



# Veterans Inventory Initiative

Quarterly Report, First Quarter, FY 2009

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.





**Quarterly Report: 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter, FY 2009**  
(October - December 2008)

**A. BACKGROUND:** *Operation Economic Transformation* is the Greater Killeen Chamber of Commerce plan to identify, measure, and capitalize on new and emerging economic development opportunities present in the Fort Hood region. One key proposal of the plan was to regularly administer a survey designed to capture insightful information regarding the skills and desired career fields of veterans separating from military service at Fort Hood. 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 of separating Soldiers in order to improve the Fort Hood regional “Quality of Place”:

- 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 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**

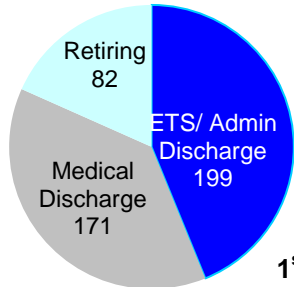
1. For the 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter (October through December 2008):
  - a. 458 Soldiers completing their military service at Fort Hood responded to the survey.
  - b. 81 percent of respondents were leaving military service prior to becoming retirement-eligible (199 responses/43%), or were being medically discharged (171 responses/37%).
  - c. 18 percent (82 respondents) were retiring after 20 or more years of service.

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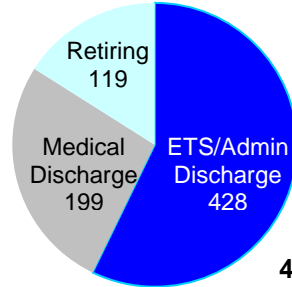
<sup>1</sup> Retiring Soldiers may participate in TAP up to two years prior to their retirement date, while non-retiring Soldiers may participate up to one year in advance. However, the Transition Services Manager reports the majority of soldiers attend the TAP workshop 6 months or less before separation. Of the soldiers with a stated separation date in FY08, 3125 completed the TAP workshop. Of these, 57% completed the survey within the last six months. The other 43% completed it before October 2007.



**DEMOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION**

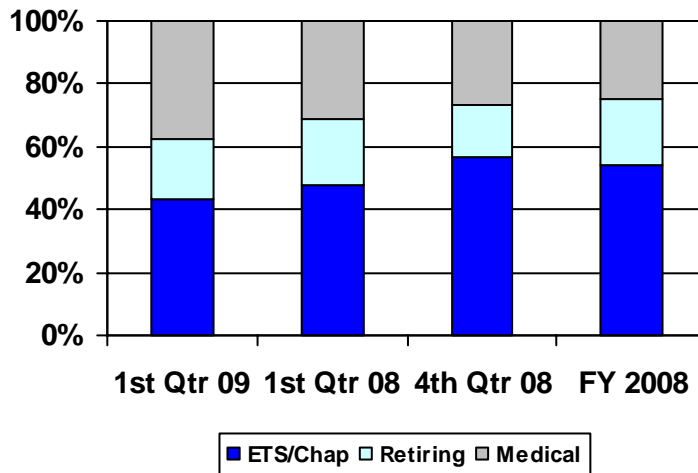


1<sup>st</sup> QTR 2009



4<sup>th</sup> QTR 2008

2. Percentages according to the reason cited for leaving the service by quarter and for calendar year 2008 are as follows:



3. Trends. The number of respondents to the 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter survey was significantly lower than previous quarters. The decrease is most likely a result of the lengthening of tours in Iraq from 12 to 15 months coupled with Fort Hood deployment cycles. During the time of this survey, 4<sup>th</sup> Infantry Div, 3<sup>rd</sup> ACR, and 3<sup>rd</sup> BCT/1<sup>st</sup> Inf Div were still deployed while 1<sup>st</sup> Cav Div was under Stop/Loss prior to its' deployment to Iraq. These units equate to approximately 12,700 Soldiers. Indications are 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter responses will not be much higher either due to the recently returned units which will then be under 90 days Stop/Loss following their return from deployment.

**C. INTENTIONS ON STAYING IN THE REGION:**

The respondents were surveyed regarding their intentions about 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. 145 respondents (representing 31.6% of all respondents) indicated they intended to stay in the region.

