



“WRAIR Forward”

June 2002, NO. 20

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

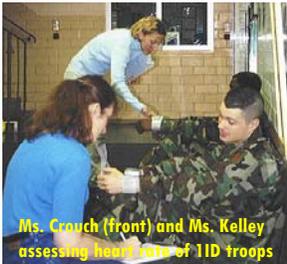
COMMANDER'S CORNER

Our Science and Technology Objective (STO), which defines our mission focus and funding for the next five years, has passed several milestones to include endorsements from the Chief of Staff of USAREUR/7A and the Commander of the European Regional Medical Command. This mission focus, to research interventions that enhance the psychological resilience of the warfighter, stems from the transformation initiative that is outlined in the Department of Defense Quadrennial Defense Review. Consistent with this initiative, USAMRU-E's attention has shifted to training and performance assessment of small autonomous units and individual combatants with a research and modeling imperative of enhancing, sustaining, and protecting individual and small unit psychological capability. The USAMRU-E is approaching the problem along three principal avenues of research: real time resilience monitoring, pre- and post-deployment assessment, and intervention. The USAMRU-E, WRAIR and USAMRMC continue to and will always be responsive to the needs of the warfighter and see this STO as providing assets to project, protect and sustain the warfighter.

-MAJ James W. Ness

Debriefing Study Launched

USAMRU-E began the first phase of data collection in a longitudinal study examining the impact of psychological debriefing and other early intervention techniques on soldiers deployed on a peacekeeping operation. More than 1700 soldiers agreed to take part in the study during their pre-deployment preparation (PDP) in Schweinfurt, Germany. From



Ms. Crouch (front) and Ms. Kelley assessing heart rate of IID troops

30 April to 15 May, USAMRU-E fielded research teams (coordinated by senior research assistant Ms. Crouch) to administer surveys and take resting heart rate and blood pressure levels using a wrist cuff monitoring device. During their last month of a 6-month deployment to Kosovo, soldiers will then be randomly assigned to one of three groups (debriefing, stress education, and no intervention) and followed up 3 times over the course of the next 12 months. The long-term objective is to identify interventions and techniques that can be useful for large numbers of relatively healthy individuals affected by potentially traumatic events. (WRAIR Protocol #862)

Following up on Leadership

From 06-21 June, USAMRU-E hosted two West Point students, 2LT Beth Bellinger and CDT Victor Johnson. 2LT



From left: CDT Johnson, MAJ Ness, CPT Thomas, 2LT Bellinger

Bellinger and CDT Johnson took part in West Point's Academic Individual Advanced Development, which provides internships to cadets in a variety of military settings. This is the first year that USAMRU-E took part in the program facilitated by LTC Bartone, director of the Leader Development Research Center at West Point and former USAMRU-E Commander (1993-1997). The interns worked with CPT Thomas on the developing cadet outcome assessment project by establishing a coordination database with former USMA graduates in USAREUR and producing a codebook of the ROTC dataset from 2000. 2LT Bellinger and CDT Johnson also assisted in survey data processing. On 18 June, COL Forsythe, the Vice Dean for Academic Affairs at West Point and LTC Bartone visited the unit and met with staff briefly on the first leg of their leadership research coordination site visits. COL Forsythe and LTC Bartone will visit the unit again in mid-July 2002.

Suicide Reporting Serves as Army Model

In this quarter, the USAMRU-E continued to support the Suicide Prevention Task Force (SPTF) commissioned in FY01 by GEN Meigs, CG USAREUR/7th Army. In May, the revised suicide investigation form, AMEDD Suicide Event Report (ASER), was finalized and disseminated Army-wide by the Psychiatry Consultant to the Surgeon General and Behavioral Health Policy Staff Officer at HQ MEDCOM. This shortened form will serve as the prototype for the Army-wide suicide surveillance system beginning this fiscal year.

An Executive Summary of USAMRU-E's role in the SPTF was sent to MG Martinez-Lopez, the MRMC Commander, and the SPTF In-Progress Brief was distributed to MG McWilliams, USAREUR DCSPIM. In June, a program evaluation of suicide event reporting system began with interviews of selected clinical care providers. During this quarter, additional data collections and records reviews were conducted at LRMC by USAMRU-E staff.

Troop Care Status for USAMRU-E's Contracting Staff

In cooperation with Project Support Services and Anteon, Inc., the unit's request for contract notification and troop care status accreditation (TCSA) is being coordinated with the DoD Executive Agent, DoD Contractor Personnel Office (DOCPER), located within HQS, USAREUR. The contract notification package and applications for 5 research associates and 1 principal investigator were submitted to the DOCPER on 25 June 2002. The contract accreditation package was submitted to the German Foreign Office (GFO) for their review on 1 July 2002.

