

# **Fiscal Year 2012 Defense Planning & Program Guidance**

## **Report**

### **BACKGROUND**

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This report is pursuant to Chapter 5.5, “Support to Families”, in the Fiscal Year (FY) 2012 Defense Planning and Program Guidance (DPPG). The DPPG tasked the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense (OUSD) for Personnel and Readiness (USD (P&R)), in coordination with the Director, Cost Assessment and Program Evaluation (D, CAPE) and the Secretaries of the Military Departments, to conduct a review of defense-wide family support programs to identify gaps and duplicative efforts as well as seek opportunities to develop joint programs and share resources.<sup>1</sup>

This report reflects a concerted round-table effort, during the last few weeks, among all of the military departments, Services, OUSD and CAPE. It is an aggressive initial attempt to represent divergent military cultures within the overall context of presenting the Department’s commitment to underwrite family support. It fosters collaboration and recognizes that although there may be some perceived gaps and overlaps in programs and services, those gaps and overlaps warrant further review, which can be addressed collectively.

Ensuring family readiness is a high priority for the Department – a priority that should not be solely shouldered by the Services or by the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD). The inherent differences in the military cultures across the Services, based on Title 10, United States Code, military missions of the Services, necessitated the development of unique and distinct programs. OSD policy establishes non-pay compensation benefits and program standards to which the Services execute programs and services to meet specific demographic, geographic and mission requirements. The similarity of services offered by the individual military Services does not therefore constitute a redundancy, but rather reflects compliance with Title 10 and discharge of Service Chief responsibilities. Traditionally, OSD has driven the policy direction and augmented the operations of the Services. It has been a fluid relationship, characterized by shifting roles in order to meet the emerging needs of family support during the long war. The agility in the system has allowed for enhanced programming in an expeditious manner.

### **INTRODUCTION**

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The DoD has more than 2.2 million military service members (1.41 million active duty/ 854 thousand in the selected reserve). More than half of service members are married. There are 3.1 million military family members, of which nearly two thirds are children (2009 Profile of the Military Community Demographics Report). In FY 2010, the Department allocated \$3.3 billion

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<sup>1</sup> It should be noted that the DPPG was published prior to the announcement of the Department of Defense Efficiencies Initiative, as directed by the Secretary of Defense memorandum on August 16, 2010. While the support to families review is based on the current program resources, the impact of the efficiencies initiative is still unknown.

in the baseline budget and an additional \$863 million in Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO) funding for family support programs included in this review.

There are two components to the review: a report and appendices. The report addresses the questions posed by the DPPG. The appendices detail the family support programs provided by the Office of the Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Military Community and Family Policy (ODUSD(MC&FP)), along with programs provided by each of the Services. To provide uniformity in program language, we used the Common Output Level Standards (COLS), as defined in Department of Defense Initial Guidance for BRAC 2005 Joint Basing Implementation, issued by Deputy Secretary of Defense Memorandum, Transforming Through Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) 2005 - Joint Basing, January 22, 2008. The COLS show an unprecedented level of cooperation among the Services to define program standards and achieve levels of consistency across the force.

The family support areas encompassed in the COLS and in our review are:

- Warfighter and Family Services (WFS)
- Child and Youth Programs (CYP)
- Morale, Welfare, and Recreation (MWR)

This report focuses on *the areas in which we identified gaps, overlaps or opportunities for joint collaboration. Additionally, we identified gaps that would arise if Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO) funding were eliminated.* A matrix detailing *all of the family support programs reviewed*, along with funding data for Fiscal Year (FY) 2010 through FY 2015, is provided in Appendix 1. To outline what is mandated or authorized by Congress, a matrix of legislative drivers for each of the programs is provided in Appendix 2. Programs that rely on OCO funding are noted in Appendix 3. Finally, family support programs deemed outside the scope of this review are detailed in Appendix 4. Issue papers are provided as background information at Appendix 5.

## **ISSUES IDENTIFIED**

We identified one overarching gap - providing services and programs for the geographically dispersed and Reserve Component families. Much of our support relies upon a family's proximity to installations, where the programs exist. While eligible to receive services, in most cases when mobilized, the families' distance from installations prevents their access to programs. The Joint Family Assistance Program (JFSAP) and Yellow Ribbon Program were started in recent years to address this particular need.

