



# “WRAIR Forward”

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## COMMANDER’S CORNER

With the knowledge that the French failure to complete a Panama Canal project was due to disease, U.S. MG Gorgas sought the practical solution of prevention. Although the causation between being bitten by a common tropical mosquito and contracting Yellow Fever had not been empirically established, his work in Cuba led MG Gorgas to the practical solution of controlling the mosquito. MG Martinez-Lopez’s charge to USAMRU-E is the same: create practical solutions for the Army so that soldiers can get the job done. At USAMRU-E, one such solution is Psychological Screening. Currently, mental health professionals must protect soldiers’ psychological fitness but the problem is how to direct assets effectively. USAMRU-E is completing the development of a screening tool designed to provide a quick estimation of individual distress and unit climate. The screen’s practical appeal has been reflected in numerous requests from the field. The tool is planned for advanced development in Spring 04.

-MAJ James W. Ness

## OEF Tracking Registry Deployed

USAMRU-E responded to a request by the Landstuhl Regional Medical Center (LRMC) to optimize their system of tracking military personnel who are medically evacuated from the theater of operations in Afghanistan. LRMC serves as the key transition point in Europe for all medically evacuated U.S. military personnel. LRMC’s early data management system required data to be integrated by hand from three separate database systems (TRAC2ES, CHCS, and Patient Medical Records). By combining these existing systems and building on the TRAC2ES system used by the Air Force, Mr. MacDonald and MAJ Ness (USAMRU-E)

developed the Deployed Injury and Incident Registry (DIIR) using Microsoft’s Access and creating a

procedure_cat number	procedure
* 160	Other therapeutic procedures on muscles and tendons
* 67	Other therapeutic procedures, hemic and lymphatic syste
* 56	Other vascular bypass and shunt, not heart
* 54	Other vascular catheterization, not heart
* 142	Partial excision bone
* 45	Percutaneous transluminal coronary angioplasty (PTCA)
* 55	Peripheral vascular bypass
* 91	Peritoneal dialysis
* 213	Physical therapy exercises, manipulation, and other proce
procedure	procedure description
* 9311	ASSISTING EXERCISE
* 9312	ACTIV MUSCULOSK EXER NEC
* 9313	DESCRIPTIVE EXERCISE

Example of OEF Data Base

relational database that incorporates ICD-9 codes and descriptions as well as information and dynamic reports on evacuated personnel. The DIIR has been briefed to LTC Sally Harvey, Chief of Psychology, LRMC, and COL West, CoS, ERMC and implemented on 3 October 2002. The DIIR is a transitional product, and in the coming months the entire database will be made available to LRMC on-line and updated monthly.

## USAREUR Land Combat Expo 2002

This year’s Land Combat Expo, the U. S. Army Europe’s premier leadership development forum for leaders, soldiers, civilian employees and their family members, was held 24-26 September in



Heidelberg, Germany. The Expo included seminars, speakers, historical displays, and numerous military exhibits. The USAMRU-E’s exhibit highlighted new technologies being incorporated into medical research, including automated neurological assessments, Starlight – a graphical display of the complex relationship of several variables, and a wrist cuff device that measures heart rate and blood pressure. The exhibit was one of many designed to educate military personnel and their families about the military. The USAMRU-E exhibit was sponsored by the European Regional Medical Command, and coordinated by COL Kraft (ERMC) and CPL Haig (USAMRU-E).

## Distinguished Visitors at USAMRU-E

- MG Lester Martinez-Lopez, Commander, Medical Research and Materiel Command, visited the unit 19 JUL 02. In a talk to the unit, he shared his vision of supporting the war effort, producing products for the Army, and applying research in the field.
- BG Elder Granger, Commander, European Regional Medical Command, visited the unit 4 SEP 02. In addition to receiving the unit brief, BG Granger met with the unit staff, discussed his command philosophy and outlined areas for future research.

## Program Review by Expert Panel

The Strategic Technology Program STP G (Soldier Readiness and Decision Support Tools) was externally reviewed by an expert panel that was assembled by the American Institute for Biological Sciences (AIBS). This review, funded by the RAD III, MRMC, was held at the Walter Reed Army Institute of Research in Silver Spring, MD. WRAIR studies supporting this STP include the USAREUR soldier OPTEMPO study, the USAREUR family OPTEMPO study, the Homeland Defense study, and the ROTC study. LTC Castro, MAJ Bliese, CPT McGurk, CPT Burrell, CPT Stetz and Dr. Durand (WRAIR, NP) presented as did Dr. Adler and CPT Thomas (USAMRU-E). (10-11 SEP 02).

## Developing Mental Health Screening

The psychological screening program continues to move toward validation testing of the primary screen survey, designed to identify military personnel in need of a follow-up assessment. On 20 and 21 July, researchers from the US Air Force Academy (Drs. Mastroianni and Smith) presented findings from their analysis of previous screening data sets. These results, taken together with other changes to the screening survey identified by Dr. Kathleen Wright in WRAIR protocol #889, will be used in a content validation study of the screening measures scheduled for October. Preparation for this study included training on 25 and 29 September for the clinical research team composed of personnel from USAMRU-E, WRAIR-NP, 254<sup>th</sup> CSC, and the 11D. A modification to WRAIR Protocol # 889 was approved in September.

