obtains the floor).
 - Member makes a motion (I move that...).
 - Another member seconds the motion.
 - FRG Leader **states** the question.
 - Debate (amendment and secondary motions).
 - FRG Leader **puts** the question to a vote.
 - FRG Leader announces the result of the vote
 - When the group is ready to vote on the motion, the FRG Leader should read (or have Secretary read) the motion and conduct the vote. Assignment to committee or individuals for implementation may follow.
 - If the group chooses, a motion under discussion can be tabled. This means it is set aside until the group is ready to address it again.
 - Motions can be committed or referred to Committee. This means that a Committee can look at the motion further to develop resolutions to present to the group.
 - The FRG Leader can make a motion, discuss and vote on a motion. In larger groups, the leader may need to remain impartial; however, the FRG is a smaller group and the FRG leader is a member of the FRG and does not need to remain impartial.
- The FRG Leader can assume a motion:
 - “If there are no further corrections, the minutes stand approved as read (or as corrected).”
 - “If there is no further business, this meeting will now adjourn. [Pause] Hearing none, this meeting is adjourned.”

Preparing the Minutes

The appointed Secretary (or representative) should take the Minutes of FRG Meetings. The purpose of the minutes is to provide a record of the proceedings. They are not to capture exactly what is said by every member, but to record what is done or decided by the FRG members. The Minutes should show:

- Kind of meeting (regular, special)
- Name of unit
- Date, time and place of the meeting
- Attendance of the FRG Leader and Secretary or their substitutes
- Attendance roster can be attached

- Whether the Minutes of the previous meeting were read and approved (or approved as corrected)
- All motions and who made them and their outcome. For example, “A motion by Jane Doe that the FRG hold a car wash fundraiser to raise money for the unit homecoming party was adopted.”
- Time of adjournment

The Secretary should sign the Minutes. When the Minutes are approved, the Secretary should write “Approved” on the Minutes and initial and date. Copies of the Minutes should be kept in the FRG Continuity books.

IV. Military Etiquette and Protocol

Nothing is less important than which fork you use. Etiquette is the science of living. It embraces everything. It is ethics. It is honor.

Emily Post

What is etiquette and why is it important to me?

Etiquette is defined as “the forms required by good breeding, social conventions, or prescribed by authority, to be observed in social or official life; the rules of decorum.” Etiquette means good manners in our daily life. In our cases, it means knowing what attire to what to what function, how to send invitations, and what to bring for our host and/or hostess.

Good etiquette also and more importantly means the way you treat people and the amount of respect you give someone, no matter their rank or standing in life. Treat people they way you would want to be treated.

What is Military Etiquette?

Military Etiquette is the everyday good manners along with the customs, courtesies, and traditions of the different services.

What is Protocol?

Protocol is the strict form of etiquette and diplomatic courtesy, customs of service (system of accepted social patterns and traditions accepted by the military) and common courtesies (the traits of kindness, friendliness, thoughtfulness and consideration of others) to create order. They let us know what to expect in a given situation.

We as military spouses attend a variety of social and uniquely military functions. Primarily for us it is a combination of military traditions, etiquette and common sense. This guidance creates a system of accepted social patterns so that we know what to expect in a given situation. Knowing these general guidelines can help you feel more comfortable in the many social and military related situations, which you may choose to attend.

NOTE: When in doubt, usually you take your cue from the next senior spouse. She/he may not always be right, but at least you will be in good company!

Use the following as outline information *not as formal guidelines*. Basic good manners and common courtesies serve you well in all aspects of life. They make people feel at ease with you, with themselves, and with the situation.

There are many references available concerning military traditions and social customs for the commander’s spouse who wants to refresh his/her knowledge on this subject. As a commander’s spouse, you set the tone for the unit and it is helpful to have a clear working knowledge of military traditions and current social customs. You may be called upon to make personal decisions that are based on this information. Do your best to

respond to questions, and do not hesitate to find out what is correct if you are uncertain. Other spouses may be looking at you as the example!

INVITATIONS

RECEIVING INVITATIONS:

In the course of your military life, you will receive many invitations. Keeping a few main points in mind will help you avoid misunderstandings and hurt feelings. At times, you will find that an invitation will conflict with another obligation or interest.

When it comes to deciding which function to attend, ***your family comes first***. Family Readiness Group meetings, Hail and Farewells, and spouses' coffees are usually held monthly and probably will be your next priority. These get-togethers are opportunities for you to get to know other people in the company or battalion. Friendships formed at these functions will unite you more closely with the other spouses, which is especially important should the unit deploy.

SENDING AN INVITATION:

Invitations can be formal, informal, or casual. They may be extended by written note, email, in person, by telephone, or sent through distribution. Only the names of the people on the invitation are invited.

If your intention is to have a function that does not include children and you are concerned that those you are inviting may not realize this, it is perfectly acceptable to say so.

If your invitation has an inner envelope, this is the place you place all the people invited to attend (all the children's names are placed here). Only place the adults on the front envelope.

It is acceptable to note that children are not invited on the invitation; i.e., "Adult Function."

Examples may be "Book the babysitter, we're having a BBQ," or "Sorry, we cannot accommodate children at this event"

If some guests have not responded to the invitation, it is appropriate to call.

Do be kind though, there may be extenuating circumstances or they may not have received the invitation.

NOTE: Important Health Note-If you attend the dinner party and you recognize that you will have an allergic reaction to the type of food being served, be courteous to the host/hostess and explain. This ensures that the hostess (or

host) is not embarrassed by the presumption that you do not like her (his) cooking!

FORMAT FOR AN INVITATION:

For coffee, tea, luncheon, brunch, reception, cocktails, buffet or seated dinner invitations (invite) should always include:

- Date: Day of the week and date in main body of invitation
- Time: Main body of invitation (informal invite can be written in numeral form, whereas formal invites need time to be written out)
- Place: Main body of the invitation
- Attire: Bottom right corner of the invitation; (casual, informal, semi-formal, formal, or specific dress guidelines, such as area/themed- i.e., Backyard BBQ “wear that denim!”)
- RSVP: Bottom left corner of the invitation; (you can use RSVP or Regrets only)
- Cost: Bottom left corner under the RSVP of the invitation (if there is a cost associated with the function)

Host/Hostess: Main body of the invitation; (if a husband/wife -- informal: Bob and Carol Smith, formal: LTC and Mrs. Robert Smith, or if unit: 407th Forward Support Battalion)

Extra notes: Lower right corner (these include no cameras permitted, gift table for the recipients of the function, etc)

Other Important Information to know about invitations:

- Always send out 10 - 14 days in advance
- Use black ink
- Emphasize to your soldier the importance of timely delivery of invitations if you send through distribution.
- Avoid initials and abbreviations.
- Exceptions: Mr., Mrs., Dr., or Captain J. Paul Doe (if an initial is used in place of a first or middle name).
- Use “Mrs.” and then full name of husband, such as Mrs. John Doe for that signifies that she is married to John Smith; using Mrs. Jane Smith can signify that her husband has passed away or she is divorced.
- Write full titles, ranks, and names.
 - Example: Private First Class, Staff Sergeant, Master Sergeant, etc.
- Dates and hours are spelled out on formal invitations with only the day and month capitalized.
 - Example: Thursday, the eighth of May; “seven-thirty” is correct; “half after seven” (also correct) is more formal.

An example of an invitation:

<p style="text-align: center;">HOST/HOSTESS</p> <p style="text-align: center;">OCCASION</p> <p style="text-align: center;">DATE/TIME</p> <p style="text-align: center;">WHERE</p>

FORMS OF ADDRESS

OFFICIAL INVITATION:

- ❖ The military member being invited in an official capacity is listed first:

Major Mary Jane Doe and Colonel John Doe

Or

Major Mary Jane Doe
and Colonel John Doe

- ❖ Both military members invited in an official capacity - higher rank first:

Captain John Doe and Lieutenant Jane Doe

Or

Captain John Doe
and Lieutenant Jane Doe

- ❖ Female military member and civilian husband:

Major Mary Jane Doe and Mr. John Doe

Or

Major Mary Jane Doe
and Mr. John Doe

- ❖ Military members are both of the same rank:

The Captains John and Jane Doe

Or

Captain Jane Doe
and Captain John Doe

- ❖ Two different last names:

Captain John Doe and Jane Deer

Or

Captain John Doe
and Jane Deer

SOCIAL INVITATION:

- ❖ Higher rank goes first:

Colonel John Doe and Major Mary Jane Doe

Or

Colonel John Doe
and Major Mary Jane Doe

- ❖ If wife is civilian and retained her maiden name:

Ms. Jane Smith and Captain John Doe

Or

Ms. Jane Smith
and Captain John Doe

- ❖ Retired: Place the rank then retired status:

John W. Smith, Colonel (RET)
Divorced from husband: Mrs. Jane Doe
Widow: Mrs. John Doe

Although we are far more casual, it is considered courteous to address a senior officer's spouse as "Mr./Mrs. Doe." If he/she desires that you call him/her by his/her first name, he/she will tell you. Do not take the liberty until then. If you are asked to use a first name, it is polite to do so.

RESPONDING TO AN INVITATION

Answer yes or no within 24-48 hours after receiving the invitation.

- The host/hostess needs to know how many people will attend so he/she can shop accordingly, or add more guests if there is enough room.

*****Helpful Hint- It is a good idea to tape the invitation to the phone you use the most if you cannot RSVP when you open it. You will not forget to RSVP later! Put the address and phone number as well as the time on your calendar.***

- **Contact is imperative**, whether yes, no, or unsure. If you are unsure, you will have to ask if your "RSVP deadline" can be extended. If you are having trouble giving a response within this time frame, call the hostess (or host) to regret and explain your situation. The hostess (host) will then have the option to accept your response or extend your deadline.
- No excuse need be given for being unable to attend, except as noted above.
- **"RSVP" means respond, if you please, and requires a yes or no response.**
- **"Regrets only" means call only if you are unable to attend.**

"To remind" is usually sent to a guest of honor after a telephonic confirmation of availability.

- Only those named on the invitation should attend.
- No children or house guests should attend, nor should you ask if they might attend, unless specifically invited.
- When you regret because of houseguests, the host or hostess may extend the invitation to include them. YOU MAY NOT ASK!

*****Important Note: Formal invitations may not have “RSVP” or “Regrets Only” on the invitation. You are expected to attend! Example: New Year’s Day Reception.***

*****Do not wait for your host/hostess to call you to see if you received an invitation or to ask if you are coming!***

SAYING “THANK YOU”

A thank you can be a mailed note, phone call, or a thank you at the door, depending on the occasion. An e-mail is also appropriate if you know the host/hostess uses their e-mail regularly. Regardless of how you do it, a personal thank you is always appreciated.

*****Rule of thumb: “If you eat and/or drink at someone’s home, or at their expense, say “thank you.”***

A small hostess (host) gift is always appreciated when visiting someone’s home. Homemade cookies or muffins, jellies, a bottle of wine, or flowers are all appropriate. It sends the message that you appreciate the invitation. Something local to your area is special to your hostess (host). If you bring wine (make sure your host/hostess does drink wine and know their preferences), your hostess (host) might want to share your thoughtfulness. Candy is also another hostess (host) gift that may want to be shared all...consider this a compliment.

Promptness is important, but it is never too late to thank anyone.

Try to get in the habit of writing a thank you before you go to bed the same night. You will still be thankful then!

Address thank-you notes to the hostess (host) only.

Sign it from yourself.

- If you are writing as a couple, refer to the other person in the note.

John and I had such a great time.”

or

“John joins me in thanking you.”

Never sign a note with your spouse's name, too.

Specifically mention something special about the evening, dinner, gift, etc.

*****Your expression of appreciation and promptness are what really matter, not how well you follow the rules!***

ATTIRE

A question often asked by men and women is what to wear to a specific function.

Invitations should have "dress" in the bottom right-hand corner.

Time of day (Stand of Dress) depends on local customs and time of day:

- Morning -- skirt/blouse/sweater, simple dress or slacks, open shirt (no tie)
- Luncheons -- skirt/blouse, dress, suit or slacks, tie, no jacket
- Tea or Reception -- dressier dress or suit, or dress pants, sports coat
- Cocktail -- dressier dress or evening suit, or men's suit

Attire may also be region specific such as "Texas casual" where jeans and cowboy boots are appropriate or "Golf Casual" where jeans are not appropriate. You may need to ask others for specific guidance.

Some of the different forms of attire:

- Casual Dress
- Informal Dress
- Semi-formal Dress (Not really a proper category, but indicates distinguished business suit and dressy dress.)
- Formal Dress

Under the above forms of attire, there are also numerous sub-categories, for example you could also see dressy casual, festive formal, cocktail formal, and backyard casual on an invitation. When in doubt, call your host or hostess and ask them what they are wearing. Always remember it is better to come dressed UP than come dressed DOWN to an event.

Quick Resource Dress Chart for Spouses

<u>Event</u>	<u>Dress</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Coffees• Teas• Luncheons	Casual or Informal Informal/Semiformal Informal

• Hails & Farewells	Informal
• Receptions	Semiformal
• Banquets/Balls/Dining Outs	Formal
• Cocktail parties (after 6pm)	Semiformal
• Barbeques & other causal Outdoor affairs	Casual
• Open houses	Semiformal
• Parades & Change-of-command ceremonies	Informal
• Graduations	Informal/semiformal
• Promotions	Informal/semiformal
• Military Funerals	Informal/semiformal
• Retirement Ceremonies	Informal/semiformal

Casual:

Females Spouses - Khaki slacks and a polo shirt, a blouse and skirt, simple dress/skirt or nice slacks.

- Simple (or no) jewelry.
- Either low-heeled or flat shoes.

Male Spouses (Sports Attire)-Polo shirt and khaki pants; dress pants, button-up shirt, and dress shoes. No cutoffs, jeans, tube-tops, tennis shoes, or t-shirts.

Informal:

Before six o'clock:

Females Spouses- Afternoon dress or dress suit (Sunday Best).

Male Spouses- Coat and tie; sport jacket with a tie; or a dark or light business suit.

After six o'clock:

Female Spouses- A very dressy afternoon dress or a cocktail dress (any length) or a dress suit.

Male Spouses-Dark Business suit; typically white dress shirt with tie.

Semiformal: Usually for evening events and is fancier than informal.

Females Spouses- Evening Suit or Cocktail dress (very dressy dress or dressy suit with jewelry and heels).

Male Spouses- Dark Business suit.

Daytime Semiformal event:

Female Spouses- Appropriate short dressy dress or dressy suit.

Male Spouses- Business suit.

Formal:

Before six o'clock:

Female Spouses-Late afternoon dress (usually dark colored) or cocktail pants suit

Male Spouses- Dark suit, white dress shirt and tie.

NOTE: Long dresses and long skirts are not normally worn before 5 o'clock.

After 6 o'clock: formal dress means Black Tie or White Tie.

Black Tie Optional:

Female Spouses-Short Cocktail dresses, floor length gowns, or dressy evening separates, or evening suit, a luxury coat if you have one.

Male Spouses- Tuxedo or a dark suit, and tie.

White Tie:

Female Spouse- the dressiest floor-length gown.

Male Spouse- Long black tailcoat and white pique bow tie.

COMING AND GOING AT A FUNCTION

Be on time or slightly late (10 minutes), but NEVER arrive early.

- Come as close to the hour as possible.
- Call ahead if you want to come early and help.
- Wait until the invitation time to ring the doorbell.

******If you have to be more than 10 minutes late, it is nice to call the host/hostess to let him/her know. Call earlier in the week/day. The few minutes prior to invitation time can be hectic for the host/hostess.***

Traditionally, at official functions the senior ranking person leaves first. This is not always necessarily true today; check to find out what is acceptable. If in doubt, wait!

- Do not leave immediately after dinner (wait at least 30 minutes for politeness sake).
- Do not overstay a welcome.
- Say 'goodnight' to senior person and the host/hostess.
- When you say you are leaving, leave. Do not linger at the door.

FORMAL DINNER NOTES

- On arrival, find your seats on seating chart.
- Mingle with the other guests.
- Visit with your host/hostess/special guest.
- At a formal or Dining Out, you will stand for the posting and retiring of the colors (bringing in and taking out of the flags).
- Stand for the invocation and toasts (with the exception of the toast “to the ladies” or “to the spouses”).
- Female soldiers will remain standing and their spouse will be seated.

*****FYI- The “Colors” (US flag and regimental flag) are carried by color bearers (NCOs today). The color Guards “protect” the flags. Traditionally, when soldiers did not have uniforms, the Regimental Colors were the only means of identifying who was fighting whom.***

RECEIVING LINE

A receiving line is an efficient and gracious way to allow the honored guest(s) to meet all guests personally.

- Those in the receiving line include: Honored guest(s), guest speaker, and host/hostess.
- Place cigarettes, drinks, cell phones, and gloves elsewhere while going through the line.
- The woman proceeds (comes before) the man at Army, Navy, Coast Guard, and Marine functions and succeeds (follows) at the White House and Air Force functions.
- The first person standing next to the receiving line is the Aide/Adjutant--you DO NOT shake his/her hand because the Adjutant is not part of that receiving line.
- The soldier introduces spouse to the Aide and his/her job is to pass the name to the first person in the receiving line.
- The soldier gives names to the Aide: Example: LT and Mrs. John Doe.
- Speak briefly to those in line, and then move on through the line.
- You may correct a mispronounced name; speak clearly.

INTRODUCTIONS

The three basic rules to introductions are:

- **Woman's name first:** Men are introduced to women by stating the woman's name first.
- **Older person's name first:** When two people are of the same sex, the younger adult is introduced to the older adult by stating the older person's name first.
- **Senior officer's name first:** Junior officers are introduced to senior officers by stating the senior officer's name first; the same for senior officer's spouse.

If you are nervous about introducing someone, if you forgot names, politely ask for the person(s) to repeat their name. This is certainly not a reason to avoid conversation.

Nametags are used for many occasions and are worn on the **right** side (the side with which you shake hands. This makes it easy for the person shaking hands to subtly look at your name.)

TOASTING

Toasting is an age-old custom and is an integral part of military occasions.

- It is respectful to stand and participate in the toasting.
- Those who abstain from alcohol may drink water or raise the wine glass to their lips.
- Never drink a toast to yourself; if seated, remain seated.
- All toasting is initiated by the host, except dining-ins.

MILITARY FUNCTIONS/CEREMONIES

These special events can inspire patriotism and pride and are held for many reasons: changes of command, changes of responsibility, presentation of awards and medals, or retirement ceremonies. Certain traditions and courtesies should be observed during the ceremonies.

PARADES and REVIEWS:

FYI- "The ceremonial formation of a body of troops for display of its condition, numbers, equipment and proficiency" and is held to honor visiting dignitaries, retiring officers, and recipients of awards.

- Try to be on time!!
- Dress appropriately – usually informal is appropriate and remember that jeans, shorts, and cut-offs are NOT ACCEPTABLE!

- Children may attend if well behaved.
- Protocol does not allow dogs, except for service dogs.
- Always stand up six (6) paces before and after the flag passes, even if not announced.
- Take your cue from the senior spouses present; they will be in the first row of seating.

FYI- “Adjutant’s Call” (the call which assembles all units under their common commander) has sounded over review fields and opened parades for over 200 years and on the formal invitation to a review, the Adjutant’s call specifies the time you should be in your seat.

MILITARY MEMORIALS:

FYI- This is unit dependent. Each installation and their command will decide whether or not to have memorials for their fallen heroes. You will be informed by your Battalion Commander’s Spouse how the command has chosen to honor the fallen.

If the command allows memorials, it will also decide when and where. These are usually held at the main post chapel. In front of the pews, the chaplains will have set up an altar of photos of the fallen placed beside their own battlefield cross. The battlefield cross is made up of the soldier’s pair of boots, their rifle with dog tags hanging and their Kevlar helmet placed atop the rifle.

- Try to be on time, earlier if possible.
- Sit on the opposite side of the gold star families; unless you have been specifically asked to sit with them.
- Maintain your own composure (try counting stained glass panes or pews) during the service.
- Stand for the 21 gun salute.
- After the service, it is customary that the highest ranking officer in the division to go the altar of photos to render honors with a salute and usually a division coin will be laid front of each battlefield cross.
- If your Battalion Commander’s Spouse honors the fallen at the front of the chapel, you follow her or his lead.
- Dress attire is informal.

This is an extremely tough service, especially your first memorial and more so if the soldier was under your spouse’s command or you are friends with the widow. Expect to hear all sorts of emotions during the memorial such as crying, wailing, and sobbing, and most often children telling their parent left behind that “there is my daddy’s picture.”

PROMOTION AND AWARD CEREMONIES

As the presiding officer enters the room and is announced, everyone present should stand.

- When “Attention to Orders” is announced, soldiers rise to attention; civilians can remain seated but out of courtesy should stand as well (at formal ceremonies, such as changes of command, the direction “Attention to Orders” is usually omitted therefore all remain seated).
- A receiving line, and sometimes a reception, will follow.

*****FYI- For a promotion ceremony, it is customary for the spouse to participate by pinning the new rank insignia on one shoulder (normally the left) while the presiding officer pins on the right.***

CHANGE OF COMMAND OR RESPONSIBILITY CEREMONIES

The Change of Command is a ceremony in which a new commander assumes the authority and responsibility from the outgoing commander.

- A Change of Responsibility is a relatively new addition in which the senior Non- Commissioned Officer (NCO) changes responsibility from the old to the new.
- You are welcome to attend a change of command ceremony without a specific invitation. However, be aware that attending the reception may require an invitation. If you are unsure, check with your battalion commander's spouse or representative.
- This is an official function with a reception following.
- Personal invitation – RSVP as soon as possible for reserved seats.
- Children may attend if well behaved. The unit/host generally does not invite children to receptions.

*****FYI- The Change of Command Ceremony and Review are steeped in tradition. After the formation of Troops, the Adjutant commands “Sound off” and the band then troops the line. The custom had its beginning during the crusades, when troops offering to serve in the Holy Land stepped forward from the ranks. The musicians marched around these ranks of volunteers, thus setting them apart in a place of honor. The US Army began this tradition of the band playing for troops during the Civil War as a means of entertainment.***

The Commanding officer of troops for the day calls the troops to attention, just as in Revolutionary War times. In George Washington’s Army, the units were arranged geographically-- the southernmost states to the right of the line, progressing northward to the left.

Sometimes the officers will march forward across the field to the commanding officer and then return to their units. This too, had a purpose 125 years ago. As troops were being dismissed, unit commanders marched to their commanding officer for special or secret orders.

When The Music Plays:

It is customary to stand for the "National Anthem".

- Outside, place your hand on your heart.
- Inside, you can either place your hand over or your heart, have your hands at your sides, or behind your back.
- Also stand for the anthems of other countries represented.
- Stand for:
 - "Ruffles & Flourishes" (when General is present, the band plays it once for each star he/she has);
 - "To the Colors" (National Anthem), and "Colors Pass in Review."
 - Don't forget that you will need to stand when the colors are six paces to your right, in front of you and for the six paces to your left, then you may sit as the colors pass in review.
- Stand when the unit plays the Division, and/or Army song. You can usually find the words to both in the program. The first verse and the refrain are listed below.

*****FYI- You will often hear the playing of "The Army Song", a tradition added fairly recently. It is derived from the Field Artillery song "The Caissons Go Rolling Along" written during World War I by two Field Artillery soldiers.***

THE ARMY SONG, 1956

First Chorus:

First to fight for the right,
And to build the Nation's might,
And the Army Goes Rolling Along.
Proud of all we have done,
Fighting till the battle's won,
And the Army Goes Rolling Along.

Refrain:

Then it's hi! Hi! Hey!
The Army's on it way.
Count off the cadence loud and strong;
For where'er we go,
You will always know
That the Army Goes Rolling Along.

RETIREMENT CEREMONIES

These ceremonies may be held with or without an accompanying parade or review.

- You are to rise when the presiding officer enters and is announced.
- As with promotions and awards, if "Attention to Orders" (the reading of the retirement orders) is announced, soldiers will rise. Out of courtesy, civilians should as well.
- For all other portions, remain seated.
- There may be a reception afterwards. If not, it is customary for the audience to line up to walk by the retiree and spouse to shake hands and offer a few words.

REVEILLE AND RETREAT (Bugle Calls)

FYI- The bugle called retreat was first used by the French army and is said to go back to the time of the Crusades. "Retraite"(we now call that"retreat") signified the closing in of night and signaled the sentries to start challenging to maintain their security watch until reveille the next morning.

Monday thru Friday-

- 6:00am or 6:30am is "Reveille." This call marks the raising of the flag and the beginning of the workday.
- 8:00am is "Work Call". This call marks the start of the work day.
- 1:00pm is "Work Call." This call marks the return to work after lunch.
- 4:30 pm is "Recall."

- 5:00 pm is “Retreat” and “To the Colors.” This call signifies the lowering of the flag and the official end of the workday.
- 9:00 pm is “Tattoo.” This call means quiet or lights out.
- 11:00pm is “Taps.” This call means lights out.

- 1) If you outside, stand quietly at attention facing the flag or music with hand over heart.
- 2) If you are in car, stop, get out, and stand as above. If there are children, remain in the car.
- 3) On Navy and Air Force bases you are only required to stop the car and remain seated.

NOTE: Children should also stop playing and observe the custom of the ceremony.

Saturday-

- 12:00pm is “Mess Call.”
- 5:00pm is “Retreat” and “To the Colors”
- 9:00 pm is “Tattoo”
- 11:00pm is “Taps”

Sunday-

- 9:00am is “Church Call”
- 10:45am is “Church Call”
- 5:00 pm is “Retreat” and “To the Colors”
- 11:00pm is “Taps”

OTHER COURTESIES

When entering or leaving an installation with a guarded gate at night, dim your headlights 50 feet before the gate so you will not temporarily blind the gate guard.

You should always address senior officers and their spouses as “LTC Smith” or “Mrs. Smith” until they ask you to do otherwise.

No children, unless specified.

- *Do not ask if you may bring your children!*
- *If you cannot leave your child/children then you send your regrets!*

Normally smoking is **inappropriate** indoors, unless the host/hostess offers to allow it.

****FYI- At very formal social functions, it is common to see Army officers in their “mess” dress- the most formal officer’s uniform. If you are attending a function**

with soldiers from different branches of service, you may notice that the color of the lapel varies. Each branch has its own "color"-

Armor/Cavalry	Yellow
Air Defense	Scarlet
Aviation	Ultramarine Blue/Golden Orange
Engineers	Engineer Red/White
Field Artillery	Scarlet
Infantry	Light Blue
Military Intelligence	Blue
Special Forces	Forest Green
Chemical	Cobalt Blue/Golden Yellow
Military Police	Green/White
Signal	Orange/White
Adjutant General Corps	Dark Blue/Scarlet
Medical/Dental/Veterinary/Nurses	Maroon/White
Medical Services Corp	Maroon
Chaplain	Black
Finance	Silver Gray/Golden Yellow
Judge Advocate General	Dark Blue/White
Ordinance	Crimson/Yellow
Quartermaster	Buff
Transportation	Brick Red/Golden Yellow

****Second color is piping***

****** Please note: At the time of the printing of the handbook, the Army has made the decision to change the green Army service uniform to the Army blue uniform. Soldiers will not be required to have the new uniform until fall 2011.**

ROSTERS

There are numerous rosters within a unit. Each serves the same purpose: to contact people and pass information. However, each roster will have different information and different people depending on the type of roster. The most common kinds of rosters within a unit are the Alert Roster, the Social Roster, the FRG Chain of Concern, the Unit Coffee Roster, and more frequently the Care Team Roster. Each one of these rosters plays a crucial role within the unit.

The Alert Roster lists the phone numbers of the military chain of command within the unit. There will be an alert roster at Company level as well as Battalion level. This roster lists the Service Members in order and rank. This roster is passed out to all Soldiers' within the unit.

The Social Roster lists phone numbers and addresses of all senior personnel (usually officer and NCO specific) within the Battalion. This roster is created by the S-1 and

given to all on the roster. This roster includes the Soldier's name; the spouse's name; birth month/birth day; address; phone numbers; and arrival date to the unit; and the company that are assigned.

The FRG Chain of Concern lists the phone numbers, emails, and addresses of all the volunteers with the unit's FRG. This list is used for contact and dissemination of information. The FRG Phone Tree is made from this master list. This roster is given to all active members of the FRG.

The Coffee Roster lists all the members of the Coffee group and includes phone numbers, addresses, emails, birthdays, and anniversaries. Only the members of the coffee group receive this roster.

The Care Team Roster is the list of volunteers that are utilized in the time of a casualty within the unit. Usually the Battalion Rear Detachment and the Battalion FRG Leader/Advisor will hold this roster.

SERVICE BANNERS

Blue Star Service Banners: Sometimes called Blue Star Flags have long been a part of our wartime history. They have been hung in the family's windows of service men and women since World War I. These banners first became a way for households to indicate they have family members in the service in 1917. At that time, World War I Army Capt. Robert L. Queissner designed this symbol in honor of his two sons who were serving on the front line. It quickly became traditional for a gold star to represent a soldier who had died serving his country. Theodore Roosevelt's family had a banner with a gold star in honor of their son who was shot down over France in 1918. This tradition was most common during WWI and WWII though it has been carried out by some in more recent wars. The stars are placed on a white background with a red border. If a family has more than one person in the armed service, the stars are put one below the next on the banner.

Silver Star Banners: The Silver Star Flag and Banner are symbols of remembrance and honor for those wounded or incurring illnesses during combat while honorably serving in the United States Armed Forces. It may be displayed or flown at anytime, not just wartime, and by families as well as the wounded and ill service members. The Silver Star Service Flag may be flown by anyone in remembrance of our wounded, ill and dying during peace or wartime. This banner was added after the Iraq conflict.

Gold Star Banner: It quickly became traditional for a gold star to represent a soldier who had died serving his country. Theodore Roosevelt's family had a banner with a gold star in honor of their son who was shot down over France in 1918. When a soldier dies in action, the blue star is replaced with a gold star. Another method is to put a smaller gold star on top of the blue star so the blue still surrounds the gold.

These banners are usually hung inside a window; however there are full service star banner flags now available. If you decide to hang a full flag with a service star, it should be hung on the right side of your home. Therefore, as you look at your home, you would then see your service star flag on the right side and your American Flag hung on the left side of your home.

BEING SOCIAL

The social aspect of the military is a vital part of our lifestyle. Because many of us are far from home and family, our military friends oftentimes fill that void. Social gatherings in the military are also used to celebrate successes, bond as a team, boost morale, celebrate fallen heroes, and foster esprit de corps, as well as to get to know others in the unit that share your situation or circumstance. Below are some of the social functions you may be invited to attend.

A note from the past... "Formal Calls" (AR 605-125) "Failure to pay the civilities customary in official and polite society is to the prejudice of the best interests of the service." The idea of the formal call to the active duty member's senior officer and "his wife" was to speed your adjustment to a new duty station. This 20-minute visit would help you get "oriented." Don't forget to wear your white gloves and bring your calling card (preferably embossed). You'll need only one because you are calling only on the spouse but the active duty member will need one for each adult in the home-- but no more than three. If your active duty member is leaving just one card for the entire family remember to turn down the top right hand corner of the calling card. See, now the social functions listed below don't seem so tough!!

Social Functions:

- **Brunch:** This function is usually held around 11:00 a.m. and is a combination of breakfast and lunch. A simple dress, skirt and blouse, or nice pants outfit is appropriate.
- **Buffets:** A buffet supper is a dinner party served buffet style. It is a convenient way to serve guests, especially a number of guests in a limited space.
 - At a buffet supper, the plates, silverware, napkins, and platters of food are arranged on the dining room table or buffet table, and guests serve themselves.
 - Guests then find a comfortable place to sit down. This kind of entertaining can range from fancy to barbecue style.
 - Remember to wait for instructions from your host/hostess before going through the buffet line.
 - The senior person present or the guest of honor is usually asked by the hostess (host) to start the line.

Many times, you will be invited to someone's home for "heavy hors d'oeuvres" which is very similar to the buffet dinner. At these functions, a variety of hors d'oeuvres will be served from dips, to meats on small rolls, to desserts. Again, dress should be indicated on your invitation and could range from casual to informal. Check your invitation for the required dress.

Cocktail Parties :

Cocktails are usually served from 5:00 p.m. or 6:00 p.m. until 7:00 p.m. or 8:00 p.m., usually lasting about two hours. Hors d'oeuvres or appetizers are served. The dress code is normally dressy dress for women and coat and tie for men unless special dress is requested on invitation (Texas casual, Aloha, Beach).

Coffees:

Coffees are usually at the Battalion level and are typically held monthly to provide an opportunity to greet new arrivals, to farewell those who are leaving, to become acquainted with other spouses in the unit, and for general unit, installation and community information.

It is important to note that, although some general information may be disseminated at a coffee, the primary function is a social one. The information source for families in a unit is the Family Readiness Group).

Traditionally, coffees have been limited to officers' spouses' but some units now have "all ranks" coffees. The purpose is still the same but because of size or preference of the group; spouses of all soldiers in the unit are included. There can be other configurations, sometimes the coffee group is comprised of officer and NCO spouses and the CSM's spouse is encouraged to organize the junior enlisted spouses.

The **Battalion** Commander's spouse/representative will probably pass around a sign-up sheet for volunteers to host monthly coffees. Many times spouses in the group will sign up together for a particular month (See "Entertaining" section later in this chapter for guidelines on hosting a coffee). Refreshments, plain or fancy depending on the host/hostess, are typically served. Try to attend as this is a terrific opportunity to meet unit spouses in a casual atmosphere.

Dependent upon the unit, company level coffees, may also be the norm. Typically, **all** spouses in the **unit** are invited regardless of the soldier's rank. It is helpful when the, Company Commander's and 1SG's spouses/ reps work together as a team for the company coffee. Again, this is primarily a social outlet and not to replace the Family Readiness Group. Dress is also casual unless otherwise noted.

*****FYI-The "coffee" is steeped in tradition and dates back to the establishment of the first military posts when wives of the frontier army, who endured many***

hardships, would get together for camaraderie and social discourse. The coffee has evolved in purpose and function as well as participants. After World War II coffees consisted of primarily officers' wives, in part, because there were few enlisted soldiers married, but also to allow for a social outlet with wives in similar circumstances.

Dining In:

As the most formal of events, a Dining In allows officers and NCOs of a unit to celebrate unit successes and to enjoy its traditions and heritage. **It is strictly an Officer/NCO function. Spouses are not invited.**

*****FYI-The Dining In is derived from the old Viking tradition celebrating battles and feats of heroism, by a formal ceremony. This spread to England and became a time-honored tradition. During World War II with the proximity of U.S. and British troops, American officers were exposed to the Dining In and took it on as their own "function of unity".***

Dining Out :

When spouses are invited to a Dining In, it becomes a Dining Out. This gives the spouses an opportunity to see all the "pomp and circumstance" that goes with the tradition. *The spouses dress in formal gowns or tuxedos.*

*****FYI- There are many unique traditions in the Dining In/Out. Mister/Madam Vice (a member of the unit) is responsible for the evening. Throughout the evening, various members of the unit may request permission from the Vice, to address the Mess (often to report some humorous "infraction of the rules" by another member of the unit, for which a small fine is levied). Try to avoid the restroom during dinner. Members of the unit are not allowed to leave without the Vice's permission. Your departure might be noticed and, in fun, noted as an infraction of the rules. This is all in the spirit of fun.***

Formal Balls

Balls are usually held to celebrate special military occasions or a holiday.
Proper dress is a formal gown or tuxedo.

Luncheons:

They may be for officers' spouses only, officers', and civilians' spouses or an all ranks spouses' club. Most Spouses' Clubs have a luncheon or similar activity each month. There may be a social hour before and a program during and after the luncheon. Reservations are usually necessary. Membership in the organization is required; however, many clubs allow you to attend your first luncheon before you have to join. A nice dress or pants suit is appropriate.

Open House:

This literally means the home is open to guests between set hours. Guests are free to arrive and depart between those hours.

Check the invitation for dress.

Progressive Dinner:

This function comprises sharing the responsibility of hosting a dinner. Everyone starts at one house. One couple hosts the hors d'oeuvre portion at their home; everyone then walks as a group to the next house for soup and salad, then the next home for the main course and so on. (This can also be done as a Potluck Progressive dinner- people bring their donation to the appropriate house before arriving at the first house.)

Check the invitation for dress.

Promotion Party:

A time-honored tradition is the promotion party that is given by an officer or NCO or a group of people with similar dates of rank, shortly after being promoted. It does not have to be a fancy affair, but it provides a chance to invite friends and their spouses to share the good fortune.

*****FYI-You may also hear it termed a “Wetting down” This is a Navy/Coast Guard term based on the tradition of pouring salt water over new stripes on the uniform to make them match the old tarnished ones.***

Receptions:

A reception is usually held in honor of a special guest or guests, or after a change of command. There may or may not be a receiving line. Guests should mingle and visit with other guests. **Before departing, be sure to thank the hostess and host and bid good-bye to the guest of honor.**

New Year's Day Reception:

The long standing Army tradition of a commander-hosted New Years Reception for unit officers and their spouses, once a mandatory event in formal attire, has changed over the years.

Depending on the Commander and his/her spouse (Command Team) there may or may not be a New Years reception. Many commanders choose to have their reception on a day other than New Year's Day to allow people to travel, watch football, or spend time with family members. The location can vary from the commander's home to the Club or Community Center. Particularly, if held in their home, there may be a staggered arrival and departure time. **Don't be late and don't stay past your allotted departure time.**

Dress may be more formal with officers (and possibly senior noncommissioned officers) attending in dress blues and spouses in Sunday best or more casual with an “open house” format and corresponding dress.

Check the invitation for appropriate attire.

*****FYI-Like the Unit Hail and Farewell, receptions now serve as the equivalent of all holiday calls given and received. It was the custom for officers or NCOs new to a post to pay a social call to their superior on holidays. Depending on the formality of the Reception, there may be a receiving line. This is the official “Calls made and received” portion of the event.***

Change of Command Receptions:

This function is held directly after the Change of Command.

The incoming Command Team hosts a reception as an opportunity to meet and greet members of the unit and their spouses. You are welcome to attend a change of command ceremony without a specific invitation. However, be aware that attending the reception may require an invitation. If you are unsure, check with your battalion commander's spouse or representative.

This is an official function with a reception following. If all in attendance are invited to the reception, there is usually an announcement made at the end of the Change of Command ceremony. There is usually a receiving line and light food in accordance with the time of day. (In the morning, there may be juice, coffee and breakfast type items such as sausage and biscuits, croissants, etc.).

Seated Dinners:

These dinners may range from the very casual family-style to the very formal with place cards and many courses. Coffee may be served with dessert at the table or later in another room (living room). Check your invitation for dress.

*****For any "dinner" invitation, it is important to arrive at the specified time on the invitation... NEVER EARLY!***

Spouse Welcomes and Farewells:

Spouses of senior military personnel in the higher unit command are traditionally welcomed and farewelled separately from the Unit Hail and Farewell. This may be done as a “Welcome Coffee” or a more formal “Welcome Tea.” You will find that this will probably be dependent on “how it’s been done in the past” within that unit.

The reason a Tea or Coffee is recommended as a Welcome is to allow the Guest of Honor to circulate.

A farewell function need not always be a Tea of Coffee. It could be a Brunch, Luncheon, or Dinner based on the preference of the Guest of Honor. Coffee, tea, punch and nibbles are served. There will probably still be a receiving line and guest book to sign and dress would still be informal or semi-formal (not really a category but it indicates business suit or dressy dress).

Teas:

A tea is usually held in the afternoon and is the most formal of daytime functions. It is traditionally given in honor of a person such as a departing or incoming commander's or senior NCO's spouse.

Coffee, tea, punch, cookies, and/or finger sandwiches are served. Formal teas require the use of china, silver and linen. Expect to go through a receiving line and to sign a guest book when you first arrive. If you are asked to "pour" at a Tea, this is considered an honor. You would most likely be asked in advance and be given guidance on the "pouring protocol".

Wear a nice (Sunday) dress or a dressy suit.

*****FYI-Beverages at a Tea are "ranked"- coffee, tea and punch in order of importance. You may hear that the reason for this ranking order harkens back to the tea taxes levied by the British prior to the Revolutionary War- a great tale but not true. When this tradition was established, coffee was the most popular drink; more guests would approach the person pouring coffee than those serving tea and punch thus the honored or most senior guest would have the opportunity to visit with more guests while pouring the coffee.***

Unit Hail & Farewells (unit parties):

Like the "Dining-In," this is a function of unity.

These get-togethers build unit spirit and camaraderie, and are successful only if everyone supports them and participates in them. Unit members and guests share the cost and planning of these get-togethers. They range from dinners at local restaurants, to picnics and barbecues, to treasure hunts.

This is a time to welcome incoming members and farewell members who are leaving the unit. Try not sitting down as soon as you arrive; if possible, moving around the room and mingling with all that are in attendance is the best approach to meet people. It is a wonderful opportunity to get to know others in the unit.

*****FYI-The Hail and Farewell is a modern equivalent of "All Calls Made and Received." Before World War II, when the Army was smaller, the custom was for a new officer or NCO and his wife to pay a social call to the home of the superior officer. The Superior and his spouse then later would return the call.***

*****Unless specifically noted, children are not included in the above functions. If children are included, it will be specified on the invitation. Otherwise, do not bring them.***

ENTERTAINING:

We have looked at social functions you may be invited to attend. You may, in turn, wish to host one as well. Entertaining can help foster friendships and feelings of family and is done for a variety of reasons including celebrating a success, boosting morale during low points, saying hello and goodbye, building friendships and camaraderie, and most of all, for sharing and having fun. The most important thing to keep in mind about entertaining is to *be yourself*. Entertain in a way that reflects your own personality, lifestyle, and budget. Entertaining does not have to be about crystal and china!

Those you entertain may be a mix of your spouse's military colleagues and their spouses, along with friends, civilian guests and your own colleagues.

As the company commander's spouse, you may want to include the following people when entertaining:

- The First Sergeant and spouse
- Company officers, NCOs and spouses
- Battalion Commander and spouse
- Other company commanders in the battalion
- Anyone who entertains you (to reciprocate)
- Spouses in the company
- Friends and neighbors

Some helpful hints and practical ideas to keep in mind when entertaining are:

- Keep it simple.
- Use what you have on hand and are comfortable with china, stoneware, paper.
- Keep your budget in mind; potlucks are fine.
- Keep appetizers simple. It is not necessary to have a lot of them.
- Serve dinner approximately an hour after the guests arrive.
- Use lap trays if you do not have enough room at the table.
- When using trays, serve everything on one plate; have utensils and napkins already on the trays.
- Borrow things you need (dishes, trays) from friends and neighbors or rent them from the Spouses' Club.
- Try not to spend all your time in the kitchen; plan menus that allow you the freedom to be with your guests (salad, casserole, bread, and dessert).
- Stay relaxed and your guests will, too.

- Save the dishes for later (or have the guys do them!)
- Keep it simple! Keep it simple! Keep it simple!