The Department is also augmenting Service support by implementing several technologically-based systems to link geographically dispersed families to programs (i.e., Military OneSource, MWR On-line Library, MyCAA, Army Fort Family, and YMCA Membership Program).

On the matrix, the Military Departments reported family support programs for Reserve and Guard members wherever possible. It is noted that some of the Services consider the Total Force when developing programs. As such, some programs for the activated Reserve component members and their families are also available for Active duty members and their families who live in remote locations.

## **Possible Program Gap**

### **Exceptional Family Member Program (EFMP)**

**Description:** The NDAA 2010, Section 563, establishes within the Department of Defense an Office of Community Support for Military Families with Special Needs to enhance and improve Department of Defense support around the world for military families with special needs (whether medical or educational) through the development of appropriate policies, enhancement, and dissemination of appropriate information throughout the Department of Defense, support for such families in obtaining referrals for services and in obtaining service, and oversight of the activities of the military departments in support of such families. This will be accomplished by expanding the Exceptional Family Member Program (EFMP) to include a family support component.

**Gap Issue:** Until enactment of the NDAA, there had been no legal or policy requirement for community support through the EFMP, and only Army and Marine Corps had these program elements. In FY 2010, to comply with the Congressional requirement for community support, OSD Defense-wide funding was provided to the Services to augment EFMPs to expand community support services where they existed or to provide services where they did not exist.

- In the Navy and the Air Force, the EFMP was primarily an assignment process to insure that Service members would be assigned to locations that had resources available to meet their family member's special medical and/or educational needs. EFMP family support was not a funded program in either Service prior to the NDAA 2010; while family support services are available to all Service members and families, including EFM families, there has been no targeted program for EFM enrolled members and families.
- Overall, there is a potential gap in some of the EFMP family support services for mobilized Guard and Reserve families who do not live near an installation.

## **Possible Program Overlaps**

### 1) Non-Medical Counseling

**Description:** Short term, non-medical counseling is made available to individuals needing counseling short of clinical therapy. Non-medical counseling is supportive in nature and addresses general conditions of living, life skills, improving relationships at home and at work, stress management, adjustment issues (such as those related to returning from a deployment), marital problems, parenting, and grief and loss. (DoDI 6490.06).

**Overlap Issues:** We identified:

- An overlap between OSD Defense-wide provided non-medical counseling and OSD (HA) pilot program.
- A *potential* overlap between OSD Defense-wide counseling and counselors at Navy Fleet and Family Support Centers and Marine Corps Community Services counseling centers.

## **OSD Defense-wide**

Military Community & Family Policy provides overall strategic policy and oversight. It also operationally manages the Military OneSource (MOS) and Military & Family Life Consultants (MFLC) Contracts. Health Affairs also has a non-medical counseling pilot program, TRICARE Assistance Program (TRIAP). One area consistently noted in surveys of families was the inflexibility of the medical services to provide crisis counseling to meet the short-term counseling needs of families. Consequently, several initiatives were implemented.

- MOS provides worldwide capability for Active duty, Guard & Reserve members, and their families to be connected through face-to-face, telephonic, or online counseling. MOS counseling services are designed to help with short-term issues such as couple relationships, parenting skills and stresses related to deployments or reintegration. Eligible Service members or family members may receive up to 12 sessions per issue at no cost. Service members and their families can call and schedule an appointment with a counselor in their local community.
- Military Family Life Consultants provide flexible service delivery to meet the ongoing and emerging needs of the total force by providing installation-based consultants with rotational assignments of 30, 45, 60, or 90 days, as well as on-demand counseling support for the National Guard and Reserve component and their families, including those associated with the Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program. MFLCs support pre-deployment, deployment, and reintegration events. Child & Youth Behavioral MFLCs are specially trained and available to support military children, parents and staff who work with military children and youth.
- Health Affairs also has a non-medical counseling pilot program, TRIAP. The purpose of this demonstration is to test the use of web-based technologies to deliver information and counseling services to TRICARE beneficiaries and determine if web-based technologies increases efficiency of identifying beneficiaries who need behavioral health care.

## **Service Programs**

- The Navy Fleet and Family Support Centers (FFSC) and Marine Corps Community Services counseling centers have licensed mental health practitioners who provide brief non-medical counseling services for sailors, Marines and their families experiencing commonly occurring life stresses. Clinical staff also provides crisis intervention for disasters and other major critical incidents, and counseling intervention for child abuse/domestic abuse and sexual assault. The Navy utilizes the OSD Child and Youth Behavioral MFLC within the Child and Youth Program.

