



# Fort Hood Region Veterans Inventory Initiative

Quarterly Report, July - September 2016

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





**Quarterly Report: 4th Quarter, FY 2016**

(July - September 2016)

**A. BACKGROUND:** Operation Economic Transformation is the Greater Killeen Chamber of Commerce (GKCC) plan to identify, measure, and capitalize on new and emerging economic development opportunities present in the Central Texas region. In April 2006, the Greater Killeen Chamber of Commerce (GKCC) employed TIP Strategies, Inc. to conduct a study to identify, measure, and capitalize on the new and emerging economic development opportunities present in the Central Texas region. The results of their study were published in 2007.

One key recommendation from the study was to regularly administer a survey for veterans separating from military service at Fort Hood to capture insightful information regarding their skills and desired career fields post separation for all Soldiers and Spouses. In July 2006, the following parties entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to routinely inventory the intentions, educational level, skills, and employment desires of separating Soldiers in order to improve the Fort Hood regional “Quality of Place”:

- Fort Hood Soldier for Life-Transition Assistance Program (SFL-TAP)
- Workforce Solutions of Central Texas - Board
- Workforce Solutions of Central Texas - Service Centers
- Greater Killeen Chamber of Commerce
- Heart of Texas Defense Alliance
- Texas Veterans Commission

Data is collected via a voluntary ten-question survey administered during either the Soldier for Life - Transition Assistance Program (SFL-TAP) workshop or installation final clearance<sup>1</sup>. 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**

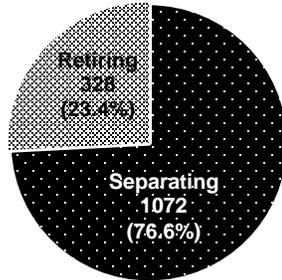
1. For the 4th Quarter FY 2016 (July - September 2016), 1400 Soldiers completing their military service responded to the survey with the demographics graphed below.

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<sup>1</sup> 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. Effective November 2012, all Soldiers separating from the military are required to attend the TAP seminar and will provide the opportunity for more Soldiers to participate in the optional Veterans Inventory Initiative survey.



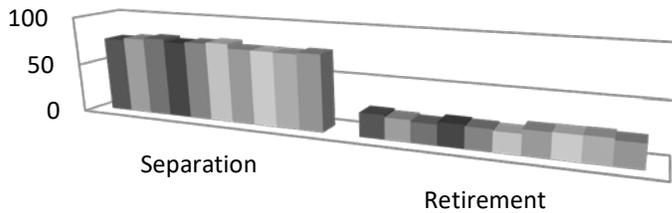
**DEMOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION**



4th Qtr 2016

2. The Veterans Inventory Initiative has collected data on Soldiers separating from the service at Fort Hood since FY 2007 and reports have been based on responses from a total of 39,484 separating and retiring Soldiers. For ease of viewing, the graph below charts the results of those who responded to a new and improved survey implemented during the TAP seminar in the 3rd Quarter 2014. During this timeframe (April 2014 to September 2016), the amount of those separating from the service has fluctuated between 75-80%, while the amount retiring has fluctuated between 20-26%. The results have been fairly consistent for the past ten quarters, and we will continue to monitor these results for trend analysis purposes.