Listed below are some ideas for entertaining (spouses only and couples functions):

- Seated dinners, buffets, picnics, cook outs, Luau, Pig Pickin.
- Heavy appetizers or desserts only.
- Ice Cream Social: Icebreaker could be to make a banana split: peel a banana with your feet, carry whipped cream on your foot, carry peanuts between knees, pluck a cherry from ice water and place on top of creation. Everyone brings their favorite topping. OR! Purchase a 10-foot gutter from a hardware store - build the world's largest sundae! Give spoons and bowls for guests to scoop their servings.
- Brunch, luncheons.
- Potlucks Anything.
- *Theme Potluck*: Oriental, Mexican, Western, Italian. (Invitation could be written on folded origami, or shaped like a taco with each condiment (lettuce, tomato, etc.) having a different piece of information (time, date, etc.).
- *Men's Potluck*: Men do the cooking, women do the judging!
- "Guests Cook the Meal" Party (Preparation beforehand is necessary!).
- Game nights (Cards, Bunco, Bingo, Board games, Charades). Everyone brings his or her favorite game. Have card tables set up in different rooms. Invitations can include a pair of die (dice!), or be a card from a game (check the Thrift Shop for old games) with the information written on it. (Games could include Cards, Bunco, Bingo, Board games, charades).
- Theme parties for holidays (Easter Egg Hunt, St. Patrick's Day, Halloween, and Christmas Caroling)
- *Turkey Eve* (Wed before Thanksgiving): Have a turkey shoot (darts with suction) - have a sheet of Plexiglas in front of a paper turkey. Have consequences (for the other team) associated with turkey parts, such as gobbling like a turkey if you hit it in the neck, flapping and squawking for the wing, etc. Also, decorate one team member as a turkey - have rolls of brown paper, scissors, crayons, glue, and a stapler.
- *Luck of the Irish*: Send invite tucked into a foil-wrapped potato. Serve lots of 'green'.
- *Halloween Party*: Have a pumpkin-carving contest; dress to resemble a famous person.
- *New Year's Party*: Write invitation on a blower. Invitee must blow the blower to see the invitation!
- Other theme parties: Beach Party, Decade (50's, 60;s, 70;s, 80;s, 90;s) Party, Wedding party, Blue Jean Brunch, Casino Night, Mafia Night TV Show charavter party. *Crazy Hat Party*: (Can be combined with favorite T-shirt or Sweatshirt Party). Have extra party hats labeled with "Party Pooper" for those who don't participate. (Consider having fake poop in a baggie attached to the hat!)

- *Beach Party*: Attach invites to leis (plastic from a party store).
- *Shipwreck Party*: Wear what you would have on if you were marooned somewhere. Food could include hot dogs roasted on a stick, toasted marshmallows, pineapple chunks, etc.
- *Mash Party*: Dress as your favorite character. Set up a tent outside the front door that everyone has to walk through with cots, a still, etc. Invitation could look like a dog tag OR an official order (See sample). Play a game; prize is dinner for two and a movie (2 MREs and a training video!)
- Craft nights or a "Bring an Unfinished Craft to Work On" Party
- BYOT Party ("Bring Your Own Topping" to share--for baked potatoes, pizza, ice cream sundaes)
- "Come as You Were When Invited" Party/"Come as You Were for Your Prom Night" Party
- Scavenger Hunt, Murder Mystery Party, Treasure Hunt with Clues
- Toga Party!
- White Elephant Sale, Brown Bag Auction, Surprise Brown Bag Lunches in the unit area
- Chili Cook Off
- Spouses' Dining In
- Country & Western Dances
- Video and popcorn night
- Wine tasting
- Sports (co-ed)
- *Super Bowl Party*: Build your own sub! (*Everyone can bring a lunch meat, if desired). Purchase a cake pan in the shape of a football helmet. Soak un-flavored gelatin (Knox gelatin) packet in 1/4 cup cold water for 10 minutes. Add to coleslaw or potato salad and place in helmet mold. It will "gel" into shape in about 2 hours. Mix 1 pkg. Italian dressing (dry mix) with one block of cream cheese and 2 TBS. milk. Use food coloring to match the super bowl team's colors. Spread on sandwich bread; cut into triangles to resemble pennants. Use thinned cream cheese in a pastry tube to write the teams' names on the 'pennants'. Invitations can be made out of construction paper to resemble footballs, or pennants, etc. Invitation can have streamers of color-coordinated crepe paper attached.
- *Mini Olympics*: Have a torch, everyone gets 'medals' (candy coins on ribbon) have crazy events, i.e. balloon toss, egg toss, etc.
- Talent Shows
- Sadie Hawkins
- Washers/Hill Billy Golf
- Wear Your Favorite Song: Guests dress as their favorite song! Have a contest to guess the guest'!

Other good sources for entertaining ideas can be found on line, at your local library or book store. The possibilities are endless! It is up to you--let your imagination run wild

or be very traditional. People invited to your home will appreciate the effort you make, and who knows, you may get an invitation in return!

PARTY PLANNING CHECKLIST

- Prepare the guest list.
- Purpose of the function (families in the unit, neighbors, etc...).
- Consider how your guests will get along and enjoy one another's company.
- Set a budget-- a successful party has little to do with what you serve. It's the simple act of getting together and having fun.
- Select a time, date and location *(see note at bottom of party planning regarding off sight entertaining).

Invitations:

- Include who, what, when, where, why.
- Decide how they will be distributed (mail, email) or phone call.
- If you use written invitations include an RSVP or "Regrets Only" to track the number attending (this will help with food preparation). Keep the list somewhere handy, like by the phone
- Are children included?
- Attire.
- Send invitations 2-3 weeks in advance.

Menu/Format:

- Dinner (potluck, BBQ...) vs. Cocktails vs. Desserts.
- Type of food and ease of preparation (try and plan something that permits as much pre-party preparation as possible).
- Types of drinks, full bar, wine, beer and sodas, BYOB, no alcohol .
- Plates, cups, cutlery, linens.
- Prepare more food than you need. It's better to have too much than too little.

Plan and prepare physical layout:

- Method of service (buffet style for instance), traffic pattern, size of dining table.
- If outdoors, inclement weather plan.
- Seating space, do we need extra chairs.

Other things to think about:

- Nametags?
- Will there be entertainment? A program? Music?
- Theme.

- Decorations.
- Make extra room for coats.
- See that the bathroom has fresh soap, towels and toilet paper!

Last minute details:

- Be dressed one hour early.
- Take food from the refrigerator that needs time to come to room temperature.
- Turn on porch light (if evening) and appropriate house lighting.
- Turn on music.
- Place your guest book out, if you plan to use it.
- Remember your party manners...
 - Both you and your spouse should try to greet at the door.
 - Introduce newcomers to those already there, or to a small group.
 - Talk to each of your guests sometime during the evening.

*****See guests to the door when they indicate they must leave. Don't close the door right away, but remain at the open door until they have walked or driven away.***

Entertaining outside the home:

Entertaining somewhere other than your home, a restaurant for instance, is a great way to treat your guests to an enjoyable meal and a few hours relaxation without having to do the work yourself. It will probably cost more but is a less stressful alternative.

Plan in advance:

- Call for reservations.
- Find out the layout so you can specifically request a certain area, room or table
- You can plan a set menu in advance, if you choose. This allows more control over the final bill!
- Create personal touches with small favors, centerpieces or place cards.
- If somewhere other than home, call to coordinate time, date and cost and reserve.

HOSTING A COFFEE

This is a time held tradition usually held for officer's spouses; however, today many units are also including senior non-commissioned spouses as well to form a more cohesive team. These can be held at Battalion or Company level. This is a function of unity.

If you are a coffee host/hostess, keep these points in mind when planning:

- Make sure you have up-to-date contact information for all spouses included in the coffee. It has become increasingly common to email invitations but check with the Battalion commander's spouse/rep to see how they are usually sent (mail, unit distribution etc).
- Check with the battalion commander's spouse/rep before sending out invitations. Make sure your date and time coordinates with her calendar.
- Consult with him/her on the agenda. Find out the order of the evening; when to conduct any business, have the program, and have refreshments.
- You may want to ask if there are any other people you should invite. It may be the norm to include the CSM's spouse, female officers, brigade commander's spouse, or non-commissioned officers' (NCO) spouses.
- Find out if it is your responsibility to provide a door prize. This tradition will vary for each group.
- Invitations, flyers or email should be sent out about two weeks in advance.
- Remember to include either an "RSVP" or "regrets only" date. It is perfectly all right to contact those who have not responded by your set date. You could say, "I just wanted to make sure you received your invitation." They may not have received the invitation or it simply slipped their mind.
- Coffees can be as simple or as fancy as you choose to make them. Most of the time desserts or nibbles and cold beverages are fine. Although called "coffees" many don't drink it in the evening. It is fine to have a pot on hand (decaffeinated is probably preferable during the evening hours).
- You can host a coffee in your home or off site at a local restaurant, spa, bookstore etc...

Suggestions for coffees:

- Tacky party-dress, serve tacky food, give a prize for the tackiest.
- Baby picture guessing contest.
- Wedding picture/album show (June)
- Recipe tasting
- Speaker on selected topics
- Couples Coffees
- Bowling, skating
- Local health spa (complimentary visit)
- Pajama Coffee
- Learn-a-craft time, share-a-craft
- Gift exchange (or ornament, cookies, or recipes) Be sure to have an extra so no one is empty handed.

Specific examples of some time and true tested coffees-

Back to School Coffee: Usually held in September. Invitations are made out of construction paper made to resemble chalkboards. Write on the black paper with a white correcting pen. The meal served is sub sandwiches, a boxed drink, an apple, a

bag of chips, and a Twinkie or homemade cookies. The 'lunch' is presented in brown lunch bags. Contact your local school or mess hall to borrow plastic trays to on which to eat. Word searches, crossword puzzles, etc. are good ice breakers. Divide guests into teams; each team must sing a school song, recite a 'piece' (such as the Gettysburg Address or a poem), and create a school banner (provide paper, scissors, and glue). Prizes are awarded to the best team (gold stars).

Chocolate Night: Speaks for itself! Send invitation on candy bar wrapper

Auctions:

- *Chinese Auction:* Everyone brings a white elephant (or pick your theme) placed in a brown grocery bag. BRING NICKELS! Have a small lunch bag for each white elephant. The lunch bag is placed on the floor; people toss nickels at the bag until the timer goes off. Last person to get a nickel in the bag wins the white elephant item!
- *White Elephant Auction:* Similar to above. One person is designated 'auctioneer'. They are the only one to touch the bag containing the item. The auctioneer starts the bidding, encouraging people to raise their bids. Highest bidder wins. (*This can help replenish a coffee fund!)

When entertaining, remember to have fun and once again, be yourself! Each family has a style that is comfortable for them. Don't be concerned that the "BBQ in the backyard" will fall short. Your guests will be happy for the chance to get to know you better and have a good time. Successful entertaining begins with the willingness to extend hospitality and to open your home to others. The expression "practice makes perfect" is truly relevant; the more you do it, the easier it becomes.

A NOTE ON RECIPROCITY

Responsibility versus Obligation: Obligation is a duty- something you must do. Responsibility is something you should do.

Having said that, if you accept an invitation, there is the responsibility to reciprocate the hospitality. Repayment does not have to be in-kind. Again, entertain within your means and comfort zone.

Reciprocation is of kindness as well as courtesy. Command performance occasions do not need "repayment", such as New Years Day Receptions, Hails and Farewells, and formal or group unit functions.

Lastly, reciprocating an invitation to a superior officer should never be considered apple polishing or brown nosing. Rather, it should be perceived as gracious.

*"Small cheer and great welcome makes a merry feast."
William Shakespeare*

V. Volunteer Leadership and Influence

Don't ever question the value of volunteers.
Noah's Ark was built by volunteers; the Titanic
was built by professionals.

Unknown

As a Company Commander Spouse, you should take the lead in encouraging volunteer involvement in the FRG and other community organizations—whether or not you are the FRG leader or a leader in other community organizations. Army units, community activities, schools and military family organizations thrive because of the volunteer support of Soldiers, Family Members and Civilians.

Volunteer positions can and should be shown on resumes and volunteer positions can be a step toward paid positions. Volunteers can receive letters of recommendation from volunteer jobs. The Army Volunteer Corps Coordinator (AVCC, sometimes AVC) at the local installation or State/Reserve Family Programs Office can help match volunteers with volunteer opportunities including: PX and Commissary councils, religious activities, PTA, schools, sports boosters, coaching sports, medical and dental, library, thrift stores, spouses clubs, ACS, Red Cross, as well as FRGs. The Company Commander Spouse is in a great position to encourage and influence spouses to fill volunteer positions in the unit and community.

MOTIVATION:

People are motivated to volunteer for various expressed and unexpressed reasons. Organizations with a successful volunteer program recognize, emphasize, and utilize these motivations to recruit the best volunteer for a position. Because a successful volunteer program can greatly enhance the overall effectiveness of an organization, unit, and community, Company Commander and Spouse understanding of volunteer motivation and emphasis on the positive effects of volunteering is critical.

Motivations: (in no particular order):

- Belief in the organization's goals and mission
- Resume building
- Want to belong to an organization
- Adult contact
- Get out of the house
- To have something to do with their time
- Interesting work
- Enjoy helping others
- Want to do their part
- Like recognition
- Set a positive example for children
- Meet people
- Have fun
- Explore new jobs
- See needs and desire to fill them
- Maintain gaps in paid work history

RECRUITMENT:

Recruitment is getting the right person with the right skills in the right volunteer position and personal contact is the ideal method to get people to contribute. Many times people do not volunteer simply because they are not asked. Asking a person to fill a specific position is the most effective method of volunteer recruitment. People like to be asked personally and are most successful when matched with the appropriate job. This can be determined through a formal or informal job interview where the unit or organization leader goes over the job description, reviews the applicant's skill set, and discusses the expectations and time commitment for the job with the applicant.

Recruiting the right person for the right job is important:

- 1) To help achieve the organization's goals, functions, and mission;
- 2) to get new ideas, advice and input to better the organization;
- 3) to provide opportunities to participate in and contribute to the organization; and
- 4) to fill the positions necessary to manage a successful organization.

Effective principles of recruitment:

- Recruit for a specific position/job description.
- Avoid asking for anybody to do anything.
- Recruit without rank in mind.
- Be honest about responsibilities and time involved.
- Recruit as positions become available.
- Consider a volunteer's skill set and ask them.
- Emphasize professional growth and resume building.
- Offer training opportunities.

RECOGNITION:

Volunteer recognition is an important responsibility for the Company Commander and Spouse. The Command emphasis on the contributions of volunteers can help ensure that unit and community volunteer positions remain filled. This in turn prevents burnout because one or two volunteers do not do all the work to accomplish the mission of the organization.

Volunteers should be thanked sincerely and often—they do work for no pay! Ongoing recognition and special awards are two important ways the command team can appreciate volunteers privately and publically. Even volunteers who profess to volunteer only because they believe in the goals of the organization or unit deserve to be recognized for their efforts. ALL volunteers deserve to be recognized privately and publically for their volunteer work in the unit, organization and community. Special awards may require two or three months of advance planning, especially during

deployment. The Command team should thank volunteers often and plan ahead for special recognition when appropriate.

Methods of recognition:

- Public praise
- In person privately
- Newsletter articles
- Welcome notes
- Thank you notes
- Special luncheons, parties, or meetings
- Announcements/photos on bulletin boards
- Email to organization membership
- Media coverage by local and post newspapers
- Certificates of appreciation and other awards

Levels of awards:

- Local organization or unit
- Installation*
- Volunteer of the Month*
- Volunteer of the Quarter*
- Military affiliated
- Military branch
- MACOM (Major Army Command)
- Department of the Army
- Presidential

*****Coordinated for Army organizations through the Army Volunteer Coordinator (AVC) at Army Community Service (ACS) or through your State/Reserve Family Programs Office.***

Important times to plan public recognition:

- Completion of a special project or event
- During National Volunteer Week in April
- Before a volunteer transfers or resigns
- Before, during and after a deployment for a unit

VOLUNTEER RECORDKEEPING:

When the Company Commander accepts the services of a volunteer in an Army program, such as an FRG, that volunteer becomes a **statutory employee** of the U.S. Government. These volunteers are afforded certain legal rights and limitations. Please see AR 608-1, Chapter 5 Volunteers and Appendix J to completely understand this

relationship. Volunteers, including Soldiers who volunteer, in Army FRG, medical and dental, CYS coaching, Army Community Service and other Army programs are included in this regulation. Because these volunteers are statutory employees, specific recordkeeping is necessary. All these volunteers will have a signed:

- DD Form 2793: Volunteer Agreement Form
- DA Form 4162: Volunteer Service Record
- DA Form 4713: Daily Time Record

In addition, each volunteer will have a specific job description, signed by the Company Commander and the volunteer. Volunteers with access to privacy protected records will maintain confidentiality and any records will be secured in a locked cabinet. Volunteers who work with children and youth will have a background check. All of the forms required for Army program volunteers are found on Army One Source in the Volunteer Management Information System (VMIS). This is often coordinated by a Family Readiness Support Assistant (FRSA) for a unit; a Volunteer Program Manager for Army programs; or an organization's Volunteer Coordinator. Again, working with the installation Army Volunteer Corps Coordinator will ensure all legal requirements are met.

National Guard volunteers use the Army forms as described above with the exception that all volunteer hours are recorded using the Joint Services Support website (www.jointservicesupport.org). Once logged in, volunteers will locate "My Volunteer Activity Tracker" where they can input their hours. In some situations, State Family Readiness Assistants or your Battalion Family Readiness Support Assistant (FRSA) may assist in tracking your hours.

Army Reserve FRGs use the USAR 106-R, Volunteer Service Record to track volunteer contact information, training and recognition. Like the DA 4162-R, the USAR 106-R is used to record the volunteer's annual hours.

Upon the volunteer's transfer or resignation, provide the volunteer with copies of volunteer forms for their personal files.

VOLUNTEER MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEM (VMIS):

The easiest way for Active Component volunteers to register is through the web site www.myarmyonesource.com. The Volunteer Management Information System (VMIS) Army Volunteer Corps (AVC) Volunteer User Guide explains how to register as an Army volunteer and can be accessed by going to the Family Programs and Services tab, then going to Volunteering and then to Volunteer Management Information System. This page offers webinars and user downloads to understand how to use the system. Volunteer hours and information for non-Army programs can be also be recorded on VMIS. The direct link is:

<http://www.myarmyonesource.com/FamilyProgramsandServices/Volunteering/VMIS/VMISHome.aspx>.

If you have questions or issues accessing or using VMIS, check with your installation Army Volunteer Corps Coordinator (AVCC).

You are encouraged to become very familiar with this process and be able to explain it to potential volunteers. Your knowledge and understanding of the process will make it less confusing and daunting to your volunteers and will ensure that all volunteers are registered appropriately and recording their volunteer hours. You are in a unique position to influence and encourage volunteering in your unit and community and doing so can be very rewarding to you.

VOLUNTEER AWARDS AND RECOGNITIONS **(in no particular order)**

Plan ahead when nominating a volunteer for an award. Department of Defense level awards take about 90 days to process. Army level awards take about 60 days to process and Army Command level awards take about 45 days to process. Local installation awards and branch awards take about 30 days to process. This list does not include all awards that may be given. Local communities may have other awards for volunteers. Check with the local Army Volunteer Corps Coordinator at Army Community Service or with your Reserve/State Family Programs Office for more information on volunteer recognition.

The Association of the United States Army (AUSA) Rubbermaid Volunteer Family of the Year Award recognizes an exceptional Army family whose dedicated volunteer service significantly contributes to improving Army well-being and the well-being of the local community.

<http://www.ausa.org/programs/familyprograms/AnnualMeetingActivities/awards/Pages/default.aspx>

Daily Points of Light Award honors individuals and volunteer groups that have made a commitment to connect Americans through service to help meet critical needs in their communities. Each weekday, one volunteer or volunteer effort in the country receives a Daily Point of Light Award. <http://www.pointsoflight.org/recognition/dpol>

Emma Marie Baird Award for Outstanding Volunteer Service is a Department of Army Award for exceptional volunteers in Army Community Service.

<http://www.myarmyonesource.com/FamilyProgramsandServices/Volunteering/Awards/EmmaMarieBairdAward/Background.aspx>

The Jefferson Awards are a prestigious national recognition system honoring community and public service in America. The Jefferson Awards are presented on two levels: national and local. They began in 1972 to create a Nobel Prize for public service. Today, their primary purpose is to serve as a "Call to Action for Volunteers" in local communities. <http://www.jeffersonawards.org>

The Military Outstanding Volunteer Service Medal (MOVSM) was established by Executive Order 12830, 9 January 1993, as amended by Executive Order 13286, 28 February 2003. It may be awarded to members of the Armed Forces of the United States and their Reserve Components, who subsequent to 31 December 1992, perform outstanding volunteer community service of a sustained, direct and consequential nature. http://www.army.mil/usapa/epubs/pdf/r600_8_22.pdf

Artillery Order of Molly Pitcher recognizes individuals who have voluntarily contributed in a significant way to the improvement of the Field Artillery Community. http://fieldartillery.org/usfaa_awards/about_molly.html

Order of Saint Joan D'Arc was established by The United States Armor Association to honor ladies who voluntarily contributed significantly to the morale, spirit, and welfare of Armor or Cavalry units and communities. Such voluntary contributions should exemplify the spirit of the Order's namesake in such service to others. <http://www.usarmor-assn.org/joanofarc.aspx>

The Order of Anne Morrow Lindbergh Award recognizes individuals who have voluntarily contributed significantly to the improvement of the active duty aviation community over a long period of time. These individuals must demonstrate the highest standards of integrity and moral character, display an outstanding degree of personal ethics, and selflessly serve the aviation community with distinction. <http://www.rucker.army.mil/pdf/AP/Awards/Anne%20Morrow%20Lindbergh%20Award%20Background.pdf>

Shield of Sparta - Heroine of the Infantry is awarded to a spouse who has contributed significantly to the Infantry. The National Infantry Association's goal is to recognize spouses of Infantrymen and other esteemed ladies, in support roles, whose contributions deserve special recognition by the National Infantry Association and the Infantry community. The award is a token of appreciation for the sacrifice and commitment demanded of the wives and supporters of Infantrymen. It further symbolizes these women as true patriots with selfless ideals and the courage to send their Infantrymen into harm's way. <http://www.infantryassn.com/pages/awards.html>

The National Military Family Association's Military Family of the Year Award recognizes strong military families who embrace their service to the Nation, are role models in their community, and understand that together they are stronger. <http://www.militaryfamily.org/our-programs/awards/military-family-award-program/>

Newman's Own, Fisher House Foundation, and Military Times Media Group (Army Times, Navy Times, Air Force Times, Marine Corps Times) join together in presenting \$75,000 in grants to the most creative military quality of life improvement plans. Your organization must be comprised primarily of volunteers, and/or be a not-for-profit organization as defined in Section 501(c)3 of the Internal Revenue Service Code. <http://www.fisherhouse.org/programs/newmans>

The President's Volunteer Service Award is for any individual, family, or group who can receive Presidential recognition for volunteer hours earned over a 12-month period or over the course of a lifetime at home or abroad.

<http://www.presidentialserviceawards.gov/>

Public Service Awards (AR 672-20 Chapter 9) are authorized by the Department of the Army and include: Decoration for Distinguished Civilian Service, Secretary of the Army Public Service Award, Outstanding Civilian Service Award, Commander's Award for Public Service, Certificate of Appreciation for Patriotic Civilian Service, Civilian Award for Humanitarian Service, and Certificate of Appreciation.

http://www.army.mil/USAPA/epubs/pdf/r672_20.pdf

The Department of Defense (DoD) awards program has five different awards to recognize career DoD employees, employees from other government agencies, and non-career employees to include political appointees/private citizens/foreign nationals for contributions to DoD at large. The information contained in DoD 1400.25-M, Subchapter 451, "Awards," and Administrative Instruction #29, "Incentive and Honorary Awards Programs," are the official source of responsibilities, procedures and requirements pertaining to awards.

<http://www.whs.mil/HRD/Civilian/LMER/documents/DoDHonoraryAwardsGuidance.doc>

Zachary and Elizabeth Fisher Distinguished Civilian Humanitarian Award is named in honor of Zachary and Elizabeth Fisher, both of whom have contributed extensively to the support and welfare of the members of the Armed Services of the United States. The award is a multi-Department award designated to recognize and reward an individual(s) or organization(s) demonstrating exceptional patriotism and humanitarian concern for members of the United States Armed Forces or their families. The recipient will exemplify Zachary and Elizabeth Fisher's personal qualities of patriotism, generosity, and selfless dedication to improving the quality of life of members of the Armed Forces of the United States. http://www.army.mil/USAPA/epubs/pdf/r672_16.pdf

The Margaret C. Corbin Award is a prestigious award to recognize volunteer service that makes a substantial contribution and has a positive impact on the quality of life for Soldiers and their families. Spouses (male and female) of Soldiers of all ranks assigned to TRADOC elements; active Army, U.S. Army National Guard, and U.S. Army Reserve are eligible. The intent of this award is to recognize those eligible spouses whose service to our country is in the form of volunteering and is often "behind the scenes." Their way of life is marked by efforts to improve their communities and enhance the overall military lifestyle. <http://www.tradoc.army.mil/TPUBS/regs/r672-8.pdf>

The Dr. Mary E. Walker Award for Volunteer Service recognizes Army spouses who contribute significantly to the well-being of soldiers and show concern for their families. The award often recognizes amazing spouses who volunteer behind the scenes. Anyone may nominate an eligible individual to a unit's senior noncommissioned officer (NCO). The nomination packet includes the individual's identification, documentation of volunteer acts/service, and justification for the nomination. The senior NCO screens

and evaluates each packet before submitting it to an NCO selection board. An individual may receive this very prestigious award only once.

139 WAYS TO SAY "THANK-YOU" AND RECOGNIZE VOLUNTEERS

- 1) Send cards for personal achievements (birthday, anniversary, new arrival, promotion, graduation, etc.)
- 2) Have an "at-home tea party." (Send volunteers a tea bag in a card and ask them to enjoy a cup of tea in the quiet of their own home.)
- 3) Write a news article which is published in the local newspaper, highlighting their contribution or impact upon the program or clientele.
- 4) Write a news article which is published in the organization's newsletter.
- 5) Send a thank-you note.
- 6) Smile.
- 7) Send a holiday greeting card.
- 8) Spontaneously say "thank-you" during a chance or planned meeting or gathering.
- 9) Ask a volunteer for their input about a program or evaluation.
- 10) Utilize a volunteer suggestion box. Carefully consider their suggestions!
- 11) Ask a volunteer to serve in a leadership role.
- 12) Present service stripes, candy sticks or candy canes with the message "You've earned your stripes!"
- 13) Ask a volunteer to conduct an orientation or educational program.
- 14) Have a soft drink party.
- 15) Ask a volunteer to coordinate a program, event, or initiative.
- 16) Shake hands.
- 17) Plan a theme party (toga, costume, western, etc.)
- 18) Give a pat-on-the-back.
- 19) Invite volunteers to staff meetings. Encourage them to contribute and participate.
- 20) Ask a volunteer to develop a window or table-top display to promote a program.
- 21) Send a volunteer to a conference.
- 22) Ask the volunteer to present a report, lesson, workshop, or seminar on some aspect of the conference which they attended.
- 23) Cultivate volunteer's special interests. Whenever possible, encourage pursuit in their volunteer role.
- 24) Utilize volunteer's unique special talents.
- 25) Be flexible.
- 26) Share the success or impact of one volunteer with others at a meeting or gathering.
- 27) Provide extrinsic rewards (certificates, plaques, pins, etc.)
- 28) Provide "perks" (free admission to paid events, free parking, etc.)
- 29) Take an interest in their personal lives.
- 30) Have a "volunteer of the month" award.

- 31) Host a banquet, luncheon, dessert, tea, or reception in the volunteers' honor.
- 32) Invite a volunteer out to lunch.
- 33) Reimburse travel expenses.
- 34) Establish a Volunteer Honor Roll.
- 35) Provide volunteers with clerical or office support.
- 36) Provide educational resources for the volunteers to utilize (videos, pamphlets, books, curriculum, etc.)
- 37) Motivate and challenge them.
- 38) Ask effective volunteers to each recruit another volunteer who is "just like them."
- 39) Debrief with volunteers following a conference, program, or activity which they participated in or assisted with.
- 40) Always use their first name.
- 41) Provide special interest materials to targeted volunteers.
- 42) Nominate a volunteer to teach a workshop at a conference or symposium.
- 43) When the workshop is accepted, assist the volunteer in preparation.
- 44) Label the office coffee pot in honor of an effective volunteer ("Vicki pours herself out for this organization!" or "Joe keeps things perking!")
- 45) Greet each volunteer with enthusiasm and appreciation.
- 46) Ask an effective volunteer to mentor a new recruit.
- 47) Send Hershey's Kisses to your organization's volunteers.
- 48) Provide useful and effective orientation for each volunteer position.
- 49) Send peppermint candies to your organization's volunteers with the message "You're worth a mint!"
- 50) Develop leadership skills and self-confidence.
- 51) Ask a volunteer for their input or opinion.
- 52) Recognize and share innovative suggestions or programs.
- 53) Be patient.
- 54) Recognize volunteers and program participants for community service activities.
- 55) Take time to explain.
- 56) Recognize volunteers for financial and philanthropic contributions.
- 57) Build consensus. Build support.
- 58) Recognize tenure.
- 59) Practice the "Platinum Rule." ("Do unto others as they prefer being done unto.")
- 60) Recognize the number of hours contributed to the agency, organization, or program.
- 61) Ask a volunteer to speak on behalf of the program to an outside agency.
- 62) Ask a volunteer to speak to a funder.
- 63) Hold a rap session.
- 64) Ask a volunteer to speak at a volunteer meeting.
- 65) Run a photograph and news story in the local newspaper.

- 66) Ask a volunteer to write a news article or news release.
- 67) Foster personal growth.
- 68) Ask a volunteer to make a television appearance or radio announcement.
- 69) Provide scholarships to educational conferences or workshops.
- 70) Enable a volunteer to move on to expanded or higher level responsibilities.
- 71) Recognize the achievements or accomplishments of those with whom the volunteer works.
- 72) Ask the volunteer to direct a membership recruitment campaign.
- 73) Share the volunteer's personal success story
- 74) Provide volunteers their own work area.
- 75) Have a youth share a success story about the volunteer.
- 76) Be respectful.
- 77) Schedule monthly birthday bashes.
- 78) Have a program participant share a success story about the volunteer.
- 79) Provide transportation to meetings, events, educational workshops, and volunteer activities.
- 80) Write letters of reference to prospective employers.
- 81) Surprise a volunteer with a birthday cake.
- 82) Utilize a volunteer as a consultant.
- 83) Send flowers.
- 84) Nominate volunteers for awards.
- 85) Attend personal celebrations (birthdays, anniversaries, etc.)
- 86) Take note of volunteers' children's accomplishments. Recognize them.
- 87) Make home visits.
- 88) Make sure that each volunteer is a "good fit" with their volunteer role.
- 89) Let each volunteer know they were missed.
- 90) Make telephone calls.
- 91) Encourage program participants to send a thank-you note.
- 92) Plan an organizational outing (picnic, theater, ball game, family day, pool party, etc.)
- 93) Praise in public; especially in front of family and friends.
- 94) Encourage program participants to send birthday and anniversary cards.
- 95) Send get well cards.
- 96) Have a birthday and anniversary column in your organizational newsletter.
- 97) Send a note of congratulations for personal achievements.
- 98) Send a note of congratulations for professional achievements and promotions.
- 99) Send a thank-you note to the volunteer's spouse to thank him/her for sharing his/her spouse's time and talents with the organization.
- 100) Send a thank-you note to the volunteer's employer, noting the impact and contribution which the volunteer has made. (If the employer does not provide release time to volunteer.)

- 101) Send a thank-you note to the volunteer's employer to thank him/her for sharing the employee's time and talents with the organization. (If the employer provides release time to volunteer.)
- 102) Recognize an employer with the volunteer publicly (if the employer provides release time for the employee, or allows the employee to utilize resources or support staff to serve.)
- 103) Encourage other volunteers to express appreciation.
- 104) Send volunteers an "Encouragemint".
- 105) Ask volunteers to chaperone trips.
- 106) Ask volunteers to judge competitions.
- 107) Provide child care.
- 108) Send hand-written notes.
- 109) Secure complimentary gift certificates from businesses or the Chamber of Commerce.
- 110) Print business cards for volunteers.
- 111) Ask a volunteer to co-present with a salaried professional at a conference, workshop, or staff development.
- 112) Promote effective volunteers to higher areas of volunteerism within your organization.
- 113) Stage a potluck dinner in a volunteer's honor.
- 114) Attend volunteers' meetings and activities.
- 115) Bounce new ideas off of a volunteer.
- 116) Involve volunteers in problem solving efforts.
- 117) Organize a card shower.
- 118) Plant a tree or flower bed in a volunteer's name.
- 119) Contribute to a charity in a volunteer's name.
- 120) Send spices, seasonings, or herbs with the note: "You are the spice of life!"
- 121) Print and distribute bumper stickers.
- 122) Provide caps or shirts to promote unity among the organization.
- 123) Provide a golf cart for a volunteer to utilize during a fair, festival, golf outing, etc.
- 124) Organize a holiday open house for your volunteers.
- 125) Feature a volunteer in a slide show.
- 126) Have reserved seating at any event.
- 127) Provide favors at meetings or events.
- 128) Direct newspaper reporters to worthy volunteers when writing a news story.
- 129) Send balloons.
- 130) Send candy.
- 131) Surprise everyone by bringing donuts or fresh coffee cake.
- 132) Send cookies.
- 133) Encourage volunteers to assume community leadership roles.
- 134) Give a volunteer a light bulb or candle with the message "You light up my life."
- 135) Send valentines

- 136) Be pleasant and appreciative
- 137) Give calendars, notepads, pens, or pencils.
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- 139) Give calendars, notepads, pens, or pencils

VI. Family Readiness Groups

Coming together is a beginning. Keeping together is a process. Working together is success.

Henry Ford

Organizing the Family Readiness Group

There are many challenges facing today's Army and the Family that will affect the unit's Family Readiness Group (FRG). Whether or not you choose to accept the role as Company FRG Leader is your decision. The following are some trends that could affect the volunteer population and the dynamics of your FRG.

- Many military Spouses are employed full time.
- Many military Spouses seek higher education and are well versed in the use of computer technology.
- Affected families may be geographically separated from their unit, especially National Guard and Reserve Families.
- Parents/Significant others are increasingly interested in becoming active members of the group.
- Many Families reside off- post.
- Today's military operations include multiple deployments of varying duration.
- Due to the increase in deployments, there is an increased need for childcare.
- Immediate and live media coverage.
- Sharp increase in instant communications (i.e. Text messaging, cell phones) and the use of social_networking sites.

FRG Authority:

The FRG is a command-mandated program. The Family Readiness Group is an official Army entity/program formed in accordance with AR 600-20, Army Command Policy. According to AR 600-20, "The Commander is responsible for establishing leadership climate of the unit and developing disciplined and cohesive units. This sets the parameters within which command will be exercised and, therefore, sets the tone for social and duty relationships within the command". An effective and functional FRG is a Commander's responsibility.

FRG Regulations:

Official Family Readiness guidelines are found under AR 608-1 Appendix J, Army Community Service Center For the Reserve USARC 608-1 *Army Reserve Family Readiness Handbook*.. Although the dynamics of each FRG may differ, the regulations are the same for all. It is vital that you are familiar with AR 608-1, Appendix J in its entirety. (http://www.army.mil/usapa/epubs/pdf/r608_1.pdf)

FRG Defined:

"An FRG is a **command-sponsored organization** of Soldiers (single and married), civilian employees, Family Members (immediate and extended) and volunteers belonging to a unit. FRGs will provide mutual support and assistance, and a network of

communications among the Family Members, the chain of command, and community resources. FRG's assist unit Commanders in deployment preparedness and enhance readiness of the unit's Soldiers and Families. They will also provide feedback to the command on the state of the unit "Family". Family readiness is defined as the mutual reinforcement and support provided by the unit to Soldiers, civilian employees and Family Members; both immediate and extended (Source: AR 608-1 Appendix J SEP2007)." A major goal of the FRG is to help Soldiers and Families feel that they are an integral part of the Army Family (Operation Ready).

An FRG is...	An FRG is not...
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Functional at all times during both garrison and deployed operations. • A Partnership between the Commander and FRG Leader; Soldiers and Families are stakeholders. • A conduit of factual, timely and reliable information. • A link to community resources • A Command sanctioned organization. • Follow-on support after casualty notification. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Just for deployment. • Based on rank. • A Social club or coffee group just for Spouses. • A fundraising entity for the unit. • Only for people with problems. • A professional counseling agency. • A financial, lending, or charitable institution. • A babysitting service. • Part of the official casualty notification process. • A private organization or a non-profit organization.

The Mission of the FRG: (according to AR 608-1 Appendix J.a.)

- Acts as an extension of the unit in providing **official, accurate** command information.
- Provide mutual support between the command and the FRG membership.
- Advocate efficient use of available community resources.
- Assist Families in resolving issues at the lowest level.
- Help Families promote Solider and Family readiness.
- Encourage an atmosphere of mutual support.

FRG Membership

Defining Membership:

The unit Family, including individuals associated with a military unit: All Soldiers (married and single), Family Members (both immediate and extended), geographically separated Families, volunteers, civilian employees, and/or others designated by the

Soldier. Because FRG Membership is voluntary, participation is not mandatory but should be highly encouraged.

For the National Guard and Reserve Component, unit Soldiers are more often than not geographically dispersed. Depending on the unit's mission and training requirements, Soldiers may live more than two, four or even six hours away from their unit or unit activities. Companies and/or detachments are spread across hundreds of miles and/or multiple states. A Reserve battalion may not even be in the same state as their higher headquarters. In addition, as with the Active Component, Soldiers may deploy with their unit or as Individual Augmentees (IA), cross-level. (The IA's current unit should be considered their home unit and the deploying unit, the host unit.) Parents of Soldiers may not live locally and some Families return "home" during deployments.

Way, all FRGs at some time must adapt to accommodate the support needs of geographically dispersed Families from within their own unit and welcome those Families of other units whenever possible.

Type and Scope:

All FRG's must follow the same regulations; however each have different dynamics and a "personality" of their own. The type and scope of FRG mission activities depend on any number of factors such as:

- The Commander's budget for FRG mission activities.
- The needs of unit Soldiers, civilian employees, and their Families.
- Command interest and emphasis.
- The number of FRG members.
- The time, energy, and talents of FRG membership.
- The make-up FRG, including the percentages of single Soldiers, number of years Soldiers and their Families have served with the military, number of Families with young children, and other Family composition factors (geographically dispersed members).

Roles and Functions:

FRG mission Activities: Certain FRG mission activities are common to all FRG's (AR 608-1 appendix J).

- Establishes and conducts member meetings.
- Attends staff and committee meetings.
- Publishes and distributes FRG newsletters (Sometimes Battalion may produce newsletters with company level input).

- Maintains updated Family Rosters and Family Readiness information.
- Establishes FRG members telephone trees and E-Mail distributions list.
- Provides Families timely and factual information.
- Provides information for community resources when applicable.
- Welcomes and communicates with new unit members soon after their arrival.
- Recruits, trains and recognizes FRG volunteers.

FRG Goals:

- Assist Family Members to focus and understand the unit's mission.
- Provide social and emotional support***be aware this area can build expectations from the group members!
- Provide empathy and allow them to solve their problems. Refer to community resources when applicable.
- Sponsor briefings throughout the pre-deployment, deployment and reunion activities.
- Membership should participate in the development and planning of activities for the FRG.
- Regular FRG Meetings are great resources in meeting FRG Goals.
- Use military facilities and community resources for meetings. Many post facilities/community center will allow FRGs to use office space, telephones, copy machines, transportation, mail privileges, and other resources. ACS facilities at some military installation have FRG areas set up such as a playroom with TV, book and games for kids to hang out during the meeting. Check with your Child Development Services for free childcare during FRG meetings.
- Discuss setting of the budget for the year.

FRG Structure:

Because each FRG is unit specific, and to the mission and demographics of the unit, it is easier sometimes to declare what an FRG is not, than what it is. FRG's vary from one unit to another due to unit mission. However, you can use this as a model when structuring your FRG (See sample forms and handouts).

FRG Members Responsibilities:

Commander:

- Provide a FRG Standard Operation Procedure (SOP).
- Provide policies and guidance in accordance to the unit mission.
- Appoint a FRG Leader.
- FRG volunteers must have duty descriptions and volunteer agreements (DD form 2793).

- Ensure the Family Readiness Plan is updated. Communicate to Families of **All** Soldiers as defined by the Soldier!
- Establish expectation management and ensure standards are articulated to all.
- Assess the effectiveness of FRG's, ensure FRG Leaders are adequately trained, and have adequate resources to function during deployments.
- Utilize Family Readiness Support Assistants and define their role.
- Understand the role of Family Programs and other support agencies.
- Ensure qualified Rear Detachment Commanders are appointed and trained.
- Provide group legitimacy.
- Be aware of and support FRG planned activities.
- Create a climate of caring for the Families.
- Ensure recognition of the appointed FRG Leader and volunteers.
- Authorize the FRG to maintain one informal fund and provides the FRG informal Fund Standard Operating Procedures (SOP).
- Review FRG financial records.
- Approves and signs off on official newsletters.
- Should refrain from involvement in the Management of Private Organizations, which support the FRGs.
- Must establish a Family Readiness Plan (FRP- Sample FRP is available online at myarmyonesource.com www.myarmyonesource.com/Mob-Dep/Army).
- Design and Activate programs that support Families during the deployments.
- Casualty notification procedures/Care Team (see the chapter on Trauma in the Unit)
- Provide support to the FRG.

Rear Detachment:

- Establish communication with and respond to Family needs during a unit's deployment.
- Provide continuity during deployment.
- Be knowledgeable on accessing support systems.
- Maintain good relationships with units' FRG representatives.
- Test Rear Detachment staff and communications with Families during unit pre-deployment training exercise.
- Identify multi-problem Families prior to deployment; refer to community support agencies early.
- Provide link between the FRG and the deployed unit.
- Be a point of contact for official actions.

FRG Leader:

The leader can be any Family member of a Soldier in the unit whom the Company Commander has appointed and endorsed. The FRG provides the Commander an atmosphere of inclusion, and stresses the importance of its partnership with the chain of command. Leadership and the group members require a consensus in order to have a successful FRG.

The Commander's Spouse is not obligated to fill the FRG Leadership position. If the Commander's Spouse chooses not to accept the leadership role then the Spouse should remember he/she falls within the role of a supported member of the FRG. The care team encourages and empowers the person who accepts the leadership position. Be clear to members that you support their leader and their success. It is important to remember that even if the Spouse chooses not to take a leadership role, there will be times, by the nature of the Spouse's command position, that members of the FRG will still seek advice.

The Command appoints the FRG Leader and members of the Steering Committee. The FRG Leader may assign duties and responsibilities from unit volunteers and other positions within the FRG. It is important to remember that the FRG is a mandated Command program and membership is voluntary. The FRG exists under the authority of the unit Commander, and he/she is therefore responsible for the conduct of all official FRG sponsored activities. Guidelines and goals are set at battalion level. Company level FRGs will work in those perimeters to create an effective FRG.

FRG Leadership can be a challenge at times also is very rewarding. The FRG Leader considered the Commander's assistant, accepts the associative authority without legal responsibility. The FRG Leader conveys group decisions back to the Commander, providing the Commander's insight to make informed decisions concerning all actions/activities.

FRG Leader Roles and Responsibilities:

- Complete FRG Training thru ACS (Army Community Service) and AFTB (Army Family Team Building) training programs.
- Understand the FRG Leaders role and mission defined by the Unit Commander- FRG operating procedures, structure, community resources.
- The National Guard attends State/Regional Family Programs Office training programs.
- Organize Company FRG.
- Attend Steering Committee meetings.
- Track and record volunteer hours.

- Ensure the FRGs system/procedure for communication (i.e. telephone tree, email, newsletter, etc) is prepared and maintained for all members.
- Call the key contact persons to activate the telephone tree/email.
- Attend and chair FRG meetings.
- Communicate with Company Commander regular.
- Recruit Volunteers.
- Coordinate with community resources to provided training for FRG volunteers and members. Army Community Services most locations provide the following:
 - FRG Leader's courses are available on line and at your installation/state (www.myarmyonesource.com).
 - Key caller, and Treasurer training (available at most installations thru ACS or through your State/Regional Family Programs Office).
 - Operation Ready
 - AFTB (Army Family Team Building)
 - My Army One Source www.myarmyonesource.com
 - FRG/Rear detachment Training-FRG Leaders and RDCs may take on-line training at www.myarmyonesource.com
 - As FRGs expand into new areas, an excellent resource forum for FRG Leaders can be found through the Army Sponsored program FRG Leader Forum at <http://FRGLeader.army.mil>.
 - Provide job descriptions for key volunteers.
 - FRG Leaders should not be involved in the management of Private Organizations, which support the FRGs.