### 2) Information & Referral Services

**Description:** Program delivers personal and family readiness tools providing information and referral services. Information and referral includes both simple contacts and responses to more complex needs for information and assistance that require a follow-up component. OSD determined a single brand for the entire Department.

**Overlap issue:** Potential overlap between Military OneSource and Army OneSource.

**OSD Defense-wide: Military OneSource (MOS)**

- MOS offers free, 24/7/365 access to confidential resource and referral support for Service members and their families. The program is beneficial to those geographically separated from installation services, or to those who are unable to seek assistance during traditional working hours. Services by phone include personalized consultations on specific issues such as education, special needs, finances and customized research detailing community resources and appropriate military referrals. An interactive website offers locators for education, child care and elder care, financial calculators, webinars, and relocation tools. It also provides on-line access to consultants and educational materials on subjects ranging from finances to parenting to combat stress. Support to geographically dispersed military members and their families is provided by the Joint Family Support Assistance teams located in all 50 states and four territories.

**Services: Army OneSource (AOS)**

- AOS created a recognizable “sub-brand” of MOS for Soldiers and Families who reported they have too much or too little information on available services and reduced the difficulty in determining which services best meet their needs. Army streamlined support by consolidating three Army websites into one web portal linked to MOS, saving \$3.2M. AOS strengthened support to geographically dispersed Soldiers and their Families by providing Community Service Coordinators (CSCs) dispersed in local communities to “connect the dots” with a warm hand-off among service providers, Inter-Service Family Assistance Committees and Soldiers and family members. AOS compiles information in a single location for Army Soldiers and Family members to access at any time of day, regardless of component or physical location. Technical support representatives are available via the LIVE CHAT Monday through Friday from 8AM to 8PM EST.

**Opportunities for Joint Collaboration**

1) Spouse Employment & Education

**Description:**

Programs and services provided to assist military spouses with career development, employment skills and placement, and tuition assistance for training, licenses and certifications towards portable careers.

**Issue:** Each of the Services makes available employment assistance through installation family centers. Installation based services are adapted based on the needs of the community. In addition to policy guidance, OSD provides the My Career Advancement Account (MyCAA).

**OSD Defense-wide**

- The MyCAA program provides eligible military spouses with comprehensive education and career counseling services delivered by professional counselors 24/7. The program provides up to \$4000 per eligible military spouse of junior Service members (E1-E5, W1-W2, and O1-O2) for education, training, licensure or certification leading to a portable career. The MyCAA program is authorized by Title 10, Sec 1784a, “Education and

Training Opportunities for Military Spouses to Expand Employment and Portable Career Opportunities.” Operational since March 2009, over 136,000 spouses of active duty personnel have participated in the MyCAA program.

- Executive Order (EO) 13473, “Noncompetitive Appointing Authority for Certain Military Spouses”, established a non-competitive appointing authority for certain military spouses to positions in the Federal Civil Service. Eligible spouses are those of active duty members on a permanent change of duty station if the spouse relocates to the member’s new permanent duty station; a totally disabled retired or separated member of the Armed Forces, or the un-remarried widow(er) of a member of the Armed Forces killed while performing active duty.

### **Veterans Affairs**

- Post 9/11 GI Bill which allows Service members with a minimum of six years in service and who agree to serve an additional four years on active duty are eligible to transfer the benefits of the Post 9/11 GI Bill to spouses or dependent children.

### **Service Programs**

- Each of the Military services provides installation based spouse employment assistance services that include career counseling, self-employment skills, job referrals, and guidance on self-employment in Government quarters.

### **Discussion of Joint Collaboration**

DoD could explore linking several programs that are already being offered. For example, the current Army Spouse Employment Program (ASEP) could be leveraged to serve all DoD military spouses. A partnership between the Army and corporate America, the ASEP promotes spouse employment by enlisting corporate partners who have pledged to increase employment opportunities for Army spouses. With adequate OSD funding, the current Army program could be renamed and expanded to represent a joint initiative and provide support to spouses of all Services.

