



Veterans Inventory Initiative

Quarterly Report, Second Quarter, FY 2007

An assessment of the intentions, educational level, skills, employment desires, and suggestions to improve the Fort Hood region's "Quality of Place" for Soldiers leaving military service at Fort Hood, Texas.



FORT HOOD REGION VETERANS INVENTORY INITIATIVE



Quarterly Report: 2nd Quarter, FY 2007

(January – March 2007)

A. BACKGROUND: In July 2006, the following parties entered into a Memorandum Of Understanding (MOU) to routinely inventory the intentions, educational level, skills, employment desires, and suggestions to improve the Fort Hood regional “Quality of Place” of Soldiers leaving military service at Fort Hood, Texas:

- Fort Hood Adjutant General/Army Career and Alumni Program (ACAP)
- Central Texas Workforce Board
- Central Texas Workforce Development Centers
- Greater Killeen Chamber of Commerce
- Heart Of Texas Defense Alliance
- Texas Veterans Commission

Data is collected via a voluntary twelve-question survey administered during either the Transition Assistance Program (TAP) workshop or installation final clearance¹. The purpose for the collection and analysis of this data is threefold:

1. develop and retain the region’s skilled and motivated military Veteran workforce;
2. foster innovation and entrepreneurship; retain existing businesses, and attract new business to the region; and
3. align the efforts of the participating agencies to enhance options for current and future/potential residents.

B. DEMOGRAPHICS: For the period comprising January-March 2007:

1. 1,577 Soldiers completing their military service at Fort Hood responded to the survey.
2. 76.5 percent of respondents were leaving military service prior to becoming retirement-eligible, or were being medically discharged. There were slightly fewer (74, with the shift predominantly in fewer medical discharges) than during the previous quarter. See Note 1
3. 23.5 percent were retiring after 20 or more years of service. There were 130 more retirement-eligibles (7.5 percent) than the previous quarter.
4. For the year-to-date (September 2006 – March 2007):
 - a. 3,101 Soldiers completing their service have responded to the survey.
 - b. 2,059 (66.4 percent) were in the category of ETS/Administrative discharge
 - c. 429 (13.8 percent) were being medically discharged
 - d. 610 (19.7 percent) indicated their intention to retire with 20-plus years of military service.

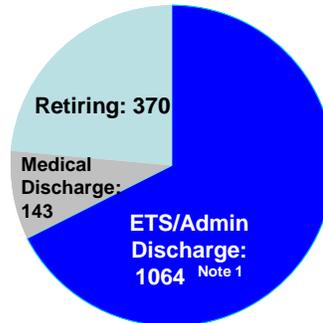
¹ There were 2,283 Soldiers who left the service from the Fort Hood Transition Point During January through March 2007. 1,358 Soldiers participated in the optional TAP workshops. Retiring Soldiers may participate in TAP up to two years prior to their retirement date, while non-retiring Soldiers may participate up to one year in advance. While there may be a time lag between when a Soldier attends TAP and leaves the service, it is logical to conclude that nearly 60% of all Soldiers leaving the service at Fort Hood currently attend a TAP workshop, and of those, over 85% respond to this survey of post-military intentions.

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DEMOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION

2ND Quarter FY 2007



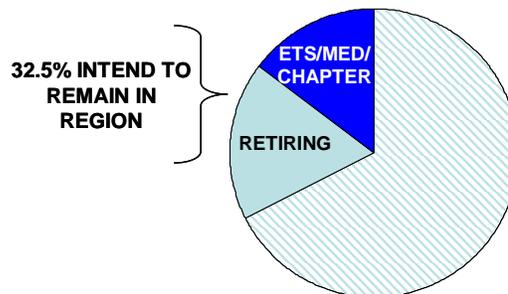
Note 1: Reasons Soldiers leave military service prior to becoming retirement eligible (usually after 20 years of Active service) include Expiration of Term of Service (ETS), i.e. their contractual enlistment term has ended; administrative discharge for a variety of reasons prior to their ETS date; and for medical reasons based upon the recommendations from a board of physicians who determine that a Soldier does not meet medical/fitness retention standards for continued military service.

C. INTENTIONS ON STAYING IN THE REGION:

The respondents were asked to indicate if they intended on remaining in the region (within 30 miles of Fort Hood – generally equating to the Temple-Killeen-Fort Hood Metropolitan Statistical Area) when their service ended.