Team Leadership (Co-leader):

In these times of rapid, unpredictable and lengthy deployments, leading an FRG for an extended period can be overwhelming and an FRG Leader can easily burn out. One option to managing the role is to have a Co-leader. A Co-leader can assist in providing leadership of the FRG, oversee particular FRG activities, and help get individuals involved in FRG activities, or serve as an advisor or assistant, depending upon how the Co-leadership role is defined. This help in sharing the burden can reduce some of the stress.

Splitting leadership requires defining and creating a working partnership between the Co-leaders to avoid conflict. With a Co-leader, it is important to talk to each other regularly. A division of supervisory roles and decision-making authority requires Co-leaders to provide a unified voice for the FRG.

Company Key Volunteers:

The following key volunteer list should be tailored to the unit mission and needs.

- **FRG Fund Manager and Alternate**— (treasurer) serves as custodian of the FRG's informal fund. This is a required position. Reports to FRG Leader and company Commander.
- **Phone Tree Chairperson**—organizes the phone tree and email list, identifies and supervises phone tree key callers. Reports to FRG Leader.
- **Phone Tree Key Callers**—maintains regular contact with assigned Families; passes along official information and provides other information to Families. These volunteers are essential. Reports to Phone Tree Chairperson or FRG Leader.
- **FRG Recorder**—(secretary) maintains accurate minutes of meetings and distributes information and correspondence to the FRG Leader and newsletter editor. Reports to the FRG Leader.
- **FRG Newsletter Editor**—coordinates newsletter preparation, publishing, and distribution. In some cases, the newsletter may be handled at the battalion level. Reports to company Commander and FRG Leader.
- **vFRG Coordinator**—coordinates with FRG Leader and other appropriate individuals to prepare postings on FRG activities, FRG announcements, and education information for Families. These postings are given to the command. Reports to Company Commander and FRG Leader. The command will prepare postings pertaining to information on deployed unit. The unit Commander or RDC reviews all proposed postings and ensures the approved postings are made to the vFRG web site. In some instances, the Family Readiness Support Assistance (FRSA) may be assigned the administrative responsibility of putting the postings on the vFRG web site.
- **Special Events Chairperson**—plans, organizes, and executes FRG activities and special events. Reports to FRG Leader.
- **Hospitality/Welcome Committee Chairperson**—contacts and welcomes all new Soldiers and Families to the company, helping them find needed resources. Reports to FRG Leader.
- **Publicity Chairperson**—informs Soldiers and Family Members of upcoming FRG activities. Reports to FRG Leader.
- **Fundraiser Chairperson**—manages internal FRG fundraising activities for FRG informal fund. Reports to FRG Leader and the Commander.
- **Childcare Chairperson**—ensures acceptable childcare for FRG meetings and special events. Reports to the FRG Leader.
- **Meals on Wheels**-Distributes meals to those who are deemed qualified by the FRG member s (i.e. Death, miscarriage, serious illness) SOP will need to be drafted and identifying who is qualified. Reports to FRG Leader.

Based on the needs of the FRG and the number of volunteers willing to help, other volunteer positions may be created such as food committee chairperson, youth committee chairperson, or FRG Co-leader.

FRG Committees and Other Activities:

While the previous section mostly talked about volunteers who will serve in important leadership positions providing oversight on specific FRG operational activities (or committees), volunteers are also needed to serve on committees and to carry out other FRG activities. For example, volunteers willing to help with special events will be needed.

- **Training Resources for FRG Volunteers:**
 - *Operation READY Smart Book.* The *Operation READY Smart Book* contains training materials that may be used by the FRG Leader to provide specific training to FRG volunteers such as key callers. In addition, there are resource materials and information sheets, which can be given to appropriate FRG volunteers. For example, the *Operation READY Smart Book* contains a Key Caller Handbook. Another example is a Coping with Stress tips sheet that might be given to all FRG volunteers.
 - *Army Community Service (ACS).* ACS provides FRG volunteer orientation training through the Mobilization and Deployment Program. Volunteers serving as key callers or FRG co-leader can also receive training through a garrison ACS. Handbooks will be distributed at their training. Those FRG volunteers who are in leadership positions (i.e., committee chairpersons) can seek guidance on managing volunteers.
 - *Child, Youth, and School (CYS) Services.* Through their Kids on Site program, they can provide training to volunteers so that the FRG can offer childcare at FRG events.
 - *Army National Guard State Family Program Office and Army Reserve Regional Readiness Command Family Programs Office.* Volunteers serving as FRG Leaders, Co-leaders and key callers can get training from these sources to become familiar with issues and resources related to Guard and Reserve Families.
 - Reserve volunteers may locate their Family Programs Office by clicking on “Contact Us” at <http://www.arfp.org>. National Guard volunteers may locate their Family Programs Office by visiting www.jointservicessupport.com and looking up the Family Readiness Assistant (FRA) for your state.
- ***Army Family Team Building Program/Guard Family Team Building.*** This three-level training program comprises 43 classes that help individuals learn about military culture and adjust to military life. Level I is designed for new Soldiers and Spouses. Level II focuses on basic leadership skills whereas Level III offers advanced leadership. This training program is available online and as classroom-based training. FRG volunteers can use this training to become familiar with the military and develop particular skills.

Sample Talking Points on Expectations of FRG Volunteers:

- ***Be punctual and dependable.*** Volunteers need to be on time and dependable. This is particularly important for key callers, who need to make calls to Families in a timely manner. When you, as a volunteer, cannot carry out a commitment, notify your supervisor or FRG Leader. Keep in mind that you are not expected to make commitments that will put your own Family's needs at risk.
- ***Be friendly and courteous.*** Be helpful and maintain a courteous attitude when dealing with the chain of command, Soldiers, Family Members, and other FRG volunteers.
- ***Be flexible.*** Given the high and changing demands on the military and unpredictable nature of deployments, we need to be able to adapt to change with understanding and calmness.
- ***Know your role.*** The FRG (and in particular key callers) is not expected to solve all problems, but is expected to provide accurate information and/or referrals. Know when to refer individuals to the appropriate agency. Also, do not hesitate to seek guidance and assistance with referrals when trying to assist with issues outside your professional knowledge. Follow-up to ensure individual's needs were met.
- ***Maintain confidentiality.*** FRG volunteers deal with problems of a highly personal nature. Be professional with personal information. Gossiping is taboo.
- ***Be nonjudgmental.*** Treat others with respect and dignity, regardless of rank. When assisting individuals, it is important to respect individual's decisions.
- ***Notify FRG Leadership of important issues.*** While it is important to be respectful of individual's privacy and sensitive to Family problems/issues, keep the FRG Leader informed of any important issues. By doing so, the FRG can address common and emerging issues of concern to Families. The FRG Leader can also bring certain issues to the attention of command or community agencies, as appropriate.
- ***Take care of yourself.*** There will likely be times when you may feel great stress or overwhelmed. Take the time to take care of yourself and your Family. Maintain a balance in your life.

Family Readiness Support Assistant's/Mobilization Deployment Assistant (FRSA):

- Maintain the continuity and stability of Family readiness groups as units undergo changes in volunteers and leadership.
- Provides administrative and logistical support to Commanders, Rear Commander Detachment Commanders, and Volunteer FRG Leaders by alleviating the administrative burden off volunteers.
- Allows FRG Leaders to concentrate on performing outreach to Soldiers and their Families in the Command, thus preserving stability on the home front, especially during periods of deployment (FRSA resource guide).

In the National Guard, FRSA's are primarily assigned to Major Subordinate Commands (primarily Brigade and Division level). Not all units may have a FRSA to assist them with these duties. Contact your State Family Readiness Assistant for help.

These duties include:

- Day to day operational guidelines are overseen at Battalion level however, they do support all companies.
- Prepare and distribute correspondence, rosters, newsletters, flyers, and reports.
- Prepare content for vFRG website and may serve as a system administrator, if assigned.
- Maintain regular contact with community agencies to inform FRG Leaders on updated information.
- Schedule and coordinate FRG meetings and event logistics.
- Assist with maintaining unit volunteer records.
- Cannot volunteer in the Battalion that they are employed.
- Work collaboratively with the Army Volunteer Corps Coordinator (AVCC) to assist supported commands, battalions and companies to recruit and maintain their active volunteer force.
- Assist Commanders with scheduling pre-deployment, coping with separation, re-deployment, and reunion briefings utilizing "Operation Ready" training material.
- Work with the RDCs and Total Army Family Program (TAFP) representative to ensure that timely and accurate information is relayed to Families.
- Arrange technical briefings, orientations and workshops for the command, Soldiers and Family Members about FRGs,
- Deployment, re-deployment and reunion.

FRSA prohibited activities: (AR 608-1 Appendix J)

- The duties of the FRSA will not conflict with the FRG Volunteer.
- Will not be involved in informal fundraising activities.
- Casualty assistance procedures.
- Suicide prevention activities.
- Teaching Family readiness training.
- Family counseling.
- Alternatively, other non-FRG official administrative support duties.
- Duplication or overlap of existing resources in the military community.
- FRSA will not serve as, or replace FRG Leaders—will not duplicate the responsibilities of the volunteer FRG Leader.
- Personal involvement in CARE teams (team coordination and roster maintenance is permissible).

- Serving as the subject matter expert (SME) for installation/Army Family Readiness.
- Maintaining personal calendars for Commanders, Senior Spouse, or FRG Leaders.

Steering committee:

- Meeting will be held at Battalion level.
- Represented by the Company Commander/Rear Detachment, FRG Leader, Co Leader, and the First Sergeant of each unit.
- Set goals for the year.
- Provides assistance to FRG Leaders at all levels.
- Coordinates with battalion Commander on Family Readiness policies and special issues.
- Provide a guidance, information, and support.
- Provide a link between the unit and the community.
- Oversee and support FRG activities in the command.
- Coordinates with battalion Commander on Family readiness policies and
- Special issues.

FRG Informal Funds:

Please check the current AR 608-1, Appendix J-7a, and with your local JAG office). For the National Guard and Reserve USARC608-1 (Army Reserve), and National Guard Funding Guidance for your fiscal year provided through your State Family Programs Office).

One informal fund per unit.

- Funds are used to benefit the **FRG membership** as a whole.
- The Army Directive 2008-01 increased the fund cap to \$10,000 (Army Community Service Center, Appendix J, section 7, subparagraphs (e) and (f). However, state and local laws Status of Forces Agreements (SOFA) may make lower fund cap necessary. Please NOTE check with JAG office that annual gross income cap complies with all local requirements.
- **Do not** solicit for gifts and donations. **No** external fundraising.
- **Submit fundraiser** permission/request memo to the installations and Commander prior to any fundraising.
- FRG's are not established as fundraising entities.
- Funds may only be raised for specific planned purposes consistent with the SOP.
- FRGs are not equipped to handle the complex tax ramifications and stringent accounting requirements that can result from excessive informal funds.
- FRG informal funds may not be used unless it benefits the entire organization. Examples of **unauthorized** use:

- Social activities
- Newsletter that contains primarily unofficial information
- Volunteer recognition (not otherwise funded with Appropriated funds)
- Picnics
- Refreshments

Improper Use of Informal Funds:

- Augmenting the unit's informal funds (cup and flower funds).
- Purchasing items or services that should be paid with appropriated funds.
- Purchasing traditional military gifts (Soldiers farewell gifts that are not related to Family readiness).
- Funding the unit ball.
- Donations to a specific military member or a private charity.

FRG Informal Fund SOP:

- Determines the purpose of the FRG informal fund.
- Must be approved by the unit Commander and a majority of the FRG members
- The unit Commander will sign a letter designating a fund custodian (treasurer) and an alternate (not the unit Commander, deployable Soldier, FRG Leader).
- FRG Informal funds **may not** be deposited with APF funds, unit MWR, unit cup and flower fund, or personal funds.
- Use it limited to expenses consistent with purpose and function of the fund and SOP. Operation of the fund will be consistent with Army values and JER (Joint Ethics Regulations).

Fund Custodian (Treasurer):

- The treasurer and alternate are personally responsible for loss and misuse of funds.
- The custodian may establish a non-interest bank account under the FRG's name (never the individual's name). The Commander will authorize the account and prepare a letter naming the custodian and the alternate as signatories. The Commander will not be a signatory on the account.
- Submit financial reports to the unit Commander monthly and as requested and shared as general knowledge with the members of the FRG.
- Submit annual budget and planned events to the Commander. FRG members must vote and approve budget and events.

Donations:

- Unit Commanders may accept an unsolicited gift or donation of \$1,000 or less

- or money tangible personal property for its FRG informal fund after consultation with the unit ethics counselor (AR 608-1 Appendix J-7f).
- Unsolicited gifts or donations are considered income and apply towards your annual income cap (AR 608-1, appendix J-7f).
- Commanders will seek guidance from their servicing Judge Advocate Counselor when they receive offers of unsolicited donations for FRG support (AR 608-1 Appendix J-9j).

FAMILY READINESS GROUP COMMUNICATION

As a FRG Leader, you may not be responsible for the basics of information gathering and distribution. If your unit has a FRSA, this should fall under his/her job description. Information flow is the top priority for FRG, included is some basic information on these topics. Further research can be found on many FRG websites and forums, but particularly in the FRG Leader's Handbook from ACS's Operation Ready.

Operation Security:

Operational Security (OPSEC) is keeping potential adversaries from discovering our critical information. As the name suggests, it protects our operations – planned, in progress and those completed. Success depends on secrecy and surprise, so the military can accomplish the mission quicker and with less risk. Enemies of freedom want our information, and they are not just after the military member to get it. They want you, the Family member.

Operations security is everyone's responsibility. Failure to properly implement OPSEC measures can result in serious injury or death to our personnel, damage to weapons systems, equipment and facilities, loss of sensitive technologies and mission failure. OPSEC is a continuous process and an inherent part of military culture and as such, must be fully integrated into the execution of all Army operations and supporting activities.

OPERATION SECURITY CHECKLIST

- Know what their organization considers critical information, where it is located, who is responsible for it, how to protect it, and why it needs to be protected.
- Protect from disclosure any critical information and sensitive information to which they have personal access.
- Commanders will issue orders, directives, and policies for unit or organization personnel to protect critical and sensitive information.
- A failure to comply with these orders, directives, or policies may be punished as violations of a lawful order under Article 92 of the Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ) or under other disciplinary, administrative, or other actions as applicable for Soldiers.

- Family Members not subject to the UCMJ who fail to protect critical and sensitive information from unauthorized disclosure may be subject to administrative, disciplinary, contractual, or criminal action.
- Prevent disclosure of critical and sensitive information in any public domain to include but not limited to the World Wide Web, open source publications, and the media.
- Do not publicly disseminate, or publish photographs displaying critical or sensitive information. Examples include but are not limited to Improvised Explosive Device (IED) strikes, battle scenes, casualties, destroyed or damaged equipment, personnel killed in action (KIA), both friendly and adversary, and the protective measures of military facilities.
- Actively encourage others (including Family Members and Family readiness groups (FRGs)) to protect critical and sensitive information.
- Know who their unit, activity, or installation OPSEC Officer is and contact them for questions, concerns, or recommendations for OPSEC-related topics.
- Report suspicious activities to the Military Police on your installation.
- Because the Internet is a public forum, Commanders will ensure that in addition to the OPSEC officer, a public affairs officer (PAO), webmaster/Web site maintainer, and other appropriate designee(s) have properly cleared information posted to the World Wide Web, unclassified intranet, or Army Knowledge Online (AKO) in areas accessible to all account types. Possible risks must be judged and weighed against potential benefits prior to posting any Army information on the World Wide Web. (See AR 25–1, Para 5–10.)
- The designated reviewer(s) will conduct routine reviews of Web sites on a quarterly basis to ensure that each Web site complies with the policies of AR 25–1 and that the content remains relevant and appropriate.
- The minimum review will include all of the web site management control checklist items in AR 25–1, paragraph C–4e(30) and appendix C. Information contained on publicly accessible Web sites is subject to the policies and clearance procedures prescribed in AR 360–1, chapter 5, for the release of information to the public.

Social Networking Sites:

With the increase in the use of technology for communication and social networking, we have to keep in mind Operational Security. It has been stated that over 900 million people have internet access. Some people use the internet for illegal activities such as identity theft, exploitation of your Family, and gaining military secrets. **Do not** post sensitive Department of Defense (DoD) information that the general public will not have access to. **Do not** post pictures of the military installation or your surroundings at work as this is conducting surveillance for the enemy of DoD facilities.

With the proliferation of Social networking sites, the Army has updated its web use policies. Any Army-related sites on Facebook, Twitter, Flickr, and You Tube that have an “official Presence” (such as FRGs and Units) must be registered with the Army. (See article- “*Army Releases New OPSEC Regulations*”, p 53 in this chapter)

The Commander and the installation Commander must approve all sites. To register your site visit <http://www.army.mil/media/socialmedia/>. You will be asked for the site URL, a POC name, and AKO email and phone number. The U.S. Army social media site also provides additional resources to help you share and promote your networking site. For example, you may want to establish an FRG presence on a social media site that would provide links to your secure vFRG web site for official unit information. As Family Members, you will be privy to sensitive information you need to be aware of the dangers of posting DoD information. You may be endangering your loved one and your Family. We do not know who the enemy is and what they are capable of doing. Ways to help your Family stay safe and observe the OPSEC rules: (See sample checklist for Operational Security)

- Do not post upcoming Deployments or Temporary Duty Assignments (TDY)
- Do not give details of what kind of work your Soldiers does for the Army
- If your Family Member is deployed, do not give details out about the location or the activities that he/she is involved in. Terrorist can be viewing your blogs or social networking sites. Therefore this can endanger your loved one and your Family.
- Realize that even though you have security settings on your social networking sites or blogs they are not foolproof. Terrorist know how to hack into the system and get vital information.
- Do not post specific identifying information about yourself. Such as your telephone number and address
- Do not post information that will lead someone to you and your Family. Such as writing about were your child attends school and posting pictures of the certain events. These are potential clues that can lead a terrorist to your Family.
- Do not post E-Mail accounts on your web page. Your address can be a clue that will lead to your name and identity. Example Rangeskids@smalltownshp.com
- Always think before you post any information. Once you post it, you cannot retract the statement.
- Keep your plans, schedules and location data to yourself?
- Protect the names and information of co-workers, friends, and Family Members?
- Tell friends to be careful when posting photos and information about you and your Family?

Newsletters:

The purpose of Newsletters:

- Communicate to a specific group with common interests

- The Commander is the final authority on all content issues and should review the newsletters to be sure that sensitive and mission-critical information is not included (OPSEC-Operational Security).
- Support FRG mission activity.
- Communicate accurate, unbiased and current information.
- Highlight military and community resources.
- Advertise upcoming FRG events.
- **Do not** disclose any financial reports or dollar amounts on any fundraising activities.
- Address issues of concern.
- Build camaraderie.
- Improve morale among Soldiers and Families.
- Reduce social isolation.
- Reduce the stresses of military life.
- Improve Family Readiness.

Preparation of FRG Newsletter:

- Often a single newsletter is published for the entire battalion, while some company FRG's may prefer to publish their own. A battalion newsletter is less costly to the company, distributes unit news, and builds pride battalion wide.
- The Commander retains final review authority on all content issues to insure the newsletters do not contain sensitive and mission-critical information (OPSEC-Operational Security). In the event of a deployment, Rear Detachment has the authority.
- The newsletter must state whether it contains only official information or combination of both official and unofficial information.
- If the newsletter contains both official and unofficial information it will include the following statement "the inclusion of some unofficial information in this FRG newsletter has not increased the cost to the Government, in accordance with DOD 4525.8-M."
- For additional regulation governing Newsletters
 - AR 360-81,
 - Official Mail Manual DOD 4525.8-M
 - Local policies
- Newsletters published with appropriated funds cannot include the following:
 - Advertising for private business or commercial ventures.
 - Financial reports or dollar amounts.
 - Political notices.
 - Casualty or injury reports.
 - Copyright information without permission of the author.
 - Professional sports scores.

Official information: “Relates to command and mission essential information that the Commander believes Families should have to be better informed.” Official information relates to unit mission and readiness.

Examples: training schedule information, upcoming deployments, unit points of contact and chain of concern, new Army programs of benefits available to Families, upcoming garrison events for Families of deployed Soldiers, and educational information.

Unofficial information: Defined as non-mission related information.

- May be included in official FRG newsletter provided: it does not exceed 20% of the printed space used for Official information; it does not increase printing and mailing cost to the Government; and it does not include personal/wanted for sale advertisements.
- Examples: Personal information (i.e. phone numbers, addresses, birth or adoption announcements, birthdays), accomplishments by Soldiers or Family Members, FRG member job changes, promotions, and awards, FRG fundraisers, recipes.

Content of the Newsletter:

- Should include a logo, motto, and title unique to the unit/company.
- Article by the Commander or Rear Detachment Officer on training, deployment news, etc.
- The Commander statement and original signature
- Article by the FRG Leader. Examples: FRG events, steering committee action, upcoming meeting, etc.

Printing and Distribution:

- Government paper and printing supplies are authorized for use to publish FRG newsletters that relay information from the command and support any FRG mission activity.
- FRG newsletters may be distributed by mail using the Army or installation Post Office, by e-mail and or posted on the company’s page on the battalion vFRG website. Reserve Component must work with their unit Commander regarding the budget for these expenses.
- E-Mailing the newsletter is the most cost effective method; however, some FRG members may not have computers. Therefore, you should mail newsletters to those who do not have internet access.

Immediate Response Information System (IRIS): Arlington, VA. – Jan. 11, 2010 – Qwest Government Services, a division of [Qwest Communications International Inc. \(NYSE: Q\)](#), has completed the implementation of the eArmy Family Messaging System, a new program by the U.S. Army Family and Morale, Welfare, and Recreation

Command, which provides information to Soldiers' Families during all stages of their deployment. The Army is using IRIS to contact Family Members instantly through almost any communications device, including wireless phones, pagers, computers and faxes. The National Guard Family Portal, www.jointservicesupport.org is also working on such a system.

KEY FACTS

The eArmy Family Messaging System is part of the virtual Family Readiness Group (vFRG) System, which provides Army Commanders with a secure portal to send credible, timely and relevant information to Soldiers and Family Members.

- The vFRG system is used for active duty, guard and reserve troops around the world.
- The eArmy Family Messaging System is supported by the Army OneSource initiative, which links community services and assistance to all Soldiers and their Families, no matter where they are located.
- Upon deployment, the messaging system provides information to Soldiers' Families about important support services, such as training, education, health care, dependent care, identification cards and "welcome home" parties.

Websites *Virtual FRG (vFRG)*: - <http://www.armyfrg.org>:

- Secure website that provides FRGs two-way communication with Family Members as well as provides a secure means for Family Members and Soldiers to communicate while Soldiers are in theatre.
- Commanders can post updates on the deployed unit.
- Provide the FRG with timely accurate information to unit Family Members who are geographically dispersed as well as a Soldiers' other Family Members such as parents.
- The FRG can use the vFRG to post newsletter, articles, and other information.
- The vFRG web site also enables telephone tree and email lists to be updated, allows for email communication, two-way instant messaging, and the posting of pictures, articles and downloads.
- The Commander (and when deployed, the Rear Detachment Commander) controls and approves all content and users, who must be registered to access the information, and manages postings to the web site.
- The FRG Leader and Command should promote and encourage access to this resource.
- The vFRG web sites are established at the Battalion level but may include separate pages for each company.
- An instruction book as well as start-up and technical support are available on the web site.

- **A word of caution:** FRGs are only authorized to use either AKO or the vFRG for their web sites. Both of these web sites are secure. Register for a vFRG site at www.armyfrg.org.

FRG Email:

- Create and maintain an email distribution list it can be delegated to the telephone tree chairperson, key caller or FRSA. If the Company has access to a battalion vFRG web site, then this web site provides an easy means for doing this task.
- Provides timely and accurate information to Family Members, including extended Family Members that Soldiers have identified.
- Publicize or provide information related to FRG meetings and social events.

Email protocols:

- It is advised that the Commander or RDC approve any emails sent out on behalf of the FRG, which contains important Company or deployment related information.
- The FRG Leader can then elect to send the approved email or forward to a designated person (e.g., telephone tree chairperson, key caller, vFRG coordinator) for distribution to all individuals on the email list.
- However, a message about FRG meetings and social events can be prepared by other FRG volunteers as appropriate, but should be approved.

Teleconferencing and Web meetings:

Think about how your FRG can use teleconferencing and web meetings to connect volunteers and members. (Posted by Laura Broome, Battalion Senior Advisor with the 490th CA BN (USARC), at <http://senior.advisor.army.mil> on 5 February 2010):

- As a geographically dispersed Reserve unit in Texas, attendance at our FRG meetings can be challenging. We have finally found a way around this problem by utilizing two free tools provided by the Army: vFRG and Teleconferences.
- We currently use teleconference system for our monthly FRG Leader meetings, which are usually held 10 days prior to our FRG Family meetings. We also use it for our BN Steering Committee meeting and even our Special Events Planning Committee is using it to discuss venues for our upcoming Dinning Out.
- Beginning this month, we will use the teleconference system with a conference speaker during our monthly FRG Family meeting so Families can call in to listen and participate who would otherwise be unable to attend due to their distance from the unit.
- We have been posting our past FRG meeting Power Point presentations, handouts and minutes on our vFRG for Families to download. Now our

Families will be able to download the PP presentation and handouts prior to our monthly meeting so they can follow along during the teleconferences.

Managing Information:

Rosters and Phone Trees (Chain of Concern):

Rosters and phone trees can also be called the “Chain of Concern.” There are many different ways to set them up depending on the number of people involved. The Chain of Concern is the primary link of communicating important information to Family Members. Reasons for use include planning social functions, passing on general information, passing information about deployment, homecomings, or emergency information. It can be one of the most efficient ways to deliver information in a timely manner. Examples of a phone tree and Chain of Concern responsibilities can be found in Operation READY through ACS.

All Spouses should be strongly encouraged to participate in the Chain of Concern. Information for the initial set up of the roster should come from the FRG Soldier/Spouse questionnaire. People should have the choice of having their information listed on a general roster and/or the confidential roster that is given to the FRG Leader. If a Spouse strongly resists giving the FRG important information, then it should be noted, signed by Spouse and Soldier, and the Spouse instructed that their only contact will be with the military chain of Command/Rear Detachment (See example of non-participation letter in the samples and handout section of this chapter). Spouses need to be instructed not to use the roster for any type of recruitment for “business” parties (Mary Kay, Tupperware etc). A Privacy statement should be printed on every type of roster (AR 340-21 The Army Privacy Program).

Keeping rosters updated is an ongoing requirement. Remind Spouses to update with new numbers and emergency numbers if they will be traveling. Roster information needs to be checked and rechecked.

Information Sheets:

The Soldier/Spouse FRG information sheet may be the single most important document for the FRG and the Rear Detachment. There are many questions to be answered and the Soldier/Spouse needs to take the time to answer all questions thoroughly and honestly. First line leaders (Platoon Leaders and Platoon Sergeants) can help with this by providing one-on-one time with the soldier to insure information accuracy. They can also help with pre-deployment rechecks of information. A complete “Spouse’s deployment checklist” is available from Operation READY (ACS).

One of the major issues with information sheets is the concern about privacy issues. All information collected is to be shared only with those on a need-to-know basis. The strength of the unit relies heavily upon the trust between the Leaders and the Families. Anyone violating this trust should be released from his/her position.

The Army Reserve requires that their FRGs start with the USAR Form 107-R, Family Information Data Worksheet, to record contact data and preferences. An electronic “fillable-saveable” 107-R is available at <http://FRGLeader.army.mil> at the “Army Reserve Leaders” document library.

Sample information sheets are located in the samples and forms section of this chapter. Other information may be included based on needs, mission, and installation requirements. Check with your local ACS.

Continuity Notebook:

A Continuity Notebook is passed from the outgoing FRG Leader to the incoming FRG Leader in order to maintain the continuity of the unit and its current functioning during the transition.

Contents of the notebook should include, but not limited to:

- Copy of the FRG SOP.
- Copy of the appointment letter signed by the Commander.
- Copy of the budget.
- Treasury report.
- Meeting agenda and minutes.
- Meeting sign in sheets.
- After Action Reports from unit events.
- Planning calendars/training calendars.
- Installation points of contacts.
- FRG Newsletters.
- Fund raising permission forms.
- Copy of volunteer hours reported.
- Examples of Volunteer awards.
- Phone tree/Chain of Concern.

This is only an example of information that may be required. Each continuity book is individual and based on the unit needs

AFTER ACTION REPORTS

It is a great idea to write After Action Reports when you do unit functions. These reports will be a great resource to you in the future for other events as well as a wealth of information for the next company Commander’s Spouse or representative. It is a good way to learn and remember what went right and what did not. It is helpful to write the report soon after the event so you can remember the details and that way you do not have to do them all at the end. Ask the person in charge of the event to write the report. You can also ask each person to write their portion of the event that they were in charge

of and then the chairperson can combine them. Make two copies of the report so you can keep one for your own records and one for the continuity notebooks.

Here are Some Things That You Might Want to Have in the Report:

- Name of the event, date, location, time.
- What were your responsibilities?
- Who were the members of your committee? How were they selected? What were their responsibilities?
- Were there other individuals who were helpful to your committee? Make a list of their names, addresses, phone numbers, and emails (if pertinent).
- How did you prepare to do your job? What resources were necessary? Where were the best places to get your resources? How much time was involved in this project?
- What expenses did you have and for what?
- List the obstacles and pitfalls you wish you had avoided. What would you advise the next person in your role?
- Pinpoint your single biggest frustration. How could you have overcome it?
- What went especially well? Why?
- If you had it to do over again, would you accept this job. Why or why not?
- Are there any other comments, recommendations, or additional information you would like to mention?

LESSONS LEARNED

Communication:

- Information should be disseminated regularly, accurately, and quickly to be most effective.
- Have practice call downs to test numbers and reliability of company key callers.
- Test email addresses periodically for accuracy.
- Training through ACS is recommended (Operation READY, Army Family Team Building [AFTB]).
- Create a Point of Contact (POC) binder for all company FRG Leaders to include chain of concern and installation resource numbers.
- The initial "Welcome" for a new FRG member is essential.
- The FRG and its members need to establish mutually respective boundaries regarding information. It is important to stress the need for privacy regarding FRG matters and information. Ethical boundaries must be established and recognized by the command and the Family Members.
- Many Spouses are not clear on the role of the FRG and may ask for things that are not appropriate. Some may try to take advantage of the FRG or are genuinely confused regarding its inability to provide personal services. When you tell them that is not why the FRG exists, they may become angry. Do not take it personally.

- There are some people that no matter what you do for them they will still not be happy and will tell everyone that you are not doing anything to assist them. Do not let them get you down. Ask them what they would do that you are not doing. Usually they will not have an answer! Invite them to become part of the solution!
- Get others involved. FRGs depend on volunteers, even though the service provides support. Talk to friends and neighbors and listen to their ideas. Your enthusiasm can inspire others.
- Keep necessary communication records.

FRG LESSONS LEARNED

- Effective FRGs are those that exist prior to deployment.
- Successful FRGs contacted Families at least monthly.
- Family financial problems typically surface at deployment.
- Try to disseminate information through as many methods as possible (email, phone, newsletters, etc).
- Energy of the FRG Leader is key.
- The FRG Leader needs to learn to delegate responsibilities.
- Spouses may have special concerns (pregnancy, language) which may require flexibility.
- During deployment the Rear Detachment Commander and FRG Leadership needs to know when Families are leaving the area.
- Reunion briefings are important to the Families (as well as Soldiers).
- It is recommended that the FRG Leadership be trained on Family crisis response and referral, casualty procedures, communication, physical security, dealing with the media, American Red Cross capabilities, etc).

Lessons Learned According to the 2010 Surveys:

According to survey answers, here are a few things going on in Company FRGs:

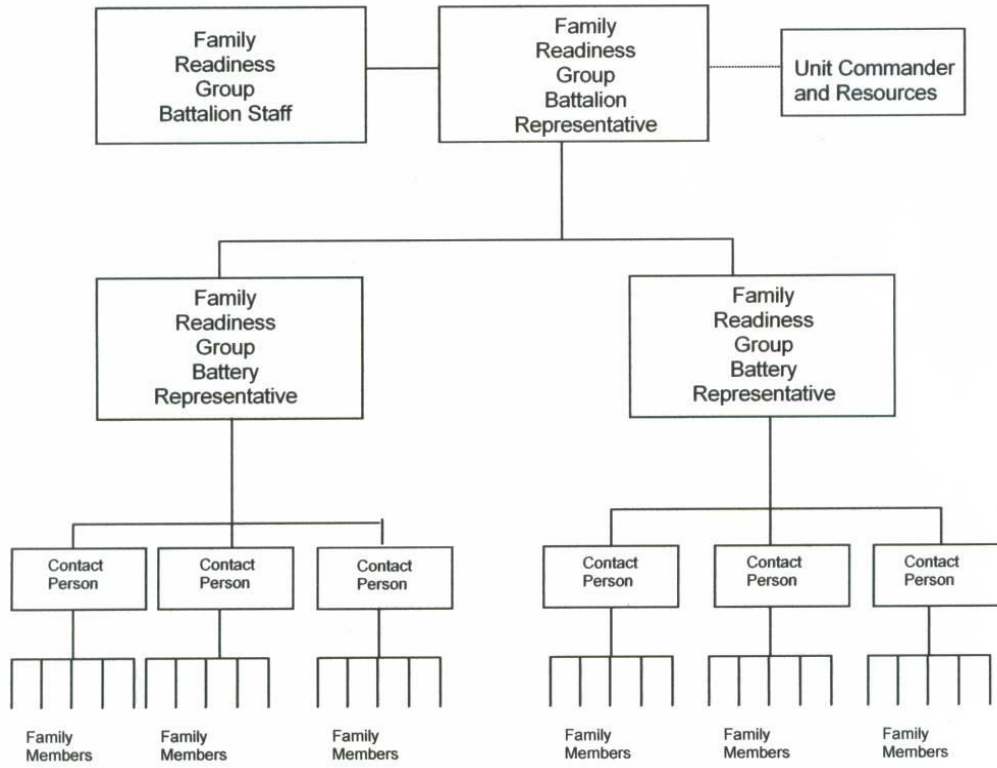
******The following lists neither endorse nor approve ideas, only report the response from the surveys. .***

<p><i>You believe an Effective FRG should...</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have Trained Leaders • Be a no gossip zone! • Discourage rumors and address rumors quickly • Provide timely and accurate communication to its members • Be sure you are including single Soldiers and geo-bachelors as well as Families • Empower members with training • Welcome new Soldiers and Families to the unit with a visit, call, letter or welcome token • Be a Family • Encourage an environment of mutual respect... “ • Be a non-rank forum • Receive command support • Have leadership who wants to get to know the membership and their ideas. • Have leadership and members who are open, supportive, involved and committed • Be organized • Have leadership who desires to build trust • Have volunteers!!! The leader cannot and should not do it all! • Be Fun! Include both social and informational activities • Maintain good communication with the command • Be patient and encouraging with members or prospective members who have been “bruised” by previous FRG experiences. 	<p><i>You reported the following as fundraising ideas...</i></p> <p>** ALWAYS check with your Office of the Judge Advocate General (JAG) regarding the legality of any fundraising ideas. Only fundraise as needed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food sales in the unit area... bake sales, hotdog & hamburgers, breakfast burritos... • T-Shirts • Cookbooks • Throw blankets • Christmas ornaments • Unit stickers • Pie-In-the-Face • Silent and Live Auctions: Baked goods, Theme baskets... • Wrist bands • Garage sale of donated items from membership <p><i>Places you suggested for holding FRG meetings and events...</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Battalion Classroom • Company Classroom • Family Readiness Center • Restaurants • Chapel • Post Gymnasium • Parks • Pool • Skate Rink • Potlucks at a community center, day room or chapel 	<p><i>You reported using your FRG funds for the following...</i></p> <p>**Use of funds should benefit the FRG as a whole. Fund use should be approved by membership and follow current regulations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting refreshments • Social activities: picnic, skating... • Welcome tokens • Sympathy gift • Funeral flowers • FRG Holiday socials/parties/decor • “Welcome Home” decor for barracks lobby, goodie bags for Soldiers, snacks for Yellow Ribbon Room • Inflatable rentals for picnics (Moonwalk, Velcro wall, Sumo wrestling arena...) • Children’s activities for Organizational/Troop days... activity booths • FRG “business cards” • Flyers for FRG activities • Recovery lunch for Soldiers after road march, upon returning from NTC, JRTC training, etc... • Toy box, crayons, color books, etc., for children’s use during FRG meetings
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<p><i>Your Battalion Level FRSA's are providing the following types of support to Battalion and Company Level...</i></p> <p>** Although FRSA's have certain duties common to all, other duties vary by Battalion.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organize childcare for meetings • Secure speakers for meetings as requested by FRG Leaders • Maintain and update FRG: phone/e-mail rosters • Serve as an vFRG website administrator • Publish weekly/monthly newsletters • Secure Audio and Visual equipment • Reserve meeting rooms • Furnish Fundraiser authorization forms • Make Copies • Distribute information at various levels • Provide information on new Army initiatives and venues • Alerts Company FRGs to Newcomers' arrival. During the deployment phase, it becomes especially hard to track new Families without this assistance. • Data input for Immediate Response Information System (IRIS) and eArmy Family Messaging System (eAFMS) 	<p><i>According to the surveys, the FRG level of organization varies by Battalion...</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approximately half of the FRG's are functioning solely at Company Level • Twice as many FRG's are functioning with a combination of both Company and Battalion level activities. Company's pool efforts for some Battalion level activities (Game night, Egg Hunt, Info Briefs) but will also initiate exclusively Company level activities. • Some FRG's function exclusively at Battalion level, with Company FRG Leadership always working together toward Battalion wide FRG support • Some FRG's function at Company level when Soldiers are in Garrison, and move up to Battalion Level activities during deployment • Basic FRG goals and expectations may be set at Battalion and Company level 	<p><i>Helpful hints from your peers...</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When Unit area fundraising is difficult due to low soldier population during a deployment, remember Soldiers' parents, designated persons and Family Members may be very interested in a unit T-shirt, cookbook... These folks can all be part of your FRG. • Clarify the Commander's FRG goals and expectations early. • Expect FRG participation to ebb and flow with the cycles of the unit. During non-deployment, or during the middle of a deployment, expect participation to decline somewhat. • Ask the FRSA what type of childcare initiatives are in place at the installation to assist your FRG • Be approachable, open and genuine • Know when to, and be willing to refer issues to the Commander, Rear Detachment, the Battalion Advisor, Local Resources. • Talk with Battalion Advisor or Battalion Commander's Spouse when you don't know what to do • Ask for help when you need it!!
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Sample Forms and Handouts

Appendix C
ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE OF AN FRG



*Battery/Troop/Company/Detachment

Family/Soldier Information Sheet

Soldier Information

Name	
Street Address	
City State ZIP Code	
Home Phone	
Cell Phone	
Work Phone	
E-Mail Address (AKO)	
Marital Status	<input type="checkbox"/> Married <input type="checkbox"/> Single If married, does your wife speak English? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

If you are a single soldier & would like the FRG to share information with one significant Family member please fill out the "Other Family"

Spouse Information (Please complete with address where Spouse will be during deployment)

Name	
Street Address	
City State ZIP Code	
Home Phone	
Cell Phone	
Work Phone	
E-Mail Address	
How would you like the FRG to contact you?	<input type="checkbox"/> Email <input type="checkbox"/> Phone <input type="checkbox"/> Never Email <i>is the quickest & least expensive method for the FRG volunteers. If you answer "never", the wife will not be contacted by the FRG under any circumstances, except to verify this request.</i>
May we include your contact information on the <i>social roster</i> ?	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO The <i>social roster</i> is used to contact you for social events that may be unrelated to the FRG.
Do you or any of your children have any special needs?	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO If yes, could you provide some details?

Children's Information				
Last Name	First Name	Date of Birth	Live at Home	School
1.				
2.				
3.				
Emergency Contact Information				
Name	Address		Phone #	
Special Family Situations:	Yes		No	
No Drivers License				
No Car				
Exceptional Family member				
Special Medical Considerations				
Primary language other than English? What?				
<i>Other Special Considerations or concerns:</i>				

PRIVACY ACT STATEMENT: Authority U-S.C. 522a. and Para 3-5, AR 340-2 I; Para 2-8a. AR 210-7. Principle purpose is to gather data on Family of assigned Soldiers to provide command information to Family Members during deployment and in emergencies.

Interview Completed by: _____

Soldier/Spouse Signature: _____ Date: _____

Family Member Information Survey

The mission of the Family Readiness Group is to provide you with a network of communication and support. You will receive information by phone, email and through newsletters. In addition, you will be invited to attend monthly meetings with guest speakers and fun activities. Please fill out this form to help us build a strong FRG. If the Soldier is filling out the form on behalf of the Family Member, the FRG will contact the Family Member to verify the information. Participation in the FRG is voluntary and confidential, and any information provided will be used for FRG purposes only. When the unit is scheduled to deploy, we will ask you to update the following.

1. Family Member Information

Name: _____

Phone Number: _____

Alternate Phone: _____

Mailing Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Birthday: _____ Anniversary: _____

Name of Sponsor/Soldier: _____ Rank _____:

Unit: _____

Does the Family Member reside with the sponsor? Yes No

2. Children's Information

Name: _____ Age: _____

School/Daycare: _____

Name: _____ Age: _____

School/Daycare: _____

Name: _____ Age: _____

School/Daycare: _____

Name: _____ Age: _____

School/Daycare: _____

Are you or your spouse expecting a baby? If so, when is the due date? _____

3. Emergency Information (to be filled out by the spouse/Family member)

Who can we call in the event of an emergency? Please list a relative, friend, neighbor, etc. Do not list your soldier spouse.

Name: _____ Phone: _____ Relationship: _____

Name: _____ Phone: _____ Relationship: _____

Name: _____ Phone: _____ Relationship: _____

List any special needs you or your Family may have (such as a disability, serious illness, language barrier, etc.) _____

Please list number and types of household pets: _____

Check the ones you currently have: Military ID Card Power of Attorney
 Driver's License Regular Access to a Vehicle Passport

4. FRG Related Information—Please check all that apply:

I would like to be contacted with FRG-related information by: telephone email mail.

I give my permission to be published in the FRG Roster which will be used only by officials and members of the FRG for related purposes. Yes No

When is the best time to call you? 9am-11am 1pm-3pm
 7pm-9pm

Please provide your email address if you would like to be included in our email distribution list to receive updates on unit and community events and activities as well as the FRG newsletter.

Email: _____

What topics/activities would you like to see discussed or planned for the FRG?

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Community Resources
Opportunities | <input type="checkbox"/> Preparing for Deployment | <input type="checkbox"/> Job/Volunteer |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Chaplain's Programs | <input type="checkbox"/> Legal Services | <input type="checkbox"/> Financial Information |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Holiday Events | <input type="checkbox"/> Ball/Formal | <input type="checkbox"/> Activities for the Kids |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sports | <input type="checkbox"/> Fundraisers | <input type="checkbox"/> Social Activities |

The FRG is run by volunteers—would you like to help with any of the following (note: the FRG will provide training/orientation for all of its volunteers):

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Welcome/Hospitality/Meals | <input type="checkbox"/> Making Phone Calls | <input type="checkbox"/> Planning Events |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fundraising | <input type="checkbox"/> Newsletter | <input type="checkbox"/> Childcare |
- I am unable to volunteer at this time, but please keep me in mind at later dates.