**Percentage of Separations by Type**

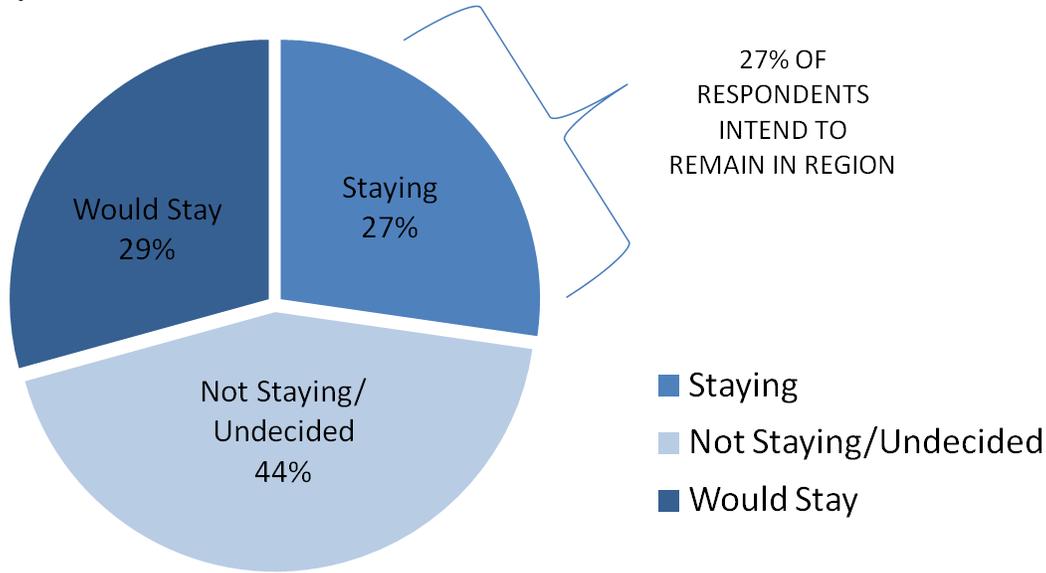


	Separation	Retirement
■ 3rd Qtr 14	75.9	24.1
■ 4th Qtr 14	78	22
■ 1st Qtr 15	79.7	20.3
■ 2nd Qtr 15	77	23
■ 3rd Qtr 15	78.4	21.6
■ 4th Qtr 15	79.8	20.2
■ 1st Qtr 16	75.4	24.6
■ 2nd Qtr 16	75.2	24.8
■ 3rd Qtr 16	74.9	25.1
■ 4th Qtr 16	76.6	23.4

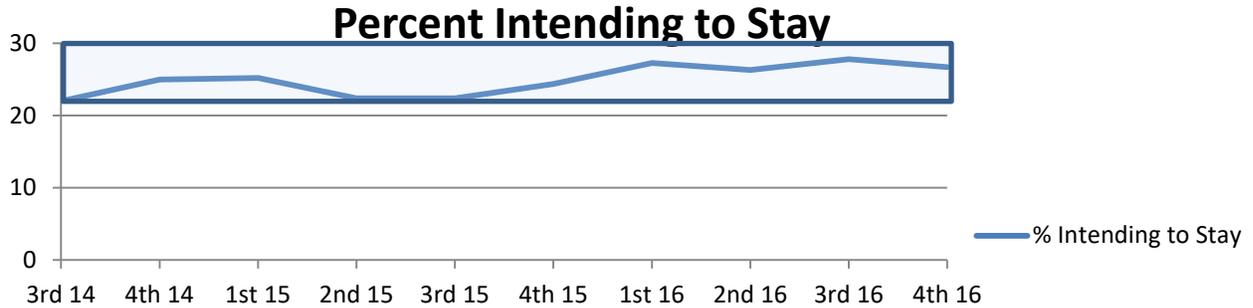


**C. INTENTIONS ON STAYING IN THE REGION:** The respondents were surveyed regarding their intentions on remaining in the region (within 30 miles of Fort Hood – generally equating to the Killeen-Temple-Fort Hood Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA)) when their service ended. Of the 1400 respondents, 211 are listed as undecided since they did not know at the time of the survey.

1. 374 respondents (representing 26.7% of all respondents) indicated they intended to stay in the region. The inventory survey also asks respondents that if they do not intend to remain in the MSA upon leaving the service, would a job available in the area change their response. An additional 403 (28.8%) indicated they would do so if desirable employment were available. Over the past two years, 26%-35% have consistently stated they would remain in the area if a job was available.



2. When analyzing data of Soldiers' intentions on remaining in the Killeen-Temple-Fort Hood MSA over the last ten quarters, the graph below indicates that the percent of Soldiers intending to remain in the area consistently averaged between 22 and 27 percent within this time period. As such, we have chosen to focus on more current data. It is also important to note that the numbers, according to the Retired Army Personnel System, shows a continual increase in retirees remaining in the region throughout the past three years (85%–90% each quarter). We will continue to monitor these results.



3. Military retirees residing in the MSA: While the Veterans Inventory Initiative only surveys the intent of Soldiers departing the service, we are able to more accurately track the disposition of the retiring population using data from the Retired Army Personnel System (RAPS), which is based on the actual retired Soldiers' zip code. According to RAPS, the cities of Killeen, Harker Heights, Belton, and Nolanville experienced retiree growth rates exceeding the MSA overall growth of 31.3% for the period June 2009 to September 2016.