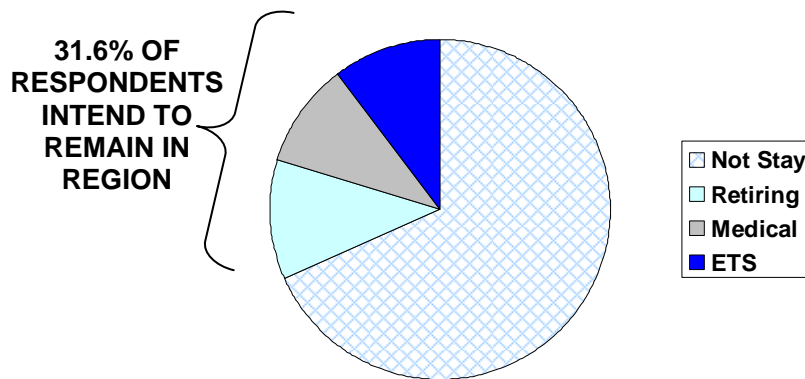
## FORT HOOD REGION VETERANS INVENTORY INITIATIVE



This data represents:

- a. 52 retirees (59.1% of all retirement eligible respondents)
- b. 93 (25% of all non-retirement eligible respondents including Medical and ETS/Chap)
- c. 118 (26%) responded they did not intend to stay in the region, but would do so if desirable employment were available.

### INTENDING TO STAY IN THE REGION WHEN SERVICE ENDS 1st QUARTER SURVEY DEMOGRAPHICS



2. For the year-to-date (December 2007 – December 2008) a total of 1097 Soldiers (34% of all respondents) leaving the service at Fort Hood indicated they intended to remain in the region once their service was completed.

3. Conclusions. On average, from October 2006 to December 2008, 34 percent of the respondents indicate they intend to remain in Central Texas when their service ends. Year to date (Dec 2007 – Dec 2008), another 22 percent of Soldiers leaving Central Texas would stay if the respondent's desired employment was available. This is about average when compared to 23.4 percent that will stay for desired employment from April 2007 – December 2007. In addition, from December 2007 - December 2008, retiring Soldiers represent 437 of the number remaining in the region – an average of 36 per month. This is about average when compared to December 2006 – December 2007 which averaged 38 retirees per month.

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 December 2008, the total number of military retirees grew by 5.6 percent in the Killeen-Temple-Fort Hood MSA. Killeen and Nolanville experienced growth rates exceeding the MSA average.

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	DECEMBER 2007	DECEMBER 2008	DIFFERENCE	% CHANGE
<b>KILLEEN</b>	7461	7996	535	7.2
<b>COPPERAS COVE</b>	2868	2998	130	4.5
<b>HARKER HEIGHTS</b>	1715	1809	94	5.5
<b>TEMPLE</b>	1090	1133	43	3.9
<b>KEMPNER</b>	842	879	37	4.9
<b>BELTON</b>	825	819	-6	-0.7
<b>LAMPASAS</b>	339	349	10	2.9
<b>GATESVILLE</b>	336	349	13	3.9
<b>NOLANVILLE</b>	239	261	22	9.2
<b>SALADO</b>	198	207	9	4.5
<b>MSA</b>	15913	16800	887	5.6

The military retiree rate of growth for north Texas (174 counties less the Killeen-Temple-Fort Hood MSA) was 2.9 percent for the same period.

The rate of growth for the MSA is much higher than in past quarters, and the rate of growth relative to North Texas was also significantly higher. We will monitor this in future reports to see if this is a one-time occurrence or the beginning of a trend. Additionally, while the national economy was experiencing the beginnings of the recession during this reporting period, the Killeen-Temple-Fort Hood MSA was:

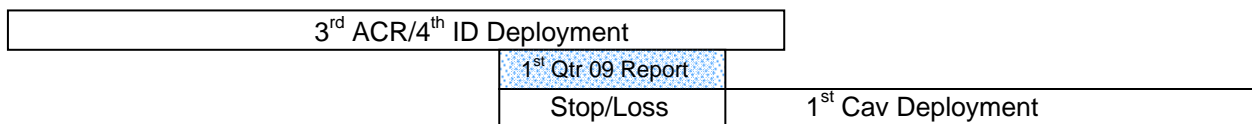
- a. the 14<sup>th</sup> fastest growing MSA in the nation (U.S. Census Bureau).
- b. ranked #1 in affordable housing (Caldwell Banker Home Price Index 9/26/2007).
- c. ranked #1 in renter livability (apartmentratings.com).
- d. rated one of the five best areas for military families (Babb Group - military.com)
- e. ranked 5<sup>th</sup> of the top 20 best MSAs for job growth (Forbes, citing Bureau of Labor

Statistics).

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 SPECIALITIES:** Departing Soldiers represented 106 different Military Occupational Specialities. However, 72% (318 respondents) can be grouped into five general areas: Combat Arms, Maintainers/Repairers, Logistics/ Transportation, Medical, and Engineers.

