



# “WRAIR Forward”

June 2001, NO. 16

This activities report is published by the U.S. Army Medical Research Unit-Europe, Walter Reed Army Institute of Research, U.S. Army Medical Research and Materiel Command

## COMMANDER'S CORNER



It's time to say “goodbye.” I have had a great time serving as the unit's commander for the past four years. The military and civilian staff at the Medical Research Unit are outstanding in every way. I appreciate what each of them has contributed in support of the

forward-deployed soldier. The accomplishments of the staff have been truly impressive. I will miss them all. I also appreciate the tremendous support provided to me and the unit by USAREUR leaders. I will miss being in Europe. Farewell, and “auf Wiedersehen”.

-MAJ Carl A. Castro

## Final Data Collection for Two-Year OPTEMPO/PERSTEMPO Study



White Base Check Point in Kosovo

From 1 March to 30 June 2001, the USAMRU-E fielded several research teams to conduct data collections in six different garrison environments, on two training exercises, and with two deployed

units as part of the two-year OPTEMPO/ PERSTEMPO Study. The research team that deployed to Kosovo studied soldiers and leaders from C Company, 2-6 Infantry Battalion and D Company, 501 Military Intelligence Battalion. The research team of MAJ Castro (Team Leader), CPT Thomas, Dr. Adler, and Ms. Huffman traveled to Camp Monteith, Camp Bondsteel, and smaller outposts in Kosovo from 9 -15 April 2001 to administer over 200 surveys, and conduct group and individual interviews. SPC Carlos Gonzalez, a combat photographer from Division of Biometrics, WRAIR, accompanied the team. The USAMRU-E research teams have followed these and eight other units in USAREUR for two years. The survey administration and interview portion of the OPTEMPO/PERSTEMPO study is now complete.

## Consensus WorkGroup CD

The unit produced and distributed a Compact Diskette (CD) based on the *Consensus WorkGroup #1: Common Survey Measures*. The CD provides actual survey items and scales agreed upon for use in military research by scientists from 5

nations. If you would like a copy, please contact Dr. Adler [amy.adler@hbg.amedd.army.mil](mailto:amy.adler@hbg.amedd.army.mil).

## USAREUR Suicide Prevention

In FY 01, General Meigs, Commanding General, U.S. Army, Europe, & 7<sup>th</sup> Army (USAREUR), commissioned a Suicide Prevention Task Force. The USAMRU-E was invited to be a member of this Task Force which is responsible for analyzing the data on suicide completions and attempts in USAREUR. Psychological autopsies on completed suicides will be forwarded to the unit. Furthermore, at the direction of BG Ursone, Command Surgeon, USAREUR, all hospitals and clinics within USAREUR, to include deployed medical assets, have begun completing a suicide investigation form to track all suicide completions and attempts. The USAMRU-E is the repository for completed forms. In addition, retrospective data on suicide attempts occurring over the past two years are being collected from medical records located at Landstuhl Regional Medical Center. Quarterly technical reports will be briefed to General Meigs through the Suicide Prevention Task Force. Currently, MAJ Castro, Dr. Wright, CPT Thomas, Erica Schroeder, and SPC Haig are the principal staff associated with this ongoing project.

## Family OPTEMPO Project

The impact of operations tempo (OPTEMPO) on families is being studied through a series of three research projects under the direction of MAJ Castro and Dr. Durand, Division of Neuropsychiatry (NP), WRAIR. More than 40 interviews with spouses of soldiers taking part in the OPTEMPO/ PERSTEMPO study were conducted with the support of Ms. Frey, OPTEMPO Family Coordinator, and led by scientists from NP, WRAIR: LTC Knudson, 18 April-1 May, and Dr. Durand and CPT Burrell, 7 June – 2 July. The second study, surveys and interviews with senior leader spouses in the US Army, Europe, began data collection in May. Surveys continue to be returned as the data collection from the third family study data winds down. This third study, requested by the 1<sup>st</sup> Armored Division (1AD), assesses family well-being during a deployment of soldiers to Kosovo.

## Change of Command Ceremony

A Change of Command Ceremony between MAJ (P) Carl A. Castro (Outgoing Commander) and CPT Jeffrey L. Thomas (Acting Commander) was conducted on 27 June 2001 at 1300 in the European Regional Medical Command (ERMC) Conference Room. BG Richard L. Ursone, Command Surgeon, USAREUR, officiated at the ceremony. As part of the ceremony, MAJ Castro was presented with a

MSM signed by MG Parker, Commanding General, U.S.  
Army Medical Research and Materiel Command.

Published by U.S. Army Medical Research Unit-Europe

## Force Health Protection Program

The psychological screening program and force health protection continues to attract the support of USAREUR commanders. Data processing is nearing completion for the post-deployment psychological screening of the 1<sup>st</sup> Armored Division(1AD)/Rotation 2A. For the first time, analyses can occur for the psychological screening conducted in the division across the three different deployment phases: pre-deployment, re-deployment and post-deployment. Data continues to arrive at the unit from the re-deployment screening conducted in Kosovo for Rotation 2B of the 1AD. The post-deployment screening for this rotation is projected to occur in late Summer. A recent development includes the approval of a protocol in support of the psychological screening program and force health protection.