	JUNE 2009	SEPT 2016	% GROWTH 2009 - 2016
<b>KILLEEN</b>	8120	11,176	+37.6
<b>COPPERAS COVE</b>	3,028	3,543	+17
<b>HARKER HEIGHTS</b>	1,843	2,627	+42.5
<b>TEMPLE</b>	1,150	1,387	+20.6
<b>KEMPNER</b>	884	1,043	+18
<b>BELTON</b>	826	1,116	+35.1
<b>LAMPASAS</b>	356	401	+12.6
<b>GATESVILLE</b>	350	421	+20.3
<b>NOLANVILLE</b>	266	389	+46.2
<b>SALADO</b>	206	261	+26.7
<b>MSA</b>	17,029	22,364	+31.3

In an economic impact study released in May 2016, Texas Comptroller Glenn Hegar reported that more than 287,000 retirees, survivors, and their families remained within traveling distance of Fort Hood. This number continues to grow each quarter due to 85-90% of all local retirees remaining in the region and many others moving into the region due to Quality of Life factors. Current estimates now show over 384,000 people are supported by Fort Hood locally and



outside the MSA. Below are some key data points to provide additional insights into the growth rates locally:

a. Congress approved the federal highway bill in 2015 which designated an existing portion of US 190 (from Copperas Cove to Belton) as part of the new Interstate 14 which will run from West Texas to the Sabine River near Fort Polk. This Central Texas Corridor will connect Army facilities to strategic seaports, and will provide additional economic development opportunities for the Central Texas area.

(<http://www.gulfcoaststrategichighway.org/KDH%201.21.16%20Report.html>, January 2016).

b. WalletHub.com reported that while the United States experienced the lowest population growth since the 1930s, Killeen was ranked number 6 in the nation for the fastest growing city out of 515 nationwide. (<https://wallethub.com/edu/fastest-growing-cities/7010/>, December 2015.)

c. Killeen was named Playful City USA by KaBOOM! for the seventh year in a row based on the city's efforts to increase the quantity and quality of playgrounds, park acreage per capita, and the number of youth served. (<http://killeenchamber.com/news/killeen-named-playful-city-usa-for-seventh-year>, June 2015.)

d. The Killeen-Temple-Fort Hood MSA holds the 3<sup>rd</sup> spot in the state of Texas for Leading Mid-Size City in the Prime Workforce category and 12<sup>th</sup> overall in the United States. (<http://killeenchamber.com/index.php/news/article/area-development-ranks-the-killeen-temple-fort-hood-msa-12th-nationally-7th>, July 2014.)

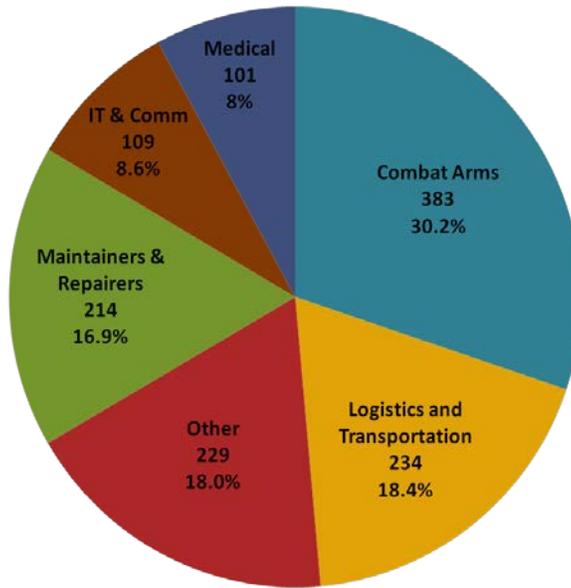
e. According to the June 2014 Texas Labor Market Review, the Killeen-Temple-Fort Hood MSA increased employment over the year by 10.3 percent and decreased unemployment by 1%. (<http://killeenchamber.com/index.php/news/article/area-development-ranks-the-killeen-temple-fort-hood-msa-12th-nationally-7th>, July 2014.)

f. The Killeen-Temple-Fort Hood MSA economy ranked fourth strongest in the state, and 13th strongest in the nation - just behind Houston, San Antonio, and Austin (according to Policom Corporation). (<http://www.policom.com/MetroRank.htm>, June 2014.)

In addition to these indicators of economic stability for the Killeen-Temple-Fort Hood MSA, the Texas Comptroller also stated in the 2016 economic report that Fort Hood's economic impact was \$35.4 billion statewide. Comptroller Glenn Hegar stated "Fort Hood is an economic engine that helps growth in Texas." The report states that Fort Hood was also indirectly responsible for 201,538 jobs throughout Texas, which include the 60,159 direct jobs on Fort Hood.

**D. MILITARY OCCUPATIONAL SPECIALITIES:** Departing Soldiers represented 175 different Military Occupational Specialties (MOS). However, 77.2% (981 of the 1270 valid respondents) can be grouped into five general areas: Combat Arms, Logistics/Transportation, Maintainers/Repairers, Medical, and Information Technology/Communications. The sixth area shown on the following chart, Other, is comprised of the remaining 289 Soldiers leaving the service with an MOS not covered in the five areas above.