Meanwhile, requests for USAMRU-E’s psychological screening expanded to include three additional real-world missions (August 2002). Mental health staff from OEF, stationed in Afghanistan, implemented the screening program for re-deploying soldiers. In addition, mental health assets from the 25ID deployed to Bosnia requested the psychological screening for re-deployment. Also in August, mental health assets deployed to Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, requested USAMRU-E’s psychological screen for service members re-deploying from duty at that confinement facility.

## Coordinating Future Research

- Following up on leadership: COL Forsythe, the Vice Dean for Academic Affairs at the U.S. Army Military Academy at West Point, and LTC Bartone, Director of West Point’s Behavioral Sciences and Leadership division, met with MAJ Ness on the second leg of their leadership research coordination site visit (6-7 July).
- Dr. Bob Sinclair, Portland State University, and graduate student Jennifer Sommers met with CPT Thomas and the science staff in Heidelberg as part of a planning committee to develop a research protocol investigating valid psychophysiological markers of performance degradation (15-18 July). A follow-up meeting was held at APA in Chicago (25 August).

## Debriefing Study: Prep for Deployment

USAMRU-E prepared for its second 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. Study team members, composed of USAMRU-E and 254<sup>th</sup> Combat Stress Control personnel, completed training in Critical Incident Stress Management (8-9 AUG 02). The study team, which will also include three WRAIR, NP researchers, is scheduled to deploy to Kosovo in October. (WRAIR Protocol #862)

## New Publication

Richard, L.S. & Huffman, A.H. (2002). The impact of commuter war on military personnel. *Military Medicine*, 167(7), 602-605.

## APA Posters & Conversation Hour

Three posters were presented at the American Psychological Association (APA) in Chicago:

- Adler, A.B., Thomas, J.T., & Castro, C.A. (August, 2002). *Measuring up: Comparing self-reports with archival records of soldier performance.*
- Thomas, J. L., Wright, K. M., & Ness, J. W. (2002, August). *Screening the Force: Modifying psychological screening for deployed soldiers.*
- Wright, K.W., Adler, A.B., Thomas, J.T., & Castro, C.A. (August, 2002). *Predicting referral rates: Clinical profiles in military psychological screening.*

In addition, the unit was invited by LTC Paul Bartone, in-coming APA Division 19 (Military Psychology) chair, to conduct a Conversation Hour entitled: “*The role of positive psychology in military research*”. Renowned psychologist and author, Dr. Martin E.P. Seligman, attended and spoke about the unique and important role of military psychology in promoting healthy adaptation. The conversation hour was led by a combined team of USAMRU-E and WRAIR-NP researchers (Dr. Amy Adler, CPT Lolita Burrell, LTC Carl Castro, Dr. Doris Durand, CPT Melba Stetz, and CPT Jeff Thomas).

## Conferences: Subject Matter Expertise

- MAJ NESS was chosen as the US delegate to NATO panel HFM-081: Stress and Psychological Support in Modern Military Operations. See <http://www.rta.nato.int/> for updates.
- At the invitation of the 1<sup>st</sup> Infantry Division (1ID), Dr. Adler and LTC Castro (WRAIR, NP) attended the 1ID’s Senior Leader Deployment Seminar for Kosovo Rotation 4B in Grafenwoehr, Germany, as subject matter experts (August 11-12).

## Training Visits: Admin & Starlight

- Mr. Bob Langevin, from Calibre Systems, met with administrative staff on developing an ABC accounting model in order to be consistent with WRAIR’s accounting model (10 -12 July).
- Two software experts, Mr. Chuck Knutson and Mr. Scott Dowson of the Starlight Support Team for Battelle and Pacific Northwest National Laboratory, trained unit staff in Starlight. This visualization tool, developed by the Department of Energy, integrates and correlates information, graphically depicting these correlations in order to support the analysis of complex data sets (8-15 August).

## Personnel Updates

- Ms. Pamela Templeton, a PSS contractor, began working as the unit’s administrative assistant on 8 July, 2002.
- SPC Haig was promoted to CPL Haig on July 10, 2002, with a ceremony held the day after.
- Ms. Coleen Crouch, former Research Assistant and PSS Contractor, was honored with a Commander’s Award for Public Service (10 July 2002)
- Ms. Evelyn Golembe, USAMRU-E’s executive officer and budget analyst, retired from government service after 20 years with the unit (3 March 1981 to 1 August 2002). She was honored with a letter of appreciation from MG Martinez-Lopez, Commander, MRMC, and a Superior Civilian Service Award for her years of dedicated service.
- SGT Marta Mitchell PCSed from the unit after serving as NCOIC from August 5, 1999 to August 1, 2002.
- Joshua McDonald, a PSS Contractor, was hired as a software engineer on September 1, 2002.

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