1. 513 respondents (representing 32.5 percent of all respondents) indicated they intended to stay in the region. That data is further broken down as follows:
 - a. 234 retirees (63% of all retirement eligible respondents)
 - b. 279 (26%) of non-retirement eligible respondents
 - c. an additional 80 retirees responded they did not intend to stay in the region, but indicated they would do so if desirable employment were available. That equates to the potential for 85 percent of retirement-eligible Soldiers remaining in the region. These numbers reflect an increase of 38 retirees (2 percent) over the previous quarter.

2ND QUARTER SURVEY DEMOGRAPHICS



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2. For the year-to-date (September 2006 – March 2007) a total of 1,046 Soldiers (33.7% of all respondents) leaving the service at Fort Hood indicated they intended to remain in the region once their service was completed.

3. Trends and Conclusions. Consistently, 1/3 of the respondents indicate they intend to remain in Central Texas when their service ends. In the 2nd Quarter, 80 additional retirees and 357 non retirement- eligible Soldiers responded they would stay in the region if desirable employment were available. That equates to the potential for 52.7 percent of Soldiers not eligible to retire to remain in the region once their service ends. For the year to date, over 500 Soldiers ending their service at Fort Hood each three month period intend to remain in Central Texas. Those numbers would nearly double if the type of employment the respondents desire was available.

4. While the Veterans Inventory Initiative only surveys the intent of Soldiers departing the service, it is possible to more accurately track the disposition of the retiring population, using data from the Retired Army Personnel System, which provides the actual numbers of retired Soldiers to zip code level. For the 12-month period ending in March 2007, the total number of military retirees grew by 2.7 percent in the Killeen-Temple-Fort Hood MSA. Nolanville, Harker Heights, Salado, Belton, and Temple each experienced growth rates exceeding the MSA average.

	APRIL 2006	MARCH 2007	DIFFERENCE	% CHANGE
KILLEEN	7405	7560	155	2.1
HARKER HEIGHTS	1560	1698	138	8.8
TEMPLE	1022	1058	36	3.5
BELTON	762	792	30	3.9
SALADO	194	202	8	4.1
NOLANVILLE	200	224	24	12
COPPERAS COVE	2994	3000	6	0.2
GATESVILLE	326	327	1	0.3
KEMPNER	824	843	19	2,3
LAMPASAS	341	342	1	0.3
MSA	15,689	16,109	420	2.7

The military retiree rate of growth for north Texas (174 counties less the Killeen-Temple-Fort Hood MSA) was 1.3 percent for the same period.

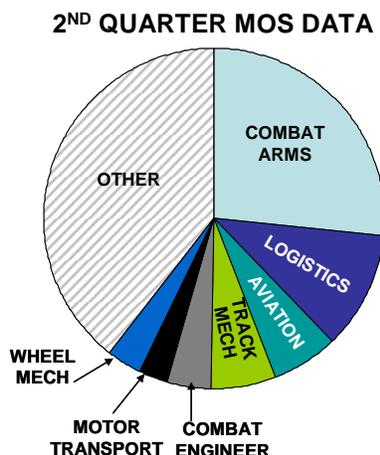
The numbers of retirement-eligible Soldiers indicating they intend to remain in the region after retirement for survey purposes (which may be up to two years before they retire) appears to be higher than the number actually staying. We will continue to monitor retiree data during 2008 to determine the potential relationship between intent and fact. It is possible that the intent to stay may erode as the actual retirement date approaches. The survey data clearly indicates that the availability of desirable employment plays a major role in the intention to remain in the area.

D. MILITARY OCCUPATIONAL SPECIALTIES: Departing Soldiers represented over 130 different Military Occupational Specialties. The top five categories/specialties equated to 54.4 percent of the total responses received. The top three categories (Combat Arms, Logistics Specialist, and Aviation) from the 1st Quarter remained the top three in the 2nd Quarter. Tracked Vehicle Mechanics and Combat Engineers moved into the number four and five positions,

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replacing Motor Transport Operators, and Wheel Vehicle Mechanics, which dropped to number six and seven, respectively.



