

INFORMATION PAPER

IMNE-MIL-MWA
2 February 2010

SUBJECT: 2010 Headquarters Department of the Army (HQDA) Army Family Action Plan (AFAP) Conference Summary

1. Purpose: To provide a summary of the 2010 HQDA AFAP Conference.

2. Summary.

a. The 2010 HQDA AFAP Conference was conducted 11-15 January 2010. A total of 97 delegates and 12 teens were in attendance from all over the globe and represented their communities and commands to discuss issues that were submitted by garrisons and mid-level commands.

b. 16 issues were prioritized for adoption into the HQDA AFAP process. These issues were briefed to Army leadership at the conclusion of the conference:

(1) Compensatory Time for Department of the Army Civilians: DA civilians who work overtime receive compensatory time at a disproportionate rate than overtime pay. Overtime pay is usually paid at 1.5 times the hourly rate; compensatory time is granted at one hour off for each hour of overtime worked. Recommendation is to increase compensatory time for DA civilians to 1.5 hours off for each hour of overtime worked.

(2) Reserve Component Government Employees' and their Family Members' Access to TRICARE Reserve Select: Reserve Component personnel who become eligible for the Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB) by employment or marriage do not have the option to enroll in TRICARE Reserve Select (TRS). Recommendation is to provide all Government employees and their Family members who serve in the RC with the option of selecting either FEHB Program or TRS.

(3) Exceptional Family Member Program Enrollment Eligibility for Reserve Component Soldiers: Reserve Component Soldiers (RC) are not eligible for enrollment in the Exceptional Family Member Program (EFMP), and as a result, are ineligible for all of the benefits of EFMP. Recommendation is to authorize RC Soldiers enrollment in the EFMP.

(4) Availability of 24/7 Child Care within Child, Youth and School Services Delivery Systems: Many garrisons' Child, Youth and School Services (CYSS) programs do not provide 24/7 child care, which do not account for non-traditional work schedules or additional responsibilities and duties. Numerous caregiver arrangements financially burden Families, strain morale and are not in the "best interest" of the child. Recommendation is to require the availability of 24/7 child care for all age groups through CYSS delivery systems at all garrisons.

(5) Supplemental Mission Funds for Reserve Component Family Readiness Groups: Reserve Component (RC) Family Readiness Groups (FRGs) are not authorized supplemental mission funds. RC FRGs are expected to perform the same functions as Active Component FRGs with less funding. Supplemental mission funds augment FRG informal funds, reducing

the stress of additional fundraising. Recommendation is to authorize Supplemental Mission Funds for RC FRGs.

(6) Family Readiness Group External Fundraising Restrictions: Family Readiness Group (FRG) informal funds can only be obtained through unsolicited donations and fundraising efforts on a military installation or through the unit membership. Without external fundraising capabilities, the majority of funds raised come from within the FRG membership. Recommendation is to authorize FRGs to fundraise in public places external to National Guard Armories, Reserve Centers and military installations.

(7) Standard Level of Security Measures in Barracks: Security measures in barracks are not standardized Army-wide. Without standard security measures, Soldiers' welfare and protection of their personal belongings are at risk of being compromised. Recommendation is to require the installation of visual monitoring systems for surveillance and to require keyless entry and peep holes in barracks Army-wide.

(8) Standardization of Privatized Housing Application Process: The privatized housing application process is not standard across installations. The lack of a uniform standard allows for inconsistencies in the application process requirements. The stress of relocation is intensified by a lack of predictability in the application process. Recommendation is to standardize the housing application process across privatized installations.

(9) Behavioral Health Services Shortages: Due to a shortage of providers, Soldiers, Retirees, Family Members and Civilians are not able to access timely behavioral health services needed for their treatment and recovery. Between June-October 2009, the Army reported an unmet requirement of 923 behavioral health providers. Recommendation is to increase the number of readily available behavioral health providers and services and increase the use of alternative methods of delivery such as telemedicine.