Mental Health Screening for Kosovo

Pre-deployment screening for 2,888 soldiers (with an additional 1,000 soldiers pending from down-range) was conducted by 11D Mental Health with USAMRU-E support for the 11D/Rotation 4A deployment to Kosovo this May. The screen used revised cut-off criteria and a shortened screening instrument. Preliminary analyses were provided to the Brigade Task Force Commander and 11D Mental Health personnel who will conduct command climate surveys based on the results. The Brigade is interested in using the screen for future deployments in order to be more proactive in solving problems and monitoring soldier stress levels. Data processing for the post-deployment screening of 1AD Rotation 2A soldiers conducted this past December will be completed this month, and the Psychological Screening Program and Force Health Protection protocol was approved by the WRAIR:

Wright, K.M., Castro, C.A., Adler, A.B., & Thomas, J.L. (2002). *Psychological Screening Program and Force Health Protection*. WRAIR Protocol #889. Washington, DC: Walter Reed Army Institute of Research.

Collaboration on Homeland Defense

CPT Thomas (1-11 April) worked with scientists at the WRAIR, Division Neuropsychiatry (NP), on a modification of the WRAIR's Homeland Defense Protocol (#931) to include Army National Guard soldiers deployed as part of Task Force Keystone in the US Army, Europe.

Family Research: Phase II

LTC Castro, Dr. Durand, and CPT Burrell from WRAIR NP, with the support of USAMRU-E research assistant Ms. Valerie Frey, conducted the second set of interviews with families in the USAREUR/7A OPTEMPO Family study (29 April- 14 May). (WRAIR protocol # 805)

- Interviewed 23 U.S. military families stationed in Germany and Italy as part of an effort to identify issues of importance to US military families living overseas.
- Briefed senior leader spouses on the results of last year's senior leader spouse survey.
- Findings from these two studies were presented at the International and Applied Military Psychology Symposium in Amsterdam (21 May).

Presentation at University of Mannheim

CPT Thomas presented an overview of USAMRU-E research at the Research Colloquium of the Laboratory of Clinical Psychophysiology, Otto-Selz-Institute, University of Mannheim, at the invitation of Professor Rupert Hölzl and Ms. Jessica Ippolitto. Following the presentation, discussion ensued on potential collaboration between the local University and USAMRU-E. (19 June)

Site Visits at USAMRU-E

- Dr. Thomas Britt, assistant professor at Clemson University in South Carolina, visited the unit (9-12 May) to collaborate with Dr. Adler on an upcoming book on the psychology of the peacekeeper to be published by Praeger Press.
- COL Hartman, Director, WRAIR Overseas Labs, and SGM Lex, Sergeant Major of the WRAIR, visited the unit 24-25 June.

Presentations & Publications

Adler, A.B., Wright, K.M., Huffman, A.H., Thomas, J.L., & Castro, C.A. (2002). Deployment cycle effects on the psychological screening of soldiers. *U.S. Army Medical Department Journal*, 4/5/6, pp. 31-37.

Dolan, C.A., & Crouch, C.L. (February, 2002). Presenting qualitative data in a quantitative world. Paper presented at the *Strategies in Qualitative Research Conference*, London.

Litz, B.T., Gray, M., Bryant, R.A., & Adler, A.B. (2002). Early intervention for trauma: Current status and future directions. *Clinical Psychology: Science and Practice*, 9, 112-134.

Thomas, J.L., & Wright, K.M. (2002). Personality moderators of stressor-strain relations in the US Army Officer Assessment Center. Paper presented at the 38th *International Applied Military Psychology Symposium*. Amsterdam, Netherlands.

Society of Industrial and Organizational Psychology Conference

Presentations at the 17th Annual Meeting, Toronto

- Bliese, P.D., Bienvu, R.V., Castro, C.A., & Adler, A.B. (April, 2002). Control, demands and leadership support: The importance of support in an austere environment. (Poster)
- Bliese, P.D., Thomas, J.L., & Jex, S.M. (2002). Job strain as a mediator between stressors and performance: Evidence from the field. In G. Adams (Chair), "The Forgotten Variable in Occupational Stress Research." (Paper)
- Sommers, J., Thomas, J.L., & Sinclair, R.R. (2002). Examining ambient stress effects on military readiness, attachment, and well-being. (Poster)
- Thomas, J.L., & Jex, S.M. (2002). Relations between stressors and job performance: An aggregate-level investigation using multiple criterion measures. In G. Adams (Chair), "The Forgotten Variable in Occupational Stress Research." (Paper)

Personnel Updates

- SPC Haig and CPT Thomas received Army Commendation medals on 04 June for work done in the unit over the last year.
- SGT Mitchell and SPC Haig attended the *Alcohol Substance Abuse Program (ASAP) group counseling* course from 08-19 April.
- SPC Haig attended the *ASAP Advanced Individual counseling* course from 22-26 April.
- Ms. Erica Schroeder attended the *Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST)* workshop for community caregivers (11-12 June).
- Ms. Valerie Frey, research assistant with the unit since 1 January 1999, completed her contract 12 June.
- Ms. Coleen Crouch, research assistant with the unit since 6 January 2000, completed her contract 28 June.

This is an unofficial Army publication, authorized under the provisions of AR 360-1, 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: james.ness@hbg.amedd.army.mil.

Commander, USAMRU-E
Editor

MAJ James W. Ness
Amy B. Adler, Ph.D.