**FORT HOOD REGION VETERANS INVENTORY INITIATIVE**



**COMBAT ARMS**

Traditionally, Combat Arms is the largest group and remains the largest group this quarter. 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 (soft skills) that would be a tremendous asset to any organization.

Soldiers in combat arms comprise 30.2%(383/1270) of the separating population.

<b>Infantry (138)</b>	Member or leader who individually employs small arms/heavy anti-armor weapons in support of combat operations.
<b>Engineer (75)</b>	Of the 75 Soldiers, 29 are combat engineers and are directly engaged in providing mobility, counter-mobility and survivability support to combat forces. Operates, directs and assists in the operation of various light and heavy engineer wheeled and tracked vehicles. Directs construction of shelters and assembly of military fixed bridges. Another 46 have engineer MOS specialties of construction, plumber, firefighter, horizontal construction, interior electrician, technical, carpentry and masonry and terrain data specialists.
<b>Armor (69)</b>	Member or leader who employs main battle tanks or cavalry fighting vehicles in combat operations, and performs reconnaissance and security.
<b>Field Artillery (51)</b>	Operate or supervise high technology cannon artillery weapons, automated tactical data systems, intelligence activities, target processing, radar operations, artillery surveying operations, or meteorological observation.
<b>Air Defense Artillery (50)</b>	Operate command/control/communications/computer information systems or the lightweight, highly mobile Avenger or medium weight Patriot Air Defense Missile systems.



**LOGISTICS AND TRANSPORTATION**

Soldiers serving in the logistics and transportation fields comprise 18.4%(234/1270) of the separating population. The top five categories are shown below.

<b>Food Service Specialists (43)</b>	Supervise or prepares, cooks and serves food in field or garrison food service operations.
<b>Motor Transport Operator (37)</b>	Supervises and operates wheel vehicles to transport personnel and cargo. Oversees and checks proper loading and unloading of cargo on vehicles and trailers.
<b>Unit Supply Specialists (37)</b>	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 (36)</b>	Supervise and perform management or stock record/warehouse functions pertaining to receipt, storage, distribution and issue, and maintain equipment records and parts.
<b>Petroleum Supply Specialists (27)</b>	Supervise the receipt, storage, accountability, and cares for dispensing, issuing and shipping bulk or packaged petroleum, oils, and lubricants.

**MAINTAINERS/ REPAIRERS**

Soldiers that work in the field of maintenance and repair comprise 16.9%(214/1270) of the separating population. The top four categories are shown below.

<b>Aviation repairers (60)</b>	12 different enlisted specialties (less pilots and air traffic controllers) ranging from aircraft structural repairers to airframe-specific armament/electrical/avionics system repairers.
<b>Wheeled Vehicle Mechanics (58)</b>	Supervise and perform unit, direct support and general support level maintenance and recovery operations on light and heavy wheeled vehicles, their associated trailers and material handling equipment.
<b>Special purpose (41)</b>	8 different low-density fields that require a degree of technical skills that would support the repair and maintenance of Army vehicles and equipment. These skills include metal workers (welders), machinists, small arms and fire control repair, power generation, computer/detection systems, radar, avionic communication equipment, and special purpose equipment (such as HVAC and refrigeration systems).
<b>Tracked Vehicle Mechanics (17)</b>	Perform or supervise unit maintenance, diagnose, and troubleshoot malfunctions on gas turbine and diesel power plants; 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.



**INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AND COMMUNICATIONS**

The information technology and communications field makes up 8.6%(109/1270) of the separating population. The top six categories are shown below.