Additional Information (is there anything else you would like us to know about?):

The information above is correct to the best of my knowledge. I will try and do my part by informing the FRG of any changes.

Sign: _____ Date: _____

PRIVACY ACT STATEMENT: Authority: 10 U.S.C. Section 3010, 5 U.S.C. 522a. Principle Purpose Information will be used to provide support, outreach and information to Family Members. Routine Uses: Primary Use of this information is to facilitate volunteers in providing command information to Family Members concerning unit events and in emergencies.

Mandatory or Voluntary Disclosure: Voluntary

Sample Authorization Letter to Open an FRG Checking Account

[Unit Letterhead]

Office Symbol (600-20)

[Date]

Bank Name
ATTENTION: New Business Accounts
Bank Address
City, State ZIP

SUBJECT: Authorization to open a new business checking account for the
_____ Family Readiness Group (FRG) Fund

Dear New Accounts Manager:

This letter is to authorize the following named individuals to open a checking account:

Type Account: Ordinary business checking

In the name of: _____ FRG Fund

Type organization: Unit cup and flower fund

Mailing Address: c/o _____, Address, City, State, ZIP

Authorized signatories:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>SSN</u>
_____	FRG Fund Manager	
_____	Alternate Fund Manager	
_____	FRG Leader	
_____	Special Events Chair	

If any questions, please contact _____ at XXX-XXX-XXXX. Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,

(COMMANDER'S NAME)
Captain, US Army
Commanding

EAAV-2BN-CO

DATE

MEMORANDUM THRU: See Distribution

FOR: Commander, US Army Area III Support Activity
APO AP 96271-5716

SUBJECT: Fundraiser for "UNIT X" NAME Family Readiness Group

1. Request permission to conduct a bake sale to benefit the Unit X's FRG. Sales will be to "UNIT X" soldiers during "UNIT X" Safety Training Day on DATE from TIME PERIOD at the LOCATION. The money will be used to supplement the "UNIT X" FRG fund. Request will be routed thru see distribution for conflict of interest matters and the legal office for legal issues.
2. Point of contact for this event is POINT OF CONTACT and PHONE/eMAIL.

XXXXXXXXXX

COMMANDER SIGNATURE BLOCK

Distribution:

Director, Community Activities (DCA)

Staff Judge Advocate

Director, Plans, Training, Mobilization and Security (DPTMS)

Endorsements (**LIST APPROVAL NEEDED BELOW**):

1. Recommend Approval/Disapproval:

DIRECTOR NAME

Director, DCA, Bldg#X Phone: XXX-XXXX

2. Recommend Approval/Disapproval:

LEGAL NAME

Legal Point of Contact, Bldg #X Phone: XXX-XXXX

3. Final Approval:

DIRECTOR NAME

Director, DPTMS, Bldg#X Phone: XXX-XXXX

___ Company Chain of Concern

Company Commander _____ Company 1SG _____

Name/Phone _____ Name/Phone _____

Family Readiness Chain of Concern Phone Roster

FRG Leader	(Crest or Company logo)	FRG Co-Leader
Name		Name
Phone		Phone
Address		Address
Email		Email

Group 1	Group 2	Group 3	Group 4
POC/Key Caller	POC/Key Caller	POC/Key Caller	POC/Key Caller
Name	Name	Name	Name
Phone	Phone	Phone	Phone
Address	Address	Address	Address
Email:	Email	Email	Email
Name	Name	Name	Name
Phone	Phone	Phone	Phone
Address	Address	Address	Address
Email:	Email	Email	Email
Name	Name	Name	Name
Phone	Phone	Phone	Phone
Address	Address	Address	Address
Email:	Email	Email	Email
Name	Name	Name	Name
Phone	Phone	Phone	Phone
Address	Address	Address	Address
Email:	Email	Email	Email

Name	Name	Name	Name
Phone	Phone	Phone	Phone
Address	Address	Address	Address
Email	Email	Email	Email
Name	Name	Name	Name
Phone	Phone	Phone	Phone
Address	Address	Address	Address
Email:	Email	Email	Email
Name	Name	Name	Name
Phone	Phone	Phone	Phone
Address	Address	Address	Address
Email:	Email	Email	Email
Name	Name	Name	Name
Phone	Phone	Phone	Phone
Address	Address	Address	Address
Email:	Email	Email	Email
Name	Name	Name	Name
Phone	Phone	Phone	Phone
Address	Address	Address	Address
Email:	Email	Email	Email
Name	Name	Name	Name
Phone	Phone	Phone	Phone
Address	Address	Address	Address
Email:	Email	Email	Email

PRIVACY ACT STATEMENT: Authority U-S.C. 522a. and Para 3-5, AR 340-2 I; Para 2-8a. AR 210-7. Principle purpose is to gather data on Family of assigned Soldiers to provide command information to Family Members during deployment and in emergencies.

Key Caller Problem Resolution Form				
Name				
Address				
Date of Contact	Time	Contact Phone	(Hm)	(Wk)
Name		Unit		
Rank		Location		
Nature of Emergency (include who, what, when, where, etc.):				
What help do you need?				
ACTION:	Who Called?	When?		
Police called?				
Ambulance?				
Fire Department called?				
Red Cross called?				
Transportation?				
Food?				
Lodging?				
Money?				
Army Emergency Relief (AER) called?				
Emergency Child Care?				
Referred To:				
Follow-up Required?				
Key Caller Signature:			Date:	

Source: Operation Ready Material

SAMPLE

SPOUSE STATEMENT OF NON-PARTICIPATION

I, _____ wish not to be contacted regarding unit socials or Family readiness group functions such as fundraisers and meetings. I understand I will be contacted for essential deployment or re-deployment information. I understand this notice may be rescinded at any time and that it is my responsibility to notify the unit FRG Leader if I choose to change my position of non-participation.

Spouse Signature

Soldier Signature

Spouse Printed Name

Soldier Printed Name

Company Designation

Date

UNIT DESIGNATION

CERTIFICATE OF APPRECIATION

IS PRESENTED TO

“VOLUNTEER’S NAME”

**FOR OUTSTANDING DEVOTION AND SERVICE, AS A UNIT DESIGNATION, FAMILY
READINESS GROUP VOLUNTEER**

**YOUR SELFLESS SERVICE TO OTHERS AND WILLINGNESS TO SERVE THE SOLDIERS
AND FAMILIES OF THE UNIT DESIGNATION, HAS CONTRIBUTED IMMEASUREABLY TO
THE SUCCESS OF THE FAMILY READINESS GROUP. YOUR GENEROUS DONATION OF
TIME AND TALENTS, ON BEHALF OF THE UNIT DESIGNATION, HAS HAD A DIRECT
IMPACT IN IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF LIFE FOR ALL. THIS SPIRIT OF GIVING IS AN
INSPIRATION TO ALL OF US, AND THROUGH YOUR DEDICATED EFFORTS YOU HAVE
BROUGHT DISTINCT CREDIT UPON YOURSELF, UNIT DESIGNATION AND THE
INSTALLATION NAME COMMUNITY.**

DATE

COMMANDER SIGNATURE

After Action Report

Event: _____

Date : _____

Successes:

What went well?

Concerns:

What could have been done better?

Thanks to:

Who helped?

Recommendations?

FAMILY READINESS GROUP VOLUNTEER JOB DESCRIPTION

POSITION TITLE: Company FRG Leader (or Battery/Troop/Detachment, etc.)

RESPONSIBLE TO: Company Commander

PURPOSE: Organize and lead unit-level FRG

JOB DESCRIPTION:

- Supports the Commander's Family readiness goals
- Provides overall leadership of the FRG
- Recruits other volunteers to serve on FRG committees
- Delegates FRG responsibilities to selected volunteers as committee chairpersons, or presides over their elections
- Serves as a member of the battalion-level steering committee
- Identifies needs or unique problems of unit Families
- Acts as unit FRG spokesperson for communicating Family Members' concerns and ideas to the unit Commander and, if needed, the battalion-level FRG Leader

TIME REQUIRED Six to eight hours a week, depending on deployment status and other scheduled activities; commitment usually duration of command

QUALIFICATIONS & SPECIAL SKILLS:

- Knowledge of Family readiness programs, unit structure and procedures, and post agencies and services
- Ability to work well with Soldiers and Families and persuade people to get things done

RECOMMENDED TRAINING:

- Operation READY classes
- AFTB Levels I-III
- Attend Family Program Academy (Guard and Reserve)
- Volunteer training and/or past experience

FAMILY READINESS GROUP VOLUNTEER JOB DESCRIPTION

POSITION TITLE: FRG Treasurer and Alternate

RESPONSIBLE TO: Unit/Battalion FRG Leader and Commander

PURPOSE: Serve as custodian for the FRG informal fund

JOB DESCRIPTION:

- Obtains appointment letter from the Commander
- Prepares form SS4 and applies to the IRS for an employee ID number for the bank account
- Sets up fund account at local bank
- Maintains FRG fund records and ledger; keeps it up to date at all times
- Receives and counts all funds submitted from fundraisers; prepares deposit slips, and deposits funds to FRG fund account
- Disburses checks in accordance with FRG Leader and Commander's guidance
- Reviews monthly bank statements and reconciles with ledger; calls bank bookkeeper about any unexplained discrepancies
- Prepares monthly reports and presents them to FRG Leader and Commander; also reads summary aloud at FRG meetings

TIME REQUIRED: Ten to twenty hours per month (depending on activity frequency); one-year commitment

QUALIFICATIONS & SPECIAL SKILLS:

- Knowledge of banking procedures
- Good math skills
- Well organized
- Ability to work well with others

RECOMMENDED TRAINING:

- Operation READY courses
- Attend Family Program Academy (Guard and Reserve)
- Similar courses and/or past experience *The Army FRG Leader's Handbook*

FAMILY READINESS GROUP VOLUNTEER JOB DESCRIPTION

POSITION TITLE: Battalion (or Unit) FRG Newsletter Editor

RESPONSIBLE TO: Battalion (or Unit) Commander and FRG Leader

PURPOSE: Publishes the battalion (unit) FRG newsletter

JOB DESCRIPTION:

- Determines ground rules for official newsletters
- Determines level of interest of FRG members in having a newsletter; discusses with FRG Leader and Commander
- Organizes a volunteer newsletter staff (reporters, writers, editors, typists, illustrators, collators, mailers)
- Designs newsletter and logo—gets input from members
- Oversees gathering of information from all sources; organizes, writes, and edits material
- Provides copies of draft newsletters to FRG Leader and Commander for editing
- After final editing, does layout and paste-up; submits camera-ready copy for reproduction

TIME REQUIRED: Ten to twenty hours per month (depending on Newsletter frequency); one-year commitment.

QUALIFICATIONS & SPECIAL SKILLS:

- Editorial, spelling, grammar skills; ability to write articles
- Managerial skills; knowledge of organization
- Creativity, energy, artistic talent

RECOMMENDED TRAINING:

- Orientation at Information System Branch
- Operation READY courses
- Attend Family Program Academy (Guard and Reserve)
- Similar courses and/or past experience

FAMILY READINESS GROUP VOLUNTEER JOB DESCRIPTION

POSITION TITLE: Phone tree Point of Contact (POC)

RESPONSIBLE TO: Phone tree Chairperson or FRG Leader

PURPOSE: Gather and disseminate information

JOB DESCRIPTION:

- Calls each of the assigned Families on their POC phone tree branch; reports any discrepancies in the information on the list
- Passes important information to assigned Families
- Telephones Spouses occasionally when troops are in garrison and twice monthly during deployments
- Annotates the phone tree with any changes, and informs the phone tree chairperson or FRG Leader
- Fields calls from assigned Families, and answers questions or directs callers to appropriate resources; provides accurate, timely information
- Fields emergency calls and assists the Families involved
- Welcomes new Families assigned to the POC's phone tree branch
- Maintains confidentiality, discourages gossip, and dispels rumors
- Reports serious matters to phone tree chairperson or FRG Leader
- Keeps a careful log of calls received, made, and their results

TIME REQUIRED: Two to six hours per week; six-month commitment.

QUALIFICATIONS & SPECIAL SKILLS:

- Good telephone/communication skills
- Knowledge of community resources and crisis intervention
- Concern and empathy for others; calm under stress

RECOMMENDED TRAINING:

- Operation READY courses
- AFTB Levels I-III
- Attend Family Program Academy (Guard and Reserve)
- Similar courses and/or past experience

Army Releases New OPSEC Regulation

Apr 19, 2007

BY Mr. J.D. Leipold

WASHINGTON (Army News Service, April 20, 2007) - Changes to the Army's operations security regulation address accountability, new technology and the inclusion of all Army personnel in OPSEC practices.

The revised Army Regulation 530-1, "Operations Security," provides updated definitions; aligns the Army's policies, terms and doctrine with the Defense Department; and brings Army Contractors into the fold while addressing the role Army Family Members have in OPSEC.

"The change includes Army Civilians and Contractors, who are not subject to the Uniform Code of Military Justice," said Maj. Ray Ceralde, the Army OPSEC program manager and author of the revision. "The reason we included Contractors in the regulation is they're more involved in operations today than ever before. If you have all your Soldiers and DA Civilians practicing OPSEC and your Contractors - who are an integral part of your operations - aren't ... well, you have a gaping hole in security that could affect everyone's lives."

Maj. Ceralde said OPSEC is a "total Army concept" and includes Families and friends though he acknowledged they are not subject to a Commander's orders.

"We felt it necessary to actively encourage those demographics," he said. "Much of the practice of OPSEC will be conveyed from the Commander down to the Soldier who we hope will pass on the importance that what a Family Member or friend puts up on the Web can unwittingly be used against us."

Regulation changes also address how technology, specifically the Internet, has changed the face of OPSEC since the last major revision to the regulations in 1995. A 2005 revision addressed new technology, but the new revision addresses technological concerns not covered in the 2005 revision.

"The Internet, personal Web sites, blogs (Web logs) - those are examples of where our

adversaries are looking for open-source information about us," said Maj. Ceralde. "Open-source information isn't classified and may look like nothing more than innocuous bits of information, a piece here, a piece there, like pieces of a puzzle. But when you put enough of the pieces together you begin to realize the bigger picture and that something could be going on."

Outside of technology, Maj. Ceralde cited an example of how "innocuous" bits of information can give a snapshot of a bigger picture. He described how the Pentagon parking lot had more parked cars than usual on the evening of Jan. 16, 1991, and how pizza parlors noticed a significant increase of pizza to the Pentagon and other government agencies. These observations are indicators, unclassified information available to all, Maj. Ceralde said. That was the same night that Operation Desert Storm began.

While Army personnel may maintain their own Web sites or post information on blogs, Maj. Ceralde said they have to be careful about what they write and what they post because even unclassified information can provide significant information to adversaries.

"For example, photos of deployed Soldiers to share with Family and friends are acceptable. However, when the photo includes a background of the inside of their camp with force protection measures in plain view, an adversary who is planning to attack their camp and sees a photo like this on the Internet now knows how to counter their force-protection measures," Maj. Ceralde said.

The regulation also puts a greater emphasis on Commanders' responsibilities to implement OPSEC.

"We tell Commanders what they must to do to get their people to understand what's critical and sensitive information and how to protect it, but Commanders have to make that perfectly clear in the form of orders and directives," Maj. Ceralde said. "The other part of this tells Soldiers that if they fail to comply they may be punished under article 92 of the Uniform Code of Military Justice for disobeying a lawful order."

Other key changes to the regulations include the addition of punitive measures for violations of specific directives, the designation of "For Official Use Only" as a standard

marking on all unclassified products that meet at least one exemption of the Freedom of Information Act, directing encryption of e-mail messages that contain sensitive information on unclassified networks, and emphasizing operations security in contracts and acquisitions.

"OPSEC is not traditional security, such as information security like marking, handling and classifying information; it's not the physical security of actually protecting classified information though they're all related and part of OPSEC," Maj. Ceralde said. "OPSEC is different from traditional security in that we want to eliminate, reduce and conceal indicators, unclassified and open-source observations of friendly activity that can give away critical information."

OPSEC AND SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES

SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES (SNS), like Facebook® and Twitter®, are software applications that connect people and information in spontaneous, interactive ways. While SNS can be useful and fun, they can provide adversaries, such as terrorists, spies and criminals, with critical information needed to harm you or disrupt your mission. Practicing Operations Security (OPSEC) will help you to recognize your critical information and protect it from an adversary. Here are a few safety tips to get you started.

THINK BEFORE YOU POST! Remember, your information could become public at any time due to hacking, configuration errors, social engineering or the business practice of selling or sharing user data. For more information, visit the Interagency OPSEC Support Staff's website.

OPSEC AND SOCIAL NETWORKING SITE CHECKLIST

Personal Information

Do you:

- Keep sensitive, work-related information OFF your profile.
- Keep your plans, schedules and location data to yourself.
- Protect the names and information of coworkers, friends, and Family Members.
- Tell friends to be careful when posting photos and information about you and your Family?

Posted Data

Before posting, did you:

- Check all photos for indicators in the Background or reflective surfaces?
- Check filenames and file tags for sensitive data (your name, organization or other details)?

Passwords

Are they:

- Unique from your other online passwords?
- Sufficiently hard to guess?
- Adequately protected (not shared or given away)?

Settings and Privacy

Did you:

- Carefully look for and set all your privacy and security options?
- Determine both your profile and search Visibility?
- Sort “friends” into groups and networks, and set access permissions accordingly?
- Verify through other channels that a “friend” request was actually from your friend.

Add “untrusted” people to the group with the lowest permissions and accesses.

Security

Remember to:

- Keep your anti-virus software updated.
- Beware of links downloads, and attachments just as you would in e-mails.
- Beware of “apps” or plug-ins, which are often written by unknown third parties who might use them to access your data and friends.
- Look for HTTPS and the lock icon that indicate active transmission security before logging in or entering sensitive data (especially when using Wi-Fi hotspots).

Think. Protect. OPSEC. www.ioss.gov

RESOURCES

OPREADY HANDBOOKS AND GUIDES

For Family Readiness Groups

- *U.S. Army FRG Leader's Handbook*—This is designed for FRG Leaders to assist in establishing and managing a Family Readiness Group (FRG), based on lessons learned.
- *U.S. Army Family Readiness Support Assistant: FRSA Resource Guide*—This handbook is designed primarily to inform Family Readiness Support Assistants about their roles and responsibilities in the deployment cycle support process.
- *U.S. Army Rear Detachment Commander's Handbook*—This handbook for leaders describes how leadership and FRGs individually and in partnership support Soldiers and Family Members through the deployment cycle.

PTSD/MTBI CHAIN TEACHING PROGRAM FOR FAMILY READINESS GROUP LEADER'S

Army Behavioral Health (<http://www.behavioralhealth.army.mil>) offers an online video file of the PTSD/MTBI Chain Teaching Program, which is available to Family Readiness Group (FRG) Leaders. This version is tailored for unit leaders to present at FRG meetings to help familiarize Family Members with signs and symptoms of PTSD/MTBI, and for further use by Family Readiness Groups to inform Spouses and other Family Members. This was developed by Battlemind Training System Office, and Army Medical Department and School.

COMMUNITY RESOURCES:

The Army Strong Community Center (ASCC) program was created by the efforts of Lt General Jack Stultz Jr. and his wife Laura. Their goal is to support the Military Members and their Families who live away from the larger military installations where support is available. The ASCC connects geographically dispersed Families with support resources in their own community and serves as an information and referral office dedicated to assisting and supporting Service Members, Retirees, Veterans and Family Members. The ASCC serves all branches of the military, active and reserve.

Miller/Duckett United States Army Reserve Center:
306 E. French Broad Street Brevard, NC 28712
Community Support Professional
828-884-9482

Army Strong Community Center:

2035 Goodman Street North, Suite 103 Rochester, NY 14609
Community Support Manager
585-339-3308
Community Support Professional
585-339-3311

Active Duty Installations: A remote Family may have no nearby **Army** installation, but they may have local Air Force, Navy or Marine installations. Don't restrict your search to just Army posts. The focus should be on getting local support for your Family, not which branch is delivering the support.

Military Homefront (<http://www.militaryhomefront.dod.mil/>) and Military Avenue (<http://www.militaryavenue.com>) have some great information on military installations. You can search by branch or state.

Find downloadable military installations guides at:

http://benifits.military.com/misc/installations/landing_page.jsp

Many **church, service-oriented and community groups** donate meeting space to support groups in their communities and can provide valuable leads. Veterans groups such as American Legion (<http://www.legion.org/>) and the VFW (<http://vfw.org>) are organized by state and have posts in many communities. Blue Star Mothers (<http://www.bluestarmothers.org/>) is primarily a support group for the parents of Soldiers; yet they are can be excellent local resources for any Family. You should also consider contacting the local Red Cross chapter (<http://www.redcross.org/>) or YMCA (<http://www.ymca.net>). If the Family cannot find local, deployed Families, connecting them to a community organization may provide a broader support base.

Resources Web Sites

Military OneSource—www.militaryonesource.com:

This DoD portal offers a toll free telephone number (1-800-342-9647) and web site with 24/7 capability for confidential counseling, to either speak to or email a master level consultant, at no cost. Assistance to Soldiers and Family Members includes reintegration support, child care, personal finances, emotional support—before, during and after deployments, relocation information, resources needed for special circumstances, or private counseling in the local community.

Army OneSource—www.myarmyonesource.com

Official Army “one-stop knowledge portal” that offers all Army members a central point for getting information about Family programs and accessing services. A

three pronged approach provides support at Army Centers, on the web, and through 24/7 telephone support (Military OneSource).

Army Community Service (ACS)—www.myarmyonesource.com:

ACS offers quality of life programs that provide support services, education, and information. Some key ACS services are the Soldier and Family Assistance Center (SFAC), Exceptional Family Member Program (EFMP), Army Family Team Building (AFTB), Army Family Action Plan (AFAP), Relocation Readiness, Financial Readiness, Employment Readiness, Survivor Outreach Services (SOS), Outreach for Waiting Families (e.g., Hearts Apart) and Emergency Assistance. The Family Advocacy Programs addresses prevention of child abuse and domestic Abuse, parent education, the New Parent Support Program (offering home visitation), stress/anger management classes, relationship support, and intervention services (e.g., victim advocacy, transitional compensation). The Mobilization and Deployment, Operation READY training materials provide a range of information regarding deployment. Military Family Life Consultants (MFLC) offer anonymous, short-term confidential support and situational counseling via licensed clinicians (e.g., Master's and Ph.D. level).

Army National Guard— www.jointservicessupport.org:

This web site provides information, services and support to National Guard Soldiers and their Families worldwide. Phone numbers (including state FAC and FAC Specialists), links to support agencies and interactive support are available 24/7—Yellow Ribbon reintegration training initiative.

Army Reserve Family Programs—www.arfp.org :

The ARFP web site is a one-stop portal to get connected with Army Reserve Family support information, resources, education, training, awareness, outreach, information, referral, and follow-up. Phone numbers, links to support agencies and interactive support are available 24/7 to include reintegration information and support.

**Soldier and Family Assistance Center (SFAC):
www.myarmyonesource.com:**

Provides tailored integrated support services while serving as an information broker/ clearing house in a location proximate to Warriors in Transition (WT) and their Families. These services are to equip and aid Warriors in making life-changing decisions as they transition either back to duty or to civilian life. The virtual SFAC (vSFAC) is a web-based system that offers information and support, and especially helpful for Family Members who are not located near an installation/facility. There are multiple links to other resources such the Army

Wounded Warrior Program and Military Home Front as well as direct links to local SFACs.

OTHER SELECTIVE RESOURCES

Army Behavioral Health—www.behavioralhealth.army.mil:

This web site has information for Soldiers, their Families and the public on how to help Soldiers deal with the stress of war, and Q&A that help assess behavioral-health needs before, during and after deployments; Pre and post deployment health self assessments (the PDHRA), post-traumatic stress disorder, and suicide prevention; Soldier's Battlemind training I and II, Battlemind for Family Members and links to fifteen video resources covering a variety of topics that are helpful for Soldiers, Family Members, children and professionals (<http://www.battlemind.army.mil>). The PTSD/MTBI Chain Teaching Program is being made available to FRG Leaders.

Army Center for Health Promotion and Preventative Medicine (CHPPM)—[Chppm-www.apgea.army.mil](http://chppm-www.apgea.army.mil):

The CHPPM mission supports health promotion and wellness for all aspects of the changing Army community anticipating and responding to operational needs to a changing world environment. They have professional resources to include Suicide Prevention resources and training materials; deployment health guides and related topics.

Army Center for Substance Abuse Programs (ACSAP)—<https://acsap.army.mil>:

The ACSAP program develops, administers, and evaluates Army-wide alcohol and other drug prevention, education, and training programs. Provides training materials on substance prevention and related information. Under tab "Drug/Alcohol Prevention Education, there are a range of trainings on everything from alcohol to steroid use and other drug trends, as well as command tools. This web site includes monthly and special campaign information and accompanying tools (articles, news releases, etc) to support each theme (e.g., "protecting lives, saving futures," "buzzed driving is drunk driving"). Links to Employee Assistance, and the clinical/treatment program, which is through the local Army Substance Abuse Program (ASAP).

[Army] Comprehensive Soldier Fitness—www.army.mil/csf:

The Comprehensive Soldier Fitness (CSF) goal is to increase "total fitness" by ensuring that Soldiers, DA Civilians, and their Family Members have the opportunity to maximize available training time, by equipping them with the skills to become more "self-aware, fit, balanced, confident, and competent." It is

designed to promote resilience to enhance skill and performance levels. An initial online assessment needs to be completed which provides links to related online trainings. Additional assessments are taken throughout the Soldier's/ Civilian's career to monitor overall fitness—physical, emotional, social, spiritual, and Family.

American Red Cross—www.redcross.org:

Rapid communication, personal and financial assistance for emergency leave and disaster assistance available 24/7. Services via phone contact (1-877-272-7337), internet connectivity, and a Welcome Home guide for Families (1996) that addresses how to make a smooth transition when military members return home. A post deployment workshop is available (as of October 2008 in 16 states and WDC and is planned to all states by summer of 2009) entitled “Coping with Deployments: Psychological First Aid for Military Families.”

Chaplain and Unit Ministry Team:

The Chaplains and the Unit ministry team offer counseling support, conduct training/ workshops on wide ranges of issues, and serve as referral contact especially for Soldiers and Family Members in distress (e.g., serve on crisis response teams). They also sponsor marriage retreats (Strong Bonds (www.strongbonds.org) or Guard and Reserve Marriage Enrichment Seminars) to help couples adjust with the challenges of deployment.

Defense Centers of Excellence for Psychological Health and Traumatic Brain Injury (DCoE): <http://www.dcoe.health.mil>:

This DoD web site brings together nine directorates and six component centers (e.g., Center for Traumatic Stress, Defense and Veterans Brain Injury Center, Deployment Health Clinic Center) through a collaborative global network to maximize opportunities for warriors and Families to promote resilience, recovery for TBI and psychological health and reintegration. They “oversee and facilitate prevention, resilience, identification, treatment, outreach, rehabilitation and reintegration programs for psychological health and traumatic brain injury.” This site provides a portal to a range of health issues (under Resource tab). Search for newsletter, DCoE in Action” which highlights special topics.

Defense Finance and Accounting Service (DFAS): <https://mypay.dfas.mil/mypay.aspx>

The MyPay web site gives each Soldier and their Family access to information about the Service Member's money 24 hours a day from anywhere in the world. After signing up for a personal PIN number there will be a list of options from which to choose such as the ability to view and make changes to your account, printing and saving LES's, viewing and printing tax statements, making changes

to federal and state tax withholdings, updating bank accounts, electronic fund transfer information, and certificates of eligibility, plus “Hot Topics” with helpful, up-to-date information.

Department of Defense’s Military HOMEFRONT:
www.militaryhomefront.dod.mil:

This official Department of Defense portal provides information for all Service Members and their Family Members, service providers and leaders relevant to quality of life information, programs and services.

Department of Veterans Affairs—www.va.gov:

The web site operates a system of 232 community based counseling centers providing readjustment counseling and outreach services to all veterans, and their Family Members for military related issues. Information and booklets on VA benefits and programs for disabled veterans are available on their web site. The Department of Veterans Affairs’ publication entitled Federal Benefits for Veterans and Dependents can be accessed on the web at www.va.gov/opa/vadocs/current_benefits.htm. For detailed information on survivor benefits, visit the Veterans Affairs’ Survivors Benefits web site at www.vba.va.gov.

Deployment Health Clinical Center—www.pdhealth.mil/main.asp:

A DoD web site, PDHealth.mil, was designed to assist clinicians in the delivery of post deployment healthcare by fostering a trusting partnership between military men and women, veterans, their Families, and their healthcare providers to ensure the highest quality care.

Leader 2 Leader:

The Leader2Leader (L2L) Network is a virtual community where our Army's homefront leaders collaborate and share ideas in a private community of like-minded peers. L2L is an Army resource that is led by fellow FRG Leaders, FRSA's and Senior Advisors.

The communities are dedicated to helping unlock your potential as a leader and provide the opportunity for professional growth as you work to build an exceptional Family readiness program.

Join the community that is dedicated to you!:

- <http://FRGLeader.army.mil>
- <http://FRSA.army.mil>
- <http://SeniorAdvisor.army.mil>

Military Child Education Coalition (MCEC)—www.militarychild.org:

MCEC identifies the challenges that face the highly mobile military child, increases awareness of these challenges in military and educational communities and initiates and implements programs to meet the challenges. MCEC offers workshops for parents at various installations.

Military Spouse Career Center—www.military.com/Spouse/fs:

A DoD web site that has a variety of articles on everything from deployment to personal finance and childcare. A connection to other resources and links on additional topics of concern to military Spouses and Families as well as an e-newsletter are available.

My Hooah 4 Health—www.hooah4health.com:

U.S. Army health promotion and wellness web site, Hooah 4 Health, is a health promotion partnership that allows individuals to assume the responsibility to explore options and take charge of their health and well-being. Topics cover the personal—physical, material, mental, and spiritual—state of Soldiers, Civilians, and their Families as well as focuses on areas concerning the deployment cycle such as Soldiers returning from a combat zone and reintegration.

National Center for PTSD (NCPTSD)—<http://ncptsd.va.gov>:

Information and resources to advance the clinical care and social welfare of U.S. Veterans through research, education and training on PTSD and stress-related disorders are accessible for Veterans and their Families, and service providers. Key resources currently available: “Returning from the War Zone: A Guide for Families,” “Returning from the War Zone: A Guide for Military Personnel,” “Iraq War Clinicians Guide,” and “The New Warrior — Combat Stress and Wellness” video (i.e., video discusses actions that can be taken to prevent chronic mental health problems for Service members who have been exposed to combat and war zone-related stress). A range of related information can be found under the tabs “Mental Health Care Providers” and “Veterans and their Families.”

National Child Traumatic Stress Network (NCTSN)—www.nctsnet.org:

The NCTSN is a unique collaboration of academic and community-based service centers whose mission is to raise the standard of care and increase access to services for traumatized children and their Families across the United States. Resources are available for Educators, Family Members, Mental Health and Medical Professionals with a specific section pertaining to and for Military Children and Families. Some of the topics include deployment-related stressors such as parental separation, Family reunification, and reintegration as well as

welcoming home a parent who returns with a combat injury or illness, or of facing a parent's death.

National Military Family Association (NMFA)—www.nmfa.org:

Dedicated to providing information to and representing the interests of Family Members of the uniformed services by providing extensive information for military Families and those who service them. Fact sheets are offered on a variety of topics, including Benefits for Survivors of Active Duty Deaths and Resources for Wounded or Injured Service Members and their Families. Both the web site and fact sheets provide detailed information and links to additional resources such as Resources for Parents, Teachers, and Family Support Professionals and Coming Home—Families and War.

Operation Military Child Care—www.childcareaware.org:

A Department of Defense initiative to help Families/child care guardians of geographically dispersed active duty personnel and mobilized National Guard and Reserve find affordable childcare options in their local communities. Under this initiative, reduced childcare fees are offered at licensed childcare providers.

Operation Military Kids—www.operationmilitarykids.org:

Army Child and Youth Service, National 4-H Headquarters/USDA, and land-grant Universities throughout the U.S. collaborate. This partnership with local organizations serving youth establishes networks that connect and support the youth of mobilized National Guard and Reserve Service Members. Through these community support networks, military youth receive a wide range of recreational, social, and educational programs in communities where they live. These include opportunities to participate in a range of programs, gain leadership, organizational, and technical skills by participating in the Speak Out for Military Kids program or Mobile Technology Lab programs, receive assistance with school issues by connecting with Army Child Youth and School Services School Liaisons—More on School Transition Support, attend single day or weekend camps and meet other youth who are also experiencing deployment.

Strategic Outreach to Families of All Reservists (SOFAR):
www.sofarusa.org/about_sofar.html:

SOFAR is a nonprofit program that connects military Families with clinicians who provide free mental health services. Founded in 2003 in the Boston area, the program has expanded with one chapter in Michigan and two more chapters to be launched in 2008 in New York and Florida. The program tailors mental health services to the Soldiers and the primary focus is on the extended Families of Army Reserve and National Guard Soldiers. SOFAR seeks to help military

Families develop realistic expectations about the process of rehabilitation and reintegration that Soldiers undergo when they return from war.

Suicidology Organization] American Association of Suicidology:
www.suicidology.org:

An education and resource organization dedicated to the understanding and prevention of suicide. Hosts conferences, provides various links to other websites as a source of further information regarding suicidology and mental health, and offers books such as the SOS— Handbook for Survivors of Suicide which, is a pocket-sized quick-reference booklet to help suicide survivors cope with grief.

Virtual Family Readiness Group (vFRG): ww.armyfrg.org:

Provides the functionality of a traditional FRG in an ad hoc and on-line setting to meet the needs of geographically dispersed units and Families across all components of the Army. The vFRG links deployed Soldiers, Families, FRG Leaders, unit Commanders, rear detachments, and other Family readiness personnel.

The **vFRG** advanced search function available under “find an FRG” at <http://www.armyfrg> can help Families find the home/host FRG, and any nearby unit FRG. However, Army FRG does not provide street addresses or POC information for the FRGs. In order to subscribe to an FRG’s website, your Soldier needs to be on the unit FRG roster. However, your attempt, if rejected, will get the attention of the FRG’s site administrator who may contact you. **Note:** only FRGs that have vFRG websites are displayed by the “Find an FRG” search function.

Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences (USUHS)—
<http://www.usuhs.mil/psy/> Center for the Study of Traumatic Stress –
www.centerforthestudyoftraumaticstress.org:

The Center conducts research in partnership with USUHS and provides information on preparing and responding to and recovering from trauma. The Courage to Care project is an electronic, health promotion and deployment campaign that offers fact sheets for professionals and Families related information. There are other materials related to response and recovery from trauma related events. The Joining Forces: Joining Families Newsletter through (USUHS) brings timely topics on Family violence to the field.

U.S. Army Combined Army Center, Center for Army Lessons Learned:
www.call.army.mil:

This site offers, “Lessons learned” and has specific FRG resources to include: Call Handbook, Guard and Reserve Family Readiness Toolkit, and other helpful information.

U.S. Army Wounded Warrior Program (AW2): www.aw2.army.mil:

Assistance to Families who have a Wounded Warrior toll-free 800-237-1336. This official U.S. Army program assists and advocates for severely wounded, injured, and ill Soldiers and their Families, wherever they are located. This site provides a wealth of information pertaining to the Wounded Warrior Program and opportunities that exist for the Wounded Warrior. It also offers multiple listings of links and resources available to the Wounded Warrior and Family for assistance to include, but not limited to Career and Education, Benefits, Information for Family/Spouse/Child/Caregiver, and Government and Military resources.

VII. Deployment Cycle

Nothing is so much to be feared as fear.

Henry David Thoreau

THE DEPLOYMENT CYCLE

In today's Army, it is not a question of **IF** your soldier will deploy, but **WHEN** your Soldier will deploy. Deployments can occur with little or no notice. The key to any deployment is preparation and communication. Talk with your Soldier about personal and professional expectations. The more informed you are before a deployment, the more confident you will be during the three main stages of deployment: Pre-deployment, Deployment, and Re-Deployment/Reunion.

Preparing for Deployment (Pre-Deployment)

Preparing the Unit for Deployment:

During the Unit's Pre-deployment stage, life will be very busy. The Family Readiness Group (FRG) should already be established but things will be "gearing up" and the Unit, as a whole, will be preparing the families and soldiers for the upcoming transition. Review the following ideas to facilitate and understand these preparations ...

- **Confirm FRG Key Leaders:** Verify that key FRG leaders are identified and are planning to maintain their positions throughout the deployment. Meet with everyone involved and discuss their plans at the earliest possible date. Key positions within the Company FRG would include the leader, key callers, treasurer, and committee chairs. During a deployment, a Battalion (BN) level Steering Committee will likely include the Rear Detachment Commander (RDC), Family Readiness Support Advisor (FRSA), BN Advisors, Family Readiness Group (FRG) Leaders, and Spouse Leadership. Key positions at Company level would consist of RDC, FRSA, and the Company FRG Leader.
- **FRG Train-Up:** The installation will offer FRG leadership training for Key Callers, Treasurers, and Leaders. Make sure all existing and new FRG leadership are aware of and have completed FRG training. If an FRG leader cannot attend training, myarmyonesource.com provides an online course in the eLearning Center. An FRG Leader's Train-up/Preparedness and Mobilization "Pre-deployment" checklist is located at the end of this chapter.

**** Reserve Component: FRG training will be at State and Regional Level.**

- **Information Flow:** Determine how information will be disseminated between the Rear Detachment, the FRSA, the FRG leaders, and FRG members. The RDC serves as the official source of information and communication between the deployed unit and families. In addition to Unit and FRG information, community/installation event information, military initiative/program updates, and Senior Spouse Information Briefings/Community Information Forum information, should be distributed through the Company.

*****Reserve Component: The Family Programs Assistant (FPA) can help Families locate and connect with their host FRG (deploying unit).***

Contact information must be kept current, and be updated as needed:

- Company contact rosters and FRG phone trees should be complete and accurate. Stress the importance, for spouses to notify key leaders (RDC, FRG Leader, FRSA) if contact information changes or if spouses are traveling out of town. This is vital in the case that critical information needs to be relayed in a timely fashion. Be sure to include geographically dispersed families in your rosters/email and phone trees.

*****Reserve Component: Often families live far from the host unit and cannot attend FRG events. The FRG and RDC should provide updated unit-related news during the deployment. The host FRG should make contact with each Soldiers Family during the period of Pre-Mobilization training. These families as well as Individual Augmentee Families should be contacted and included in the Host FRG Telephone trees, email and newsletter rosters.***

(See Handouts at end of chapter for sample phone tree)

- The RDC should ensure that information data sheets are completed and/or updated during Soldier Readiness Processing prior to deployment. This information must remain accurate and current.

(See Handouts at end of chapter for Information Data sheet samples: Soldier Readiness Contract, Spouse preference form, Newcomer information sheet)

- Distribute the Soldiers in-theater/deployed address to the families, along with any mailing restrictions for that region. If the address is known at the Pre-deployment briefing, it will be released at that time; otherwise RDC will distribute it when the unit is downrange.

- **Casualty Procedures:** Casualty Procedures should be reviewed prior to deployment. Include Military procedures, timelines, and notification protocol. FRG's are **NOT** part of the official notification process; however they do provide follow-on support and they should have an understanding of standard operating procedures. It is important to note that reference to a casualty refers to any person who is "lost to an organization" for a variety of reasons (www.HRC.army.mil). There are 7 categories of Casualty Status, which are used for reporting purposes; all of these do not indicate death. Notification procedures vary and are based on the casualty category. A guideline for this process would be Wounded in Action (WIA) is notified by telephone, while Killed in Action (KIA), Missing in Action (MIA) or Duty Status-Whereabouts Unknown (DUSTWUN) are notified in person. This type of notification is carried out by a Casualty Notification Officer (CNO) accompanied by a Chaplain.
- **Pre-Deployment Briefing:** A Pre-Deployment Briefing will be organized by the unit. This briefing may be held at Battalion level if an entire Battalion is deploying or alternately, at Company level if a Company will deploy apart from the Battalion. Included topics will cover information that is pertinent to the soldiers and families: unit specific information, officially prepared slides, finance, religious support, legal issues, communication, Mission Statement, readiness checklists, emergency information, etc. Family members are strongly encouraged to attend these briefings. Soldiers are required to attend.

*****Reserve Component: See phase 1 (Pre-Deployment) of the Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program at the end of this chapter. Not all Families are able to attend pre-deployment briefings in person. Virtual Mobilization Deployment Briefings are available on the "Soldiers, Families, Friends, and Employers" menu at www.arfp.org.***

(See Handouts at end of Chapter for a sample Pre-Deployment Briefing timeline worksheet)

- **Family Preparedness Tools:** Providing resources for the family members encourage self-help and empowerment. We recommend you work with your FRSA to produce the following tools:
 - Providing families with a consolidated listing of important phone numbers such as; RDC, FRG Leader, FRSA, Staff Duty, Chaplain, Clinic, Military Family Life Consultant (MFLC), Red Cross, law enforcement, and other local emergency numbers, is very helpful to family members. Some ideas for distributing this information would be wallet cards, magnets, and pre-deployment brochure/packet.

*****Reserve Component: In addition to the above mentioned contacts, distribute the host FRG leader, the FPA, and the Family Readiness Liaison (FRL) contact data to each family.***

(See sample of wallet card at end of chapter)

- Provide a listing of the above mentioned resources/agencies with a description of the services each provide. Do not assume all spouses/families have a full understanding of the resources that are available to them.

Preparing the Family for Deployment

Deployments are a very stressful time for families. You can ease the stress by preparing yourself and family ahead of time.

- Use the Family Preparedness Checklist as a guide to prepare your family for deployment.

(See sample Preparedness Checklist at the end of this chapter)

- Some installations require a Family Care Plan (FCP) before deployment. This is a plan for the care of family members and personal property and is mandatory for Dual Military Couples. It is highly recommended that all families complete a FCP.
- Insure all unit and FRG information data sheets, forms and questionnaires have been completed or updated with accurate contact information. This information is held at the unit for security purposes.

(See sample data forms at the end of this chapter)

- Discuss the time commitment for the deployment with your soldier. Bear in mind, some deployments are open ended and time frames may shift.
- Talk to your soldier about concerns and feelings before a deployment. You may have problems understanding your soldier's excitement. The Soldier is doing the job he/she was trained to do; therefore, do not interpret this as personal rejection. Attempt to resolve conflicts, as unresolved conflicts will not disappear throughout the deployment.
- Finances need to be addressed. If the soldier usually takes care of personal finances, make sure you are comfortable with assuming these responsibilities for the duration of the deployment. You soldier may grant you access to his/her Leave and Earning Statement (LES) through www.dfas.mil .

- Become familiar with all bills, checking, savings and investment accounts, and associated passwords for online accounts.
- Be aware of all bills and taxes that need to be paid and when they are due.
- Agree on a spending and saving plan for both of you before the deployment to avoid conflict in the future.
- There will be changes to the LES during a deployment (separation pay, combat pay, etc.).
- Speak with the Finance Office about contributing to Thrift Savings Plan and/or Saving Deposit Program. SDP is only available while the military member is deployed.
- Check with your credit card company(s) and auto insurance company to see if you qualify for lower rates.
- Service Members Civil Relief Act (SCRA) provides a wide range of protections for individuals entering, called to active duty in the military, or deployed service members from civil obligations such as: outstanding mortgage payments, pending trials, taxes, termination of lease, debt incurred prior to entering the military, etc.
- Visit Army Community Service (ACS) to find out what Financial Readiness classes are offered on your installation.
- If you will need Power of Attorney for financial matters, get these NOW at the Installation Legal Office.