Deployment cycles for Fort Hood units had a significant impact on this First Quarter report, and reported Military Occupational Specialities reflect that.

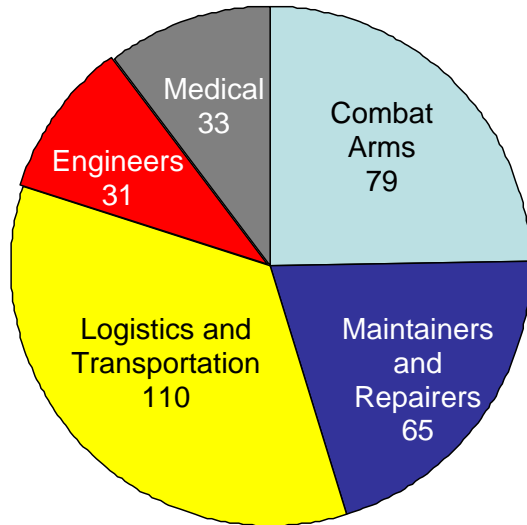


The extension of the deployment for at least two major Fort Hood units meant that the majority of survey responses came from departing Soldiers in the III Corps Separate Brigades and 13<sup>th</sup>

**FORT HOOD REGION VETERANS INVENTORY INITIATIVE**



Sustainment Command Expeditionary. As a result, the Logistics and Transportation category MOS' were represented at a higher rate than the traditional top category – Combat Arms. The same trend will likely carry over to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter 2009 report. Engineers replaced the Information Technology and Communications category, attributable likely to the redeployment of the 36<sup>th</sup> Engineer Brigade.



**LOGISTICS AND TRANSPORTATION**

Soldiers serving in the logistics and transportation fields comprise 25 percent of reported fields.

<b>Motor Transport Operator (21)</b>	Supervise (truck master/dispatcher) or operate wheel vehicles ranging from sedans/High-Mobility Multipurpose Wheel Vehicles (i.e. Humvee) to the Heavy Equipment Transporter (capable of line hauling a main battle tank) to transport personnel and cargo. Many respondents indicated they possess a Commercial Driver's License (CDL).
<b>Automated Logistical Specialists (23)</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 (20)</b>	Supervise the receipt, storage, accountability, and cares for dispensing, issuing and shipping bulk or packaged petroleum, oils, and lubricants.
<b>Unit Supply Specialists (17)</b>	Supervise or perform duties involving the request, receipt, storage, issue, accountability, and preservation of individual, organizational, installation, and expendable supplies and equipment.
<b>Food Service Specialists (13)</b>	Supervise or prepares, cooks and serves food in field or garrison food service operations.
<b>Transportation Management Coordinators (5)</b>	Monitor, control, and supervise the movement of personnel, equipment, and cargo by rail, highway, and water.

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<b>Shower/Laundry and Clothing Repair Specialists (1)</b>	Supervise or performs personnel laundry and shower operations and repairs personnel clothing and light textiles.
<b>Water Treatment Specialists (3)</b>	Supervise or performs installation, operation of water purification equipment, water storage and distribution operations and activities.

### COMBAT ARMS

Given the types of units at Fort Hood (seven Brigade Combat Teams and one Fires Brigade) 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.

Soldiers in combat arms comprise 18 percent of the reported fields.

<b>Infantry (21)</b>	Member or leader who individually employs small arms/heavy anti-armor weapons in support of combat operations
<b>Armor (31)</b>	Member or leader who employs main battle tanks or cavalry fighting vehicles in combat operations, and performs reconnaissance and security.
<b>Field Artillery (16)</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 (11)</b>	Operate command/control/communications/computer information systems or the lightweight, highly mobile Avenger or medium weight Patriot Air Defense Missile systems.

### MAINTAINERS/ REPAIRERS

Soldiers that work in the field of maintenance and repair comprise 14.7 percent of the population.

<b>Aviation repairers (16)</b>	13 different enlisted specialties (less pilots and air traffic controllers) ranging from aircraft structural repairers to airframe-specific armament/electrical/avionics system repairers.
<b>Tracked Vehicle Mechanics (10)</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.
<b>Special purpose (13)</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),

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	machinists, small arms and fire control repair, power generation and special purpose equipment (such as HVAC and refrigeration systems).
<b>Wheeled Vehicle Mechanics (26)</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.

### MEDICAL

Personnel in the medical field make up 7.5% of the reported fields.

<b>Health Care Specialist (22)</b>	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.
<b>Other (16)</b>	3 Medical Laboratory Specialists, 2 Biomedical Equipment Specialists, 2 Radiology Specialists and 2 Officers whose specialty was Health Service Administration

### ENGINEERS

The information technology and communications field makes up 7% of the fields reported.