<p><b>Information Technology Specialist</b> (22)</p>	<p>Supervise, install, operate and perform unit level maintenance on multi-functional/multi-user information processing systems, peripheral equipment, and associated devices. Perform analyst and information assurance functions and conducts data system studies. Perform Information Services Support Office (ISSO) duties of printing, publications, records management and Communication Security (COMSEC) custodian functions and certification authority duties in support of the Defense Message System (DMS).</p>
<p><b>Multichannel Transmission System Operator-Maintainer</b> (18)</p>	<p>Supervise, install, operate and perform unit level maintenance on multi-channel line-of-site and tropospheric scatter communications systems, communications security (COMSEC) devices, and associated equipment.</p>
<p><b>Signal Support Systems Specialist</b> (15)</p>	<p>Supervise, install, employ, maintain, troubleshoot and assist users with battlefield signal support systems, terminal devices, satellite communications equipment and automated telecommunications computer systems, to include local area networks, wide area networks and routers. Integrate signal systems and networks; performs unit level maintenance on authorized signal equipment and associated electronic devices; train and provide technical assistance to users of signal equipment.</p>
<p><b>Nodal Network System Operator-Maintainer</b> (14)</p>	<p>The Nodal Network Systems Operator-Maintainer supervises, installs, operates, and performs systems maintenance on large and small electronic switches; system control centers; node management facilities; associated multiplexing and combat net radio interface (CNRI) equipment; short range line of sight radio systems; communications security (COMSEC) devices; and other equipment associated with network switching operations.</p>
<p><b>Cable Systems Installer-Maintainer</b> (10)</p>	<p>Cable Systems Installer-Maintainers are primarily responsible for installing, operating and performing maintenance on cable and wire communications systems, communication security devices and associated equipment.</p>
<p><b>Satellite Communication Systems Operator-Maintainer</b> (8)</p>	<p>Satellite Communication Systems Operator-Maintainers are responsible for making sure that the lines of communication are always up and running. They install, operate, maintain and repair strategic and tactical multichannel satellite communications.</p>



**MEDICAL**

Personnel in the medical field make up 8%(101/1270) of the separating population.

<p><b>Health Care Specialist (57)</b></p>	<p>Provide emergency medical treatment, limited primary care, force health protection, evacuation in a variety of operational and clinical settings from point of injury or illness through the continuum of military health care under the supervision of a physician, nurse or physician’s assistant. As a field combat medic, provides emergency medical care/treatment at point of wounding on the battlefield or to battle and non-battle casualties during wartime .</p>
<p><b>Other (44)</b></p>	<p>5 Medical-Surgical Nurses, 5 Dental Specialists, 4 Mental Health Specialists, 4 Army Practical Nursing Specialists, 3 Medical Laboratory Specialists, 2 Preventive Medicine Specialists, 2 Medical Logistics Specialists, 2 Operating Room Specialists, 2 Obstetrics/Gynecology Nurses, and 15 other Soldiers with various medical specialty MOSs.</p>

**E. DESIRED POST- MILITARY SERVICE EMPLOYMENT:**

Respondents are asked to indicate the type (or types) of post-military employment they desire. If married, they can indicate their spouse's employment preferences as well. In order to standardize input for ease of analysis, the survey provides 14 broad categories conforming to industry categories found in the North American Industrial Classification System (NAICS). The choice "other" is offered when a specific desired category is not provided. For this quarter, the responses were very low in regards to the question asking for the Soldier’s desired area of employment upon separation; 851 of those surveyed did not answer that particular question. Because this survey is voluntary and can be taken up to a year before the date of separation during the Soldier For Life-Transition Assistance Program, it may be very possible that at the time of the survey, the majority just did not know what area of employment he/she would prefer. For this 4th Quarter report, of those who did respond to this question (549 Soldiers and 523 spouses), the top five desired categories of post-military service employment were<sup>2</sup>:

<sup>2</sup>Employers desiring to hire Fort Hood veterans should contact Fort Hood Soldier for Life -Transition Assistance Program (formerly known as ACAP) directly through the TAP Director of Marketing, Mr Robert Schumacher: at (254)288-0827; [Robert.c.schumacher.civ@mail.mil](mailto:Robert.c.schumacher.civ@mail.mil); or by posting their opportunity and company website URL on the TAP website ([www.acap.army.mil](http://www.acap.army.mil)). Mr Schumacher can coordinate employer participation in a host of TAP transition events, as well as assist with highly specialized targeted hiring initiatives. Employers may place a job posting via "Work in Texas" ([www.workintexas.com](http://www.workintexas.com)) - a statewide, internet-based job-matching system through Workforce Solutions of Central Texas (WFSCT) (254) 200-2020. The Texas Veterans Services (TVC) staff work closely with the Central Texas Workforce Business Services including job development, direct referrals, and military skills-civilian occupations matching. Contact Adam Jones, TVC Supervisor, (254) 200-2038.



