



“WRAIR Forward”

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COMMANDER’S CORNER

Germany hosted the World Cup this quarter. The event was memorable for many reasons, but two have special meaning for the unit. First, the World Cup gave us an opportunity to strengthen ties that we’ve been building with our NATO counterparts over the past several years. During our NATO meeting in Breda we had a chance to watch a German game with our German NATO representative, a British game with our British representative, and a Dutch game with our hosts. Watching the games in this international setting added a special dimension to these growing connections. Second, one of our contractors had tickets to an Italy game, but gave them up without mentioning it (I had my ways of finding out) to support our data collection at Fort Carson. Perhaps only World Cup fans can truly appreciate the magnitude of this sacrifice; nonetheless, as Commander I want to take this opportunity to acknowledge the dedication of this individual and our entire contractor staff for the outstanding support they provide USAMRU-E.

-LTC Paul D. Bliese

MEDCOM Leadership Updated

LTC Bliese attended a MEDCOM Senior Leaders’ Mental Health Research Update at WRAIR on 20 and 21 June. The meeting was hosted by COL Charles Hoge, Director, Division of Neuroscience and Neuropsychiatry, and provided senior leadership with current research findings and implementation strategies designed to provide comprehensive behavioral health support to Soldiers.

NATO Research Group Shifts Focus

Following the success of the NATO symposium this spring, NATO Research & Technology Task Group RTG-020 (HFM-081) met to continue development of a military leaders’ booklet on operational stress.

- A general meeting in Brussels focused on future planning (27-28 APR 06).
- The second meeting of the editing committee for the booklet was held in Breda, The Netherlands (15-16 JUN 06). LTC Bliese and Dr. Adler attended both meetings.



BEST ARTICLE AWARD

LTC Bliese, together with his co-authors Dr. Gilad Chen and Dr. John Mathieu, were awarded the Best Article of the Year by the journal Organizational Research Methods. The paper, entitled “Conceptual Framework and Statistical Procedures for Delineating and Testing Multilevel Theories of Homology” was published in 2005.

NATO Group Sponsors Symposium

The NATO Research & Technology Task Group (RTG-020) on *Stress and Psychological Support in Modern Military Operations* sponsored a 3-day symposium entitled “Human Dimensions in Military Operations: Military Leaders’ Strategies for Addressing Stress and Psychological Support.”

The symposium brought together an international array of more than 200 military leaders and mental health

professionals. US lead representative LTC Paul Bliese (USAMRU-E) and Dutch representative Lt Col Peter van Kuijk co-chaired the symposium’s track on Psychological Fitness (Brussels; 24-26 APR 06).

Presentations involving USAMRU-E personnel included:

- Castro, C.A., Adler, A.B., McGurk, D., & Thomas, J.L. (2006, April). Leader actions to enhance soldier resiliency in combat.
- Cawkill, P., Adler, A., van den Berg, C., Avers, P., Puente, J., & Cuvelier, Y. (2006, April). The Military Leaders Survey: NATO Military Leaders’ Perspectives on Psychological Support on Operations.



HFM-134 SYMPOSIUM

Nation	Number Surveyed
Austria	10
Belgium	17
Bulgaria	11
Canada	5
Czech Republic	10
Denmark	5
France	17
Lithuania	11
Luxembourg	10
The Netherlands	15
Romania	10
Spain	14
Slovakia	10
Sweden	4
United Kingdom	9
United States	14
Total	172

Leader Survey

Members from 16 nations participating in NATO RTG-20 administered a survey to 172 military leaders with recent deployment experience. Findings presented at the symposium highlighted (1) the importance leaders place on psychological support across the deployment cycle, (2) the lack of training on mental health issues aimed specifically at leaders, (3) the preference for concrete guidance on how to deal with mental health issues (protocol #1217). The survey will be used to guide development of a NATO leaders’ booklet on operational stress.

Combat-to-Home Transition Study: Final Survey Administered

As part of a study assessing the efficacy of post-deployment transition training, Soldiers from a Brigade Combat Team returning from a year in Iraq were randomly assigned by platoon to one of three transition training sessions: traditional stress education, post-deployment psychological debriefing, and Battlemind Training. They were then surveyed 4 months later. This quarter, a team of USAMRU-E researchers administered a final follow-up survey.

