

## Army Reserve Family Program Update

---

Welcome to this month's email of *The Connection-USAR Family Program Update*. This month we will cover the Army Reserve Army Family Action Plan (AFAP) Conference.

The Army Family Action Plan seeks input from Soldiers, family members, retirees, Department of the Army (DA) Civilians, volunteers, and representatives of the Army in the form of issues for recommendations for change for all the Army's family. Leadership ensures that these issues of concern are formally assigned, monitored, and guided as they are worked toward resolution. By involving delegates in the identification of concerns, AFAP gives commanders a real-time check on the satisfaction of the force. AFAP reflects the Army's strong commitment to improving well-being for Soldiers and their families and to maintaining high standards for readiness and retention. In 20 years of operation, more than 542 issues have been raised into the Headquarters, Department of the Army (HQDA) AFAP and have resulted in 82 changes to legislation, 130 changes to Army and Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) policy, and 140 improvements to programs and services. Fifty-two percent of AFAP issues benefit all of Department of Defense (DoD).

This year's Army Reserve Army Family Action Plan Conference was held 15-19 March 2004 in St. Louis, Missouri. Conference attendees numbered 159. Attendees included delegates, Facilitators, Recorders, Transcribers, Issue Support People, Observers, Subject Matter Experts, and staff.

The Conference was opened by BG Gary Profit, Deputy Chief, Army Reserve. Luncheon speakers throughout the Conference included LTG James R. Helmly, Chief, Army Reserve; MG Larry Gottardi, Forces Command Deputy Chief of Staff; and CSM Nick Piacentini, Jr., Command Sergeant Major of the United States Army Reserve Command. MG Charles Wilson, Deputy Commanding General, United States Army Reserve Command, attended the Report Out at the closing of the Conference to hear the Spokespersons brief their Workgroups' Top Five Mobilization, Deployment, and Family Readiness Strengths and Weaknesses; Four Most Valuable Services; and Top Three Issues.

A lot of sweat and hard work went into the discussion and prioritization of the 87 issues. The issues were divided into 7 Workgroups: Consumer Services/Employment, Entitlements I, Entitlements II, Family Support, Family Support/Dental, Force Support, and Medical.

Excitement and dedication of the attendees contributed to a successful Conference. Thank you to all who participated and submitted issues. Our combined efforts made a difference! Army Reserve leadership heard our voices.

## **Top Five Mobilization, Deployment, and Family Readiness Strengths**

1. Stronger Family Readiness Groups
  2. Personalized Soldiers' portal through Army Knowledge Online (AKO)
  3. Soldier level training – updated training based on lessons learned
  4. Entitlements and benefits
  5. Strengthening of the Reserve Forces through accelerated separation of non-performers
- 

## **Top Five Mobilization, Deployment, and Family Readiness Weaknesses**

1. Indecision of orders – vacillation of mobilization and notification
  2. Army of One not working
  3. Financial disparities exist between deployed Active Duty and Army Reserve Soldiers
  4. Command, Soldiers, and families are not aware or educated by Subject Matter Experts on their benefits and entitlements
  5. No standardized Casualty Assistance Training for Casualty Assistance Officer (CAO)
- 

## **Top Six Critical Active AFAP Issues**

1. Army Reserve Mobilization Preparation
2. Survivor Benefits for Service Connect Deaths
3. Basic Allowance for Housing for Activated Reserve Component
4. Reserve Component Retirement Pay
5. Army Emergency Relief for Reserve Component
6. No 6<sup>th</sup> selected due to three-way voting tie

## Conference Four Most Valuable Services

1. Medical/Dental Care
  2. Family Readiness Group
  3. Mobilization and Deployment Readiness Support
  4. Army Family Action Plan
- 

## Conference Top Five New Issues

1. Employer Support of Family Members of Mobilized/Deploying Army Reserve Soldiers
2. Travel and Lodging Expenses for Unit Training Assemblies (UTAs)
3. Standardized Dental
4. Guidance for Reserve Retirement
5. Communication Access Improvements for Deployed Soldiers



## To Find Out More

To find out more about AFAP, how it works, how you can participate, and how to write and issue, contact your servicing AFTB/AFAP Program Manager.

USAR AFAP Program Director - 404.464.9581

9th RRC - 808.438.1600 Ext. 3292

63rd RRC - 562.795.1221

65th RRC - 787.707.2168

70th RRC – 206.301.2219

77th RRC - 718.352.5765

81st RRC - 205.795.1569

88th RRC – 612.713.3955

89th RRC - 316.681.1759 x1326

90th RRC - 501.771.7826

94th RRC - 978.796.2487

96th RRC - 801.656.3398

99th RRC – 412.604.8293

USACAPOC(A) – 910.432.7954



United States Army Reserve Command, Deputy, Chief of Staff, G-1, ATTN: AFRC-PRF, 1401 Deshler Street, SW, Fort McPherson, GA 30330, 800.226.4219, extension 253. Articles are for information only and do not reflect endorsement of referenced sites, products, or services contained therein.