1. **Combat Arms** (420 responses) comprises four separate specialties, listed below, along with the number of respondents. Given the units at Fort Hood (seven Brigade Combat Teams and two Fires Brigades), and deployment cycles, the number of Combat Arms Soldiers leaving the service is predictable. Most, if not all, will be combat veterans of the Iraq/Afghanistan campaigns, which have a distinctive small-unit focus by their nature. Therefore, in addition to the skills listed below, these Soldiers would likely have extensive leadership and staff planning skills that far surpass those of their civilian peers.

a. **Armor/Cavalry** (153): member or leader who employs main battle tanks or cavalry fighting vehicles in combat operations, and performs reconnaissance and security.

b. **Infantry** (135): member or leader who individually employs small arms/heavy anti-armor weapons in support of combat operations.

c. **Artillery** (122): operates or supervises high technology cannon artillery weapons, automated tactical data systems, intelligence activities, target processing, radar operations, artillery surveying operations, or meteorological observation.

d. **Air Defense** (20): operates command/control/communications/computer information systems or the lightweight, highly mobile Avenger or medium weight Patriot Air Defense Missile systems.

2. **Logistics Specialist** (177 responses) comprises three separate specialties, listed below, along with the number of respondents in each specialty.

a. **Unit Supply Specialists** (92Y; 60) supervise or perform duties involving the request, receipt, storage, issue, accountability, and preservation of individual, organizational, installation, and expendable supplies and equipment.

b. **Automated Logistical Specialists** (92A; 66) supervise and perform management or stock record/warehouse functions pertaining to receipt, storage, distribution and issue, and maintain equipment records and parts.

c. **Petroleum Supply Specialists** (92F; 51) supervise the receipt, storage, accountability, and cares for dispensing, issuing and shipping bulk or packaged petroleum, oils, and lubricants.

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3. **Aviation Specialties.** There were 100 respondents representing 14 different enlisted specialties, ranging from aircraft electricians to airframe-specific armament/electrical/avionics system repairers. There were four officer/warrant officer specialties including 6 helicopter pilots.

4. **Track Vehicle Mechanics** (96 responses – 63A/H/M/X/Z) performs or supervises unit maintenance, diagnose, and troubleshoot malfunctions on gas turbine and diesel power plants; and the suspension, steering, hydraulics, auxiliary power units, and the armament/fire control systems on tracked vehicles including the M1 Abrams main battle tank and Bradley Fighting Vehicle.

5. **Combat Engineer** (66 responses) performs and/or supervises basic demolition, mine warfare, and combat construction (bunkers, shelters, fighting positions, obstacles) operations. Operates various light and heavy tracked and wheeled engineer vehicles, or directs the employment of engineer vehicles in support of maneuver forces. Conducts road, route, bridge, tunnel and ferry reconnaissance.

E. DESIRED POST-MILITARY SERVICE EMPLOYMENT:

Respondents are asked to indicate the type (or types) of post-military employment desired. In order to standardize input for ease of analysis, the survey provides 12 broad categories, generally conforming to industry categories found in the North American Industrial Classification System (NAICS), but respondents may write in and/or amplify any area not listed. The data (expressed as the number of responses) is shown below for both retirement-eligible and non retirement-eligible Soldiers based on the top three types of employment desired:

	SINGLE RESPONSE	MULTIPLE RESPONSES
RETIRING	Management (47)	Management (128)
	Transportation (18)	Administrative (83)
	Education (14)	Transportation (81)
NON-RETIRING	Law Enforcement (106)	Law Enforcement (362)
	Management (47)	Management (256)
	Equipment (43)	Equipment (163)

The data is relatively consistent in terms of the type of post-military employment desired. Soldiers that are retiring with 20-plus years of service rated Management as their top choice. Officers and Non-Commissioned Officers eligible to retire have spent many years leading increasingly larger and more complex organizations, are graduates of an Army Professional Education system that focuses on developing their leadership skills, and have demonstrated success as a result of their longevity of service. In most cases, their skills would include human resource development, supervision of large numbers of subordinates, fiscal planning, etc.