Findings from the study thus far identify two types of transition training as particularly effective for those experiencing high rates of combat exposure (about 30% to 40% of the sample). For these Soldiers:

- Post-deployment psychological debriefing reduced psychological symptoms of traumatic stress, depression, sleep problems, and anger compared to a traditional stress education briefing. This study is the only randomized control study of psychological debriefing with a military sample following combat.
- Battlemind Training reduced symptoms of traumatic stress, decreased perceptions of stigma and increased life satisfaction compared to traditional stress education. Battlemind Training is a new program developed by a team of WRAIR researchers (LTC Castro, primary author). The training emphasizes skills Soldiers possess that need to be adapted to facilitate transition home.
- For more information on Battlemind Training, go to www.Battlemind.org



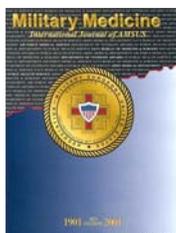
The USAMRU-E data collection team included Dr. Adler, CPT Cabrera, SPC Terry, Ms. Salvi, Ms. Prayner, and Ms. Terra. This work (19 JUN – 7 JUL 06) was conducted under WRAIR protocol #862 (Dr. Adler and LTC Castro, Principal Investigators).

Bringing USAMRU-E to USAREUR

CPT Cabrera briefed two US Army, Europe groups on the unit's accomplishments:

- The Mannheim Community Resource Team at the Mannheim Elementary School (14 MAR 06)
- The Heidelberg Community Resource Team at the Army Community Services Office (5 MAY 06)

LTC Bliese, Dr. Wright and Dr. Adler briefed BG Hawley-Bowland, Commanding General, Europe Regional Medical Command (ERMC), and COL Maher, Deputy Commander, ERMC on recent unit accomplishments (14 JUN 06).



NEW PUBLICATION

Dolan, C.A., & Adler, A.B. (2006). Military hardiness as a buffer of psychological health on return from deployment. *Military Medicine*, 171, 93-98.

International Cooperation

- Lt Col Stephanie Hodson, Commander, 1st Psych Unit, Australian Army, visited USAMRU-E to review survey scanning procedures and discuss recent research findings (4-5 MAY).
- Dimitris Rizopoulos, a Ph.D. Student at the Biostatistical Centre in the School of Public Health at the Catholic University of Leuven in Belgium, met with unit staff to present final results from his contract work programming IRT analyses for the statistical language “R” (10 APR 06).
- Jessica Ippolito, Dipl.-Psych., successfully defended her dissertation at a colloquium at the University of Mannheim. Her dissertation, on the psychological adjustment of US Army reservists activated for Homeland Defense, is supported through the Oak Ridge Institute of Science and Education (protocol #931). LTC Bliese and Dr. Adler served as advisors on her dissertation committee. (3 MAY 06).

International Conference in Berlin

The 42nd International Applied Military Psychology Symposium (IAMPS) was held in Berlin (8-12 MAY 06). Results from the transition training study (see column left) were presented, and LTC Bliese also provided information to the group about advances in the statistical language R. LTC Bliese, Dr. Adler, and Ms. Ippolito attended the meeting.



- Adler, A.B., Castro, C.A., Bliese, P.D., McGurk, D., Wright, K.M., & Hoge, C.A., (2006, May). The Efficacy of Post-Deployment Psychological Debriefing with Soldiers.

Human Performance Optimization

An interdisciplinary group of military scientists met as part of a working group to explore ways to optimize Soldier performance. LTC Bliese participated in the meeting which was held at the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences in Bethesda, MD. (7-9 JUN 06).

Personnel Updates

- SGT Deena Carr passed the E-6 board and is now in promotable status (5 APR 06). She re-enlisted in the Army on 17 APR 06.
- Ms. Andrea Bellis, a research associate contractor with CACI, left the unit (26 MAY 06)
- CPT Oscar Cabrera was awarded the Army Commendation and Army Achievement Medals (13 JUN 06).

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