*****Reserve Component Families: become familiar with the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA). USERRA provides reemployment protection and other benefits for veterans and employees who perform military service***

- Be organized. Know where all of your important papers and phone numbers are kept. These records are best kept in one location: passports, social security cards, marriage license, birth certificates, copy of orders, Power of Attorney, divorce decrees, custody papers, etc. Use a Deployment checklist as a guide.

(See sample Deployment Checklist at end of the chapter)

- Keep all important numbers near your home phone and a copy with you at all times. Enter emergency numbers on mobile phones, as well, to keep numbers handy. Enter an “In Case of Emergency” (ICE) number in your mobile phone stored under the name ICE. Emergency workers may look for this entry on your phone if you are incapacitated. Important numbers include: Unit, Rear Detachment, Family Readiness Group Leader/Key Caller, Unit Chaplain, On-Call Chaplain, American Red Cross, Staff Duty, and Military Family Life Consultant.

- Talk with your Soldier about how you will communicate during deployment: United States Postal Service, email, HOOAH mail, social network, web cam, www.trooptube.tv/home, etc. Be aware that some options may not be available at your soldier's location, especially at the onset of a rapid/combat deployment. Your soldier may not actually know what communications he/she will have available, until after the unit stabilizes in-theater. Be prepared for the possibility that you may not be able to communicate for weeks at a time... this situation is often out of your soldier's control. If you need to set up a Guest AKO account (email), go to www.us.army.mil and click on "Register for AKO". Your Guest account (which expires in 1 year) requires sponsorship from your soldier.
- Attend all Pre-Deployment briefings, meetings, and chats as these forums will provide accurate and updated deployment information.

During the Deployment

This time of your life will become very stressful but it may also be an opportunity for personal growth. At the unit, spouses will look to you for mentorship, leadership, and guidance. At home, family members may depend on you. There may also be pressure to assume volunteer roles within the community. It is a good idea to develop and establish ways for coping and balancing the demands of the unit, family, and community.

At the beginning of the actual deployment, there will be an outpouring of support from friends, units and the community. This will lessen with time. You and your family and friends will slowly get into a routine. It is important to stay focused on the tasks at hand.

*****Reserve Component Families: At some point during the Deployment, Reserve Component Families will have the opportunity to come together during Phase 2 (Deployment) of the Yellow Ribbon Program for their unit.***

Spouse Leadership

As a spouse in a leadership role during the Unit's Deployment, the example you set can set the tone for the entire group. Establish a "zero tolerance" for gossip and rely only on factual information. In this leadership role, you may be privy to sensitive information; **discretion and confidentiality are imperative!** Whether or not you serve as the FRG leader, people will come to you with concerns and questions. If you do not have a knowledgeable answer, inform the individual that you will get back to them with an answer or a resource as soon as possible. Keep notes and be sure to follow-up. You are not capable of fixing everyone's problems, but you can serve as an effective resource referral. Neither the FRG nor the RD will always be able to provide families the resolution/answers they are wanting. Keep an up-to-date listing of available

resources on your installation, in your unit and in your community by the phone for quick reference. You would be well advised to carry this information with you to FRG meetings as well. Strive to remain informed, and get to know your resources.

The FRG

A Unit's FRG, during deployment, normally has a drastic increase in participation. Meetings will occur more frequently and will sometimes move up to a BN level when it is necessary to brief all families simultaneously on pertinent issues. Everyone's emotions are on the surface which can lead to emotional FRG meetings. Set ground rules for the group. Be patient, as each family's concerns are legitimate. Keep information factual and ask key callers to refer those needing assistance to the appropriate agency and to give the FRG leader a "heads-up" on issues and rumors. Remember the FRG is most effective when each member takes responsibility for the group's success. At each FRG meeting introduce all leadership and the Rear Detachment. This will reinforce the member's knowledge that they are supported by the Unit and gives the family members an opportunity to address concerns that the FRG leader may not be abreast of. There may be a drop in FRG participation during the middle of the deployment as people establish their routine, but will likely surge again as the unit begins to focus on the return home.

Ask the FRSA to take notes at the FRG meetings. These notes should be distributed through the FRG, being especially helpful to those who cannot attend the meeting and to those whose geographical location prevents them from attending.

Be aware that parents of Single Soldiers are also part of your FRG, if designated by the soldier. Find ways to keep them connected and informed, i.e. newsletter, emails, vFRG or a monthly letter designed specifically for them.

Rumors are one of the biggest hurdles of an FRG during deployment. Rumor control is most effective when rumors are addressed quickly. It is essential that Families receive accurate information, disseminated in a timely manner. This will help to avoid rumors and give members faith in their FRG.

- For issues involving the unit, ask RD what information can be released to the families.
- "Rumor control" can be put on a meeting agenda as a designated time for FRG members to address recurring unit rumors, such as those regarding troop movement dates, tour extensions, etc.
- Encourage membership to go straight to FRG leadership or the RDC with concerns rather than spreading speculative information to other members.

- Family members can remind their soldiers never to discuss unit movement and mission information. Relaying this type of information can endanger our Soldiers.
- Personal rumors are not tolerated and will not be discussed!

Check with your Installation to see if childcare is provided for Pre-deployment briefings and FRG meetings. Some spouses will bring their children; others will prefer to use childcare if it is available. This need will vary based on the type of FRG activity that is planned. Prior to each meeting, an FRG should provide its membership an agenda so parents can make the best decision for themselves and their children regarding childcare.

The following are some issues that should be covered at FRG meetings:

- **Operational Security (OPSEC)** is very important and should be addressed during FRG meetings. It is helpful to invite someone from the unit to discuss procedures with family members. OPSEC is keeping potential adversaries from discovering our critical information (<http://www.usaghessen.eur.army.mil/Forceprotection/FamilyOPSEC.htm>). “As a family member of the military community, you are a vital player in Operational Security. You may not know it, but you play a crucial role in ensuring your loved ones safety. You can protect your loved ones by protecting military, day-to-day, information that you may know. This is known in the military as operations security or, OPSEC.” (United States Command, OPSEC Operations Security). “The Internet, personal Web sites, blogs (Web logs) are examples of where our adversaries are looking for open-source information about us. Open-source information isn't classified and may look like nothing more than innocuous bits of information, a piece here, a piece there, like pieces of a puzzle. But when you put enough of the pieces together you begin to realize the bigger picture and that something could be going on.”(Army News Service, April 20, 2007, Army Releases New OPSEC Regulation, by Mr. J.D. Leipold).
 - Sensitive information, such as area of operation, troop numbers, and mission information should NEVER be discussed.
 - Deployment/redeployment dates will be released by the Unit Command or Rear Detachment Command when appropriate and should not be discussed in any public forum (phone, email, in public places, social networking sites, etc.)
 - Never post photos with indicators (location, military equipment, Soldiers name, etc.) in the background or reflective surfaces.
 - Do not publicize information that would identify you as having a deployed soldier. You do not want to advertise yourself as “home alone.” There are those who could target you with scams, etc.

Keep Yourself and Our Soldiers Safe!

- **Area/Installation Support** is often available for deployed family members. Check with your installation and local community for discount and/or free services being offered to families with deployed soldiers. This may include, childcare, childcare for FRG meetings, respite care, free Youth Services SKIES classes and team sports, car maintenance, movies, exercise classes, etc., but will vary dependent upon the area you reside. Some of this information will fall under the Army Family Covenant.
- **Resource briefings** encourage and empower families to use available, and often free, resources to solve issues: ACS or AFTB can be scheduled to address an FRG group on Community Resources, distribute listings of current computer/website information such as www.militaryonesource.com and www.myarmyonesource.com, etc.

**** Non-Profit Organizations may offer assistance. Although the military can not endorse these organizations or their services, you may find a listing for citizen services and offers under “Citizen Support” at www.ourmilitary.mil**

Family Member’s out of town plans:

- Safety and preparedness should be stressed for those making out of town plans.
- If living on post, notify military police and/or post housing if your quarters will be empty for an extended period.
- Encourage family members to notify Rear Detachment Commander and the FRG leader if they will be out of town. The temporary contact information will be recorded, and will only be used in the event extremely time sensitive or critical information must be relayed. Some units suggest a Family Member Leave Form for this purpose.

(See sample of Family Member Leave Form at end of chapter)

- Family members should notify their medical insurance, Tricare, if they plan to stay out of their currently assigned health care region for more than 30 days. They will switch over to the “out of town” region for health care while they are away, and back to their original region upon returning home.
- **Reunion plans** should be discussed as the time of redeployment nears. Decide what you will do to celebrate the soldiers return to garrison. Re-integration and Reunion briefings will be planned by various Army agencies. Everyone should be encouraged to attend.

- **Definitely, discuss and plan Social Activities!** In addition to informational meetings, your FRG/Unit should host social events such as: Picnics, Holiday parties, pool parties, skate parties, etc. Social forums are conducive to bonding within the Unit Family.
- **Other deployment stage topics/activities** for the FRG might include: Rest and Recuperation Policy, Children and Deployment, Dealing with the Media, Fundraising, Chaplain activities/emotional support services, Unit specific information on the casualty notification process, Yellow Ribbon Rooms.

Deployment and Your Family

Communication is very important during a deployment. E-mail, phone calls, letters, care packages, web cam, Troop tube, HOOAH mail, and video-teleconferencing (VTC) are all ways to stay in touch with your loved ones. Keep in mind at the onset of a deployment, as units are initially arriving in theater, there are usually very limited and sporadic communication opportunities. Numbering letters is always a good idea, as they may not be received by the soldier in the order they were mailed. Encourage children to be directly involved in communication with a deployed parent. Children like to draw pictures, write to their parent, and receive their own mail. At any point in a deployment, communications may temporarily be interrupted due to technical issues, logistics, and mission requirements.

Each child will have a different emotional response to deployment. They will test their boundaries, so it is important to maintain discipline and be consistent. Remember to talk to your children about their feelings. Visit your installation Army Community Service office to gather materials designed to assist your child through this difficult time. Establish a relationship with your child's teachers and check with Schools/School Counselor for programs offered for children of deployed parents.

This can be a very stressful time for you as well. Deployment can be an emotional roller coaster. Below is a list of ideas that may help you manage separation:

- Take care of yourself, emotionally, physically, intellectually and spiritually.
- Eat right, exercise and get plenty of sleep.
- Seek ways to be involved but don't try to please everyone. Learn to say "No" when you need to.
- Participate in installation and community activities.
- Start a new hobby or activity you have always wanted to try.
- Take a class.

- Attend Unit Briefings/Activities and FRG meetings as this is the best source for gleaning factual and current information about your Soldier.
- Volunteer. When focusing on helping others, we dwell less on our own hardships.
- Set goals for yourself.
- Spend time with other military spouses. Time passes much faster with a friend who understands the demands of deployment.
- **STAY BUSY** with things you enjoy!!!

Re-Deployment and Reunion

Re-Deployment and Reunion is the stage when the unit and/or the soldier prepare to return home. The Unit will organize training for both the soldier and the family as they must both prepare for redeployment and reunion. Preparations for the “Happy Homecoming” will keep the FRG as well as the RDC busy during the weeks prior to Re-deployment. Advance parties will start arriving approximately 2 weeks before the main body. The Advance party soldiers may also assist with Reunion plans and taskings.

(See welcome home ideas at the end of this chapter)

Re-Deployment and the Unit

Redeployment preparation is easier if communication lines are open between you, your Soldier, and the unit. Battlemind training will be offered to spouses and required for the Soldier. This training provides insight into what both parties have experienced during the deployment. In most cases, a child based class is also offered. Other helpful suggestions for a smooth transition:

- Attend Unit Redeployment briefings.
- Expect pay changes, and reevaluate the family budget as needed.
- Utilize available redeployment resources: Army Community Service, Operation R.E.A.D.Y. resources, militaryonesource.com, etc.
- Try to remain flexible as dates and times of arrival will likely change.
- Maintain realistic reunion expectations.

Remember that official information regarding a soldier/unit’s return to garrison will be released by the Unit Command. The FRG will be involved in relaying information; however this should never be initiated until given a directive by the Commander to do so. As Operational Security is of utmost concern when moving troops, and transportation schedules can be ever changing, “ball-park” time frames may be set, with specifics only being released once soldiers are literally on their way home (on the plane).

After arriving back to the Unit, normally Soldiers will turn in their weapons, and then be bused to a large receiving area that has been designated as the point

where families will reunite with their Soldiers. Some posts' garrison command along with protocol, will organize Welcome Home ceremonies. These ceremonies are held approximately two hours after the Soldier's arrival to the Battalion or Company area. After these ceremonies, Soldiers are then released to family members. Soldiers MAY have a brief period off before being required to report to the unit. Block leave may be taken a few weeks after arriving home. These policies and procedures are at the commanders' discretion and are dependent on mission requirements.

*****For the Reserve Component, Soldiers return through their initial Mobilization Station for out-processing. The length of time at the MOB station will vary and families may or may not be allowed to join their Soldier at that time. The actual Reunion and ceremony will vary by mission and location.***

Re-Deployment and the Family

The day is finally here! You made it! When the soldier arrives he/she may be tired from many hours of travel, and the family worn down from hours of expectant waiting. As both the soldier and the family have dealt with new experiences during the deployment, both will have grown and changed. Setting aside family time for this readjustment phase is a good idea... not too busy, just time to get to know each other again. Reuniting and reacquainting may be smooth or rocky with the possibility of conflicts arising over roles and responsibilities. If you need help with the reuniting process, do not hesitate to contact your Military Family Life Counselor (MFLC) Chaplain, Militaryonesource.com, or your Health care provider for counseling, resources, and/or medical assistance.

*****Reserve Component Families may also choose to contact their State/Region Joint Family Support Assistance Program (JFSAP).***

- **As a spouse**, you may feel nervous, excited and stressed as reunion approaches. Closeness may be awkward at first, so take things slow. You may have become more independent during the separation as you managed more of the household duties, but it is important that you let your soldier know how important they are to you and/or your family, and be willing to readjust and reintegrate them into the family responsibilities.
- **A child's reaction** to redeployment may be both joyful and hesitant. Reactions vary by each individual child and by their age group: babies may cry, toddlers may not initially recognize the redeployed parent, pre-school children may appear slightly afraid, school-aged children may be demanding of the redeployed parent's time, and teenagers may be moody and act like they don't care.

- **A Soldiers** readjustment may include: sleep disturbance from jet lag, feeling “closed-in” and needing space to feel comfortable, being overwhelmed by the normal noise and confusion of home life, feeling left out or unimportant in the home, and feeling hurt when children are slow to hug them and show emotions.

(A Soldier and Family Guide to Redeploying, USAREUR/ERMC Edition 1)

Re-Deployment and the FRG

After the initial welcome home celebrations, **the FRG** will go through a re-adjustment period as well. Meetings may become less frequent and/or you may observe a decrease in participation. Families will be busy readjusting and some may be preparing to move to new duty stations. FRGs should always remain active, while at the same time adjusting to the needs of its members.

Changes Within the Unit and FRG

Once Soldiers return to work, life gets “back to normal.” As much as we like to keep our soldiers close to home, realize that Field Training Exercises and Combat Training Center rotations will resume (FTX, NTC, and JRTC).

The Unit/FRG will go through many changes and adjustments within weeks of redeployment. There will most likely be numerous changes of command, hail and farewells, leadership transfers, permanent change of station (PCS) orders and perhaps volunteer resignations. This is all “normal” and part of the reintegration process. If you have served as the FRG leader and your spouse is changing command, be sure to give a copy of the Company FRG Leader notebook to the FRSA or to the new Company Command. This continuity notebook should be passed on to the new FRG Leader. Keep a copy of the notebook for your personal records as well.

*****Reserve Component Soldiers will be going through significant adjustments as they return to their civilian professions with their continued traditional military training and requirements. This is the time for Phases 3 (Demobilization) and 4 (Post-Deployment Reconstitution) of the Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program for the Reserve Component which includes events at the 30, 60 and 90 day marks from the unit's return.***

FRG'S LEADER'S TRAIN-UP/PREPARATION AND MOBILIZATION PRE-DEPLOYMENT CHECKLIST

Reprinted from *U.S. Army FRG Leader's Handbook*

- Introduce yourself (FRG leader) to Soldiers and Families at pre-deployment briefings, FRG meetings, and other opportunities that arise. (Note, if time and space permit, a short FRG meeting can be conducted following a pre-deployment briefing.) These occasions are an opportunity to talk about the FRG and explain the benefits of participation. Keep in mind this is a brief sales presentation. The first impression the FRG leader conveys and what is said will influence whether Families choose to participate or not; so it is important to plan and execute well.
- Disseminate information about Company pre-deployment briefings (including childcare arrangements), mission and schedule information (if allowed), Soldier Readiness Processing (SRP) schedule, and FRG meetings to Soldiers and Families using the phone tree, vFRG web site, and email.
- Ensure Families understand the process of notification in case of casualty or injury.
- Encourage Soldiers and Families to attend pre-deployment briefings, if possible. Provide important information disseminated at pre-deployment briefings to Soldiers and Families.
- Encourage Soldiers and Families to provide contact information for all desired loved ones (i.e., immediate Family, extended Family/relatives, and fiancés/fiancées). This information will be obtained by the RDC, FRG and ACS. Also get information on Families' interest in participating in FRG activities or vFRG. Ask the Soldier to provide a form authorizing Family Members' access (by name and relationship) to the RDC or vFRG system administrator.
- Ensure Family Members know how to access the unit's vFRG web system and MyArmyLifeToo.com for up-to-date information.
- Provide information on how Families can contact Soldiers while deployed, if known.
- Coordinate with PAO to provide information to Soldiers and Families on how to deal with the media.
- Remind spouses to check that they have access to important personal documents (e.g., power of attorney), safe deposit box, car keys, checkbook, etc. and Family care plans if an emergency arises during deployment.
- Distribute information on Military One Source and Community Mental Health resources.
- Give all FRG members a pocket guide list of emergency phone numbers on their post including RDC, RDNCO and FRG POC.

- Provide Families with appropriate information and education materials such as:
 - a copy of the *Operation READY Soldier/Family Deployment Handbook* available from ACS and Reserve Component Family Programs
 - a copy of military and civilian community phone directories of important resources
 - Copies of Operation READY children's workbooks for the appropriate ages (also available from ACS and Reserve Component Family Programs).

- Make sure Soldiers are told specifically to add any person (such as fiancée's, significant others, parents, etc.) on their information sheet that they would like the FRG to contact.

- Make sure all FRG members' have an FRG member on emergency pick up on school information for children in case of emergency.

- Advise members to share with school counselors that their spouses are being deployed so that schools may support or at least be aware of home situation.

- Make sure all spouses have AKO accounts.

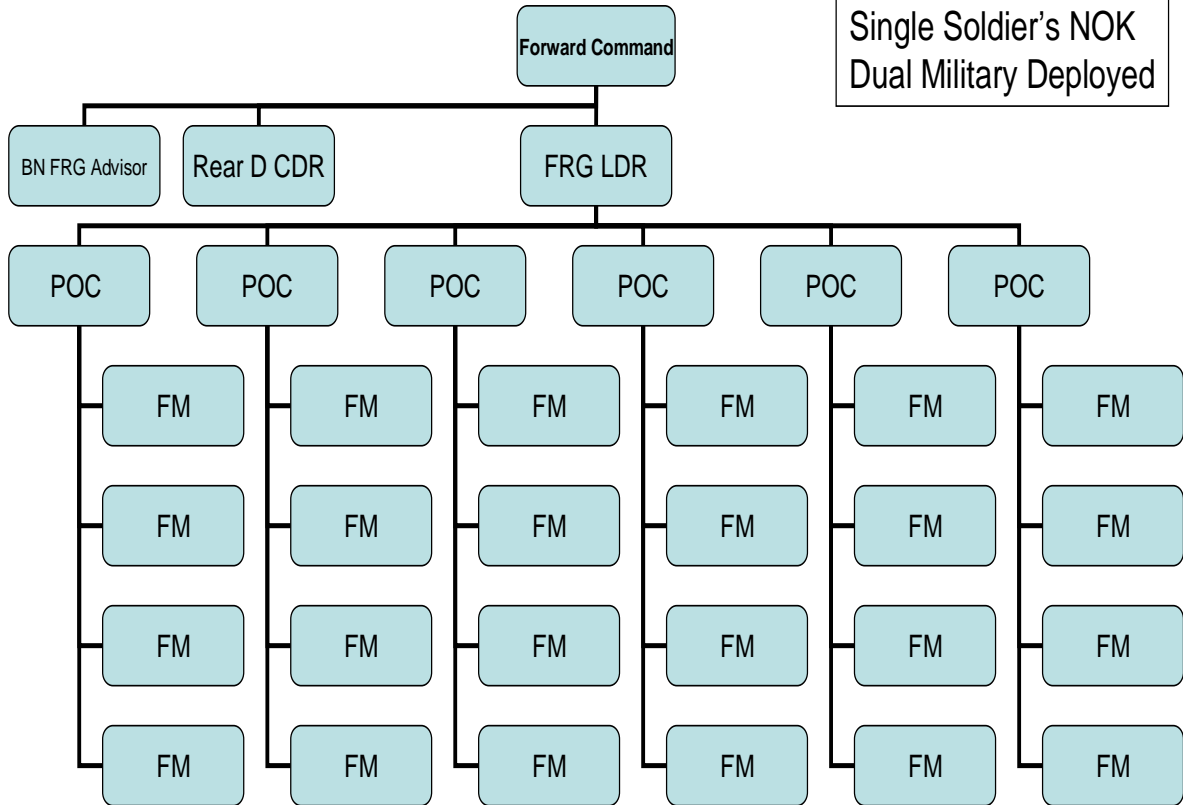
- Ascertain whether Families have any questions, especially after pre-deployment briefings, and address Family questions as appropriate.

- Conduct social activities to build Family camaraderie.

Encourage Families who are considering leaving the area to notify the unit and provide the FRG and RDC with new contact information.

Key Caller Roster (During Deployment)

Name
Phone (Home/Cell)
Email
Single Soldier's NOK
Dual Military Deployed



PRIVACY ACT

Sample Family Member "Leave" Form

(Copied from the Spouse Battlebook IV)

Your Name: _____

Home Address: _____

Home Phone _____

Home Email: _____

Child(ren) traveling with you? _____ Yes _____ No

Child's Name: _____

Child's Name: _____

Child's Name: _____

Child's Name: _____

Child(ren) left with: _____

Phone: _____ Address: _____

Soldier's Name / Rank: _____

Soldier's Unit: _____

LEAVE Address: _____

LEAVE Telephone Number: _____

LEAVE Email Address: _____

STAYING WITH (optional) _____

(Name of parent, sibling, friend, etc.)

Date of Departure: _____

Date of Return: _____

Sample

FAMILY BRIEFINGS/PREDEPLOYMENT BRIEFINGS

Reprinted from *U.S. Army Rear Detachment Commander's Handbook*

Pre-deployment briefings for Soldiers and Family Members help equip them to cope with an upcoming separation by acquainting them with unit plans and making available handbooks and information on spouse contacts and post and community resources.

The following guidance refers to briefings that will be conducted on the Battalion level when the Battalion deploys as part of a task force. **Companies are encouraged to conduct similar briefings when they deploy as smaller elements.** These milestones should be kept in mind, as advance planning is important:

<u>Date</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Responsibility</u>
Six weeks prior To deployment	Schedule briefing to include facility, Speakers, equipment, Refreshments, childcare	S-1, S-3
Five weeks prior To deployment	send out personal invitations from Battalion Commander	S-1
Three weeks prior To Deployment	conduct briefing	Battalion Commander

The Battalion or Company Briefing will include information from the American Red Cross (ARC), Army Community Service (ACS), and other Family-helping agencies. The schedule could be similar to the following:

<u>Topic</u>	<u>Presented by</u>	<u>Time</u>
Welcome	Battalion commander	15 min
Personnel issues	Battalion S-1	15 min
Predeployment Information	ACS staff	10 min
Security	Provost Marshal Office	05 min
Rear Detachment Concerns	RDC	10 min
Financial Assistance	Financial Readiness/CFSNCO	10 min
Religious Support	Unit Chaplain	10 min
Legal Issues	Staff Judge Advocate Ofc	15 min
FRG	BN or Co FRG Leader	10 min

Other optional briefers may be the Guard or Reserve Family Program Coordinator or key FRG personnel. A Staff Judge Advocate (SJA) officer might make a presentation on Powers of Attorney and wills. Following the formal briefing, Companies may want to hold FRG meetings to elaborate on issues specific to their group.

Sample WALLET CARD
(copied from the Spouse Battlebook IV)

Copy this page, fill in the information based on your installation and unit phone numbers, and provide it for your spouses in wallet card format or in your monthly newsletter.

Emergency Contacts	
Battalion X (give BN identification here)	
HHC	_____
A Company	_____
B Company	_____
C Company	_____
D Company	_____
Company FRG Leader	_____
Rear Detachment Commander	_____
Rear Detachment Commander Home	_____
Battalion Chaplain	_____
Chaplain after Duty/Emergency	_____
Rear Detachment Chaplain	_____
Help Line	_____
Battalion Staff Duty NCO	_____
Legal Assistance	_____
Armed Forces Emergency Service	_____
American Red Cross, 24hr Toll-Free Number	_____

Sample Key Phone Number Magnet

<p align="center">Insert Unit Logo/Graphic Here</p> <p align="center">Welcome to "Unit Name"</p> <p align="center">Family Readiness Group!</p> <p>The following information is important to know especially during a deployment. Please post it in an easily accessible location (i.e., refrigerator or send home to loved one). If you have any questions or concerns, contact any of the personnel below:</p> <p>Unit Name: _____</p> <p>Unit Phone (duty hours) _____</p> <p>Unit Phone (after hours) _____</p> <p>Unit Website: _____</p> <p>Company Key Caller's Name/Number:</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>Company FRG Leader's Name/Number:</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>FRG Assistant's Name/Number:</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>Rear Detachment Commander's Name/Number:</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>	<p align="center">Insert Unit Logo/Graphic Here</p> <p align="center">Welcome to "Unit Name"</p> <p align="center">Family Readiness Group!</p> <p>The following information is important to know especially during a deployment. Please post it in an easily accessible location (i.e., refrigerator or send home to loved one). If you have any questions or concerns, contact any of the personnel below:</p> <p>Unit Name: _____</p> <p>Unit Phone (duty hours) _____</p> <p>Unit Phone (after hours) _____</p> <p>Unit Website: _____</p> <p>Company Key Caller's Name/Number:</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>Copmany FRG Leader's Name/Number:</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>FRG Assistant's Name/Number:</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>Rear Detachment Commander's Name/Number:</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>
---	---

Unit Chaplain's Name/Number:

Chaplain's 24 hour line

(xxx) xxx-xxxx

American Red Cross (24 hour toll free number)

1-877-xxx-xxxx

Army Community Service (ACS)

(xxx) xxx-xxxx

Army One Source

www.militaryonesource.com

www.myarmyonesource.com

user id _____

password _____

*** Other important information: soldier's name, rank,
and social security number

Unit Chaplain's Name/Number:

Chaplain's 24 hour line

(xxx) xxx-xxxx

American Red Cross (24 hour toll free number)

1-877-xxx-xxxx

Army Community Service (ACS)

(xxx) xxx-xxxx

Army One Source

www.militaryonesource.com

www.myarmyonesource.com

user id _____

password _____

***Other important information: soldier's name, rank, and
social security number

American Red Cross Notification Information Letter

(copied from the Spouse Battlebook IV)

Dear Family,

If you need to contact me quickly or need my presence at home, you must contact the American Red Cross (ARC) in your local community. A message from the American Red Cross is required before I can get the documents for transportation on military aircraft and/or commercial aircraft, and for leave authorization. The following is information that you should provide the local American Red Cross:

My Full Name _____

My Social Security Number: _____

My Rank: _____ My Branch of Service _____

My Enlistment Date _____
Month Day Year

My Date of Birth _____
Month Day Year

My Military Unit _____

My Mailing Address _____

Duty Phone _____

My Residence Address _____

My Home Telephone Number _____

In addition, ARC will request detailed information regarding the nature of the emergency. At a minimum, you will need to know the name and address of the doctor/hospital, plus a statement as to why I am needed. I realize in the case of death or critical illness in the Family, you would want to call me directly, but you must also contact the Red Cross to authorize and expedite travel arrangements.

The Red Cross may be contacted 24 hours a day and there is no charge for this service. Please complete the following now and place this document in a safe

place so that it can easily be found in case you need to contact me. This procedure can be used regardless if I am deployed or at my home station.

Local American Red Cross _____

24 hour Toll Free Number _____

ARC Address _____

Signed: _____
(Service Member)

Soldier: Complete this information and hand/mail it to Family Members.
Family Member: Keep this document in a safe place in case of emergency.
Record case number here _____

The Soldier/Family Deployment Survival Handbook
FAMILY PREPAREDNESS CHECKLIST
Reprinted from Fort Leavenworth Family Assistance Handbook

Although deployments and separations are never easy on the Family, the hardships involved need not be increased by failure to plan. A carefully prepared and executed pre-deployment checklist can save you and your Family from giant headaches in the future.

It is very important for you, as a military Family, to have in your possession certain documents. Military spouses are often required to take over Family matters during the Soldier's absence, therefore, it is important that both of you sit down together to gather the information and documents named in this checklist. You are encouraged to keep originals or copies of all listed documents in a special container that you can find immediately. If you are using a safe deposit box, be sure you check with the bank to determine regulations for access when the Soldier is away.

LOCATION OF CONTAINER: _____

- ◇ Marriage certificate
- ◇ Birth certificates of all Family Members
- ◇ Shot records up to date of all Family Members, including pets
- ◇ Citizenship papers, if any
- ◇ Adoption papers, if any
- ◇ Passports, visas, if any
- ◇ Military ID cards for all Family Members 10 years and older
- ◇ Life insurance policies for Family Members, including name, address, and phone number of insurance companies
- ◇ Power of Attorney drawn up, copies provided
- ◇ Wills for both spouses completed and filed, copies on hand
- ◇ Orders - at least 10 copies of TDY and/or PCS orders
- ◇ Emergency data card updated in Military Personnel Record; copy on hand
- ◇ List of all credit cards and account numbers
- ◇ List of all bonds and stocks
- ◇ Court orders relating to divorce, child support, or child custody (if applicable)
- ◇ Real estate documents. Copies of all documents relating to rent or ownership of land. Documents relating to lease, mortgage, deed, or promissory note
- ◇ Copies of installment contracts and loan papers
- ◇ Death certificates for deceased Family Members
- ◇ Last LES (Leave and Earnings Statement)
- ◇ Discharge papers and other documents related to military service records
- ◇ Allotments updated with correct amount, name, address and account number
- ◇ Social Security numbers for ALL Family Members
- ◇ Inventory of household goods
- ◇ Titles to all automobiles
- ◇ Extra set of keys to house, car mailbox, etc.
- ◇ Next of kin informed of rights, benefits, assistance
- ◇ Family budget and business arranged
- ◇ Emergency services available explained

Family Preparedness Checklist, continued

- ◇ Nature and location of important documents explained
- ◇ Moving of household goods explained
- ◇ Joint checking/savings account arranged. List all account numbers
- ◇ Parents and spouse's parents informed of deployed's address; how to contact Soldier in case of an emergency
- ◇ Location and use of Red Cross explained
- ◇ Location of Army Community Service explained
- ◇ Location of JAG (Legal Assistance) explained
- ◇ Current addresses and telephone numbers of all members of immediate Families of both spouses (include father, mother, brothers, sisters)
- ◇ Personal telephone directory updated; important/emergency telephone numbers available at fingertips
- ◇ All doors and windows have good locks
- ◇ Problem areas with cars, household or appliances identified and resolved

Data Form Sample #1
Family Member Emergency Contact Information

Post this form on the back of your front door or on the refrigerator.

Soldier's Rank/Name _____

Unit _____

Spouse's Name _____ Phone _____

Home address: _____

Are there any special diets needed for any immediate Family Members?

___ Yes ___ No

Specify: _____

Are there any medical concerns/conditions for immediate Family Members?

___ Yes ___ No

Specify: _____

School / Childcare:

Child _____ School _____ Teacher _____ Phone _____

Child _____ School _____ Teacher _____ Phone _____

Child _____ School _____ Teacher _____ Phone _____

Carpool / Bus Information:

Name _____ Phone _____ Bus # _____

In case of emergency, the children can go home with: (This person has Temp Guardian POA)

Name _____ Address _____ Phone _____

Neighbors/Friends for Emergency Childcare:

Name _____ Address _____ Phone _____

Name _____ Address _____ Phone _____

Do you have Pets? ___Yes ___No Describe: _____

Names of those who could pet sit: _____ Phone _____

Family Readiness Group Contacts:

Key Caller Name _____ Phone _____

FRG Leader Name _____ Phone _____

Family Contacts:

Name _____ Address _____ Phone _____

Name _____ Address _____ Phone _____

Religious: Do you want your church/pastor contacted and/or unit chaplain?

___Yes ___No

Church _____ Pastor _____ Phone _____

Documents: Where are your important documents located? _____

Data Form Sample #2
FAMILY ASSISTANCE INFORMATION PACKET

PRIVACY ACT STATEMENT

AUTHORITY: Title 10, USC, Section 3012. PRINCIPLE PURPOSE(S): To assist Army Agencies and Commands in their mission of providing care and assistance to Families of Service Members who are required to be away from their home station. ROUTINE USES: (1) To identify specific problems and service needs of Soldiers and their Families. (2) To gather data that will assist in the development of appropriate programs and services. (3) To serve as a record of services provided. MANDATORY OR VOLUNTARY DISCLOSURE AND EFFECT ON INDIVIDUAL NOT PROVIDING INFORMATION: Voluntary information is required to assist the individual and his/her Family Members. Failure to provide the required information could result in a delay in providing assistance to the individual and/or Family Members.

1. SPONSOR INFORMATION:

Name _____ Rank/Grade _____ SSN _____

Home address _____

Email address _____

Home phone number w/area code _____

Cell phone _____

Unit Affiliation _____

Soldier's religious preference _____

Local church / Pastor _____

Marital Status: Single _____ Married _____ Divorced _____

2. EMERGENCY/CASUALTY NOTIFICATION:

In case of emergency notification, would spouse/PNOK require or request the presence of the Chaplain or any clergy? _____ Yes _____ NO If yes, who

Does your spouse have a "Base Buddy" (friend/neighbor) whom he/she would rely upon for assistance? _____ Yes _____ No. Would your spouse want this person contacted in the event of casualty notification? (This person would be contacted after official notification has been completed.) If yes, provide contact information:

Name _____ Telephone _____

Address _____

Employment location _____

FAMILY ASSISTANCE INFORMATION PACKET, continued

Additional information _____

3. FAMILY INFORMATION:

Spouse's or Family Member name _____
(person you want general information to be delivered to, could be parent, fiancé, etc.)

Home telephone _____ Cell phone _____

Spouse or Family Member email _____

Spouse's place of employment _____

Children: ____ Yes _ ____ No (List all children/dependents of the Soldier, living with you or not, including those of previous marriages/relationships. Use back of page if necessary.)

Name(s)	Birthdate	Lives with (Name/Location)	School
---------	-----------	----------------------------	--------

_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

4. PRIMARY NEXT OF KIN (PNOK), if other than spouse:

Name _____ Relationship _____

Address _____

Home phone w/area code _____

Email address _____

Native language spoken by PNOK _____

Nearest military installation to your PNKO _____

FAMILY ASSISTANCE INFORMATION PACKET, continued

5. SECONDARY NEXT OF KIN (SNOK):

Name _____ Relationship _____

Address _____

Home phone w/area code _____

Native language spoken by SNOK _____

Nearest military installation to your SNKO _____

6. EVALUATE FAMILY PROBLEMS/CONCERNS:

Are there Special Needs in your Family? _____ YES _____ NO.

If Yes, state problem and assistance needed _____

Financial: What arrangements have been made to provide financial support to spouse/children? Check to bank _____ ATM Card _____ Checkbook _____ Allotment _____ Other, specify _____

Housing: Will your Family relocate because of this deployment? _____ Yes _____ NO. If yes, relocation address _____ Phone _____

If no, are there any concerns about current housing situation? _____ Yes _____ NO. If yes, specify _____

Transportation: Does spouse/PNOK drive? _____ Yes _____ NO. Will there transportation be a problem in your absence? _____ Yes _____ NO. If yes, specify _____

MEDICAL: Are there any medical concerns? Pregnancy? Surgery Planned? _____ Yes _____ NO.

Due Date/Planned Surgery Dates: _____

FAMILY DOCUMENTS: Does your spouse/PNOK have the following documents:

ID Cards: _____ Yes _____ No Registered in IACS: _____ Yes _____ No
Power of Attorney: _____ Yes _____ No Will: _____ Yes _____ No
Family Care Plan _____ Yes _____ No

FAMILY ASSISTANCE INFORMATION PACKET, continued

Single parent, Dual-Military couples, or pregnant Soldiers: if yes, does the Family care provider have installation access? ____ Yes ____ No

List any pertinent issues not covered above which will have an adverse effect on your deployment:

7. FAMILY READINESS GROUP (FRG) INFORMATION:

Would you like your spouse/Family Member to be contacted by the FRG for current unit news and community information? (This could be one of the following parent, brother, sister, fiancé, etc.)

Yes/No email address _____

Would your spouse/Family Member like to volunteer with FRG activities?
____ Yes ____ No

Specify _____

8. STRIP MAP - Below, or on the reverse, please draw (or print out a map from an online service, Google, MapQuest, etc.) a strip map to the spouse's/PNOK's residence. Add written instructions as if explaining to a new arrival who is not Familiar with establishments, use landmark references as necessary.

If living on post, provide a location of your building in reference to the streets or other buildings (schools, etc.) noting your stairwell entrance as necessary.

Soldier's Signature _____ Date _____

Spouse's Signature _____ Date _____

Data Form Sample #3
Family Member Information Survey

The mission of the Family Readiness Group is to provide you with a network of communication and support. You will receive information by phone, email and through newsletters. In addition, you will be invited to attend monthly meetings with guest speakers and fun activities. Please fill out this form to help us build a strong FRG. If the soldier is filling out the form on behalf of the family member, the FRG will contact the family member to verify the information. Participation in the FRG is voluntary and confidential, and any information provided will be used for FRG purposes only. When the unit is scheduled to deploy, we will ask you to update the following.

1. Family Member Information

Name: _____ Phone Number: _____

Alternate Phone: _____

Mailing Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Birthday: _____ Anniversary: _____

Name of Sponsor/Soldier: _____ Rank: _____

Unit: _____

Does the family member reside with the sponsor? Yes No

2. Children's Information

Name: _____ Age: _____ School/Daycare: _____

Name: _____ Age: _____ School/Daycare: _____

Name: _____ Age: _____ School/Daycare: _____

Name: _____ Age: _____ School/Daycare: _____

Are you or your spouse expecting a baby? If so, when is the due date? _____

3. Emergency Information (to be filled out by the spouse/family member)

Who can we call in the event of an emergency? Please list a relative, friend, neighbor, etc. Do not list your soldier spouse.

Name: _____ Phone: _____ Relationship: _____

Family Member Information Survey continued

Name: _____ Phone: _____ Relationship: _____

Name: _____ Phone: _____ Relationship: _____

List any special needs you or your family may have (such as a disability, serious illness, language barrier, etc.) _____

Please list number and types of household pets: _____

Check the ones you currently have: Military ID Card Power of Attorney

Driver's License Regular Access to a Vehicle Passport

4. FRG Related Information—Please check all that apply:

I would like to be contacted with FRG-related information by: telephone email
 mail.

I give my permission to be published in the FRG Roster which will be used only by officials and members of the FRG for related purposes. Yes No

When is the best time to call you? 9am-11a 1pm-3pm 7pm-9pm

Please provide your email address if you would like to be included in our email distribution list to receive updates on unit and community events and activities as well as the FRG newsletter. Email: _____

What topics/activities would you like to see discussed or planned for the FRG?

Community Resources Preparing for Deployment Job/Volunteering

Chaplain's Programs Legal Services Financial

Holiday Events Ball/Formal Activities for Kids

Sports Fundraisers Social Activities

The FRG is run by volunteers—would you like to help with any of the following (note: the FRG will provide training/orientation for all of its volunteers):

Making Phone Calls Planning Events Welcome/Hospitality/Meals

Fundraising Newsletter Childcare

I am unable to volunteer at this time, but please keep me in mind in the future.

Family Member Information Survey continued

Additional Information (is there anything else you would like us to know about?):

The information above is correct to the best of my knowledge. I will try and do my part by informing the FRG of any changes.

Sign: _____ Date: _____

PRIVACY ACT STATEMENT: Authority: 10 U.S.C. Section 3010, 5 U.S.C. 522a. Principle Purpose Information will be used to provide support, outreach and information to family members. Routine Uses: Primary Use of this information is to facilitate volunteers in providing command information to family members concerning unit events and in emergencies.

Mandatory or Voluntary Disclosure: Voluntary

Sample #4

SOLDIER AND FAMILY MEMBER INFORMATION
"Designed for Overseas use"

TODAY'S DATE: _____ **DEROS:** _____

SERVICE MEMBER:

NAME/RANK _____

COMPANY _____

SOLDIER'S LOCAL PHYSICAL ADDRESS _____

SOLDIER'S MAILING ADDRESS _____

PHONE NUMBER _____

SOLDIER'S E-MAIL ADDRESS _____

UNIT COMMUNICATION:

Is there a family member/designee that you would like to receive battalion news?

NAME _____ RELATIONSHIP _____

ADDRESS _____

E-MAIL _____

****It is the service member's responsibility to notify the bn frg leader if this name needs to change.**

SPOUSE INFORMATION, IF APPLICABLE

If married, in what country does your spouse reside? _____

SPOUSE NAME _____

SPOUSE'S HOME ADDRESS _____

SPOUSE HOME TELEPHONE NUMBER _____

SOLDIER AND FAMILY MEMBER INFORMATION continued

SPOUSE CELL PHONE NUMBER _____

SPOUSE'S E-MAIL ADDRESS _____

Does spouse speak English? _____

If yes, is spouse fluent in another language as well? What language are they fluent? _____

If no, what language does spouse speak? _____

CHILD INFO:

CHILD	AGE	SCHOOL NAME/LOCATION
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

DIRECTIONS: Below, please give directions (on the back of this page) from the main gate to your home (or you may attach a "google map")

I give permission for my name/my spouse's name, email address and phone number to be published on the Company FRG Phone tree. I understand this information will be used by FRG Leaders and Key Callers.

SIGNATURE: PLEASE READ THE PRIVACY STATEMENT AND SIGN THE FORM.

Privacy Act Statement. AUTHORITY: 10U.S.C.8013 and Executive Order 9397. PRINCIPLE PURPOSE: Client profile is required for Family Readiness Group Roster and crisis response. ROUTINE PURPOSES: This information will be maintained by the BN FRG leader and shared only by permission of the undersigned. DISCLOSURE IS VOLUNTARY: Failure to provide the requested data will not result in the individual being denied services.

I have read and understand the Privacy Act Statement above. The data in this Family Readiness Group Information form is freely disclosed.

Signature _____ Date _____

...on a lighter note – Planning Happy Homecomings!

(copied from the Spouse Battlebook IV)

With so much excitement in the air, spouses will hardly be able to contain themselves. Keep them busy by helping to prepare the barracks and post for reunion. Remember that at this point the RDC and helpers may be few in number and some were not physically able to deploy or may have returned with injuries. There is plenty of back breaking work to be done to prepare the barracks – most spouses will help if you ask.