1. Soldiers Separating:

**SOLDIER**

**SPOUSE**

1. Other:	109	1. Medical/Health Field:	150
2. Law Enforcement/Security:	97	2. Other:	156
3. Medical/Health Field:	88	3. Education/Teaching:	50
4. Computers/Software:	40	4. Administrative/Office:	44
5. Management/Business:	39	5. Management/Business:	34

The anomalies in Military Occupational Specialty (MOS) data may have been carried over to the types of post-service employment desired. Law Enforcement/Security has always ranked as one of the top five desired career choices for post-service employment, which continues to be the case this quarter and is most likely attributed to the large number of Soldiers separating with a Combat Arms MOS. Soldiers with a medical-related specialty are usually considered "low density." Since Medical was one of the top MOS areas, and 8% of the respondents came from that field, it is likely that many would desire post-service employment in the medical field. Since October 2007, the top desired careers for spouses have always included Administrative/Office, Education/Teaching, Management/Business, and Medical/Health Field, with the Medical/Health Field moving to the number one choice for spouses this quarter. It had previously been the second desired career for a spouse over the last two quarters. This choice "other" continues to remain one of the top five choices for both the Soldier and their spouse (top choice for Soldiers this quarter).

2. Soldiers Retiring:

The top categories of desired post-service employment for those retiring from military service are:

1. Management/Business:	107
2. Admin/Office:	98
3. Other:	78
4. Law Enforcement/Security:	60
5. Education/Teaching:	59

Management/Business is usually the number one desired job for retirees, and continues to remain number one this quarter. Administration/Office has typically been one of the top two desired areas of employment for retirees, and once again, is the number two desired employment this quarter. As stated in the previous section, "other" continues to remain of the top desired career choices for retirees as well. Law Enforcement/Security is typically one of the top five desired career choices, and most likely a common desire due to the experience that Soldiers have acquired while serving in the military.

3. Employment:



a) According to a previous study by Payscale.com in 2012, management consultation is at the top of the list for best jobs for veterans. The following is a list of the 16 most common and well-paid occupations that veterans of all services across the United States have entered since transitioning from the military service.

- Management consultant
- Program manager, information technology
- Systems analyst
- FBI agent
- Field service engineer, medical equipment
- Systems engineer
- Information technology consultant
- Intelligence analyst
- Helicopter pilot
- Network engineer
- Project manager, construction
- Technical writer
- Business development manager
- Network administrator, information technology
- Heating, ventilation, and air conditioning service technician
- Fireman

b) Orion International, an employment placement service for former military personnel, finds that officers and senior-enlisted personnel typically find success in high-level management positions, with many major corporations offering "fast-track" leadership development for veterans. 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. Employers are looking to former military personnel due to their leadership experience, transferrable skills, and proven accountability. These veterans are known for being highly energetic and motivated and are also known for being career-oriented, goal-oriented, and are very familiar with being in a position where accountability is high. As such, it is essential to help place those with strong leadership skills back into the private sector work force who have mastered the skills of management during military service, and many companies are looking to veterans to fulfill that need.

c) The Institute for Veterans and Military Families at Syracuse University performed a comprehensive study in March 2012 on the traits of military veterans and developed a report of the results titled, "The Business Case for Hiring a Veteran."

This study reported that previous military service resulted in leadership ability and a strong sense of mission, which are highly valued traits in a competitive business environment. Of the ten traits discussed in the paper, it identified that Veterans are adept at skills transfer from their past military experience to the new work environment, they are able to act quickly and decisively in a changing environment, they demonstrate high levels of resiliency, exhibit advanced team-building skills, and possess a strong organizational commitment. This research supports very compelling reasons for hiring individuals with military background and experience. Their discipline, drive, and motivation are characteristics that make them desirable employees. The

**FORT HOOD REGION VETERANS INVENTORY INITIATIVE**



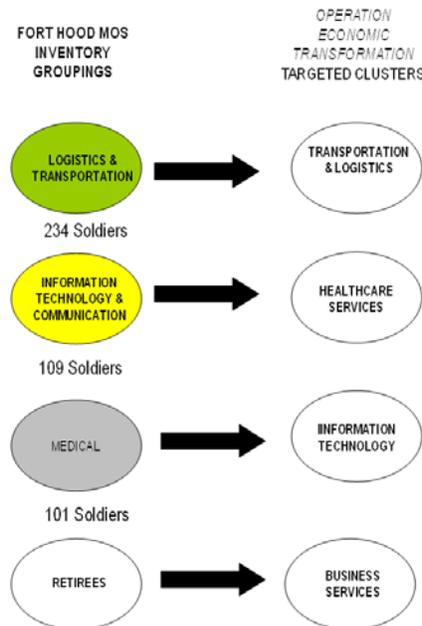
Killeen-Temple-Fort Hood MSA has a large pool of educated veteran job applicants to choose from and it is clear that many would respond favorably to remaining in the area if the right job was available to choose from at the end of their service in the military.