<b>Combat Engineer (23)</b>	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.
<b>Other (9)</b>	3 Bridge Crew Members, 1 Construction Equipment Operator, 1 Firefighter, 3 Technical Engineers, 1 Concrete/Asphalt Equipment Operator

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

Respondents are asked to indicate the type (or types) of post-military employment they desire. In order to standardize input for ease of analysis, the survey provides 12 broad categories 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 indicates for all respondents the top four categories of post-service employment desired are:



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### SOLDIER

1. Management:	146
2. Law Enforcement:	134
3. Administrative:	127
4. Transportation:	109 <sup>2</sup>

### SPOUSE

1. Medical	80
2. Administration	57
3. Education	49
4. Management	44

For only those respondents who are retirement eligible, the top four categories of desired post-service employment are:

1. Management:	40 responses
2. Administrative:	24 responses
3. Transportation:	24 responses
4. Education:	20 responses

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. Therefore, Management and Administration are areas of post-service employment that are consistent with their training and experience.

The anomalies in Military Occupational Specialty data may have been carried over to the types of post-service employment desired. For non-retiring Soldiers, careers in the Transportation field replaced the Computers field, again reflecting more respondents with a Transportation MOS. Fewer Combat Arms respondents likely accounted for Law Enforcement careers (traditionally at the top of the list) slipping to the number two position. For the second quarter in a row, Medical topped the list for spouse employment desired. Retiring Soldiers listed Transportation as an area for post-service employment – the first time it has been listed since 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter 2008. Again, this is most likely a function of the high volume of respondents whose MOS was transportation and logistics.

### **F. EDUCATION LEVEL OF THOSE REMAINING IN THE REGION:**

Respondents were asked to indicate their highest level of educational attainment. Forty one percent of all respondents indicated they had “Some College” or greater. Twelve percent have an Associates degree, and 11.5 percent have a Baccalaureate degree.

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<sup>2</sup> Employers desiring to hire Fort Hood veterans may post their job announcement on the ACAP website ([www.acap.army.mil](http://www.acap.army.mil)). Large employers with an employment website can post the URL on the ACAP website which will directly link to their employment website. Employers can also coordinate with the Fort Hood Transition Services Manager (Linda Christ at (254)288-6735) to arrange to recruit potential Veteran employees in person Tuesday through Thursday, and briefly address the TAP workshop (industry they represent, skills they are seeking, availability to discuss job opportunities.)

Employers can place a job posting via “Work In Texas” ([www.workintexas.com](http://www.workintexas.com)) – a statewide, internet-based job matching system through the Central Texas Workforce Center (254) 200-2020.

The Texas Veterans Services staff work closely with the Central Texas Workforce Business Services including job development, direct referrals, and military skills-civilian occupations matching. Contact Jerry Butts (Killeen: (254)200-2026) or Eugene Hall (Temple: (254)773-1607, ext. 4032) for more information.



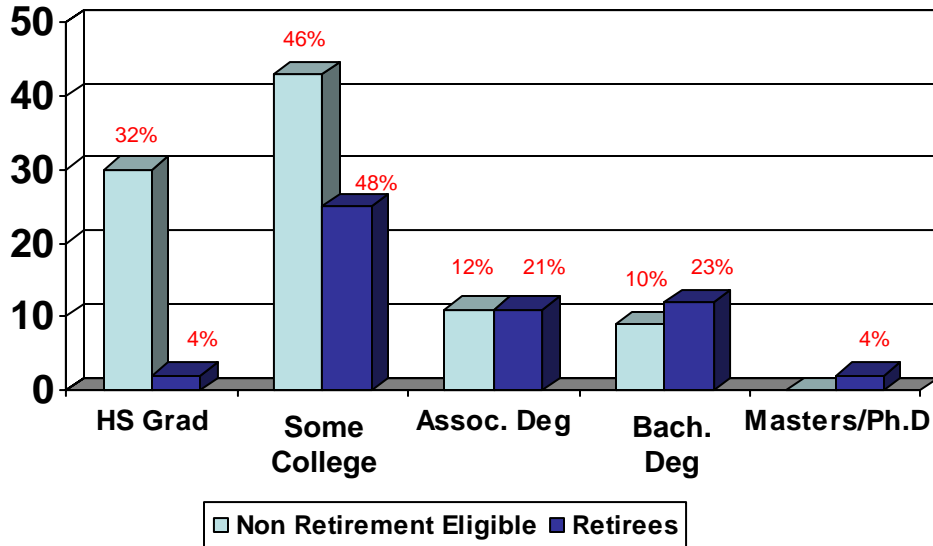
The data depicted below represents only the 145 respondents who indicated they intended to stay in the region upon completion of their service, and is separated by those eligible for retirement and those Soldiers leaving the service that are not retirement eligible.<sup>3</sup>

The data indicates that an overwhelming majority (96%) of retirement-eligible respondents who intend on remaining in the region have some post-secondary education. 48 percent list their highest education level as “Some College”, 21 percent have received their Associates degree, and 23 percent have a baccalaureate degree. 68 percent of non retirement-eligible Soldiers have post-secondary education, with 46 percent indicating they have “Some College.”