Pre-made Barracks – With providing housing for transients throughout the deployment year, or sitting empty throughout the year, the barracks may need to be painted, and kitchens and bathrooms scrubbed. In addition to painting and scrubbing, Soldiers' Ready Boxes and Household Goods should be returned to individual rooms (these are not to be unpacked!).

Bed Linens & Curtains – beds should be made with fresh linens & pillows, curtains should be hung.

Welcome Home Banners – spouses normally prepare banners for their Soldiers and hang them on every available fence, but don't forget single Soldiers. About 3 to 4 months before redeployment, contact parents, fiancés, families, and friends to mail banners to the unit. Tack these banners in individual barracks rooms.

Door Banners – use FRG meeting time to prepare barrack's door signs welcoming home each Soldier.

Goodie bags should be assembled and delivered to rooms, along with drinks placed in refrigerators. Don't forget chocolates for each pillow!

Often times FRGs provide goodie bags at the Reunion Tent, but Soldiers are already lugging all of their gear and are sometimes too busy catching up with friends to take a goodie bag. It's not until they arrive exhausted at the barracks (usually at two in the morning) that they realize they didn't have time to eat. Our experience is that a pre-positioned goodie bag in barracks rooms is the way to go. Staple a little note simply saying "From the FRG – We missed you – Welcome HOME!" Your bags could include:

Soda, sports drink, or water
Snack cakes or cookies
Mints and gum

Crackers
Jerky or chips
Trail mix or raisins

Yellow Ribbon Tying Day – tie yellow ribbons on every tree (or almost) across post.

Welcome Home BN Formal/Ball – Use caution with planning a formal/ball too close to reunion, Try to hold off on a formal/ball until after the block leave period, when everyone has had time to readjust.

REUNION CEREMONY DETAILS

(Copied from The Battlebook IV)

The following list of “nice to have” items is provided, in case your unit is charged with set up of the reunion/ceremony tent. Of course, none of this is your responsibility, the RDC will be charged with the mission. Because of inevitable flight delays, families may be gathered at the tent for hours at a time.

Many of the items shown on the bottom of the list can easily be obtained by putting out a call for individual donations of gently used items.

Additionally, work with the Chaplain's Office to request that a “quiet room” be built into a corner of the tent so at-risk couples can reunite away from the crowd and with a mediator/counselor available as necessary.

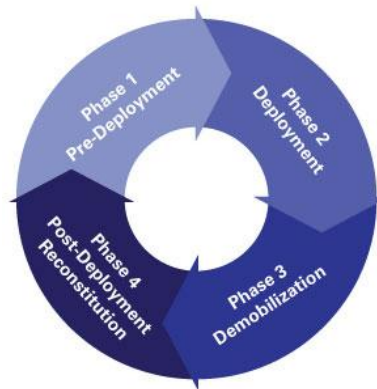
Backdrop flag	Patriotic music /scrolling unit photos
PA system – podium	VFW salute team w/flags
Sign announcing next scheduled ceremony	Bathrooms with running water
Cables for banners with clothes pins	Comfortable seating
Tables for goodies	Goodies/drinks/coffee
Children's area with rug, toys (check w/YS)	Magazines & rack
Stroller area/corral	Diaper changing table

Reserve Component Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program

(Copied from www.jointservicessupport.org)

All National Guard and Reserve Components are required to hold Yellow Ribbon events and activities. Within the National Guard, each State, Territory, and the District of Columbia has the authority to tailor their Yellow Ribbon events and activities to meet the specific needs of their Service and Family members within their State.

Each event held during the deployment cycle will provide specific information on benefits, services, and resources that are available during and after the deployment. Most of the information that is provided at the initial phase of the deployment (pre-deployment) will be continued into each of the other phases as refresher or sustainment information.



Pre-deployment event

This is normally a one day event in which both the Service members and Family members participate. During this event they should be provided with all the information they will need to cope with the difficulties of extended separation and deployment. Some items that should be covered are Financial Readiness and Counseling, TRICARE, Family Care Plans update, identifying special Family needs, Military OneSource/Counseling, VA benefits and entitlements, updating DEERS information, Employer Support, and single Service Member concerns. Emphasis should also be placed on providing suicide prevention awareness, pay and finance, National Guard Family assistance centers, Chaplain and/or other religious support that is available, child and youth services, and the American Red Cross.

During Deployment event

These are normally one day events that Family members attend while the Service member is deployed. At a minimum, an event should be held for Family members at least 30 to 60 days prior to the Service member's return from deployment. Information provided during these events is to help Families

connect, and to provide support to our Family members during the deployment. This phase should involve qualified health professionals to assist in identifying "at risk" Family members for referral to appropriate community agencies as needed. Other areas that should be covered during these events are TRICARE issues, providing coping tips for Families, financial readiness issues, and child and youth issues and services available. Prior to the Service member returning from deployment, Family members should receive information about Resilience and stress reduction, TBI and PTSD awareness, identifying and discussing reunion issues, suicide prevention awareness, and homecoming for Families. Other areas that may be covered during these events are communicating with your Service member, child and youth services, outreach to employers/religious communities, safety, and Family member employment/job fairs.

30 Day Post Deployment event

This is normally a two day event that both the Service member and the Family attend together. The event should be held in a setting that allows for small group interaction and discussion. The intent of this event is to provide assistance to the Service member and Family to help them reconnect, and provide resources to mitigate the stressors associated with extended separation. It is also an opportunity to welcome the Service member home. Items that should be covered during this event include marriage assessment/counseling, and referral, VA Benefits, to include enrollment in the VA if appropriate, education, and health care (mTBI/PTSD), VA Vet center, TRICARE, domestic violence awareness and prevention, suicide awareness and prevention, Military OneSource, substance abuse awareness, safety awareness, Employer Support (ESGR), and single Service member issues.

60 Day Post Deployment event

This is normally a two day event that both the Service member and the Family attend together. It is a continuation of the 30 day event, and again should be held in a setting that allows for small group interaction and discussion. Areas covered at this event should place emphasis on assisting the Service member and Family member with communication, mental health awareness and referral (sometimes referred to as Battlemind training), anger management, substance abuse awareness, domestic violence awareness, VA benefits, health care (mTBI/PTSD), and education, financial assistance/taxes, Veterans Service Organizations (VFW, American Legion, etc.), driver safety, legal issues, child and youth issues, and single Service member issues.

90 Day Post Deployment event

This is normally a two day event that only the Service member attends. Areas covered at this event center around the Service members physical and mental health as well as their military careers. Items that should be covered at this

event include completion of the Post Deployment Health Re-assessment form, the Army Career and Alumni Program (ACAP), participating in small group discussions about their deployment experiences, pay and finance processing, and military career counseling.

VIII. Trauma in the Unit

**Although the world is full of suffering, it
is full also of the overcoming of it.**

~Helen Keller

Trauma in the Unit

This chapter is designed to address the realistic possibility of trauma occurring in the unit. Trauma is not limited to the death of a Soldier; it is also an emotional shock that has a deep effect on one's life for a long time. The most helpful information we can pass along is to inform you of the official duties and procedures of the military in the extreme case of trauma in the unit. Decide upfront if the responsibilities will rest with the Company Commander's Spouse or who will be appointed to complete these responsibilities. Caring for the unit Families during a time of tragedy is a difficult task. The support provided to the unit, the Soldier and the Family during their time of need is invaluable. Your role can help make the transition a little easier for everyone involved when the unit really cares and you have made a plan ahead of time with your Family, the Battalion Commander team, the Chaplain, and the Care Team.

- Definition of Trauma
- Care Teams
- Support Teams
- Respecting and Understanding Grief/Trauma
- Army's Casualty Notification Process
- Definition Of Casualty
- Incident Briefing
- Military Casualty Process
- The Media
- Acronyms
- Resources
- Forms

This chapter is not intended to be all inclusive, but to be a guide for you to plan in case trauma occurs in the unit. Resources were used from other Spouses' lessons learned, US [Army Care Team Handbook](#) and adaptation of information provided in Army War College's [A Leader's Guide to Trauma in the Unit](#), Care Team training, Care Team Guides, CDR/1SGT Course, Deployment Health Clinical Center's fact sheet entitled "A Normal Reaction to an Abnormal Situation," [4th ID Care Team Handbook](#) and [Operation READY Rear Detachment Commander's Training Handbook](#), [Survivor's Resource Handbook](#).

Thank you for taking care of your unit and volunteering your time and energy. Your contribution to support Soldiers and their Families will give them the dignity and respect they so richly deserve.

Definition of Trauma

According to Webster, trauma is a disordered psychic or behavioral state resulting from mental or emotional stress or physical injury. Your perception of trauma and how you deal with it may differ greatly from the soldier's or other Family members in the unit. There are numerous situations that occur in a unit that can and often do, result in trauma. A sudden loss of a Soldier, child or Family member is particularly difficult when death has occurred under any of the following circumstances: 1) death occurred without warning and opportunity to say goodbye, 2) death occurred as result of violence, 3) death in which body is never recovered, 4) multiple losses (e.g., mass casualty), and 5) death occurred as result of willful misconduct of others (e.g., accidents, war and terrorism). Traumatic deaths or sudden loss of significant attachment can lead to a more complicated and longer grief process.

Traumatic grief is when an individual shows extreme distress over an extended period of time or that dominates an individual's life. It is not uncommon for these individuals to experience intense reactions including agitation, suicidal ideation, and powerful rage (e.g., anger toward those perceived to be responsible) or revenge fantasies. These individuals also commonly have frightening memories/thoughts about the traumatic event by either agonizing about what their loved one experienced during the final moments of life or recalling the horror of the traumatic event they experienced. These frightening memories/thoughts along with the intense symptoms of distress are over and above the normal symptoms of bereavement.

Army's Casualty Notification Process

Having a general understanding of the casualty notification process and casualty assistance program is helpful to seeing how the Care Team fits into the overall efforts to support Families of casualties. With this knowledge, Care Teams can support Families more effectively. As a Spouse never forget to keep what you know confidential. Let the Notification process work how it is supposed to work. Sometimes this may take longer than you feel you can wait but it is very important. The Family deserves that respect, as you would if it was happening to you and your Family.

Definitions of Key Roles:

Care Team It is important to note that the Care Team will only be utilized at the request of the Family and should not be assumed to be needed in all traumatic events. Care Teams are not mandatory, but are an additional way the unit can provide valuable support to Families and Soldiers.

The Go Team The Go Team is made up of the Brigade Commander Advisor or the Command Sergeant Major Advisor, the Battalion Commander Advisor and the Company Rear Detachment Commander (RDC). The Go Team is not the

Care Team and is utilized only during deployment. The Go Team is activated for a trauma in the unit and provides immediate Command condolences to the Family. They also meet and assess the immediate needs of the Family and assign the appropriate Care Team. Each Battalion along with the Brigade Command Team decides if they will form a Go Team early in the Command. It is recommended that they attend Care Team training.

Commander/Rear Detachment Commander (CDR/RDC) The CDR/RDC is responsible for coordinating support and identifying resources needed by the Family. The CDR/RDC maintains ongoing communication with the Family. Leadership also oversees the unit memorial service and Care Team.

Chaplain The Chaplain has many roles in the Army. He or she accompanies the Casualty Notification Officer (CNO) when notification is made in person. The Chaplain offers pastoral counseling, comfort and solace to Families. The Chaplain is also a source of information about religious observances and funeral services.

Public Affairs Officer (PAO) A Public Affairs Officer may contact the Family to offer information and guidance on dealing with the media.

Summary Court Officer A Summary Court Officer is appointed to collect, inventory, safeguard, and send the effects of the deceased Soldier to the place requested by the Next Of Kin (NOK).

NOTE: Generally, in the Reserve Component, most States and Regions do not utilize Care Teams or Go Teams. Instead, Casualty Notification Officers and Casualty Assistance Officers are utilized. Survivor Outreach Services Coordinators help to fill the gap in the case of the death of a military member. See more detailed descriptions of these roles later in the chapter.

Military Casualty Process:

In the event of a serious injury or death of a Soldier, the military is responsible for casualty notification and helping Family Members. The notification process depends upon the casualty status and location of the Next Of Kin. Typically, the incident is first reported by the appropriate commander to the Casualty Operations Branch, Human Resources Command. Once the Casualty Area Command (CAC) has confirmed the incident, it produces an initial casualty report.

If the Soldier is Wounded in Action (WIA) then notification is made by telephone. If the Soldier is deceased, Duty Status – Whereabouts Unknown (DUSTWUN), or Missing in Action (MIA), a Casualty Notification Officer (CNO), generally accompanied by a Chaplain, visits the Primary Next of Kin (PNOK) to notify the

Family in person. The command will assign a Casualty Assistance Officer (CAO) who will visit the Family to assist with survivor benefits, funeral arrangements, personnel-related matters, and emotional support. The Public Affairs Office (PAO) may also contact the Family to offer assistance in dealing with the media.

How Is A Care Team Set Up?

When a Care Team is to be sent to a Family, the CDR/RDC selects a small group of volunteers from a roster of trained Battalion Care Team volunteers. When putting a team together, the RDC is likely to seek advice from a number of individuals such as Commander's Advisor, Battalion Advisor, Battalion Care Team coordinator, and unit's Family Readiness Group (FRG) Leader about who the Family would most likely be comfortable having around them. Consideration is also given to whom the Family has identified as caregiver for emergency situations on Spouse/Significant Other Preference Form. Thus, the actual composition of a Care Team can vary. Care Teams can consist of any or all of the following: key spouses from the Brigade, Battalion and/or Company; FRG Leader, and spouses from the same Platoon or Company as the Soldier and Family. The size of the Care Team depends on the Family's needs. If the unit sustains several casualties at once, the Battalion Commander may request a sister Battalion's Care Teams to assist in the casualty situation. This will minimize the process of going over what their role is; they will have the same training and supplies as your unit has.

Once the Command or RDC has selected a team, the appropriate volunteers are notified by the RDC, but not until after the Primary Next of Kin (PNOK) has been notified. The RDC may hold a brief meeting with the Go Team or Care Team before the team visits the Family. The RDC may appoint one member of the team to serve as Care Team Leader. However, the Care Team must always remember that they report to the RDC, who supervises their actions.

A WORD OF CAUTION: Care Team members and FRGs may not be notified of a Soldier's death or injury until after official notification has been made to the Family. Care Teams may not accompany the Casualty Notification Officer (CNO) to the house or wait outside the house while notification is being made. The RDC should give the Care Team guidance on when it is appropriate to approach the house.

The Care Team's Role In The Unit

The Battalion Commander or CDR/RDC may activate a Care Team to assist a Family when a trauma in the unit occurs. This team may have very little time to prepare so being familiar with your role and material is helpful. The purpose of the Care Team is to offer short-term care and support to Families and Soldiers until the Family's own support structure is in place.

When a Care Team is activated, there is little time to prepare. Some Brigades will activate their Go team and then a Care Team will jump into action. Being familiar with the roles your unit will plan to do and using the materials can be helpful. Being prepared is the key to enhancing your abilities to respond and adapt to the task of comforting a Family at a very difficult time. This can be life changing. A lesson learned is to keep an updated roster and the Important Phone Numbers form with you when the Care Team is activated.

Forms are available in the Resource section of this chapter to help organize your efforts to aid the Family in crisis.

What Is the Care Team Leader's Role?

In some instances, the Commander may assign one member of the Care Team to serve as Care Team Leader. The role of the Care Team Leader is to:

- Coordinate the assistance provided by each Care Team volunteer and how the team will perform different areas of support, including establishing shifts and sub-teams for different support areas, if necessary.
- Take offers of help from individuals who want to help the Family. Inform these individuals immediately or contact later on what specific help they can provide. Seek guidance on gifts or donations from the CDR/RDC or unit ethics counselor.
- Talk with unit's FRG Leader about how the FRG can support the Care Team in their efforts as well as Care Team volunteers themselves. (For further information, see section on Support Available to Care Team.)
- Keep the CDR/RDC informed of Family's requests and support provided.

What Does A Care Team Do?

The actual support provided depends on Family needs and Command guidance. Care Team volunteers provide assistance that complements the assistance provided by the Commander, Casualty Assistance Officer, Chaplain, and CDR/RDC (if deployed).

The focus of Care Team volunteers' efforts is on providing practical assistance and emotional support to the Family on a short-term basis so that the Family can continue to function while dealing with a traumatic event.

What A Care Team Does NOT Do:

- Prepare death notices for newspaper.
- Arrange donations to organization or charity in lieu of flowers if Family wants to make this arrangement.
- Make funeral arrangements (which include transportation for Family, childcare arrangements for children.)
- Arrange emergency financial assistance or give money to Family.
- Brief Family on benefits or entitlements.
- Serve as grief counselor or offer any type of counseling.

A WORD OF CAUTION:

It is important not to contribute to the Family's stress by being overbearing or "overly helpful." Be aware of the Family's need for privacy. Trust is given to the individuals in the Family's home, and we should never betray the Family.

Let the Family maintain control over what they can reasonably do for themselves. Let the Family identify their needs rather than the Care Team telling the Family. Suggestions are great but keep them practical for everyone involved. Feedback from the Family on any suggestions or offers is really important. ***Listen.***

Guidance for Care Team Volunteers

Each trauma event and Family (both their reactions and needs) is different so Care Teams need to view each situation as unique. This means that Care Team volunteers will need to think on their feet and adjust to the situation. The key to providing valuable support is to take cues from the Family; to be flexible and adaptable as the situation changes, and to never lose sight of the fact that the Family is the primary focus. The Family is going to have good days and bad days. So please remember not to take things personally, and encourage others also to be tolerant and kind. The Family is going through a difficult situation, and the Care Team's role is to help make it a little easier, not add to it in any way.

Items of support

Care Teams may collect supplies ahead of time. It has been suggested to store them in ready to go boxes or better yet Rubbermaid boxes. Have these boxes available for Care Teams at the BDE HQ or a place that is available at a moment's notice.

- Critical items would be:
 - Company's phone roster
 - BDE, CSM, BN Commander Spouse contact information
 - FRSA contact information
 - CDR/RDC contact information
 - Chaplain hotline

- Suggested but not limited to supply list (since each activation is so different):
 - Tissues
 - Pens/pencils
 - Notepads/journal
 - Telephone Log form
 - Tylenol/Advil*
 - Water bottles
 - Gum
 - Tums*
 - Airport directions
 - Nearby hotels and prices
 - Coupons for local restaurants
 - Labels (for dishes brought to the Family)
 - Information packet on garrison and local area (i.e., community directories, for visiting family and friends)
 - Local maps (for visiting family and friends)
 - School schedules, calendars and school contacts
 - Blank thank you notes
 - A printed note that can be hung on the door asking visitors to please leave their condolences. This gives the Family the privacy they need. An easy way to this is by hanging a large Ziplock bag filled with note cards and a pen on the door.
 - A deck of cards, coloring books and crayons

*****Be cautious about offering medications of any kind to the family and do not leave medications in the home when you depart.***

Units, Battalion Care Team coordinators or Care Team volunteers may also choose to set up separate folders for each of the support areas (Call Support, Home Care Assistance, etc.). These “grab and go” folders would contain a copy of this chapter and the relevant Care Team forms. When a Care Team is activated, these folders would be distributed to Care Team volunteers responsible for different tasks.

The intent of these collective efforts is to facilitate the Care Team's (and unit's) ability to be ready at a moment's notice.

How the Go Team Assists

The Go Team is established early on in a Command and is best utilized during a deployment. The RDC activates the Go Team only if the Family lives in the local area and has asked the NO and Chaplain for a Care Team. The Go Team should be prepared to respond in a moment's notice. When the Go Team arrives to the home, the NO and Chaplain briefs one member of the Go Team while the others are with the Family. At this point the NO and Chaplain will leave. We recommend no more than three in the house with the Family at a time, which seems to work best for everyone involved.

The Go Team offers the Command's condolences and assesses the immediate needs of the Family. Communicating closely with the RDC the Go Team can provide answers to some of the military questions that the Family may have. The Go Team will decide which Care Team members will best meet the needs of the Family and will activate the Care Team. Their goal is to not leave the Family alone and provide the Command with information to best help the Family during this difficult time.

A WORD OF CAUTION:

Exact details regarding the casualty are extremely important. Obtaining the exact name, exact unit, and absolutely correct address is vital before the Go Team or Care Team is activated. Confirm this information with the NO and the Chaplain before Google and MapQuest (check both) map is printed. Getting to the correct location in a timely manner is critical.

Call Support

Screens calls and visitors according to Family's wishes.

Do not give any information unless you are sure to whom you are talking and the Family member agrees. In the case of serious injury, identify with the Family what information the Family wants shared and what they do not want shared. With regard to the media, discuss with the Family how they would like the Care Team to handle media requests. (For further information, see section on Dealing with the Media.)

Keep one phone log.

Write down the names of all callers and their telephone numbers. It may mean a lot to the Family member later to see who called. You can use it to return calls to

those who wanted information on the funeral and memorial services if the Family requests.

Get a list of condolence phone calls the chain of command receives and information about VIPs expressing sympathy to the Command Group. Be sure to pass this information on to the Family so that they are made aware of these calls. A list can be added to the phone log maintained by the Care Team.

Ask if there is anyone the Spouse/Family would like you to call or who needs to be contacted. Individuals that may need to be contacted might include: friends, neighbors, Spouse's employer (if employed) and extended family.

TIP: It is the Family's call on who they want notified. If they ask you to make the initial notification call for them, encourage them to take on this responsibility personally. In our lessons learned, we have discovered that simply supporting the Spouse or Family while having to make these difficult phone calls will certainly be appreciated in the long run.

A Notification Log is provided in the forms section of this chapter for keeping track of who the Family notifies; they may not remember so it is very helpful to help them write this down.

Support for the NOK Families

Involvement at the Brigade, Battalion and Company FRG level varies. Each unit is different and each trauma situation is different. Adapting each situation and making sure the volunteers are caring for the Family is the main goal. We suggest that no more than three volunteers in a Family's home at one time is important. It is helpful for all volunteers assisting at the NOK Family's home to bring a scripted response from the Command or PAO office to help with answering the phone and the door. This is to have the names of the NOK, Spouse, children's names and anyone else needed that their names are spelled correctly.

TIP: Most of the actual workload to support the NOK Family such as answering phones, preparing meals, running errands, etc. tends to be done at the Company FRG/Care Team level.

Support for the NOK Family if they live away from the unit location:

During a notification process you may be supporting a Family that lives away from the unit's (home station) location. These Families will receive their official notification from a military organization located in their own area.

The BN CDR'S Advisor, The CO CDR'S spouse or FRG Leader and others who know the Soldier directly may contact the Family if the Family consents. We

recommend writing out a script before phoning the Family so that you are prepared with the correct names and information that you want to share. Do your homework and be prepared; under stress and nerves, you can lose your train of thought easily.

These Family members may travel to the unit to attend the memorial ceremony. The Command group and FRG members should meet with Family Members when they arrive. (Check the Guidance and tips for Care Team Do's list to further assist.)

The FRG may want to coordinate meals or welcome/comfort baskets for the Family's hotel or guest rooms.

TIP: It is important that Spouse/Family Members not living in the unit's home station location be given the same respect as those located in the area. What is done for one Family in the beginning is expected for all Families.

Respecting and Understanding Grief/Trauma

Understanding grief and respecting the needs of those grieving are some of the most important gifts of service you can offer a Family in crisis. It is important that you recognize that personally you may be going through the grief process because of the trauma and that your needs must also be met.

Grief/Trauma is the intense suffering experienced by someone when there has been a severing of an attachment that has great significance. Critical to understanding this sense of loss is respecting that everyone experiences it differently. The grief process begins with shock and denial, followed by anger before reaching acceptance and hope. Individuals go through the different stages of grief at different levels of depression and despair, depending on the greatness of the loss felt. A person may go in and out of each stage of grief for a long period. Research studies suggest the most difficult time of grief is 5 to 9 months after the initial loss. Persons may stay in intense modes of grief anywhere from 18 to 36 months. Remember, no one goes through grief the same way. As long as a person continues in and out of the stages of grief and reaches some level of hope, the timeframe is not important.

Stages of Grief:

Denial and resistance:

- Symptoms - crying, weakness, loss of appetite, sleep deprivation
- Feelings – shock, resistance, angry at self
- Anger and despair:
- Symptoms – feelings of hopelessness, difficulty concentrating, feelings of depression, bargaining, blaming others

- Feelings – agony, intense sadness, strong anger, indifference

Acceptance:

- Symptoms – open to new relationships, new desire to “live”
- Feelings – hopefulness, open to new “feelings”

It is valuable to recognize that children in the unit may feel the trauma. It is important to encourage unit Families to communicate with their children and for you to do so as well. Address the trauma in a direct manner of truthfulness, while also acknowledging the capacity for understanding based on the child’s age and maturity level. Trying to protect children by avoiding the topic of trauma can potentially cause more damage to them than telling them the truth. Children are intuitive and they may sense the effects of the trauma on their own Family. If they are school age children they may hear about situations at school. Respect their feelings and be an active listener. It is best to check out one of the many books published on this topic.

Casualty notification- Army Regulation 600-8-1:

"The casualty notification officer (CNO) notifies the Next of Kin (NOK) of an individual who has been reported as a casualty in a timely, professional, and dignified manner. The CNO will notify NOK within 4 hours of his/her assignment as CNO. The method of notification varies, depending upon the type of casualty and circumstances surrounding the incident. This regulation specifies duties of a person designated as a CNO for deceased, missing, or duty status—whereabouts unknown (DUSTWUN) Soldiers at chapter 5, section I, and for injured or ill Soldiers at chapter 5, section II. Notification is made in person by a uniformed Soldier for deceased, missing, or DUSTWUN Soldiers and telephonically for injured or ill Soldiers (chap 5). If there is a chance that the NOK may learn of the casualty by other than official sources, the chief, CMAOC (AHRC–PEZ) may approve notification by the quickest means, normally the telephone. In such an event, a Uniformed Services representative will render official condolences (for death cases) or official expressions of concern (for missing or DUSTWUN cases) in person. The CAC should make every effort to provide a Chaplain to accompany the CNO. When a Chaplain is not available, a second Soldier will accompany the CNO on the notification mission."

Casualty Assistance Program- Army Regulation 600-8-1:

“Casualty assistance is always provided to those receiving benefits and/or entitlements in death, missing, or DUSTWUN cases and to those NOK who have need for ongoing exchanges of information with the Department of the Army (DA), such as parents who are secondary next of kin (SNOK). The casualty assistance officer (CAO) provides these services. The main objectives of casualty assistance are:

- *Assist the NOK during the period immediately following a casualty.*
- *Assist in settling claims and applying for and receipt of survivor benefits.*
- *Assist in other personnel-related affairs.*
- *Serve as the Army's liaison to pass information relating to the Soldier or the incident between the Army and the Family."*

Definition of Casualty

According to Army Regulation 600-8-1, a casualty is any person lost to the organization by reason of having been declared beleaguered, besieged, captured, dead, diseased, detained, Duty Status Whereabouts Unknown (DUSTWUN), injured, ill, interned, missing in action (MIA) or wounded.

How Are Families Notified Of A Casualty?

The casualty notification process varies depending upon the type of casualty. If a Soldier is deceased, DUSTWUN or MIA, the Family will be notified in person. In the case of an injured Soldier, notification depends on the nature of the Soldier's injury. Generally for very seriously injured (VSI) or seriously injured (SI), the CDR/RDC or Casualty Assistance Center (CAC) will notify the primary Next Of Kin (NOK) by telephone. Sometimes a physician may contact the Family. When the Soldier is not seriously injured (NSI), and the illness or injury is a result of hostile action the Primary Next of Kin (PNOK) is notified by telephone by the CDR/RDC. The Soldier may also notify his/her Family.

Who Assists The Family?

There are several individuals and agencies designated by the Army to respond when Soldier injury or death occurs. These individuals may be present in the home during the time the Care Team assists a Family. It is important to understand the role and responsibilities of these individuals and not to conduct the tasks performed by these individuals. The role of the Go Team is to provide short-term care and support to the Family (if requested); a Care Team is then activated until the Family's own support structure is in place.

Casualty Notification Officer (CNO): The CNO is responsible for notifying the Primary Next of Kin (PNOK) and Secondary Next of Kin (SNOK) and any other person listed on the Soldier's Record of Emergency Data (DD Form 93). In addition, the CNO will inform the PNOK that a Casualty Assistance Officer (CAO) will contact the Family within four hours of official notification (but not between the hours of 10 pm and 6 am).

Casualty Assistance Officer: Army Regulation 600-8-1: "The CAO represents the SA. The CAO's role is dependent upon the needs of the assigned beneficiary or Family member. Refer to chapter 6 for specific guidance. The CAO will—

- Be courteous, helpful, and compassionate toward the NOK while performing this sensitive mission.
- Be trained and certified to perform this sensitive mission prior to conducting an actual CAO assignment.
- Assist and counsel the PNOK or other designated beneficiary on all matters pertaining to the deceased."

The CAO provides support to the Family and aids with personnel-related matters. The CAO calls within four hours of official notification (but not between 10 pm and 6 am) to schedule a visit with the Family. The purpose of the first visit is to identify the Family's needs and offer solace. In subsequent visits, the CAO offers counsel and support to the Family on burial arrangements, benefits and other personnel matters. The CAO's role is to serve as an ongoing resource for the Family.

The CAO is an Officer (Captain or higher), Warrant Officer or senior NCO (SFC and higher). Normally, the CAO will be of equal rank or higher than the casualty and/or the NOK that the assistance is being provided. The CAO is relieved of other duties so that the CAO can assist for as long as is necessary for the Family to complete the transition or to ensure the Family is receiving benefits and entitlements.

Note: A uniformed CAO is sent only when a Soldier is deceased or been declared missing.

Note: Survivor Outreach Services (SOS) Coordinator: Demonstrates the National Guard's commitment to Families of the Fallen. This mission of SOS is to provide a holistic and multi-agency approach to delivering services to these Families in their local communities. Embracing and reassuring Survivors that they are continually linked to the Army Family through a unified support program enables them to remain an important part of the Army for as long as they desire. They provide expertise on State and Federal Survivor benefits; work closely with the CAO to provide guidance and assistance to the Family in regard to benefits, entitlements, and local resources; arrange for estate and financial advice when requested; connect Survivors with appropriate mental health support/counseling; as well as provide referrals for a wide variety of available services. SOS Coordinators also form networks and support groups so Survivors will have peer support readily available. They also educate the military command, community social services and support

agencies of the needs of our military Survivors. There is one SOS Coordinator in each state.

Incident Briefing

Once the Official Notification has been made some units have found it very important to get out the facts out to their affected Company. An incident Briefing is held by the CDR/RDC, CSM, Chaplain, Military Family Life Counselor, Active Company Commander Advisor, BN Advisor, CSM Advisor, BDE Advisor, the CSM Advisor, Division Advisor and the BDE and BNs FRSA's. The presence of these people shows the Company that they are not grieving alone and that the unit supports one another.

An effective way to contact the Company's Family members is to have the CDR/RDC, BN CDR Advisor, BDE and BN FRSA's, and Key Callers all meet at the Company. Have a script prepared by the CDR/RDC. The group gathered can then divide the roster and begin calling the Company Families using the script provided.

Example: (a ready to use script is located in the Forms section)

Script for Incident Briefing:

(Spouse's name), Good (morning) (afternoon) (evening)

This is _____ from _____ Company.

I am calling you on official business.

I would like to start by saying your (husband) (wife) is fine.

All is well with (him) (her).

Okay?

However, the Company did have (a soldier) (soldiers) who (was) (were)

_____wounded in action

_____killed in action

_____ are determined as unknown whereabouts

We respectfully ask that you do not contact the next of kin at this time.

The next of kin are currently being assisted.

We also ask that you do not contact any of the _____ spouses, as we are still notifying them.

This is so that we may follow the right procedure to prevent unnecessary rumors and heartache. But this also gives you the respect to get the facts first hand before you see this on the news. We will also provide professional support for you during this difficult time.

The CDR/RDC, (give rank and name) is conducting an official briefing to discuss the details of the incident at (location) at _____ (time/date).

You are certainly encouraged and welcome to attend. This briefing is only for members of ____ Company, and we recommend that children or friends do not accompany you. Childcare is available by calling _____.

Again, your (husband) (wife) is fine.

I apologize that I must end this call so quickly, but I need to continue notifying the other spouses.

If you are unable to attend and as other details become available, I can call you back.

These callers should not get off track on their message no matter how much the person on the other end wants more information. They should just be reminded that all their questions will be answered at the briefing and there will be professional help there if they need it.

Some duty stations provide emergency childcare for briefings like these. Have someone such as your BN FRSA arrange this right away. They should also contact a Military Family Life Counselor to arrange for them and the Chaplain to be present at the briefing. They can also set up the room and have water available.

TIP: The Company CDR/RDC should read from a script and just give the Soldier(s) name(s) and what the incident was. Lessons learned are for CDR/RDC to stick to the facts. It was found helpful to show the Soldier(s) name(s) on a screen or paper, as those listening may not hear correctly. The CDR/RDC should stress that they do not want there to be any confusion at the briefing, or for Families to mistakenly think their Soldier was involved.

Dealing with the Media

In the most stressful hours of coping with a trauma in the unit, you or the Family may be approached by the media for a formal interview, an informal comment or a gut reaction. You and the Family have the right to accept or decline media interview requests. Contact your command whenever the Family or you are approached by the media.

If the Family is approached, encourage the Family to contact the PAO for assistance with any media interaction. The PAO can advise and coach as to the best approach. If the Family elects to talk to the media, the PAO can be present with the Family during the interview process. Alternatively, the Family may wish to write a statement that is read to the media and not answer any questions.

Lesson learned is to defer the media to CDR/RDC. Try not to put yourself or the Care Team in these situations.

If someone on the Care Team is given permission by the Family to speak to the media on behalf of the Family, here are helpful tips for handling your interaction with the media.

TIPS:

- Know with whom you are talking. Ask for and write down the reporter's name, telephone number, and name of the media organization.
- Anticipate what questions reporters may ask. Determine response to questions or prepare a written statement with the help of the PAO, and stick to the statement.
- Listen carefully to the question. Think before speaking.
- Know your limitations. If you do not have first-hand knowledge, do not speculate. Provide explanation when you cannot answer a question.
- Be brief in answer and just answer the question. Be cautious about questions that lead to only "yes" or "no" responses. Do not answer "What if..." questions.
- Avoid acronyms.
- Know what not to discuss or say. Know how to respond to specific types of questions.
- Do not say "off the record."
- Never give sensitive information that could jeopardize the safety, security and privacy of either Soldiers or Family members.
- Do not say anything you do not want printed, heard or seen.
- Be positive. Do not argue. Be courteous and diplomatic. Be yourself.
- Be sincere about how you feel. If it upsets you, or you are frustrated, say that.
- Answer in the first person. Use "I" rather than "we."
- Do not be intimidated by the media.
- Do not be afraid of silence. Often the media will use this as a tool to make you feel uncomfortable or to say more than you intended.

- You may politely refuse to cooperate with the interviewer. Stay in control and do not let anyone persuade you to do or say anything you do not want to.
- End the interview when you are ready.
- Notify PAO, if you have not already done so.

Frequently Asked Questions about Media

Will media be allowed to attend the funerals and/or unit memorial services?

Families determine media attendance at funerals or Family memorials. The unit Commander determines attendance at unit memorial ceremonies. The unit Chaplain determines attendance at unit services.

How are Soldiers' names released to the media? Can Family members have a Soldier's name withheld from the media?

Once required Next of Kin notifications have been completed, the Army Human Resources Command Public Affairs Office will release the information to the Army's Office of Chief of Public Affairs (OCPA), 703-697-7550. OCPA releases to Office of Secretary of Defense Public Affairs and the media, 24 hours after official notification is complete. Although Families may request their Soldier's name be withheld, it is a matter of public record and may be released without their permission.

What information is released to the public?

Information released to the public includes: the Soldier's name, age, place of birth, unit, as much information about the incident as is available, next of kin information (name, relationship to the Soldier, and their city and state of residence), when and where the Soldier entered the Army, and the Soldier's Military Occupational Specialty (MOS) or branch. Because the Army wants to release as much information as possible as quickly as possible, names will be released immediately. However, there may be times when not all information will be immediately available. Follow-up releases may be provided when necessary.

How can media representatives get information?

Media representatives can call the Department of the Army Public Affairs at 703-697-7550. No media updates are disseminated through the hotline.

How often will information be released to the media?

Department of the Army Public Affairs will determine the regular release of information.

Are there any media sites that will be set up at the incident site or at the unit's home station?

All information will be initially released at the Department of the Army level. If a media center is established, information will be available from Army Public Affairs, Media Relations Division, 703-697-7550. Information may also be disseminated through the unit or installation public affairs office of the unit involved. Office of the Chief of Public Affairs (OCPA) determines the level of response, in coordination with subordinate commands. Public release is made at <http://www.defenselink.mil>. Releases 24 hours after HQDA receives confirmation of completed PNOK notification.

SUPPORT AGENCIES

These resources are not limited to the following: The address, numbers and websites may have changed.

TAPS - Tragedy Assistance Program For Survivors

National Headquarters - **800-959-TAPS (8277)**
1777 F Street NW, Suite 600
Washington, DC 20006

Main Telephone: Number: 202-588-TAPS (8277)
TAPS Programs: 202-588-TAPS (8277)

General Information on TAPS Services and Support: info@taps.org

Fundraising and Development: development@taps.org

Media Inquiries: media@taps.org

Technical Issues with Website: support@taps.org

A National Military Survivor Seminar and Good Grief Camp: A four-day event held each Memorial Day Weekend in the Washington, D.C. area. This healing weekend allows survivors to come together for grief education and to learn skills that assist them in their grief journey. Casualty personnel, commanders, family support personnel and Chaplains also come to learn more about the grief process and to strengthen skills that assist them in supporting survivors.

Peer Mentor Program: A national network of trained Peer Mentors who have lost a loved one in the armed forces and are able to reach out to and support others who are affected by a similar tragedy. Mentors are available for family, friends and co-workers of fallen service members.

Community Survivor LINK Program: Organized groups of survivors, volunteers and professionals in various locations around the country. These groups are designed not only as support groups, but also to give all those interested in supporting military families, opportunities to do so through the mission of TAPS.

TAPS Chat: Each Tuesday evening at 9 PM Eastern Standard Time, the TAPS Chat forum is open. It brings together survivors from across the country and is facilitated by a survivor volunteer and/or TAPS Staff. Participants are encouraged to share their hearts with those who can truly understand their grief journey: www.taps.org.

TAPS Hotline: A toll-free crisis and information line that receives calls 24 hours a day everyday: 1-800-959-TAPS (8277)

Resources Library: This program maintains a collection of materials on grief, trauma and a variety of related topics of interest to survivors. A selected few of these resources are available to survivors at no fee.

Counseling Resources and Casework: This program provides survivors with contacts and information regarding counseling resources in their local area, including local support groups and professional counselors. It also provides problem-solving assistance for survivors who have difficult questions or situations that need to be resolved.

Quarterly TAPS Magazine: This publication focuses on military survivor topics that are both informative and inspirational. Also included is a book review section for printed grief materials. The magazine is sent free of charge to survivors, commanders, Chaplains, casualty staff and caregivers around the world.

Crisis Response Plan: This plan allows TAPS to network and deploy trained Crisis Responders during traumatic events involving military personnel.

Crisis Intervention: This program provides “Coping and Casualty” briefings to military commands around the country. This educational briefing approaches casualty from a survivor perspective. The goal of this presentation is to prepare casualty and family services personnel to respond to a wide variety of emotional issues presented by survivors.

SURVIVOR SUPPORT CONTACTS:

Associations	Telephone #
Defense Finance and Accounting Service	800-321-1080
Department of Veterans Affairs	800-827-1000
Memorial Programs Service	800-697-6947
Montgomery GI Bill/VEAP Refund	888-442-4551
National Cemetery System	800-827-1000
Presidential Memorial Certificate Program	202-656-4259
Gold Star Wives of America, Inc.	888-751-6350
Military Family Resource Center	703-696-9053
Military Medical Support Office (MMSO)	800-876-1131

National Military Family Association	703-823-6632
National Association for Uniformed Services	800-842-3451
Office of Service Members' Group Life Insurance	800-419-1473
Society of Military Widows	800-842-345
Social Security Administration	800-772-1213
Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors (TAPS)	800-959-8277

DEATH OF A SPOUSE CONTACTS:

<https://hrc.army.mil>. U.S. Army Human Resources Command. Good source for Army regulations and publications. Also provides a direct link to the Army Casualty Website.

www.lifelines.navy.mil/familyline : This website provides good information about financial preparation, coping with trauma and many other topics associated with death of a family member as well as death of the active-duty member.

<http://www.usaaedfoundation.org/favicon.ico>: This website provides invaluable information on topics ranging from coping with the emotional loss of a loved one to practical advice on dealing with financial and legal issues. It also provides a checklist, "What to Do If Your Spouse Dies."

<http://www.goldstarwives.org/>: This military survivor's organization has been serving war widows from all conflicts and service connected disabilities since 1945.

<http://www.goldstarmoms.com/>: The membership of American Gold Star Mothers, Inc. is composed of American Mothers who lost a son or daughter during World War I, World War II, the Korean War, the Vietnam War, Beirut, Grenada, Panama, the Persian Gulf, Somalia, Bosnia, Saudi Arabia, all Strategic Areas, or while in service to our country.

<http://www.amilitarywife.com/operationgoldstar.html>: Mission: to give a Gold Star Service Flag to the family of each service member who died while serving on active duty since the beginning of Operation Enduring Freedom and continuing in the future during times of war and peace.

www.taps.org: TAPS offers peer support and assists survivors through a wide variety of programs.

[Operation Family Fund](#): Provide for the Families of those who have been killed or severely disabled during Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom

with funds for immediate or long-term needs; Fund a National Memorial dedicated to the men and women who lost their lives in our country's War on Terror.

[Operation Thankful Nation](#): We would like to send a free keepsake package to every family who has lost a loved one.

<http://www.afsc-usa.com/favicon.ico>: The Relief Societies have partnered with AFSC to sponsor membership in AFSC for widows of active duty deaths after 9-11 (effective dates vary by service). The Relief Society pays the lifetime membership fee in AFSC for the widow. We have developed a webpage in our site that specifically addresses eligibility and services under that program.

<http://www.killedinactionfund.org/>: The pursuit of liberating these victims of oppression in Afghanistan and Iraq, the ultimate sacrifice is being made by hundreds of America's finest young military personnel. Many leave behind a spouse and small children. It is the goal of the Enduring Freedom KIA Fund to give financial aid to those needy and deserving families.

jmiller@thirdstone.net: Enduring Freedom Killed in Action Fund has recently increased their grants but you will need to contact them. JoAnne Miller is the contact person: email: telephone: (949) 719-9678; address: 405 Vista Roma, Newport Beach, CA 92660

[Operation Ensuring Christmas](#): For children of soldiers killed in Iraq and Afghanistan.

[Special Operations Warrior Foundation](#): The Special Operations Warrior Foundation (SOWF) provides college scholarship grants, based on need, along with financial aid and educational counseling to the children of Special Operations personnel who were killed in an operational mission or training accident

http://www.intrepidmuseum.org/foundation_heroesfund.html: The Fund provides unrestricted grants to the families of military personnel who have given their lives in the current operations in defense of our country. The gifts, \$10,000 to each dependent family and an additional \$5,000 per child, are intended to help these families through any immediate or long-term financial difficulties they may face.

<http://www.orgsites.com/favicon.ico>: Provides handmade blankets to the children who have lost a parent in the war on terror. Please go to the "contact us" section on our Home Page and give us the name of your fallen hero, the age and gender of the children, and the address where the blanket is to be mailed.

<http://groups.msn.com/SSPSoldierPortraits/>: Set up to honor the families of the fallen heroes of Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom with a custom designed and hand-crafted wooden portrait of their loved one.