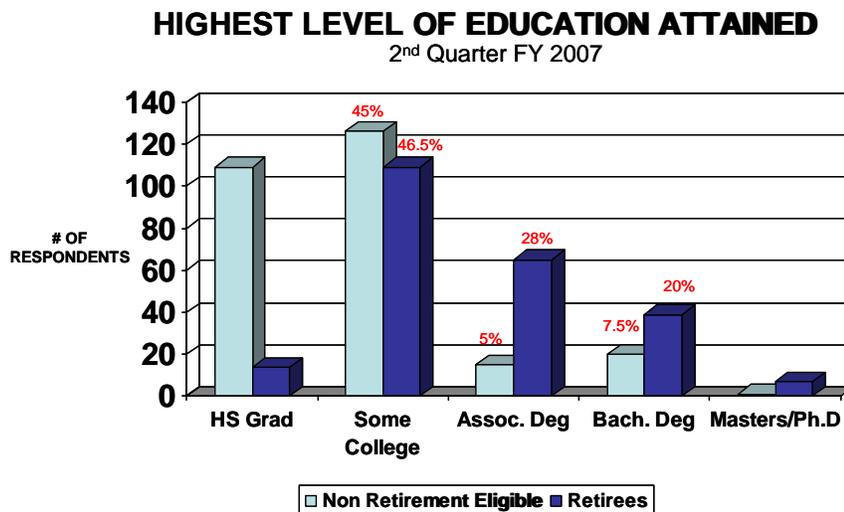
Soldiers leaving the military prior to becoming eligible for retirement rated Law Enforcement as their number one choice. Given the skills of the predominant Military Occupational Specialties (Combat Arms), a high rate of recent combat experience, and advanced educational attainment of the respondents, a wide range of possibilities available in the Law Enforcement area is apparently appealing.

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F. EDUCATION LEVEL OF THOSE REMAINING IN THE REGION:

Respondents were asked to indicate their highest level of educational attainment. The data depicted below represents only those respondents who indicated they intended to stay in the region upon completion of their service, and is separated by those eligible for retirement and those Soldiers leaving the service that are not retirement eligible.²



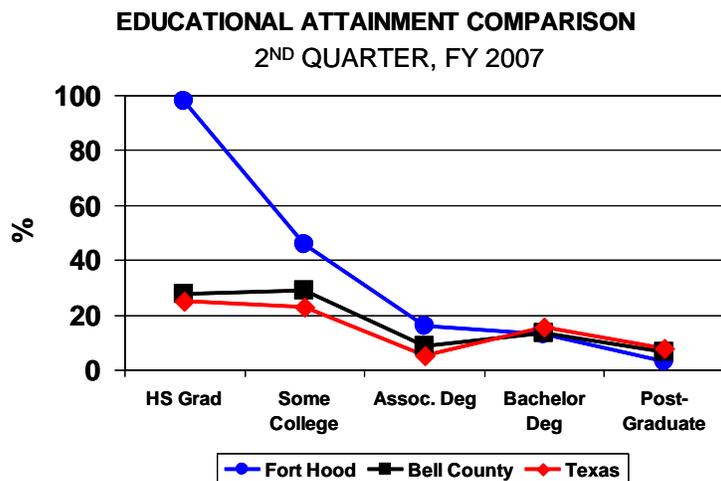
The data indicates that almost 95 percent of retirement-eligible respondents who intend on remaining in the region have post-secondary education. 46.5 percent list their highest education level as “Some College”, and 28 percent have received their Associates Degree. Nearly 60 percent of non retirement-eligible Soldiers have post-secondary education, with 45 percent indicating they have “Some College.”

1. When the highest level of educational attained by Soldiers leaving the service at Fort Hood is expressed as a percentage of all respondents (rate of educational attainment) and compared to educational attainment for Bell County Texas and the state of Texas as a whole, the following comparison can be made³:

² Data is for 234 retirees and 271 non-retirement eligibles; n=405

³ Source: Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board; also cited on the Texas A&M University Real Estate Center – Market Overview 2006.

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2. Conclusions. The data indicates Soldiers are better-educated than their civilian counterparts in the region and statewide. This is reflective of a high degree of self initiative and demonstrates that Soldiers willingly embrace the notion of lifelong learning. Continuing education is an important component to retention, and it is routine for Soldiers to perform in an increasingly sophisticated and technical operating environment in the execution of their duties. In 2006, there were 3,415 Fort Hood Soldiers enrolled in Central Texas College, the local community college, pursuing Associates Degrees and/or vocational/technical training; and for academic year 2006, an average of 73 Soldiers were enrolled in upper-level/graduate coursework at the Tarleton State University System Center – Central Texas.