**The psychological screening program and force health protection.** Principal Investigator: Kathleen M. Wright, Ph.D.; Co-investigators: MAJ Carl A. Castro, Amy B. Adler, Ph.D., & CPT Jeffrey L. Thomas. WRAIR Protocol # 889.

## Research and Analysis (R&A)

LTC Karl Friedl, Director, Military Operational Medicine, and MAJ James Ness, Staff Officer, U.S. Army Medical Research and Materiel Command, conducted an on-site R&A of the unit's research programs 24-27 April 2001. The unit's three main programs (STP G – Soldier and Unit Readiness Decision Support Tools; Warfighter Physiological Systems Monitoring; and Force Health Protection) were reviewed. LTC Friedl expressed his satisfaction with the unit's continued progress, data analysis, and manuscript preparation. Research plans for FY02/03 were accepted without changes.

## USAMRU-E Presentations

Bliese, P.D., Ritzer, D.R., Thomas, J.L., & Jex, S. (2001). Supervisor and upper management support as moderators of stressor-strain relations: A multi-level investigation. Poster presented at the **16<sup>th</sup> Annual Society of Industrial and Organizational Psychology**, San Diego, CA.

Huffman, A.H., Crouch, C.L., & Dolan, C.A. (2001, May). USAREUR/7A OPTEMPO Study. Moderating the effects of a high workload: Soldier coping in USAREUR. Presented at the **Medical Service Corps Symposium**, Bad Kissingen.

Adler, A.B., & Castro, C.A. (2001, May). The impact of lost leave on the medical readiness of US soldiers: It's not a European vacation. Paper presented at the **37<sup>th</sup> International Applied Military Psychology Symposium**,\* Prague, Czech Republic.

\*Chaired two sessions: Welcoming Addresses and Opening Presentations - Part II (MAJ Castro) and Recruitment, Personnel Selection, and Training - Part I (Dr. Adler).

## Military Recognition

- CPT Thomas, ARCOM, 20 April 2001.
- MAJ Castro was selected for promotion to lieutenant colonel on 22 May 2001.
- MAJ Castro received a Letter of Recognition for his work in international cooperation from the Office of Naval Research,

presented by Capt Smolinski, Commanding Officer, Office of Naval Research International Field Office.



## Austrian Cooperation Study

The USAMRU-E participated in a joint research effort with Austrian and German military researchers from 4-10 May 2001 in Wiener Neustadt, Austria. In a study initiated by COL Wittels from the Austrian Army, USAMRU-E researchers were given the opportunity to examine stress, health, and performance using survey and physiological measures in a realistic applied setting by following 14 soldiers in the Austrian Special Forces over the course of a vigorous weeklong training and evaluation exercise. The USAMRU-E team, represented during the baseline phase of the study by MAJ Castro and Dr. Adler, and during the entire data collection by team leader CPT Thomas and SPC Haig, collected Actigraph sleep/activity data, Bootstrike caloric expenditure data, salivary cortisol assays, and survey data on stress and coping. USAMRU-E provided the German translations of the survey measures (Ms. Golembe) and the technical brochure (Mr. Jackson). Austrian researchers, led by COL Wittels, collected blood and saliva samples to assess stress hormones, and tested the Commandos' physical endurance using stationary bicycle evaluations. German researchers, led by Dr. Johansen, piloted a new method and software application for assessing voice-stress over the course of the training cycle and assessed coping and personality style using a survey. The international research team meets again in the fall to combine results and initiate a report.

## Hail & Farewell

- Major Castro (P) completed his tour at the USAMRU-E on 1 July 2001. His new duty station is Division of Neuropsychiatry, WRAIR, Washington, DC.
- SGT Millie E. Calhoun completed her tour at the Medical Research Unit on 24 May 2001. Her new duty station is Ft. Lewis, Washington.
- Nonpersonal services contracts were awarded to: Ms. Erica Schroeder, research assistant, 21 May 2001-20 May 2002; Dr. Thomas W. Britt, senior principal investigator, 1 June 2001-31 May 2002; Ms. Paige West, research assistant, 1 June 2001-30 November 2001.
- Outgoing personnel: Ms. Alexandra Hanson, research assistant, completed her contract on 30 April 2001; Mr. Larry Chanin ended his contract on 14 June 2001.
- Summer-hire personnel: Ms. Jennifer Hines; Ms. Jasmin Huddleston; and Ms. Nena Philan.

This is an unofficial Army publication, authorized under the provisions of AR 360-81, and published quarterly in the interest of the **U.S. Army Medical Research Unit-Europe**, CMR 442, APO AE 09042 (DSN: 371-2626). This issue was approved by HQ, WRAIR for release. Editorial views and opinions expressed herein are not necessarily those of the Department of the Army. Visit our homepage: <http://www.usamru-e.hqusareur.army.mil/> to view our most recent briefs and reports. For information on our research initiatives, contact:

[carl.castro@hbg.amedd.army.mil](mailto:carl.castro@hbg.amedd.army.mil).

Commander, USAMRU-E  
Editor

MAJ Carl A. Castro  
Evelyn H. Golembe