<http://www.michaelgreaganartist.com/FallenHero.htm>. Using the family's favorite photo, professional custom hand-drawn portraits are available free of charge to the families of all servicemen and women who have been killed in Iraq and Afghanistan in America's War Against Terrorism from portrait artist Michael Reagan.

<http://www.childrenoffallensoldiersrelieffund.org/favicon.ico>: A means of providing College assistance to surviving children of our U.S. military service members who have lost their lives in the Iraq and Afghanistan wars. We now are able to provide College Grants to the spouses as well as emergency funds to those families with children under 18 who need assistance with rent, utilities, groceries, clothing, food and other necessary items.

<http://www.neverforgetflag.us/index.html>: The Armed Forces Memorial Tribute Flag was designed to honor and remember those who have made the ultimate sacrifice for us. All profits from sales go to the Armed Forces Family Aid and Relief Fund (administered by the USO of Metropolitan NY), a resource to help ease the burden for active duty personnel, their families and their survivors facing sudden financial crisis due to deployment or death. The fund is available to members of all branches of the armed forces.

<http://www.lastwishfoundation.org/favicon.ico>: The objective of this foundation is to grant the last wish of the U.S. service members who have been lost in Operation Iraqi Freedom: to provide for their children.

<http://www.westpascoquilters.org/ohfq.html>: Operation Home front Quilts provides memorial quilts to every military family who has lost a loved one in Iraq and Afghanistan. (Recipients include parents OR widows and children presently living with them). You may contact us at: Porterfamilyandskip@msn.com.

<http://www.bmtfoundation.com/bfa/index.htm>: The Beaumont Foundation of America is giving 1 laptop Toshiba computer and backpack to all the families with children under the age of 18, if the child was listed as the soldiers dependent (natural, step or adopted child).

SURVIVOR CONTACTS

Federal Survivor Benefits:

Defense Finance and Accounting (DFAS): www.dfas.mil

Department of Defense: www.defenselink.mil

Department of Veterans Affairs: www.va.gov

Military Funeral Honors: www.militaryfuneralhonors.osd.mil

National Cemetery Administration: www.cem.va.gov

Social Security Administration – Survivor Benefits: www.ssa.gov/ww&os2.htm

Survivors and Eligible Dependents VA benefits - www.vba.va.gov/bln/dependents/index/htm.

Financial Assistance for Survivors:

[America First, Inc: www.americafirstinc.org](http://www.americafirstinc.org).

Armed Forces Children’s Education Fund: www.afcef.org.

Fallen Heroes Last Wish Foundation: www.lastwishfoundation.org.

Fallen Patriot Fund: www.fallenpatriotfund.org.

Freedom Alliance Scholarship Fund: www.freedomalliance.org/scholarship.htm.

Intrepid Fallen Heroes Fund: www.intrepidmuseum.com/foundation_heroesfund.html

Operation Family Fund: www.oefamilyfund.org.

Patriot’s Fund: www.patriotfund.us.

United Warrior Survivor Foundation: www.frogfriends.com.

Grief Support Contacts:

AARP Grief and Loss Programs: www.aarp.org/griefandloss.

Aircraft Casualty Emotional Support Services (ACCESS): www.accesshelp.org.

Bereaved Parents of the USA: <http://www.bereavedparentsusa.org/>.

Center for Loss & Life Transition: <http://www.centerforloss.com/>.

Compassionate Friends: <http://www.compassionatefriends.org/>.

Grief Dreams: <http://www.griefdreams.com/>.

Journey of Hearts: <http://www.journeyofhearts.org/healing/nature.html>.

Parents of Murdered Children, Inc.: <http://www.pomc.org/>.

Sons and Daughters in Touch: <http://www.sdit.org/>.

The National Center for Grieving Children and Families: <http://www.dougy.org/>.

The Centering Corporation: <http://www.centering.org/>.

Widow Net: <http://www.fortnet.org/WidowNet/index.html>.

Support Groups and Services - by State:

American Association of Suicidology: <http://www.suicidology.org/web/guest/home>.

Bereaved Parents of the USA: <http://www.bereavedparentsusa.org/>.

Compassionate Friends: <http://www.compassionatefriends.org/home.aspx>.

Grief Education and Certification Association for Death Education and Counseling (ADEC): <http://www.adec.org/>.

Grief, Inc.: <http://www.griefinc.com/>.

GriefRecovery®: <http://www.grief-recovery.com/>.

The American Academy of Grief Counseling: <http://www.aihcp.org/aagc.htm>.

The American Grief Academy: <http://www.griefinc.com/griefinc/aga/index.htm>.

Trauma Education and Certification Association for Traumatic Stress Specialists: <http://www.atss-hq.com/index.cfm>.

International Critic Incident Stress Foundation, Inc.: <http://www.icisf.org/favicon.ico>.

National Center for PTSD: <http://www.ptsd.va.gov/>.

The American Academy of Experts in Traumatic Stress: <http://www.aaets.org/>.

The International Society for Traumatic Stress Studies: <http://www.istss.org/>.

Military Interest Links:

Military.com: <http://www.military.com>.

MilitaryCity.com: <http://www.militarycity.com/>.

Special Operations Warrior Foundation: <http://www.specialops.org/>.

The National Gulf War Resource Center: <http://www.ngwrc.org/>.

Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall: <http://www.thewall-usa.com/>.

VietnamWall.org: <http://www.vietnamwall.org/>.

Military Organizations and Services:

American Gold Star Mothers: <http://www.goldstarmoms.com/>.

Armed Forces Insurance: <http://www.afi.org/>.

Disabled American Veterans: <http://www.dav.org/>.

Gold Star Wives of America, Inc.: <http://www.goldstarwives.org/>.

Military Officers Association of America: <http://www.moaa.org/Default.asp>.

National Guard Association of the United States: <http://www.ngaus.org/>.

National Military Family Association: <http://www.ngaus.org/>.

Society of Military Widows: <http://www.militarywidows.org/>.

The American Legion: <http://www.legion.org/>.

The Army and Air Force Mutual Aid Association: <http://www.aafmaa.com/home.asp>.

The Association of the United States Army: <http://www.ausa.org/>.

The Reserve Officers Association: <http://www.roa.org/>.

The Retired Enlisted Association: <http://www.trea.org/>.

Uniform Services Benefit Association: <http://www.usba.com/usba/>.

Veterans of the Vietnam War: <http://www.vvnw.org/>.

Vietnam Veterans of America: <http://www.vva.org/>.

Letters of Condolence and Concern: AR 600–8–1, 30 April 2007.

8–5. Description of condolence letters: Letters of condolence convey condolence on a Soldier's death from a higher level of CMD; however, do not describe the circumstances surrounding the death in a condolence letter.

8–6. Preparation of condolence letters:

- a. Commanders who would normally send a letter of sympathy will send a letter of condolence when the NOK—
 - 1) Was present at the time of death and knows the circumstances firsthand.
 - 2) Has been provided the details by some appropriate authority such as the local police or other member of the chain of command.
- b. Appropriate CDRs in the chain of command (other than the CDR writing the letter of sympathy) such as medical facility CDRs and Chaplains, while not required to prepare letters of condolence, may do so.
- c. *An immediate* CDR (particularly overseas where retirees, family members, and DA civilian employees are part of the military community) may send a letter of condolence to the NOK of a family member of DA civilian employee who dies within his or her CMD.

8–7. Sending condolence letters: Do not mail letters of condolence prepared per paragraph 8–6 above until receipt of confirmation that NOK were notified. Do not mail any other letters of condolence until at least 24 hours after mailing the letter of sympathy.

8–8. Review of condolence letters: The CAC (or deployed Adjutant when so directed by the contingency CAC concerned), will review the letter of condolence to ensure compassion, clarity, accuracy, completeness, and that it is in compliance with paragraph 8–5, above. When the CAC does not prepare a letter of condolence, the preparing CMD will provide the CAC with an information copy of the letter.

8–9. Letters of concern: If they desire, CDRs of personnel hospitalized and listed as VSI, SI, or NSI, may correspond with the Soldier's NOK. If they write, they must follow the procedures for preparing and reviewing letters of sympathy.

8–10. Rules for preparing letters of sympathy, condolence, and concern:

- a. The CDR most knowledgeable of the Soldier and the facts and circumstance surrounding the casualty incident will prepare the letter of sympathy except as indicated in paragraph 8–1, above.

- b. Send letters of sympathy to the PNOK in all death and missing cases except those mentioned in paragraph 8–1c.
- c. Mail letters of sympathy only after receiving confirmation of notification.
- d. The CAC (or deployed G–1 when so directed by the contingency CAC concerned), will review letters of sympathy prior to dispatch.
- e. Prepare letters of condolence and concern in those situations as described in paragraph 8–6.

FORMS

Authority: Title 10 USC, Section 3012.

Principle Purpose: To assist the unit Leadership in responding to your needs and preferences if your spouse is involved in a serious incident.

Routine uses: To provide the command information necessary to assist you in your time of need.

Mandatory and Voluntary disclosure and effect on individual not providing information: Disclosure of this information is voluntary; however, failure to provide this information may affect the command's ability to promptly respond to your needs.

Script for Incident Briefing

(Spouse's name), Good (morning) (afternoon) (evening)

This is _____ from _____ Company.

I am calling you on official business.

I would like to start by saying your (husband) (wife) is fine.

All is well with (him) (her).

Okay?

However, the Company did have (a soldier) (soldiers) who (was) (were)

_____ wounded in action

_____ killed in action

_____ are determined as unknown whereabouts

We respectfully ask that you do not contact the next of kin at this time.

The next of kin are currently being assisted.

We also ask that you do not contact any of the _____ spouses, as we are still notifying them.

This is so that we may follow the right procedure to prevent unnecessary rumors and heartache. But this also gives you the respect to get the facts first hand before you see this on the news. We will also provide professional support for you during this difficult time.

The Rear Detachment Commander, (give rank and name) is conducting an official briefing to discuss the details of the incident at (location) at _____ (time/date).

You are certainly encouraged and welcome to attend. This briefing is only for members of _____ Company, and we recommend that children or friends do not accompany you.

Childcare is available by calling _____.

Again, your (husband) (wife) is fine.

I apologize that I must end this call so quickly, but I need to continue notifying the other spouses.

If you are unable to attend and as other details become available, I can call you back.

SPOUSE/SIGNIFICANT OTHER PREFERENCE FORM:

Your Name:		Your SSN:	
Address:			
Home Phone: ()			
Cell Phone: ()			
Company you work for:		Work Phone: ()	
Your Position:		Hours:	
List all children (whether living with you or not; include those from previous marriages):			
First and Last Name	Address	Phone	Birth Date
Do you speak English:		With which language are you most comfortable?	
Please list any special physical, medical, or dietetic needs:			
What are your religious preferences?			
What is your spouse's religious preference?			
What chapel do you attend regularly?			
What is your local minister's name and phone?			
After being notified of a serious incident whom would you like to come and support you?			
First and Last Name	Address/Phone		
Please sign and date:			
Your Signature		Date	
Please turn form over and draw a map that shows how to get to your home on/from Brigade Headquarters or provide mapquest directions.			

AFTER ACTION REVIEW

FOR

CARE TEAMS

EVENT:

EVENT DATE:

AAR DATE:

WHAT WENT WELL:

WHAT CAN WE DO BETTER?

WHO HELPED?

RECOMMENDATIONS:

IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS

TITLE	NAME	OFFICE#	HOME#	CELL#	EMAIL
CDR/RDC					
BDE FRSA					
BN FRSA					
UNITS INFORMATION					
CHAPLAIN ON CALL					
BDE or REAR D CHAPLAIN					
FRG LEADER					
CARE TEAM					
PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICER (PAO)					
CASUALTY ASSISTANCE OFFICER					

TELEPHONE LOG

DATE:	TIME:	
NAME OF CALLER:	CALLER'S PHONE#:	
MESSAGE:		
CALL BACK:		
RESPOND BY:	Y / N ?	EMAIL:
DATE:	TIME:	
NAME OF CALLER:	CALLER'S PHONE#:	
MESSAGE:		
CALL BACK:		
RESPOND BY:	Y / N ?	EMAIL:
DATE:	TIME:	
NAME OF CALLER:	CALLER'S PHONE#:	
MESSAGE:		
CALL BACK:		
RESPOND BY:	Y / N ?	EMAIL:

NOTIFICATION LOG

NAME:

DATE:

TIME:

MESSAGE:

RESPOND BY:

PHONE:

EMAIL:

NAME:

DATE:

TIME:

MESSAGE:

RESPOND BY:

PHONE:

EMAIL:

NAME:

DATE:

TIME:

MESSAGE:

RESPOND BY:

PHONE:

EMAIL:

VISITOR LOG

NAME:

DATE:

TIME:

MESSAGE:

RESPOND BY:

PHONE:

EMAIL:

NAME:

DATE:

TIME:

MESSAGE:

RESPOND BY:

PHONE:

EMAIL:

NAME:

DATE:

TIME:

MESSAGE:

RESPOND BY:

PHONE:

EMAIL:

VISITING FAMILY AND FRIENDS TRAVEL INFORMATION

Name:	
Relationship:	Number In Party:
Mode Of Travel:	
Flying:	
Arrival Date:	
Time:	
Airport Flight #:	
POV:	
Arrival Date:	
Hotel Accommodations:	
Name	
Relationship:	Number In Party:
Mode Of Travel:	
Flying:	
Arrival Date:	
Time:	
Airport Flight #:	
POV:	
Arrival Date:	
Hotel Accommodations:	
Name	
Relationship:	Number In Party:
Mode Of Travel:	
Flying:	
Arrival Date:	
Time:	
Airport Flight #:	
POV:	
Arrival Date:	
Hotel Accommodations:	

CHILDREN'S SCHEDULE

Name of Child:	Grade:	Child's Cell Phone:
School Name:		
School Address:		
Telephone Number:		School Hours:
Bus Schedule/Location:		
Other transportation:		
After School Activities:		Hours:
Location:		
Transportation needed:		
POC for more information (coach, Scout Leader, etc.)		
POC Phone #:		
Name of Child:	Grade:	Child's Cell Phone:
School Name:		
School Address:		
Telephone Number:		School Hours:
Bus Schedule/Location:		
Other transportation:		
After School Activities:		Hours:
Location:		
Transportation needed:		
POC for more information (coach, Scout Leader, etc.)		
POC Phone #:		
Name of Child:	Grade:	Child's Cell Phone:
School Name:		
School Address:		
Telephone Number:		School Hours:
Bus Schedule/Location:		
Other transportation:		
After School Activities:		Hours:
Location:		
Transportation needed:		
POC for more information (coach, Scout Leader, etc.)		
POC Phone #:		

MEDICATION SCHEDULE

Name:

Date :

Time :

Medicine Name :

Dosage Given :

Comments:

Name:

Date :

Time :

Medicine Name :

Dosage Given :

Comments:

Name:

Date :

Time :

Medicine Name :

Dosage Given :

Comments:

Name:

Date :

Time :

Medicine Name :

Dosage Given :

Comments:

QUESTIONS FOR THE CASUALTY ASSISTANCE OFFICER:

QUESTIONS FOR THE COMMAND:

IX. Warrior Transition Units and the Army Wounded Warrior Program

What wound did ever heal but by degrees?

William Shakespeare

“There is no higher priority for the Department of Defense, after the war itself, than caring for our wounded warriors.”

Robert M. Gates, Secretary of Defense

The Army Warrior Healthcare Covenant says:

We are grateful for the contribution of warriors and their families. We will provide warriors and their families the highest quality of care and services possible, to honor their contribution to our nation. We will provide an environment that is conducive to healing by focusing on body (medical treatment), mind (skills and interests), heart (communication skills and anger management), and spirit (relaxation techniques, leisure skills, and religious support)

Warrior Transition Units (WTU):

Improvements in body armor and advances in medical technologies are increasing survival rates in combat situations. Estimates reveal that 1 in 4 soldiers are returning home with a service-related disability. As per the Army Medical Action Plan, WTUs stood up in June 2007 to provide qualifying wounded warriors (1) high quality, accessible living conditions near a medical treatment facility, (2) streamlined care designed to prevent unnecessary procedural delays, and (3) conditions that **facilitate their healing processes medically, psychologically, cognitively, socially, and spiritually, in conjunction with their career goals and aspirations.** As of the summer of 2010, there are 32 WTUs in the United States, as well as 3 WTUs in Europe, overseen by Meddac and the US Army Warrior Transition Command (in Alexandria, VA), which currently supports an expected 8,500 total warriors in transition.

A “warrior in transition” (WT) is any wounded, injured, or ill soldier **with complex medical needs requiring greater than six months medical treatment and/or requiring a Medical Evaluation Board (MEB), and whose duty limitations preclude the service member from contributing to the parent unit’s mission.** This includes active duty soldiers on Medical hold status, reserve component soldiers in Medical holdover status, soldiers on Active Duty Medical Extension (ADME), and soldiers with P3/P4 profiles that do not meet AR 40-501 retention standards and have a referral for a Medical Evaluation Board (MEB). WTUs consolidate treatment for active duty and reserve component soldiers. Approximately 11% of the total WT population is made up of soldier’s suffering from physical combat injuries; 25% comprise soldiers with diseases or non-battle injuries who are evacuated from theatre (including post-traumatic stress disorder/PTSD, other behavioral health issues, heart attacks, etc.); the rest became ill or injured at home station or had medical issues identified during the mobilization or demobilization process.

A service member assigned to a WTU is no longer assigned to his or her parent unit or rear detachment. This may present a dilemma for those in the parent unit, especially the

command team and FRG, who may desire to be a part of the care and assistance provided to the severely wounded or ill soldier and his/her family. Someone in the parent unit may want to ensure the soldier and his family have made a seamless transition to the WTU and that they are being well taken care of. One way to settle your worries is to actually make a visit to the WTU and SFAC (Soldier and Family Assistance Center) to see for yourself the excellent care being provided to the soldier and his/her family. Military courtesy suggests that if you are interested in visiting the WTU, in being on the care team, or in providing any form of assistance from the parent unit, that you call the WTU commander to make an appointment and to offer your support. The following is a detailed report of the functions of the WTU so you can relax and be assured that all levels of care are being addressed.

Another area of support to keep in mind is for the injured soldier who becomes non-deployable but who does not meet the criteria for the WTU. Partnering with his/her AW2 Advocate to provide care and assistance might be a meaningful way to help build the soldier's morale as the unit is deployed. Guard against the AW2 soldier doing duties that are counterproductive to his/her healing process, such as early formations for soldiers on sleep medications needing at least 8 hours of sleep. It is ultimately the commander's responsibility to maintain a command climate conducive to the recovery of these soldiers, to include eliminating the real or perceived barriers to seeking mental health care.

The Wounded Soldier and Family Hotline is 800-984-8523 (CONUS) and overseas DSN is 312-328-0002. These lines are open 24/7.

The Warrior Transition Unit

The Warrior Transition Unit mission is *"to facilitate the healing and rehabilitation of soldiers, return them to active duty when possible, or to prepare them for a successful life as a veteran in their community"*. This mission will be performed with the dignity and compassion due those who have bravely defended our country and its Constitution. In close consultation with medical personnel, the command team will "consider" whatever makes a soldier feel better and heal faster to include service dogs which help combat PTSD, living closer to home on remote status, and allowing WTU soldiers to wear the patches and insignia of their parent units (if the soldier prefers).

The **Soldier's Creed** still applies to the wounded warrior which states: "I will never accept defeat. I will never quit. I will never leave a fallen comrade. I am disciplined, physically and mentally tough." **The WT soldier's mission includes *"I am a Warrior in Transition. My job is to heal as I transition back to duty or continue serving the nation as a veteran in my community. This is not a status, but a mission. I will succeed in this mission because I AM A WARRIOR AND I AM ARMY STRONG."***

While in the WTU, a soldier's day-to-day responsibilities may be a mix of medical and military (to include light work assignments on post, if it is medically beneficial to do so.) A typical WTU consists of a company commander, executive officer, first sergeant, 3-6 platoon sergeants, and 12-24 squad leaders. The specially trained cadre is responsible

for ensuring that the injured soldier's needs are met, their care is coordinated, and their family's well-being is addressed. A key element of the WTU cadre is the "**triad of support**" consisting of a **primary care manager** (a physician or physician's assistant to oversee the care) with a ratio of 1:200, a **case manager** (a registered nurse to coordinate the care) with a ratio of 1:20, and a **squad leader** (usually a sergeant or staff sergeant) who is responsible to lead 10-12 WT and hold them accountable to their job, which is to get better and be able to return to work as a productive citizen in society.

All WTU soldiers are a part of the Army Wounded Warrior Program (AW2), established in 2005, wherever the soldier is located, regardless of military status. Generally, a soldier who will be rated 30% or greater by the Physical Disability Evaluation System is considered a part of the AW2. All wounded warriors (from overseas contingency operations since 9/11) are assigned an **AW2 Advocate** for as long as such services are needed. However, not all AW2 soldiers qualify for a Warrior Transition Unit.

Wounded Warrior Six-phase Lifecycle of Care

AW2 assists and advocates from the time of injury and continues throughout the Wounded Warrior six-phase Lifecycle of Care. The Army uses this cycle to determine what the wounded soldier, veteran, and family needs during each phase.

(1) Evacuation and Notification: the wounded warrior is assigned an Advocate who initiates contact with the soldier and family, and closely monitors their progress

(2) Treatment: while the AW2 soldier is receiving inpatient or outpatient care, the Advocate identifies individual soldier and family issues, and actively manages these issues while preparing them for the next phase

(3) Rehabilitation: after optimal medical benefit is achieved in rehabilitation, the Advocate discusses life goals and future options with the soldier and family and helps them to develop a plan of action for successful continuance of Army service or transition into the civilian community

(4) Evaluation: Advocate actively monitors the MEB/PEB (Medical and Physical Evaluation Boards) process, explains options, and completes a detailed income report to help the soldier and family with their decision to "stay on active duty vs. medically retire"; a pilot program called the **Physical Disability Evaluation System (PDES)** will begin in January 2010 which entails 1 medical exam and a single-sourced disability rating eliminating the duplicative, time-consuming, and confusing elements of the two current systems; a **PEBLO** (Physical Evaluation Board Liaison Officer) is responsible to counsel and assist soldiers referred into the system; the soldier should not sign anything without a complete understanding of what it is they are signing and what the ramifications are; there are various points throughout this process which allow the soldier to appeal

(5) Transition: Advocate helps execute plan of action for the soldier and family, assisting with a successful return to the military or transition into civilian community

(6) Management and Support: Advocate continues to proactively support the soldier, veteran, and family by assisting with new issues they may face, helps them to achieve their life goals, and to adjust accordingly when these goals change. The Advocate maintains a relationship with the soldier, veteran, and family to ensure they are receiving the support they need *for as long as they need it*.

Concerning the WTU, the Squad leaders meet patient and/or family or adult caregiver at the airport and escort them to the **SFAC** for in-processing. The SFAC is a one-stop shop providing administrative and social work services for family members/caregivers staying with wounded troops and wounded DOD civilians. A parent, legal guardian, or other adult family member 21 years of age or older authorized by official orders to travel with a wounded soldier, civilian, or WT is called a **non-medical attendant** and is eligible for a temporary military ID card, lodging, transportation, and per diem. Adult caregivers cannot receive military ID cards, but are eligible to receive all SFAC services.

The SFAC mission is to assist soldiers, caregivers, and commanders in identifying and resolving emerging health related, personal, and social issues affecting wounded soldiers, civilians, and their families, as well as supports the WT community through the development, coordination and provision of varied services designed to address complex physical, personal, family, social, and economic needs. It provides eleven essential services: military personnel benefits and services, substance abuse counseling and information for families, financial counseling, information and referral, transition and employment assistance, education counseling for soldiers and family members, pastoral services, legal assistance, outreach assistance, and donation management (the SFAC can accept private donations for WTU use as a way of giving back to those who have given so much...freedom isn't free and the costs of recovery can be exorbitant).

The SFAC is a pleasant "home away from home" facility to recharge in. Childcare and youth services offer no cost hourly care for medical appointments/treatment; 16 hours of no cost respite childcare per child per month. The SFAC also provides recreation and social activities for the wounded and their family/caregivers. It often fulfills the role of the FRG for the Warrior Transition Unit. Virtual SFACs and virtual FRGs can be accessed on-line so grandparents, parents, siblings, friends, etc. can keep updated with official and unofficial unit information. Soldiers can also log onto AKO, see their own case files, and track their care under "My PEB".

Additionally, the Squad leaders help guide the soldiers as they transition through and between the different phases in the continuum of care. The nurse case manager is the advocate and liaison between physicians, therapists, and administrators addressing all aspects of care such as managing pain, monitoring goals, etc. An integrated team of professionals (i.e. occupational therapists, social workers, chaplains, and other specialists) provide skilled services to assist the soldiers and their families throughout the healing and transition process. Besides medical care, the soldier can receive assistance with housing, administrative needs, and financial services.

The Warrior Transition Unit Continuum of Care

The WTU Continuum of Care has five phases:

(1) Assessment phase: the level of soldier functioning is evaluated by a primary care manager (physician) and specialty care services, as medically indicated, to include an occupational therapy assessment (which includes identifying previous military job skills, training, interests, and abilities.)

(2) Goal Setting phase: a multi-disciplinary team, the soldier, and his/her family establish goals, timelines, and target dates specific to healing the soldier's heart, mind, body, and spirit; this **Comprehensive Transition Plan** acts a roadmap for recovery and transition, with personal and professional milestones, such as passing a PT test, taking college courses, or participating in job internships.

(3) Rehabilitation phase: four tiers of rehab (A-B-C-D) tailor services, therapies, training, and education according to the soldier's current ability level, individualized needs, and career interests; the longest time is spent in this phase—working toward goals.

- Occupational therapy interventions are designed to decrease the risk of developing or worsening deficits, disorders, problems, or undesirable behaviors that might limit the performance in self-care, soldier-specific tasks, work tasks, and relationships, while teaching habits that promote a quicker return to productive living such as memory improvement techniques, anger and stress management, and life-skills training. Occupational therapists provide consultation to MWR programs to assure that the activity meets the needs and abilities of the WT. OTs also works closely with the VA and civilian organizations to create work internships, mentorships, and job shadowing experiences for soldiers.

(4) Transition Preparation phase: discharge planning (begins to leave the WTU as a soldier or a vet).

- There are numerous free assistive technologies and services provided through **CAP (computer/electronic accommodations program)** to ensure people with disabilities have equal access to the information environment and opportunities in the Department of Defense and throughout the federal government. These include literacy software, alternative keyboards, personal digital assistants, voice-recognition software, listening devices, screen magnification software, and programs that provide verbal output of electronic information to accommodate partial or complete vision loss. The soldiers are entitled to retain these tools, at no cost, even if they are separating from the Army.

(5) Transitional/Post-transitional phase: follow-up appointments are made, as appropriate, at next duty station or the VA hospital to assure a smooth re-entry to the

The desired outcome for the soldier is to emerge physically, mentally, socially and spiritually strengthened and vocationally enabled.

Lessons Learned

Today's Army has kept faith with wounded warriors who have the capacity and the desire to remain on active duty. It has been good morale for the WTs (and for others) to see examples of thriving AW2 soldiers in regular units. The Army is viewing these soldiers in new light and it is a positive step forward into the future. These combat-experienced veterans are not just inspirational; they are vital assets to the Army mission all around. Tiffany Smiley, wife of CPT Scott Smiley, who was blinded by enemy IED in Iraq, 2005, and now commands the WTU at West Point, says these soldiers "make the military better; they're good for America, and for what we stand for as a whole."

Finally, a word about the WTU command teams, cadre, and medical staff who work under the pressure of high military and civilian expectations, long and unpredictable hours, with often-limited resources and personnel. They are also heroes whose families must hold down the home front while their service member does his or her job of providing top-notch care for our deserving wounded warriors. Like all new systems, there may be issues that need resolving and refining. It is important to find creative ways to help each other and to increase one another's resilience during these difficult times facing our American citizens both military and civilian. Remember while some sacrifices are evident to all, some go quietly unnoticed.

Locations of Warrior Transition Units:

Balboa WTU, San Diego, CA	Fort Leonard Wood, MO
Fort Knox, KY	Fort Lewis, WA
Fort Belvoir, VA	Fort Meade, MD
Fort Benning, GA	Fort Polk, LA
Fort Bliss, TX	Fort Richardson, AK
Fort Bragg, NC	Fort Riley, KS
Fort Campbell, KY	Fort Sam Houston, TX
Fort Carson, CO	Fort Sill, OK
Fort Dix, NJ	Fort Stewart, GA
Fort Drum, NY	Fort Wainwright, AK
Fort Gordon, GA	T A Medical Center, AK
Fort Hood, TX	Walter Reed Army Medical Center, MD
Fort Huachuca, AZ	West Point, NY
Fort Irwin, CA	Bavaria, Germany
Fort Jackson, SC	Heidelberg, Germany
Fort Lee/Fort Eustis, VA	Landstuhl, Germany

Resources

Tear Soup: A Recipe for Healing After Loss by Pat Schwiebert and Chuck DeKlyen

***This book was recommended during a grief seminar, given on 1/21/09, to the women of West Point by Lorraine Brosious (M.A. in Counseling), mother of Lisa Beamer and mother-in-law of Todd Beamer, a 9/11 hero on Flight 93 whose last words “Let’s roll!” have rallied many of our own deployed soldiers in the struggle against terrorism. It is in picture book format appropriate for elementary aged children, but the content would also encourage adults.*

Hope Unseen (due out on 9/18/2010) by CPT Scott Smiley and Doug Crandall

CPT Smiley is the Commander of the Warrior Transition Unit at West Point, who was blinded by enemy IED in Iraq, 2005.

Exit Wounds: A Survival Guide to Pain Management for Returning Veterans and Their Families by Derek McGinnis, Iraq War Veteran with Stephen R. Braun

When War Comes Home: Christ-Centered Healing for Wives of Combat Veterans

By Chris Adsit, Rahnella Adsit, and Marshale Carter Waddell (specifically addresses the hidden wounds of war, including PTSD, and offers comfort and practical help for the “secondary trauma” she is experiencing) Recommended by Lt. Gen R. L. Van Antwerp

Hope For the Home Front: Winning the Emotional and Spiritual Battles of the Military Wife by Marshale Carter Waddell

Army Wounded Warrior Program:

- <http://AW2portal.com/default.aspx>
- www.woundedwarriorsproject.org
- www.army.mil/warriorcare
- www.nationalresourcedirectory.org
- www.militaryonesourcs.com: wounded warrior resource center; 1-800-342-9647.
- www.yellowribbonfund.com: organizes community support for injured service men and women.
- www.u.s.armywarriortransitioncommand: lots of links, including a ten page printable list of resources for soldiers and family members called “My Help List.”
- www.heromiles.org: no cost travel for family members and spouse to visit AW2 in MTFs across the country.
- www.angelsOfmercy.org: clothing and supplies for AW2 and family members.
- www.fisherhouse.org: temporary, free housing on grounds of major MTF or VA medical centers.

- www.fisherhouse.org/caring/about: can keep updated about soldier's medical condition in the hospital and during recovery.
- www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org: 1-800-273-talk 8255.
- www.homesfortroops.org: adapts homes for handicapped accessibility.

Warriors To Work Program:

- <http://wtow.woundedwarriorproject.org>
- www.hirevetsfirst.gov/REALlifelines: support with funding for civilian careers.
- <http://lifetransformed.org>: scholarship for computer literacy course for war-wounded caregivers, active-duty SM and spouses, and National Guard and Reserve.

“Troops To Teachers” Program:

- www.Proudtoserveagain.com
- www.Gijobs.com
- www.Vetsuccess.gov: on-line employment resource and vocational rehab.
- www.HireHeroesUSA.org: career placement and services regardless of disability.

Other:

- <http://www.fndfl.org/VeteransResources.asp>: Master list of many military assistance organizations.
- www.ncptsd.va.gov/ncmain/website/sitemap.html: National Center for Post Traumatic Stress Disorder.
- <http://www.avbi.org>: American Veterans with Brain Injuries.
- <http://giftstoarmy.army.mil>: way for people to donate money to FMWR programs or directly to a specific installation.
- www.operationmilitarypride.com: good guide on care packages.
- www.adoptaplatoon.org: set up community support for soldier's unit.
- www.defendamerica.mil
- www.uso.org
- www.ausa.org: produces Family Programs update and newsletter.
- www.netpets.org/netp/foster.ph: military pets foster project.
- www.hooah4health.com: take on-line courses to learn “Resiliency” through the
- www.myarmylifetoo.com: Comprehensive Soldier Fitness Initiative.
- www.deploymenthealthlibrary.fhp.osd.mil: emotional cycles of deployment
- www.militarymentalhealth.org: confidential on-line mental health survey.

X. Maintaining Balance and Wellness

When health is absent, wisdom cannot reveal itself, art cannot manifest, strength cannot fight, wealth becomes useless, and intelligence cannot be applied.

Herophilus, Greek Physician

Company Command can be a very stressful time for the Soldier and Spouse. It is imperative that you recognize this and have a flexible plan in place to maintain balance in your life...physically, emotionally, intellectually and spiritually. Realistically acknowledging and considering how you and your family deal with demands and stressors is a first step in maintaining balance and wellness. If you do not take care of yourself first, you will not be as effective in doing your part for yourself, your spouse and family, the unit and the Army. Areas of potential stress to consider and discuss:

- Pressure of being in the spotlight
- Ebb and flow of Soldier's emotions during command
- Deployment
- Marital issues: family/in-law visits; finances, childrearing, household chores, etc.
- Expectations of each other during command
- Childcare
- Participation in children's activities, i.e. attendance at sports events, recitals, etc.
- Actions and reactions taken during trauma or crisis
- Role during trauma or crisis
- Hormonal ups and downs of pregnancy/post-partum depression
- Illness
- Suicide in the unit or community
- Pillow talk
- Gossip
- Negative comments from fellow unit family members
- Lack of support/too much support from higher ups
- Leaving the unit at the end of command
- Working outside the home
- Desire to be there for the unit
- Daily schedule
- _____
- _____

Our physical, emotional, intellectual and spiritual health is intertwined and interdependent in maintaining wellness and balance. Being out of balance in one area can cause problems in another area. For example, if you are so emotionally drained that you can't sleep, then you will not be able to focus at a leadership training. You must be aware of each area of wellness.

Physical:

The physical demands of command are real. Because you are in a leadership position, you may want to or be expected to attend meetings, make phone calls, visit unit members, and attend to many unit-related details that will take up much of your time—in

addition to your regular home or work related activities. Find balance by looking at your rest, exercise and nutrition.

- **Adequate rest:** In order to maintain your physical health, you will need to be sure to get enough rest. Not getting enough rest will make you tired, irritable and unable to think clearly during the day. This can have negative ramifications in every area of your life. If you find that you are sleeping only four or five hours a night with no time to nap or rest during the day, you may need to assess your physical wellness. You may need to delegate some unit related activities or accept help with home and work activities. Doing so is a step toward wellness and balance.
- **Exercise:** Research has shown that including exercise in your daily activities can help relieve some of the stress that builds up. Even a short walk around the block can help you reduce stress related tension. Yoga, Pilates, and Tai Chi can help reduce stress. Or you may prefer a good kickboxing class! Check with your local gym for classes. If exercise is not already a part of your life, consider planning time for it daily.
- **Nutrition:** Your body needs the appropriate vitamins and minerals provided from healthy nutrition to function. Eating in moderation from a variety of food groups and getting enough water every day gives your body the fuel it needs to fight disease and function well. Avoid drinking more than one or two alcoholic beverages a day. Alcohol is not a good way to relieve stress. Your local health clinic has nutritionists available to help you if you have special dietary needs.

If you are not feeling physically well and healthy, notice your daily rest, exercise and nutrition habits. You may need to make some changes that will contribute to your physical wellness before it impacts your total wellness.

Emotional:

Command can send you on an emotional roller coaster! You will have an emotional response to many things that happen during command and reviewing your feelings, finding your release and identifying your support networks will prove valuable to achieving your personal balance.

- **Evaluate your emotions:** Strong emotional responses, good and bad, cause a chemical reaction in our bodies, which may have physical ramifications including but not limited to stomach upset, headaches, teeth/jaw grinding, diarrhea, or lack of sleep. If you experience these symptoms, check your emotional wellness.
- **Find your release:** Exercise is a great way to work off emotional tension. It is extremely important that you do things to maintain your emotional health. Hobbies, traveling, socializing, religious activities, etc. can contribute to your

emotional wellness. You will need to take time for things that make you happy and build you up.

- Rely on relationships: You should have a trustworthy individual who is not a part of your unit in whom you can confide. This may be a friend, mentor, a parent, or even a behavioral health professional. People in the unit will look to you for strength and resilience. There is no way to maintain that strength and resilience for others without also dealing with your own emotional responses to events.
- Reach out for help: If you become completely overwhelmed with the emotional response to unit or life events, it is imperative that you speak to a behavioral health professional or a chaplain. Many chaplains are trained in marriage and family counseling and can be good listeners.

Behavioral health services are available through:

- Military Family Life Consultants: 12 free sessions/issues, no records, see ACS or your State/Regional Family Programs Office
- Military One Source : 12 free sessions per issue/referrals, no reports to your unit 800-342-9647; www.militaryonesource.com
- Your local clinic/hospital: Self-referred; you do not have to go through your Primary Care Manager.

You should not suffer in silence! That era has passed! If your foot is broken you go to a bone doctor...and when your heart or mind is overwhelmed you go to a behavioral health doctor. Behavioral health services, trusted confidantes, and doing things that make you smile can all contribute to your emotional wellness.

Intellectual or Mental:

Making time for your intellectual health is vital. Your Command Spouse will be receiving a great deal of training and responsibility and will be growing intellectually throughout the command. This is a good time for you to learn and grow along with them. Take the opportunity to learn more about the military, increase your professional knowledge, and develop other interests.

- Expand your military knowledge: Educating yourself about the Army and how if functions can contribute to your own intellectual well-being, giving you increased confidence in your new leadership role. Seek out classes and trainings that will enhance your learning. The Army Family Team Building program at ACS or through your State/Regional Family Programs Office offers classes to enhance your basic knowledge of the Army as well as in depth classes on leadership, group dynamics, conflict and more. You can keep up with current events in the Army and the military by subscribing to newsletters from Army Well-Being, MWR, and other military programs. Become familiar with the many internet resources that focus on the military

- lifestyle. Because you are in a position of leadership, knowledge about the Army will be useful in your dealings with the unit and military community.
- **Maintain your professional edge:** If you are taking time off from work during the command time or because of location or lack of jobs in your field, be sure and keep up with the trends and information relating to your work field by subscribing to magazines or newsletters. You may find a wide variety of them available at your local library. If your schedule permits, try to find volunteer opportunities where you can use some of the critical job skills you have already developed. This can help you maintain your professional qualifications.
 - **Develop other interests:** If you have small children at home it can sometimes seem that your vocabulary is limited to Sesame Street or Dr. Seuss. Consider a book club or other groups where you can participate in stimulating conversation. Utilize the local libraries or your community adult education classes. Learn a new skill or begin a new project or try out a new volunteer position. Even doing a crossword puzzle or Sudoku can sharpen mental acuity.
 - **Purposefully plan activities that boost your intellectual or mental wellness** in order to help achieve the balance and the energy that you need.

Spiritual:

Spiritual wellness can mean different things to different people. No matter how you define it, you need to tend to your spiritual health. We all draw our energy from somewhere...God, nature, others, ourselves, a higher power, etc. This belief in something larger than ourselves can give us peace. Spiritual wellness is deeply personal. How you define your spiritual wellness is up to you, but active participation in activities that boost your spiritual wellness should not be neglected or choked out by the busyness of life.

- **Personal quiet time:** Taking time to meditate on how we fit into the world and recognizing that we have a purpose in life is important to our spiritual health. It may mean meditating in your own home every day or journaling your thoughts or prayers, singing, chanting, or reading religious or sacred books or scriptures. For others it may include a walk in a park or a hike up a mountain to commune with nature or spending time in a sacred place.
- **Participate in spiritual activities:** Joining with others who believe as you do can boost your spiritual wellness. For some spiritual wellness is enhanced through participation in worship with others at the various chapel or local community church services. Some may choose to participate in a yoga class, Tai Chi, Bible study or other faith rituals. The mutual sharing of ideas or feelings with others in groups or by service to other people can foster spiritual wellness.

Your emotional and spiritual wellness is often intertwined. Just as exercise is a good release for emotional tension, so is participation in personal quiet time and spiritual

activities. The chaplains in your local or state military community can assist you with meeting whatever spiritual needs you have, no matter what your religious beliefs are. Maintaining your inner peace and wellness and participating in spiritual activities is important to creating spiritual balance.

Comprehensive Soldier Fitness:

The Army has recognized that we face many physical and psychological challenges. We live very stressful lives and that stress takes a toll on us. The latest Army initiative to help us is the Comprehensive Soldier Fitness (CSF) program. This program assesses our resiliency and coping skills in areas similar to what was discussed above: Physical, Family, Social, Spiritual and Emotional. The program, based on 30-plus years of scientific study and results, uses individual assessments, tailored virtual training, classroom training and embedded resilience experts to provide the critical skills our Soldiers, Family members and Army Civilians need. Soldiers and Family members can take the Global Assessment Tool (GAT) and take online modules that teach you how to develop resiliency and utilize coping skills in the five individual areas. Read more about this program at <http://www.army.mil/csf/>.

Hooah 4 Health:

For the Reserve Component, Hooah 4 Health (www.hooah4health.com) is a health-related website for the entire family that encourages you to live a healthier, less stressful life. Focusing on Body, Mind, Spirit and the Environment, Hooah 4 Health encourages individuals to assume the responsibility to explore options and take charge of their health and well being.

Military One Source:

Military One Source (www.militaryonesource.com) has multiple resources including a free Healthy Habits Coaching program and a Life Health Assessment available for helping each family member achieve the balance they desire.

QPR or Gatekeeper Training:

Another training course that you may see offered is QPR or Gatekeeper training. QPR stands for Question, Persuade, and Refer -- 3 simple steps that anyone can learn to help save a life from suicide. Just as people trained in CPR and the Heimlich maneuver help save thousands of lives each year, people trained in QPR learn how to recognize the warning signs of a suicide crisis and how to question, persuade, and refer someone to help. Check with your local behavioral health clinic or ACS to find out when this training may be offered. You never know when you might need it!

Stress Management:

Basic stress management is crucial...eating well, getting enough rest, decompressing. Army Community Service or your State/Regional Family Program Office offers in depth stress management classes through a couple of different programs and you should take advantage of these before or at the start of the command time. Resources are everywhere. Take advantage of classes through Army Community Services, your State, or your local community. Understanding stress and how it affects us physically, emotionally, intellectually and spiritually can be a great help in learning how to manage it successfully and will contribute to your wellness during command time.

XI. Leaving the Unit

Who has never tasted what is bitter does not know what is sweet.

German Proverb

LEAVING THE UNIT

The departure of the command team is a major event in the life of a unit. This time of transition will encompass strong emotions, much social activity, final responsibilities, expressions of gratitude, and the difficult task of saying farewell. During this time of transition, you may experience heightened emotions for much of your life has revolved around the unit, the soldiers and their families.

Meeting with the incoming commander's spouse will ease this transition for the unit. You now have a wealth of information that will be of great value to the incoming spouse! When you meet, talk openly and honestly, what worked and what did not work as well as any lessons learned. Most importantly, stay positive and avoid any negative personal opinions. Bring and explain any supplies or materials you need to pass on as well as copies of any after action reports, notes and rosters. Current rosters will enable the incoming spouse to start learning the names of soldiers and family members of the unit. Discuss the change of command ceremony and answer any questions pertaining to the reception.

The soldiers and family members of the unit may be anxious about the upcoming transition; change can be both exciting and difficult! If presented the opportunity, publicly thank the spouses, soldiers, and anyone else in the unit who has been especially helpful to you.