While it is understandable that jobs readily available within the area would retain many more Soldiers within the MSA upon leaving the service, the Census Bureau has confirmed that more than 2.4 million businesses are owned by military veterans. The U.S. Small Business Administration, Office of Advocacy, reported that 9% of all businesses in the U.S. were owned by veterans in 2013. Veterans have many years of military experience preparing them for the rigors of running a small business, and many find that entrepreneurship is a more appealing opportunity when transitioning to the civilian workforce. The combination of self-driven veterans and an inexpensive cost of living makes the Killeen-Temple-Fort Hood MSA a desirable place to remain after their service.

d) The *Operation Economic Transformation* Report identified four “target industries” or clusters that present the Greater Fort Hood Region with immediate opportunities for economic growth:

- Information Technology
- Transportation and Logistics
- Healthcare Services
- Business Services

Clusters are geographic concentrations of interconnected firms and institutions utilizing related applications and serving similar markets. When fully developed, clusters can act as the principal drivers of economic growth and innovation in a region. The report recommended pursuing the development of these four clusters through a coordinated strategy of business retention, recruitment and entrepreneurship.



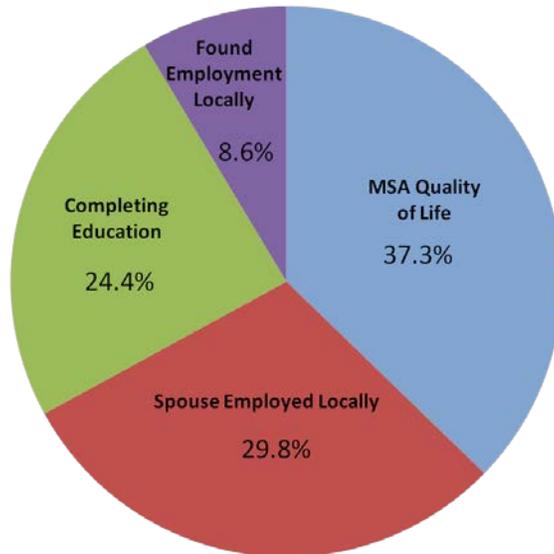


When separating the respondents into major MOS categories, there is a strong correlation between the numbers of separating Soldiers with those skills and the target clusters in the Operation Economic Transformation Report as shown in the chart above. In addition, because Officers and Non-Commissioned Officers eligible to retire have spent many years of their military career in leadership positions and are graduates of an Army Professional Education system, they have acquired many skills in Management and Administrative roles. This training and experience, regardless of their MOS, would directly correspond with the Business Services cluster.

**F. REASONS FOR REMAINING IN THE MSA:**

1. In 2013, the survey was revised to gain more clarity on the Quality of Life factors cited by separating Soldiers that impact their decision to remain in Central Texas or go elsewhere after their service ends. The majority of those completing the survey that identified they were staying locally said it was due to the MSA quality of life, while two other large groups were staying due to their spouse being employed locally, or the Soldier's intent for completion of their education. With the addition of Texas A&M-Central Texas to the MSA, the Soldiers and their spouses now have the opportunity to complete their baccalaureate or master's degree while remaining in an area with a lower cost of living compared to other areas with universities.

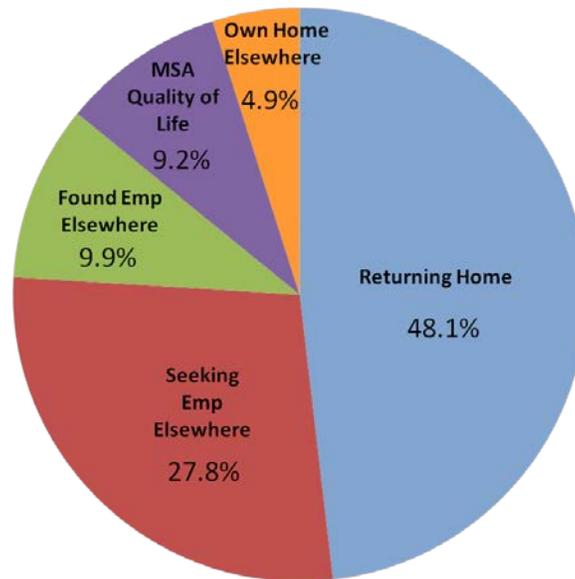
**Reasons for Remaining Inside the MSA  
4th Quarter FY 2016**





2. The graph below addresses the reasons for those service members not staying in the MSA after separation. The majority of those choosing to live outside of the MSA after separation mainly wanted to return to their home of record, while the second largest group stated that seeking employment elsewhere was their primary reason. These have been the top two reasons for the past nine quarters. While returning to home of record is not something that can be improved for the area, available and desirable employment and the perception of the MSA quality of life are areas that can be improved.