(10) Active Duty Family Members Prescription Cost Share Inequitability: Prescriptions filled at a Military Treatment Facility (MTF) are filled at no cost. Active Duty Family Members utilizing retail or mail order pharmacies are required to pay cost shares. Recommendation is to eliminate prescription cost shares for Active Duty Family Members not enrolled at a MTF.

(11) TRICARE Allowable Charge Reimbursement of Upgraded/Deluxe Durable Medical Equipment: When the TRICARE beneficiary chooses upgraded/deluxe Durable Medical Equipment (DME) they must pay full cost out-of-pocket with no reimbursement for the TRICARE allowable charge. Purchasing the upgraded/deluxe DME could improve patient compliance, quality of life, comfort and function. Recommendation is to authorize reimbursement of the TRICARE allowable charge for the standard DME when a patient chooses an upgraded/deluxe DME.

(12) Extended Transitional Survivor Spouses' TRICARE Medical Coverage: Transitional Survivor Spouses maintain enrollment in the TRICARE Prime for only three years. This status change requires medical coverage at the retiree payment rate. Recommendation is to extend the Transitional Survivor Spouses' TRICARE Prime medical coverage at the active duty Family Member status from three to five years.

(13) Monthly Stipend to Ill/Injured Soldiers for Non-Medical Caregivers: The Army does not offer a monthly stipend to ill/injured Soldiers who do not qualify for the Traumatic Service Members' Group Life Insurance (TSGLI) and are in need of a non-medical caregiver's

assistance. Recommendation is to provide a monthly stipend to Soldiers that do not qualify for TSGLI and are certified to be in need of assistance from a non-medical caregiver.

(14) Funding Service Dogs for Wounded Warriors: The Department of Defense does not offer a formal program that funds service dogs for Wounded Warriors. The recommendation is to fund a formal program to provide service dogs for Wounded Warriors.

(15) Reserve Component Inactive Duty for Training Travel and Transportation Allowances: There is no legal authority for training travel and transportation allowances for Reserve Component (RC) Soldiers conducting Inactive Duty for Training (IDT) when the training duty station, drill site or assigned unit location is over 50 miles from home of record. Soldiers often travel significant distances to duty locations and can incur expenses that exceed the actual pay received. Recommendation is to authorize travel and transportation allowances for RC Soldiers traveling over 50 miles for IDT.

(16) Reduced Eligibility Age for Retirement of Reserve Component Soldiers Mobilized in Support of Overseas Contingency Operations: Reserve Component (RC) Soldiers with Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO) eligible active duty (AD) services between 11 Sep 01 and 28 Jan 08 do not receive credit for active service towards reduced retirement age. Recommendation is to credit OCO eligible AD service prior to 29 Jan 08 towards reduced eligibility age for retirement of RC Soldiers.

c. The Army Teen Panel briefed the following four issues to senior leadership at the conference's closing session:

(1) Preparational Life Skills Programs: The variety of preparational programs that teach work/life skills are disappearing from Army youth programs. Recommendation is to survey youth about activities wanted by youth and to implement additional activities into already existing programs.

(2) Safeguarding/Improving Youth Athletic Fields: Athletic fields are in need of repair and/or development and youth are being turned away when trying to participate in extra-curricular activities. Recommendation is to follow through on the "take a field, make a field" agreement in a timely manner and to build multi-purpose and/or indoor arenas to maximize usage and save energy/caretaking.

(3) Continuing Youth Leadership Forums: The reorganization of regions might impact the continuation of Youth Leadership Forums (YLFs). Recommendation is to continue regional YLFs despite Army reorganization of the regions.

(4) Marketing Youth Programs: The current marketing techniques and strategies are not appealing to teenagers. Recommendations are to utilize programs such as HIRED! to establish positions for youth in the MWR marketing department; market through corporate sponsors; and to promote youth programs through modern methods of technology (e.g. text messages, emails, etc.)

d. Once adopted, issues will be assigned by the Director of the Army Staff to the appropriate Army staff offices to be worked toward resolution. Action officers will develop a cost analysis and an action plans to resolve the issues and identify a completion date for each stage of the action plans.

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