The outgoing commander is responsible for the change of command invitations. Sit down with your spouse and work out an invitation list. Invitations should be sent out approximately four weeks prior to the event, know that the invitations will be sent out by the unit. Invitations should be sent to friends and family as well as people in the battalion and brigade. If you have any questions or concerns it is best to ask the spouse of the battalion commander for guidance.

You will probably have mixed emotions on the day of the change of command. It is the culmination of a long period of events, both happy and sad. Try to keep your composure and be ready to support your spouse as it will be very difficult for your spouse to say farewell to the soldiers in the unit. Following the change of command ceremony, you can say good bye to the unit members immediately afterwards and then leave the area so the unit members feel free to go to the new commander's reception. If you are staying within the battalion, be kind and 'at a distance'. The new command will need time to become cohesive and productive, just remember when you were new to the unit. People may come up to you with comments about the new command, the changes that have been made, and what they are doing. Use this as an opportunity to explain why change is good, and always accentuate the positive. Do not feed into any negative comments.

Take time to think about what you have learned and gained as a person from the command experience. You may not realize the contribution you have made to so many

until months or even years after leaving. Your daily pace may not be the same after the change of command. Be good to yourself. Take time to unwind and relax. Refocus your energies and talents in a way that will be beneficial to you, your family, and your community. It is nice if you and your spouse can take some leave before reporting to your next assignment.

Your experience was unique and your feelings will be also. You may be concerned about people in the unit for a period of time. You may have a sense of relief and should not feel guilty if you are smiling when the command time is over. There are a lot of valid reasons for being ready to move on.

Depending on your preparation and attitude, leaving the unit can be a positive and special time for all. Feel good about yourself and take pride in your contributions as you have touched the lives of many soldiers and their family members.

Congratulations!

XII. Additional References and Resources

Final Thoughts from the Survey

Use an index card to put your husband's final wishes on them and place it in your wallet. Tell your friends where your card is in case it has to be used. We put who we wanted to escort our husband's home, where he wanted to be buried, what uniform he wanted to be buried in and what other military paraphernalia as well as who I needed called in case my mind went blank. It was a good security blanket, knowing that I held my husband's final wishes in my purse at all time.

I've learned that not everyone in the unit will participate and the best thing you can do is make sure that the spouses are informed.

Always treat the soldiers with respect.

I learned that service members need to make sure that all their information is correct and updated so there are no confusions as to their final wishes.

Communication and teamwork. You see the BN CDR and CSM working together and the Company CDR and 1SG working together so we try to incorporate that into the FRG leadership as well. All of our FRGs has 2 leaders and we try to promote teamwork. It's too hard for one person to do it, especially through a deployment.

I cannot stress enough that teamwork is the key. Use your CSM Spouse and Advise together. Listen to each other's concerns. In the end, don't get your feelings hurt if the BN CDR's Spouse doesn't want to take your ideas. There is always another day. Be open minded. I have had great working relationships with all of my spouses and I guess I am the lucky one (from what I have been told). Show a united front, your husbands have to work together and it makes for a more pleasant working environment. If you have the experience, then use it. Don't be afraid to share your ideas, especially if you have a CDR's wife that is not as experienced.

The Gold Star Family is priority number one and they get to have whomever they want at their house whenever they chose!

The involvement of all commanders from Division to the companies, along with a desire to help families from the wives of those commanders makes an effective FRG.

From the start as an FRG leader I always with the support of the commander, stood behind my words that I will not tolerate gossip.

When coming into a unit and being the “commander’s wife” doesn’t mean that you should or will be the FRG Leader.

Don’t break what is working. Experience is the key when it comes to FRG and especially leading.

The FRG Leader should be whoever is able and willing to put the time into it that is needed.

We created FRG business cards to hand out. We’re trying to reach every soldier so they know this is not just for family members but the FRG is for them too!

Be friendly and open to talk to the enlisted member spouses. Don’t treat them any different. They are the backbone of the unit and deserve the same treatment. It helps ease the tension between the two and makes for a much better atmosphere throughout the entire unit.

Emotional strength helps make an effective FRG.

You cannot get everyone in your company to participate in FRG functions, just be happy with the ones that want to be involved, and don’t take it personally if others wish not to be involved.

Most people just need someone to listen to them.

I also had a period of time where I had compassion fatigue...I was going through this deployment and had to also deal with all of the problems of the spouses in our unit. When dealing with an irate call, document the situation, listen, reiterate what has been said, and express that everything has a solution. Once you are off the phone, contact the Commander with the details, and wait for instructions. Remember this is the Commander’s FRG and your job is to assist with their organization.

Rank plays no part in the FRG! Establish a positive sense of teamwork right from the beginning.

Remove the stigma that FRG is an officer’s wives only group...cliquey...the only way to resolve this is to just lead by example! The classic “do unto others” adage! If the leadership can demonstrate that the group is not at all elitists, etc., then word will spread and more folks will join the fun!

Families that thrive on negativity and drama...I ask them not to bring it to the meetings, but talk to me privately. I listen, listen, listen and then offer positive solutions. I never participate in the negativity, even if I might agree with what they are saying! Keep it positive at all times. Offer guidance and solutions. Don't get wrapped up in the drama.

Try to make time for lunch one or more times a week to get quality time in.

A properly, functioning FRG should act as a "family." An effective FRG is one in which everyone is supportive of everyone else. I truly believe that a Company Commander's wife does set the tone of the FRG. It should be Officer and Enlisted Families working together for the same goal!

One thing that makes an effective FRG is a strong commander who understands the importance of supporting families. A strong FRG leader who values serving, informing, and supporting families as that they, in turn, can support the soldiers is equally important.

Attend trainings (FRG and AFTB) so you are better able to handle questions and issues that arise- even if you are not the FRG leader; create a relationship with the company leadership (1SG, XO, platoon leaders and platoon SGT's) as well as their spouses; create a relationship with BN FRG; create relationships with other commander's spouses; decide before hand what areas and to what capacity you will be involved within the company and share them with your soldier.

Sharing my husband with the Company at times is lonely, no one prepare me for that. Be approachable, honest, and avoid the gossip monster. Also don't forget to your single soldiers, they are often eager to help they just need to be asked. Embrace your young wives. And remember above all you can only help someone as much as they want to be helped.

FRG Leader is not a title for the faint of heart. It is a labor of love! Having an organized roster, key callers who are able to effectively disseminate information, social events for spouses to get to know each other, having a person that each spouse knows she can contact if she needs anything.

A welcome letter is also a nice touch.

The most important thing is to reach out to all the wives as soon as you arrive. Go through the phone tree and just call to introduce yourself this allow you to reach out to people who may not have been active members in the past. Often people choose not to

participate in the FRG because they have had bad experience with certain people or a certain FRG leader hearing that a new FRG leader has arrived might encourage them to participate again. Also talk with the other FRG leaders they might have helpful tips that apply to working with the BN Commander or FRSA.

Just be there if they need you.

Best piece of advice- treat your volunteers (especially the key caller) right and it will trickle down to others, making all feel comfortable with you as a leader.

I would recommend that if an established FRG is already in place that the spouse does not come in trying to fix things that need not be fixed.

I really think that it is important for a unit to have a set standard across the board for how they are going to respond to the death of a soldier or family member, such as if you are going to have a time set aside for everyone to come together and meet at the chapel this should be done for all soldiers regardless of their rank.

It isn't our job to be everyone's, best friend. Also make friends with the other Company Commander's wives; they will be a good outlet for sharing ideas and questions and problems.

I had difficulties' with spouses sharing their frustrations with the "command team" publicly, on Face Book or word of mouth.

Don't volunteer out of obligation, this is a wonderful way to help spouses during deployments and they need someone who will be active and present.

Spouses/Parents love the Monthly newsletter with pics of their soldiers- make sure you get the Company Commander to assist by making each platoon submit articles.

I would establish a relationship with the young/new spouses early because they will be the ones that need help in the future. Establish a good working relationship with you r Rear-D and make sure that person assigned to Rear-D is someone you can work with. This may seem obvious but good communication at all levels is key...especially with the commander.

The FRG Leader must be able to speak to people and explain things to people that are not familiar with the military, military terms, or procedures.

Developing a “zero tolerance” for drama or a “drama free zone” as we refer to it. No gossip permitted area.

If you have no interest in being the FRG Leader you should hand it off to someone that wants to do it. You are hurting the group as a whole if you don't.

I have learned that is it very vital that you receive the Spouses' change of address and contact information throughout the deployment. Too often spouses move home during their soldier's deployment and do not inform the FRG. This poses difficult when trying to get ahold of the spouse. Too often people change email addresses and phone numbers as well. So in every FRG meeting, in your sign in roster, make a section next to their names for any changes, so they can fill it in and you can edit your information. Don't get overwhelmed, one step at a time, don't take rejections or no feedback personally, always do your best.

I made the mistake of forwarding out an email to the FRG about welcome home banners that were being offered for free. I had not taken off two wives who just had their soldiers killed. I got a not-so friendly email from their CAO, as I had done this on purpose. Double check those emails.

It is imperative that a CARE Team is in place before the unit deploys and everyone has gone through training.

An effective FRG has a strong FRG leader, Company Commander that cares about the FRG, getting out relevant information in a timely manner, holding FRG meetings during deployment time and keeping nonlocal family members “in the know.”

Remember that you do not wear your spouse's rank; everyone in the FRG is equal. The excitement of leadership makes and FRG effective; if the leadership doesn't want to be there why would the families want to waste their time?

The more knowledge that is given to our spouses (especially during deployment) the more successful they will be. So before deployment, I provided a lot of guest speakers, books, websites, and pamphlets. All services that is available on post.

Your commander makes and effective FRG.

Be positive, make it fun, have games and prizes and food at meetings, and follow through with your word.

It needs to be recognized that not every spouse wants to be contacted or involved and that some soldiers don't want that either.

Never wear your spouse's rank.

They are in command, not you, and the quicker you realize that with the soldiers and other spouses, the less issues you will have.

This is all volunteer, so anytime someone tries to dictate what will and won't be done with a poor attitude, you are set for friction.

An effective FRG means, if you, as a leader, are genuinely interested in the welfare of your spouses and make yourself approachable, they will want to be involved!

We have a very welcoming FRG and I think that helps spouses decide they want to be a part of the FRG.

I think it is important to have an NCO's wife be a part of the FRG as well. We have a SGT's wife who works with me as the FRG Co-Leader. It is wonderful having her because she is friends with a lot of enlisted spouses. They feel more comfortable coming to her than me when it comes to questions or concerns. It is nice to bridge that gap sometimes!

The IRIS system has been a tremendous help!

When every family member understands that the FRG is for them and not about the FRG leader or any one person specifically. This ownership provided us with a strong participation level.

Our biggest challenge is wives posting unit info to blogs and Facebook.

Explaining OPSEC and having multiple meetings educating why OPSEC is important to follow....

Never complain to your members and remain positive at all times, they look up to the leader and strength during deployments.

Don't be FRG Leader just because your spouse is the company commander.

Prepare yourself for the reactions of the family members while at the memorial.

An effective FRG means the company leadership needs to be involved and support the FRG.

Having a planning team has really helped us. They would sit down with me and tell me what types of events they would like to do. If there was information that needs to go out we will put it out while we are bowling or cooking out.

I love helping soldiers and their families. I love to volunteer, but the paperwork that is asked of us is ridiculous.

Remember that you are a spouse the same as the FRG members. You are not their FRG commander. Family members are not members of the military (usually) and should not be treated as such.

The FRG should be information based.

Find another commander's spouse in the unit to work with and share ideas, encourage, etc....

The FRG Leader just has to keep reaching out and try doing activities that are fun.

Be approachable.

Have multiple key volunteers to share the burden in case of an emergency.

I think it takes a leader who is willing to welcome every one into its group without prejudice or judgment and a leader who does not "wear their husband's rank". It takes a group of people, who are knowing different and respect the difference between them and who are open to hearing new ideas and trying new things. And importantly, in my opinion, what makes an FRG most effective is not being so stuck on the individual but really putting your focus on the group as a whole.

I found that, especially during a deployment, it was very effective to ask (or even beg if it came to that) for input from the spouses as a whole.

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AAFES	Army and Air Force Exchange Service also called Post Exchange (PX) or Base Exchange (BX). There are also exchange services for the Navy (NEX), Marines (MCX) and Coast Guard (USCG Exchange)
AAM	Army Achievement Medal
AAR	After Action Review
AASLT	Air Assault
ABN	Airborne
AC	Active Component
ACAP	Army Career and Alumni Program
ACC	Air Combat Command (Air Force)
ACES	Army Continuing Education System
ACS	Army Community Service; Marine Corps Community Service (MCCS-Marines); Fleet and Family Support Center (FFSC or FSC-Navy); Family Support Center (FSC-Air Force)
ACS/FPC	Army Community Service/Family Program Coordinator
ACU	Army Combat Uniform
AD	Active Duty; Air Defense
ADA	Air Defense Artillery
ADJ	Adjutant
ADSC	Active Duty Service Commitment
ADSW	Active Duty for Special Work
ADT	Active Duty for Training (Guards, Reserves)
AER	Army Emergency Relief
AF	Air Force
AFAP	Army Family Action Plan
AFAS	Air Force Aid Society
AFB	Air Force Base
AFN	Armed Forces Network
AFRTS	Armed Forces Radio and Television Services
AFSC	Air Force Specialty Code that identifies job responsibilities for active duty members (MOS in the Army, Marines)
AFTB	Army Family Team Building
AFWBAC	Army Family Well-Being Advisory Council
AG	Adjutant General
AGR	Active Guard Reserve
AIT	Advanced Individual Training
AKO	Army Knowledge Online; provides information, links, updates,
AMC	Army Materiel Command (Army); Air Mobility Command (AF)
AMMO	Ammunition
AMN	Airman

AN	Army Nurse
ANCOC	Advanced Noncommissioned Officer Course
ANG	Air National Guard
AO	Area of Operations; Administrative Officer
APC	Armored Personnel Carrier (Army, Marines)
APF	Appropriated Funds
APO	Army Post Office; Air Post Office (called FPO in Navy /Marines)
AR	Armor; Army Regulation; Army Reserve
ARC	American Red Cross
ARCOM	Army Reserve Command; Army Commendation Medal
ARFP	Army Reserve Family Programs
ARIMS	Army Records Information Management System
ARNEWS	Army News Services
ARNG	Army National Guard
ARPERCEN	Army Reserve Personnel Center
ARSTAF	Army Staff
ARTEP	Army Training Evaluation Program
AR-WFAC	Army Reserve-Warrior & Family Assistance Center
ASAP	As Soon As Possible
ASCC	Army Strong Community Center
AT	Annual Training (Army); Annual Tour (Air Force)
AUSA	Association of the United States Army
AV	Aviation
AVCC	Army Volunteer Corps Coordinator formerly called IVC
AWC	Army War College; Air Warfare Center (Air Force)
AWOL	Absent Without Leave
BAH	Basic Allowance for Housing
BAMC	Brooke Army Medical Center, San Antonio, TX
BAQ	Basic allowance for Quarters
BAS	Basic allowance for Subsistence
BASD	Basic Active Service Date
BC	Battery Commander
BCT	Basic Combat Training; Brigade Combat Team
BDE	Brigade
BDU	Battle Dress Uniform (jungle, desert, cold weather)
BEQ	Bachelor Enlisted Quarters
BLUP	Bottom Line Up Front
BMO	Battalion Motor Officer
BMS	Battalion Motor Sergeant
BMT	Battalion Maintenance Technician
BN	Battalion
BNCOC	Basic Noncommissioned Officer Course
BOQ	Bachelor Officers Quarters

BOSS	Better Opportunities for Single Soldiers Program
BRAC	Base Realignment and Closure
BSEP	Basic Skills Education Program
BTA	Battle Training Assembly
BUPERS	Bureau of Naval Personnel
BX/PX	Base Exchange (AF), Post Exchange (Army). See also AAFES
C of S	Chief of Staff
CA	Civil Affairs
CAC	Combined Arms Center
CAC	Casualty Assistance Center
CALFEX	Combined Arms Live Fire Exercise
CAO	Casualty Assistance Officer
CAO	Casualty Assistance Officer
CAR	Chief of Army Reserve
CARS	Combat Arms Regimental System
CASCOM	Combined Arms Support Command
CAV	Cavalry
CDC	Child Development Center
CDR	Commander
CDS	Child Development Services
CENTCOM	Central Command
CFC	Combined Federal Campaign
CFS	Combined Support Force; Command Financial Specialist
CFSC	Community and Family Support Center
CG	Commanding General
CGSC	Command and General Staff College
CH	Chaplain
CID	Criminal Investigation Division
CIF	Central Issue Facility
CINC	Commander in Chief. Formerly used for each of the four-star officers heading one of the Unified Combatant Commands. Replaced by the more generic title of "Commander." For example, "Commander, US Atlantic Fleet," or "Commander, "Commander in Chief" and of the acronym "CINC" is to be used exclusively in reference to the President.
CM	Chemical Corps
CMAOC	Casualty and Memorial Affairs Operations Center
CMC	Commandant Marine Corps
CMR	Community Mail Room
CMTC	Combat Maneuver Training Center, Germany (Joint Military Training)
CNGB	Chief, National Guard Bureau
CNO	Casualty Notification Officer
CNO	Chief of Naval Operations
CO/Co	Commanding Officer/Company

COB	Close of Business
COC	Change of Command
COCOM	Combatant Command
COHORT	Cohesion Operational Readiness Training
COLA	Cost of living allowance
CONUS	Continental United States
CP	Command Post
CPO	Civilian Personnel Office
CPX	Command Post Exercise
CQ	Charge of quarters (duty required after duty hours)
CS/C of S	Chief of Staff
CSA	Chief of Staff, Army
CSF	Combined Support Force
CWO	Chief Warrant Officer
CY	Calendar Year
CYS	Children and Youth Services
CZTE	Combat Zone Tax Exclusion
DA	Department of the Army
DAC	Department of the Army Civilian
DC	Dental Corps
DCA	Director of Community Activities
DCSPER	Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel
DCU	Desert Combat Uniforms
DDESS	Domestic Dependent Elementary and Secondary Schools
DDRP	Drug Demand Reduction Program
DDS	Direct Deposit System
DeCA	Defense Commissary Agency
DEERS	Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System
DEH	Directorate of Engineering and Housing
DENTAC	United States Army Dental Activity
DEROS	Date of Estimated Return from Overseas (Army); Date Eligible to Return from Overseas (DEROS-Air Force); Rotation Tour Date (RTD-Marines); Projected Rotation Date PRD-Navy)
DFAS	Defense Finance and Accounting System
DI	Drill Instructor
DISCOM	Division Support Command
DITY	Do It Yourself Move
DIV	Division
DIVARTY	Division Artillery
DJMS	Defense Joint Military Pay System
DLA	Dislocation Allowance
DMZ	Demilitarized Zone
DO	Duty Officer

DOB	Date of Birth
DOD	Department of Defense
DODDS	Department of Defense Dependents School
DoDEA	Department of Defense Education Activity
DOIM	Directorate of Information Management
DOR	Date of Rank
DOS	Date of Separation
DPCA	Director of Personnel and Community Activities
DPP	Deferred Payment Plan
DPW	Director of Public Works
DSN	Defense Switch Network (worldwide telephone system)
DTG	Date Time Group, such as 150030August2005
DUSA	Daughters of the U.S. Army
DUSTWUN	Duty Status Whereabouts Unknown
DZ	Drop Zone
EANGUS	Enlisted Association of the National Guard of the United States
EAS	Expiration Active Service (see also ETS)
EDRE	Emergency Deployment Reaction Exercise
EDS	Education Services
EE	Emergency Essential
EEO	Equal Employment Officer
EER/OER	Enlisted/Officer Evaluation Report
EFMB	Expert Field Medical Badge
EFMP	Exceptional Family Member Program
EFT	Electronic Funds Transfer
EIB	Expert Infantry Badge
EM	Enlisted Member
EN	Enlisted; Engineers
EOCO	Equal Opportunity Coordinating Office
EOM	End of Month
EOS	Expiration Obligated Service
EOY	End of Year
EPR	Enlisted Performance Report
ERP	Employment Readiness Program
ESC	Enlisted Spouses' Club
ESGR	Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve
ESL	English as a Second Language
ETA	Estimated Time of Arrival
ETS	Estimated Time of Separation; Expiration of Term of Service
EUCOM	European Command
FA	Field Artillery
FAC	Family Assistance Center/Army Community Service
FAO	Foreign Area Officer; Finance and Accounting Office

FAP	Family Advocacy Program
FAS	Family Assistance Specialist
FC	Finance Corps
FCC	Family Child Care
FCP	Family Care Plan
FDC	Fire Direction Center
FDO	Fire Direction Officer
FDU	Full Dress Uniform
FFSC	Fleet and Family Support Center (Navy). Also FSC
FICA	Federal Insurance Contribution Act
FIT	Federal Income Tax
FITW	Federal Income Tax Withholding
FLAGS	Facilitator, Leadership and Group Skills
FLO	Family Liaison Office
FM	Family Member; Field Manual
FMEAP	Family Member Employment Assistance Program
FMF	Fleet Marine Force
FOD	Field Officer of the Day
FORSCOM	Forces Command (Joint)
FOUO	For Official Use Only
FPA	Family Programs Assistant (USAR)
FPA	Family Programs Academy (USAR)
FPC	Family Program Coordinator
FPD	Family Programs Director (USAR)
FPO	Fleet Post Office (Navy, Marines)
FRA	Family Readiness Assistant (ARNG)
FRC	Family Readiness Center, established by units
FRG	Family Readiness Group
FRGA	Family Readiness Group Assistant
FRL	Family Readiness Liaison
FRO	Family Readiness Office
FRSA	Family Readiness Support Assistant
FS	Fighter Squadron (Air Force)
FSA	Family Separation Allowance
FSC	Family Support Center (Air Force)
FSSG	Force Service Support Group
FTX	Field Training Exercise
FY	Fiscal Year
FYI	For Your Information
FYTD	Fiscal Year To Date
G-1	Division Level Personnel Officer
G-2	Division Level Intelligence Officer
G-3	Division Level Operations and Training Officer

G-4	Division Level Logistics Officer
G-5	Division Level Civil Affairs Officer (Army); Plans (Marines)
GED	General Education Diploma equivalent to high school diploma
GI	Government Issue
GMT	General Military Training; Greenwich Median Time
GO	General Officer
GOV	Government Owned Vehicle
GS	General Schedule (Government civilian employee pay grades)
GSL	Guaranteed Student Loan
GSU	Geographically Separated Unit
GWOT	Global War on Terrorism
H&S Co	Headquarters and Service Company
HDIP	Hazardous Duty Incentive Pay
HDP-L	Hardship Duty Location Pay - Location
HFP	Hostile Fire Pay, often combined with Imminent Danger Pay
HHB	Headquarters and HQs Battery
HHC	Headquarters and Headquarters Company
HHG	Household Goods
HOR	Home of Record
HQ	Headquarters
HQDA	Headquarters, Department of the Army
HRC	Human Resource Command (formerly PERSCOM)
HRO	Housing Referral Office
HRSC	Human Resource Service Center
HS	Home Station
HSB	Headquarters and Service Battery
IADT	Initial Active Duty Training
IAW	In Accordance With
ICC	Interactive Counseling Center
ID	Infantry Division
ID	Identification
IDP	Imminent Danger Pay. See also HFP
IDT	Inactive Duty Training
IE	Initial Entry
IED	Improvised Explosive Device
IET	Initial Entry Training
IG	Inspector General
IMA	Installation Management Agency
IN	Infantry
INFO	For the information of
ING	Inactive National Guard
IO	Information Office
IRF	Immediate Reaction Force

IRR	Individual Ready Reserve
ITO	Information Travel Office; Invitational Travel Order
ITT	Information, Tours, and Travel; Inter-Theater Transfer
IVC	Installation Volunteer Coordinator now called Army Volunteer Corps Coordinator (AVCC)
JAG	Judge Advocate General
JCS	Joint Chiefs of Staff
JFCC	Joint Functional Component Command
JFSAP	Joint Family Support Assistance Program
JFTR	Joint Federal Travel Regulation
JR EN	Junior Grade Enlisted Personnel
JR NCO	Junior Grade Noncommissioned Officer
JRTC	Joint Readiness Training Command; Joint Readiness Training Center, Fort Polk, LA (Joint military training)
JUMPS	Joint Uniform Military Pay System
KIA	Killed In Action
KP	Kitchen Patrol or Kitchen Police
KVN	Key Volunteer Network (Marines)
LES	Leave and Earnings Statement
LN	Local National
LOC	Logistical Operation Center; Line of Communication
LOD	Line of Duty
LOI	Letter of Instructions
LRMC	Landstuhl Regional Medical Center, located in Germany
LZ	Landing Zone
MACOM	Major Army Command
MAG	Marine Air Group
MARS	Military Affiliated Radio System
MC	Medical Corps
MCB	Marine Corps Base
MCCS	Marine Corps Community Services
MCEC	Military Child Education Coalition
MCX	Marine Exchange. See also AAFES
MEB	Marine Expeditionary Brigade
MEDDAC	Medical Department Activity
MEDEVAC	Medical Evacuation
MEF	Marine Expeditionary Force
METL	Mission Essential Task List
MFO	Multinational Forces and Observer
MFR	Memorandum for Record
MI	Military Intelligence
MIA	Missing in Action
MILSTD	Military Standard

MILTECH	Military Technician
MMTF	Military Medical Treatment Facility
MOA	Memorandum of Agreement
MOS	Military Occupational Specialty
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MP	Military Police
MPF	Military Personnel Flight
MPS	Military Postal System
MRE	Meals Ready to Eat
MS	Medical Specialist
MSC	Medical Service Corps
MSM	Meritorious Service Medal
MTF	Military Treatment Facility
MTOE	Mission Table of Organization and Equipment
MUSARC	Major U.S. Army Reserve Command
MUTA	Multi-Unit Training Assembly
MWR	Morale, Welfare, and Recreation
NA	Not applicable
NAF	Non-appropriated Funds (generally located)
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NAVSEA	Naval Sea Systems Command
NCIS	Naval Criminal Investigation Service
NCO	Noncommissioned Officer
NCOA	Noncommissioned Officers Association
NCOER	Noncommissioned Officer Evaluation Report
NCOIC	Noncommissioned Officer in Charge
NCOSC	Noncommissioned Officers' Spouses Club
NEO	Noncombatant Evacuation and Repatriation Operation
NEX	Navy Exchange. See also AAFES
NG	National Guard
NGAUS	National Guard Association of the United States
NGB	National Guard Bureau
NLT	Not Later Than
NMCRS	Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society
NMFA	National Military Family Association
NOK	Next of Kin
NORCOM	Northern Command
NPD	No Pay Due
NRMC	Naval Regional Medical Center
NSI	Not Seriously Injured
NTC	National Training Center, Fort Irwin, CA
O' CLUB	Officers' Club
OBC/OAC	Officer Basic/Advanced Course

OCONUS	Outside Continental United States
OCS	Officer Candidate School
OD	Officer of the Day; Ordnance Corps
ODC	Officer Data Card (Navy). See also ORB
OER	Officer Evaluation Report
OIC	Officer-in-Charge
OJT	On the job training
OOD	Officer of the Day (Marines)
OPCON	Operational Control. Level of authority used frequently in the execution of joint military operations.
OPNAV	Office of the Chief of Naval Operations
OPSEC	Operational Security
OQR	Officer Qualification Record (Marines). See also ORB
ORB	Officer Record Brief (Army); Officer Qualification Record (OQR-Marines); Officer Selection Brief (OSB-Air Force); Officer Data Card (ODC-Navy)
ORE	Operational Readiness Exercise
OSB	Officer Selection Brief (Air Force). See also ORB
OSC	Officers' Spouses Club
OSI	Office of Special Investigation
OTS	Officer Training School (Air Force)
OTSG	Office of the Surgeon General
PA	Physician's Assistant
PAC	Personnel Administration Center
PACOM	Pacific Command
PAL	Partial Airlift. A method of mailing packages.
PAM	Pamphlet
PAO	Public Affairs Officer
PAT	Process Action Team
PBO	Property Book Office
PCA	Permanent Change of Assignment
PCS	Permanent Change of Station
PEBD	Pay Entry Base Data
PERSCOM	Total Army Personnel Command – now HRC
PIIP	Put it into Perspective
PLDC	Primary Leader Development Course (NCO course)
PLT	Platoon; Primary Level Training
PM	Provost Marshal (police chief)
PME	Professional Military Education
PMOS	Primary Military Occupational Education
PNOK	Primary Next of Kin
POA	Power of Attorney
POC	Point of Contact

POE	Point of Embarkation
POI	Program of Instruction
POV	Privately Owned Vehicle
POW	Prisoner of War
POW	Privately Owned Weapon
PRD	Projected Rotation Date (Navy)
PSA	Personnel Support Activities
PSD	Personnel Support Detachment
PT	Physical Training
PTSD	Post Traumatic Stress Disorder
PX	Post Exchange. See also BX or NEX
PZ	Primary Zone
QA	Quality Assurance
QM	Quartermaster
QRF	Quick Reaction Force
QTRS	Quarters (living area)
R&D	Research and Development
R&R	Rest and Recreation
RA	Regular Army
RAP	Relocation Assistance Program (Navy program)
RC	Reserve Component
RD	Rear Detachment
RDC	Rear Detachment Commander
RDF	Rapid Deployment Force
REAR D	Rear Detachment
REFRAD	Release from Active Duty
REG	Regulation
REGT	Regiment
RFO	Request for Orders
RIF	Reduction in Force
RNLTD	Report No Later Than Date
ROA	Reserve Officer Association
ROTC	Reserve Officer Training Corps
RRC	Regional Readiness Command
RSC	Regional Support Command
RSVP	Reply whether or not you can attend (repondez s'il vous plait)
RTD	Rotation Tour Date (Marines). See also DEROS
S-1	Brigade/Battalion Personnel Officer/administrative section
S-2	Brigade/Battalion Intelligence Officer/intelligence section
S-3	Brigade/Battalion Operations Officer/operations and training
S-4	Brigade/Battalion Logistics Officer/logistics and supply section
SAA	Staff Administrative Assistant – Brigade level
SAC	Strategic Air Command

SAM	Surface to Air Missile; Space Available Mail
SAS	School Age Services
SBP	Survivor Benefit Plan
SC	Signal Corps
SCO	Summary Court Officer
SD	Staff Duty
SDNCO	Staff Duty Noncommissioned Officer
SDO	Staff Duty Officer
SDP	Savings Deposit Program (available during deployments)
SEA	Senior Enlisted Advisor
SEAL	Sea-Air-Land
SECDEF	Secretary of Defense
SES	Senior Executive Service (senior civilian employee grades)
SF	Special Forces (Army); Security Force (Air Force)
SGLI	Soldier's Group Life Insurance
SI	Seriously Injured
SIDPERS	Standard Installation/Division Personnel Reporting System
SITW	State Income Tax Withholding
SJA	Staff Judge Advocate
SMI	Supplemental Medical Insurance
SNOK	Secondary Next of Kin
SOCOM	Special Operations Command
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
SORTIE	Name of a flight
SOS	Survivor Outreach Support Coordinator
SOUTHCOM	Southern Command
SPACECOM	Space Command
SPECAT	Special Category
SQD	Squad, a unit within a platoon
SQDN	Squadron, equivalent to a Battalion
SQT	Skills Qualification Test
SRB	Selective Reenlistment Bonus
SSN	Social Security Number
STARC	State Area Command
STRATCOM	U.S. Strategic Command (Joint)
SZ	Secondary Zone
TAD	Temporary Additional Duty (Navy, Marines)
TAG	The Adjutant General
TAP	Transition Assistance Program
TAPS	Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors
TASC	Training and Support Center
TBA/TBD	To Be Announced or To Be Determined
TC	Transportation Corps

TCS	Temporary Change of Station
TDY	Temporary Duty
TIG	Time in Grade
TLA	Temporary Living Allowance
TLF	Temporary Living Facility (Air Force)
TMC	Troop Medical Clinic
TMO	Traffic Management Office (Marines)
TMP	Transportation Motor Pool
TOC	Tactical Operational Center
TPU	Troop Program Unit
TRADOC	Training and Doctrine Command
TRANSCOM	Transportation Command
TRICARE	Military Medical Health Plan
TRS	TRICARE Reserve Select
TSC	TRICARE Service Center
TSP	Thrift Savings Plan
TTAD	Temporary Tour Active Duty (Reserve, National Guard)
UA	Unit Administrator (USAR)
UA	Unauthorized Absence
UCMJ	Uniform Code of Military Justice
UD	Uniform of the Day
UIC	Unit Identification Code
USAF	United States Air Force
USAFE	United States Air Force Europe
USAPA	United States Army Publishing Agency
USAR	United States Army Reserve
USARC	United States Army Reserve Command
USAREUR	United States Army Europe
USARF	United States Army Reserve Forces
USAWC	United States Army War College
USAWOA	United States Army Warrant Officer Association
USCG	United States Coast Guards
USMC	United States Marine Corps
USO	United Services Organization
USR	Unit Status Report
UTA	Unit Training Assembly
VA	Department of Veterans Affairs (formerly Veterans Administration)
VA CBOC	Veterans Affairs Community Based Outpatient Clinic
VAMC	Veterans Affairs Medical Center
VC	Veterinary Corps
VHA	Variable Housing Allowance
VIP	Very Important Person
VISN	Veterans Integrated Service Network

VOLAR	Volunteer Army
VOQ	Visiting Officers' Quarters
VSI	Very Seriously Injured
W2	Wage and Tax Statement
WG	Wage Grade
WIA	Wounded in Action
WIC	Women, Infants and Children's Program
WO	Warrant Officer
WOAC	Warrant Officer Advanced Course
WOBC	Warrant Officer Basic Course
WOC	Warrant Officer Candidate Course
WOC	Warrant Officer Candidate
WOCC	Warrant Officer Career Center
WOCS	Warrant Officer Candidate School
WOSC	Warrant Officer Senior Course
WRAMC	Walter Reed Army Medical Center, located in Washington, DC
WTU	Warrior Transition Unit
XO	Executive Officer
YS	Youth Services
YTD	Year To Date
ZULU/GMT	Greenwich Mean Time

MILITARY TERMS

72	Three day pass for leave (72 hours)
96	Four day pass for leave (96 hours)
A RATIONS	Hot meals that are made with “real” food
ARMY COMBAT UNIFORM	The new combat uniform that has a digitized camouflage pattern. It is designed to be more functional for Soldiers to be able to execute their combat mission.
ACCOMPANIED TOUR	Tour of duty with family members
ACTIVE ARMY	On active duty
ADVANCED PAY	Payment before [duty performed] actually earned. Also, requested payment prior to a PCS move paid back through allotment.
ALERT	Emergency call to be ready
ALLOTMENT	Designated payment to bank or to an individual
ALLOWANCE	Pay and special compensation
APACHE	Army attack helicopter
ARMY COMMUNITY SERVICE	Provides family support services on installations for active duty members and their families
ARTICLE 15	Disciplinary action, non-judicial, imposed by the company commander, battery or battalion commander. See also NJP
ASSIGNMENT OFFICER	Person who assigns next duty and station (Army, Air Force). Called “Detailer” in Navy; “Monitor” in Marine Corps.
AUGMENT	Moved from “reserve” into “regular” ranks
AUGMENTEE	Temporary “fill” of a shortage in personnel
B RATIONS	Cooked food from cans or packages
BARRACKS/BILLETTS	Place where a soldier lives
BILLET	Specific job in Navy, Marines
BED CHECK	An accounting for soldiers
BENEFITS	Medical, dental, commissary, etc.
BOOT	A recruit in Navy, Marines
BOOT CAMP	Basic Training in Navy, Marines
BOOT BLOUSER	A blousing band used to tuck camouflage trouser leg
BRANCH OF SERVICE	Army, Air Force, Navy, Marines, Coast Guard
BRIG	Correctional facility
BRAVO ZULU	Congratulatory term meaning “Well Done” (Marines)
CADRE	Leadership at training level
CAISSON	Artillery vehicle
CAMMIES	Camouflage shirt and trousers
CHAIN OF COMMAND	Leadership structure
CHAIN OF CONCERN	An informal self-help channel for family members
CHAPLAIN	Military minister, priest, rabbi, or pastor
CHEVRONS	Grade stripes worn on sleeves and collars

CHINOOK	A large helicopter, used for transportation of personnel and equipment
CLASS A's	Green slacks/skirt, light green shirt, tie or neck tab, and jacket
CLASS B's	Green slacks/skirt, light green shirt, and optional sweater without jacket
CLASS VI	Store on post to buy alcohol
CLEARING	Obtaining official release from post
CODE OF CONDUCT	Rules by which a soldier must live
COLA	The Cost of Living Allowance is paid monthly to help offset the high cost of living. COLA varies from post to post and month to month.
COLORS	National and unit/organization flags
COMMAND PERFORMANCE	Function which requires attendance
COMMAND SPONSORED	Family members are permitted to accompany the military person to an assignment overseas (OCONUS).
COMMISSARY	Grocery store for military
COMMISSION	The written order that gives an officer rank and authority
COMPANY GRADE	Lowest three officer ranks
COURT-MARTIAL	Trial system
COVER	Name for hat in Navy, Marines
D-DAY	Day on which operations will begin
DAYROOM	Recreation area in soldier lodging
DEPLOYMENT	Soldier sent on a mission without family members
DET	Detachment from a larger organization
DETAIL	A special duty or assignment
DETAILER	Person who assigns next duty and station (Navy). See also Assignment Officer.
DIRECT DEPOSIT	Soldier's guaranteed check to bank
DINING IN	Formal social gathering for soldiers only
DINING OUT	Formal social gathering with spouses
DISCHARGE	Departure from active duty
DISLOCATION ALLOWANCE	Allowance received for PCS move
DITY MOVE	Self movement of household goods
DOGTAGS	Identification tags worn by soldiers
DRESS BLUES	Informal attire with four-in-hand tie/formal attire with bow tie
DRESS MESS	Formal attire; short jacket equivalent to "white tie and tails"
DUTY ASSIGNMENT	Job/place while on active duty
DUTY ROSTER	Duty schedule maintained by the unit
EMERGENCY DATA CARD	Contains important information for quick use in emergencies. Kept with official records.
ESPRIT DE CORPS	Morale within unit or organization. Epitome of pride.
FAMILY ADVOCACY	Program that assists with child and spouse abuse problems

FAMILY CARE PLAN	Written instructions for care of family members while the sponsor is away from duty station (can include provisions for finances, wills, and guardianship)
FAMILY PROGRAM COORDINATOR	Provides family support services to active duty and their families
FAMILY READINESS GROUP	Organization of family members, volunteers, and soldiers/civilian employees belonging to a unit/ organization that together provides an avenue of support and assistance and a network of command, communication among the family members, the chain of command, and community resources
FIELD DAY	Designated day for military displays. Also, clean-up day.
FIELD GRADE	Majors, lieutenant colonels, and colonels
FLAG OFFICERS	Generals and Admirals
FLOAT	Deployed at sea
FORMATION	Gathering of soldiers in a prescribed way
FROCK	Assume next higher grade without pay
FRUIT SALAD	Ribbons and medals worn on uniform
FUNCTION	Social event
GARRISON	Post or community
GEAR	Equipment used by soldiers
GI BILL	Education entitlement
GI PARTY	Clean up duty
GRADE	Corresponds to pay level of soldier (E-3, O-2, etc.)
GREEN BERETS	Special Forces
GUEST HOUSE	Temporary living quarters (Army); Hostess House (Marines); Navy Lodge (Navy); temporary living facility (Air Force)
GUIDON	Unit identification flag
GUNG HO	Very enthusiastic
HAIL & FAREWELL	Social event to greet newcomers and say good-bye to those who are departing
HARDSHIP TOUR	Unaccompanied tour of duty
HASH MARKS	Stripes for enlisted members' time in service
HAZARDOUS DUTY PAY	Extra pay for duty in hostile area
HOSTESS HOUSE	Temporary lodging on base (see Guest House)
HOUSING OFFICE	Where you check in for housing
HUMP	Field March
ID CARD	Identification card issued to legally recognized soldiers and their family (10-years and older)
INSIGNIA	Indicates branch of soldiers
JAG	Stands for Judge Advocate General but term is also used for lawyers. JAG officers provide many of the same legal services as civilian lawyers.
JODY CALL	Troop cadence for marching or running
JUNGLE BOOTS	Special green boots for tropical climates

K-9	Dogs trained for military police service
KEY VOLUNTEER NETWORK	Family support and readiness program implemented in each unit (Marines)
KLICK	Slang for kilometer
LATRINE	Toilet
LEATHERNECK	A Marine
LEAVE	Approved time away from duty
LIBERTY	Off duty
LOGISTICS	Equipment and support needed for performance
MEDIVAC	Medical evacuation
MESS NIGHT	Formal dinner with soldiers only
MILITARY BRAT	Endearment for a child of military personnel
MOBILIZATION	Assembling of forces in preparation for deployment
MONITOR	Person who assigns next duty and station (Marines). See also Assignment Officer.
MOTOR POOL	Area where official vehicles are kept
NAVY LODGE	Temporary living facility. See also Guest House.
NJP	Non-judicial punishment (Air Force), Article 15 (Army), Officer Hours (Marines), Captain's Mast (Navy)
NON-COMMAND SPONSORED	Family members are not permitted to accompany the military person to an assignment overseas (OCONUS).
O'OURSE	Obstacle Course
O'DARK THIRTY	Early morning hours, usually before sunrise
OLD MAN	Slang for Commander
ORDERLY ROOM	Company office
ORDERS	Spoken or written instructions to soldier
PACKAGE STORE	Store on base to buy alcohol. See also Class VI.
PLATOON	Several squads within a company
POLICE CALL	Clean up
POST EXCHANGE	Army department store; PX
POWER OF ATTORNEY	Legal document permitting a person to act on behalf of another
PROFILE	Medical profile to limit duty performance
PROTOCOL	Customs and courtesies
QUARTERS	Government housing for married soldiers
RACK	Bed
RANK	Official title of soldier
RECRUIT	Individual undergoing initial military training
REGRETS ONLY	Respond only if not attending
RETREAT	Bugle/flag ceremony at end of day
RE-UP	Re-enlist. See also "ship over."
REVEILLE	Bugle call/ceremony at beginning of day
ROSTER	List of members
RUFFLES AND FLOURISHES	Musical honor for general officers and equivalent ranking officials

SCUTTLEBUTT	Rumor, gossip
SECURE	Closed; put away; taken care of
SELECT	Approved for promotion to next rank in Air Force, Navy, and Marines. Called "promotable" in Army.
SEPARATION PAY	Pay for unaccompanied duty
SEVEN DAY STORE	Mini mart on base. See also "Shoppette"
SHIP OVER	Re-enlist. See also "re-up."
SHOPPETTE	Mini mart on post. See also "Seven Day Store"
SHORT TIMER	Person with short time left to serve on active duty
SHORT TOUR	Unaccompanied tour
SICK BAY	Marines, Navy term for hospital, clinic, dispensary
SICK CALL	Specific block of time for medical attention
SPACE A	Space available flights
SPIT AND POLISH	As clean as possible
SPONSOR	Person who is salaried by the Government. Also, soldier who provides advance information and arrangements for an incoming (PCS'ing) soldier of the same rank.
SQUARED AWAY	In order; sharp looking uniform
SUBSISTENCE	Food allowance
SURE PAY	Soldier's guaranteed check to bank
TAPS	Last call of the day
TOP	Slang for First Sergeant
UNACCOMPANIED BAGGAGE	Express shipment sent ahead to next duty station
WATCH	A duty such as Officer of the Day
WARRIOR ETHOS	

I will always place the mission first.

I will never accept defeat.

I will never quit.

I will never leave a fallen comrade.

WETTING DOWN	Promotion celebration
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