G. DESIRED “QUALITY OF PLACE” IMPROVEMENTS:

1. A key consideration in the retention of a talented military Veteran workforce is how those individuals perceive the “Quality of Place” in which they choose to live upon separation from military service. Respondents were asked to indicate the improvements (not limited to one choice, and in many cases, numerous areas were selected) in place criteria that would positively affect their decision to remain in the region. For purposes of this analysis, data is depicted for only those Soldiers who indicated they intended to remain in the region after separation. The data is shown by whether a Soldier is retiring (and staying) or not retirement eligible (and staying).⁴

2. In the case of both retiring Soldiers as well as those who were not retirement-eligible, there is consistency in the three criteria that were most often cited as improvements they desire to see:

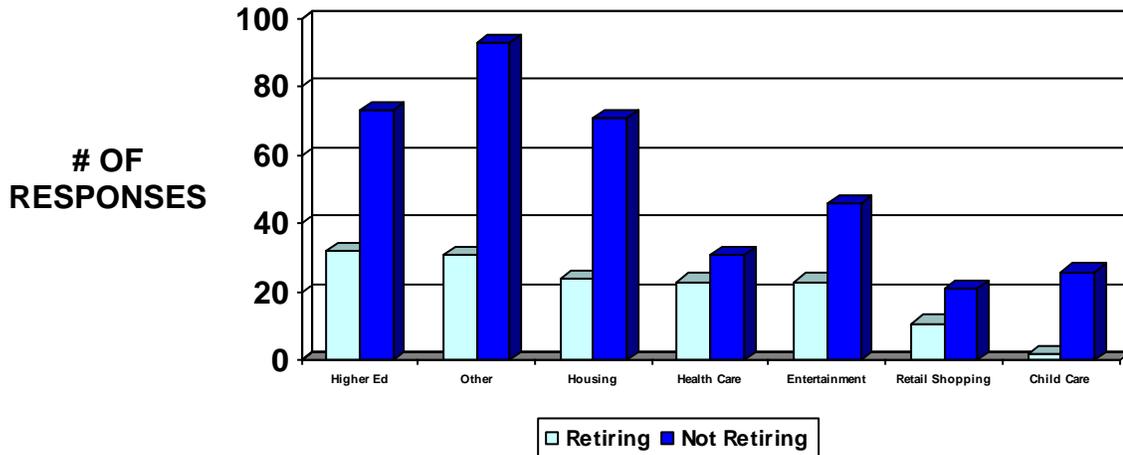
- Higher Education offerings
- Other (See Below)
- Housing

⁴ Due to an inadvertent overlap of data collected for the 1st and 2nd Quarter reports, the information captured in this report reflects data for the period of September 2006 through February 2007. Subsequent reports will reflect data for that quarter.

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DESIRED "QUALITY OF PLACE" IMPROVEMENTS



3. Additional Comments: Respondents were given the opportunity to write in specific suggestions to amplify their response on areas where the region could improve the “quality of place.” There were two predominant responses: More Jobs (47) and Better Pay (27). Additionally, 14 respondents indicated the crime rate in the region was too high, 13 stated there needed to be more community activities (entertainment venues, stores, and restaurants), and 12 cited traffic congestion (highway access) as areas that needed to be improved. The creation of the future Texas A&M University-Central Texas in the near term should provide the higher education opportunities for Soldiers departing the service, and given the high percentage with “some college” or who already possess an Associates Degree, program expansion may need to be refocused on those areas that more closely align with the military specialties the departing Soldiers worked in. The U.S. Highway 190 improvements (ramp reversal, lane additions, etc.) should aid in the perception that there is disproportionate traffic congestion, and the Downtown Killeen revitalization plan is addressing the perceptions of a higher per capita crime rate. We will continue to monitor the responses to the “quality of place” questions to see if there are significant changes in trends beyond this initial report.

*Additional information not addressed in this quarterly report may be available for release to eligible entities. Requests for specific information should be addressed **in writing** to Executive Director, Heart Of Texas Defense Alliance at 100 W. Central Texas Expressway, Suite 106, Harker Heights, TX 76548.*

Special thanks to Ms. Linda Angel, Central Texas Workforce Center for the design of the report cover and logo; and to Mr. DeShawn Jones, Texas Veterans Commission work study who compiles the data for these reports.