Spouses in need of assistance with locating employment can access installation-based, hands-on support from counselors who are aware of local community resources. The EO 13473 facilitates Federal employment for military spouses upon a permanent change of duty station if the spouse relocates to the member’s new permanent duty station. For spouses in need of financial assistance for education or training, as well as career counseling, the MyCAA service is available by telephone 15 hours a day. My CAA complements the brick and mortar services provided at the installation by providing funding for education, training, licenses or certifications and extended access to counselors. Finally, the Post 9/11 GI Bill provides a source of possible education funding for military spouses of more senior military members.

#### 2) Financial Readiness

**Description:** Programs are conducted by trained counselors who provide personal and family financial planning education, information services, and assistance, including but not limited to,

consumer education, advice and assistance on budgeting and debt liquidation, retirement planning, and savings and investment counseling (DoDI 1342.27, November 12, 2004).

**Issue:** Financial counseling and education provided by OSD augments what Services have available on the installation. Our Service members need support at the key financial, career and life transition decisions points to assist them in making career and economic security plans. Because the risk of poor choices is so high (overwhelming debt, poor credit, loss of security clearances), we need to have a system which empowers our Service members to be mission ready by being financially ready to serve.

### **OSD Defense-wide**

- OSD Defense-wide Military OneSource provides voluntary personal financial counseling by phone and online with referrals for in-person sessions (24/7/365) to augment installation Personal Financial Management programs.
- The Military Family Life Consultant (MFLC) program also has Personal Financial Counselors (PFCs) who provide personal financial counseling for surge, rotational and on-demand events to augment installation programs.

### **Service Programs**

- Each of the Services offers personal financial management counseling at the installation, as well as educational programs and workshops. Installation Financial counselors provide command specific and locally tailored educational programs that OSD Financial Counselors are often unable to provide. Army financial counselors provide Army Emergency Relief counseling and loan processing.

### **Discussion of Joint Collaboration**

To support financial readiness, OSD's augmenting of installation services – making counselors available by phone and in the local community as well as providing surge support at the installation – needs to continue to be developed.

### **Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO) Funded Programs: Potential Gaps if OCO is Discontinued**

Below are the potential gaps identified if the OCO funds were withdrawn from family programs. Although some of the Services have made great progress to increase their baseline funding for enduring family support requirements, many programs still rely on OCO funding.

#### **Support to Geographically Dispersed**

The Reserve Component relies on OCO funds to support the Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program (YRRP). The YRRP prepares Service members and families through the cycles of mobilization and reintegrates Service members with their families, communities and employers upon redeployment. It includes information, services on current benefits and resources available, and referral to help overcome the challenges of the deployment cycle. Without OCO funds, the long term support for the Service members and their families would be undermined as they return to local communities across America.

## Children and Youth

OCO currently funds support for respite child care during deployment, child care subsidies that reduce the out of pocket child care costs for families, and programs for children and youth that support healthy, active lifestyles. Respite child care provides a much needed 'break' from the stresses and demands of parenting alone during a spouse's deployment. In order to be eligible for child care subsidies, child care programs in the local community must meet standards for oversight, health and safety. These requirements help to ensure that the large number of families who live off the installation can access quality child care in their community. Access to dependable, safe child care reduces daily stresses for working parents.

## MWR

Deployment support in Theater would be critically compromised if OCO funds were withdrawn from MWR. The following support would be substantially diminished:

1. Communication (e.g., free internet cafes, bandwidth, portable morale satellite units)
2. Fitness/sports/recreation equipment and replacement
3. Library support (e.g., paperback/audio books, playaways, gaming, etc.)

These programs keep Service members mentally and physically fit to fight, reduce stress and boredom, and facilitate communication with family and friends at home. Withdrawing these funds would have a strong negative impact on morale.

## **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION**

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Though there appear to be some gaps and overlaps in programs and services, these programs deserve further review. Our recommendation is to continue our review of family support programs, led by USD(P&R) in coordination with the Director, Cost Assessment and Program Evaluation (D, CAPE) and the Secretaries of the Military Departments:

- To validate the extent to which the findings in this report represent gaps or overlaps in programs
- To link program review to family readiness future force needs and outcomes as well as describe the full range of appropriate family support services that the Defense Department will provide to balance affordability with readiness.

The follow-on report will be delivered to the Deputy Secretary of Defense on September 1, 2011.