**Reasons for Living Outside of the MSA  
4th Quarter FY 2016**



**G. EDUCATION LEVEL OF THOSE REMAINING IN THE REGION:** Respondents are asked to provide their highest level of educational attainment. For this quarter, 303 of 374 (81%) percent of the respondents who intend to remain in the region have some level of post-secondary education:

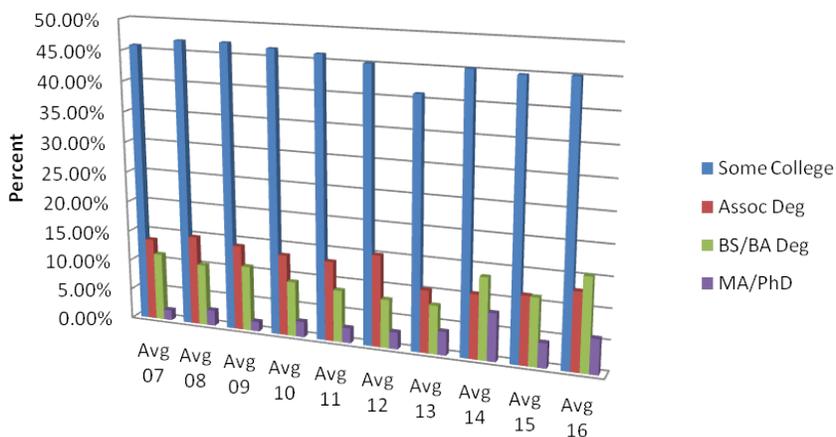
1. Some College – 168 (45%)
2. Associates Degree – 52 (14%)
3. Baccalaureate Degree – 64 (17%)
4. Masters/PhD Degree – 19 (5%)

The data from over 38,000 Soldiers separating during the last eight years indicates that for those Soldiers who intend to remain in the Killeen-Temple-Fort Hood MSA (both retirement eligible and non-retirement eligible), educational attainment for those completing their Masters or PhD has increased as indicated in the graph below. This could be a direct result of the



availability of upper level universities in the area, especially with the addition of TAMU-CT. This data is further affirmation that those Soldiers leaving the service provide a large amount of highly educated potential employees for the area.

**Educational Attainment % of Those Intending to Stay in MSA**



Anecdotally, businesses indicate they want to hire veterans. Educational attainment is a key variable in that process given the current national unemployment rate. With the sluggish job market and the extra benefits of health care, tuition assistance, and housing and food allowances while in the service, the military remains a favorable career choice. However, with the downsizing of troop levels, the standards of recruiting continue to be more stringent, so candidates applying with a GED are often turned away and encouraged to complete at least 15 college credits before re-applying, which guarantees a more educated group of veterans<sup>3</sup>. When taking into account that Central Texas offers a low cost of living, has several post secondary educational institutions within the Killeen-Temple-Fort Hood MSA where Soldiers are able to complete their degrees, and the fact that a large percent of Soldiers separating from the service desire to remain in the area, the Killeen-Temple-Fort Hood MSA is becoming a very desirable region for potential business partners to relocate to the area. This opportunity may also motivate many other Soldiers who have started their degree as indicated in the above graph to complete their education through the use of their Post 9/11 GI Bill benefits, with the potential of a job in the area after leaving the service.

Perceptions versus reality: As 98% percent of Fort Hood Soldiers reside on-post or within 10 miles of the Fort Hood main gate in the communities of Central Texas, the survey choices reflect their perceptions of areas where improvements might further influence their decision to remain in the region when their military service ends. As Operation Economic Transformation points out, “Economic development planning that is responsive to new opportunities... recognizes the increasing importance of quality of place in the attraction and retention of business and workers. Quality of Life is about providing options, not just for current residents,

<sup>3</sup> Annalyn Kurtz, Getting Into the Military is Getting Tougher, <http://money.cnn.com/2013/05/15/news/economy/military-recruiting/>, 15 May 2013.



but for those who will be residents in the future.” Quality of Life within the MSA is important to retaining Soldiers in the area after separating (37.3%), as seen in the previous graph on page 14. Veterans ending their service at Fort Hood are clearly a talented and educated workforce worth retaining in the Central Texas region and their perceptions of the Quality of Life is important to be considered in future planning. While the Quality of Life is affected greatly by perception, bringing in larger industry and providing those employment opportunities is a strong way to make the Quality of Life in the MSA more desirable, helping to retain the Soldier and their family in the MSA.

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 2916 Illinois Avenue, Killeen TX 76543.

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