The number of retiring Soldiers remaining in the region whose highest education completed was a baccalaureate degree, exceeded 20% for the first time. This reinforces previous data that indicated separating Soldiers had a higher level of educational attainment, and bears monitoring in the future.

### HIGHEST LEVEL OF EDUCATION ATTAINED

Soldiers REMAINING in the Region



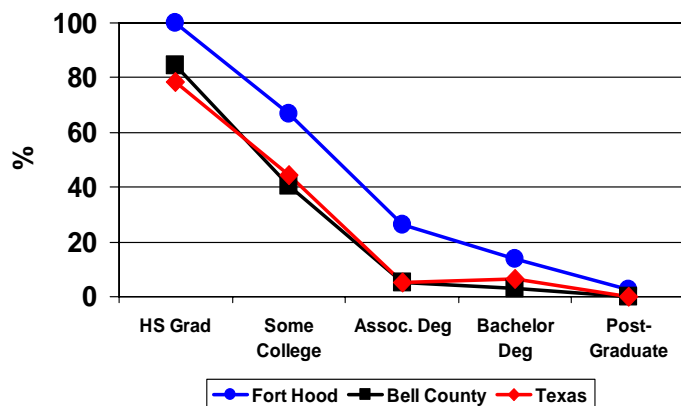
1. When the highest level of educational attained by Soldiers leaving the service at Fort Hood is expressed as a percentage of all respondents (rate of educational attainment) and compared to educational attainment for Bell County Texas and the state of Texas as a whole, the following comparison can be made<sup>4</sup>:

<sup>3</sup> Data is for 52 retirees and 93 non-retirement eligible respondents.

<sup>4</sup> Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Fact Finder, 2005-2007 Data.



**EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT COMPARISON**



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.

**G. DESIRED “QUALITY OF PLACE” IMPROVEMENTS:**

1. An important consideration in retaining a talented military Veteran workforce is how they perceive “Quality of Place” when deciding where to live upon separation from military service. Respondents were asked to indicate the improvements they would desire (their perception of the Central Texas Quality of Place) in the general areas of higher education, retail shopping, health care, entertainment, child care, or “other” that would positively affect their decision to remain in the region. 19.4 percent of respondents listed housing, followed by higher education (19.2%), entertainment (12%) and health care (11.6%). Less than 10 percent of respondents listed child care or retail shopping as Quality of Place factors they perceived needed improvement. The desire for higher education opportunities in this area consistently remains one of the top reasons that Soldiers would not remain in the area after leaving the military. While the opportunity to earn a degree from Tarleton State – Central Texas (part of the Texas A&M University System) has existed since 1998, degree offerings have been constrained. The transition to Texas A&M University – Central Texas in the Fall 2009 semester, coupled with growing opportunities for defense contractors to partner with this new university may reverse this negative perception.

2. The most frequently recurring response was “other.” The survey affords respondents the opportunity to provide additional written comments, and the most often-noted areas respondents perceive needing improvement are:

- a. more pay/better jobs (34 comments)
- b. crime rate/ traffic/congestion (17 comments)
- c. better atmosphere/ quality of life - including comments concerning (K-12) schools (10 comments)

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Note: Higher education and housing are general survey categories and both of these remained the highest percentage for this quarter as compared to the last quarter. Compared to the 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter 2008 report, housing moved from the 3<sup>rd</sup> highest percent to the highest. This could possibly tie in with the “other” comments of respondents desiring a better atmosphere and quality of life.

3. Perceptions versus reality. Specific comments separating Soldiers cite as desired improvements to the Central Texas “Quality of Place” remain consistent from previous reports. As 75 to 80 percent of Fort Hood Soldiers reside in the communities of Central Texas (98% within 10 miles of the Fort Hood main gate), the comments 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 place is about providing options, not just for current residents, but for those who will be residents in the future.” 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 Quality of Place improvements are important feedback to be considered in future planning. We will continue to monitor the responses for any significant changes in subsequent reports.

*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.*

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