



# Fort Hood Region Veterans Inventory Initiative

Quarterly Report, April - June 2014

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: 3rd Quarter, FY 2014**

(April - June 2014)

**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 recommendation 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)
- 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

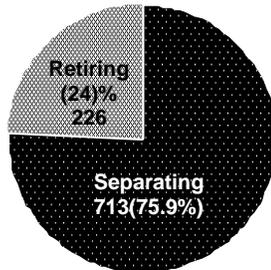
Data is collected via a voluntary ten-question survey administered during either the Transition Assistance Program (TAP) workshop or installation final clearance<sup>1</sup>. The purpose for the collection and analysis of this data is threefold:

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 3rd Quarter (April - June 2014), 939 Soldiers completing their military service responded to the survey with the demographics graphed below. The survey for the Veteran's Inventory Initiative Reports was recently modified. As a result, the following graph has grouped those Soldiers separating due to medical reasons, as well as ETS, into one group labeled Separating.

**DEMOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION**



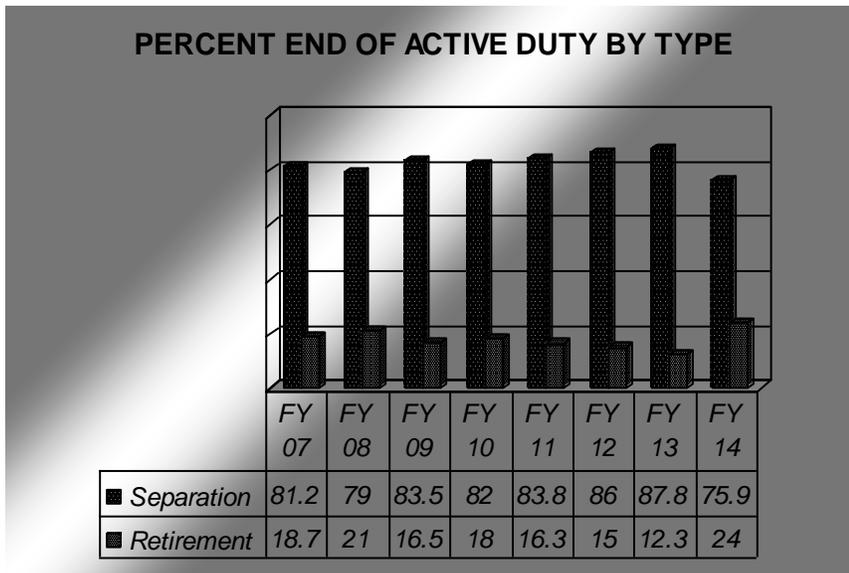
**3rd Quarter 2014**

<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.

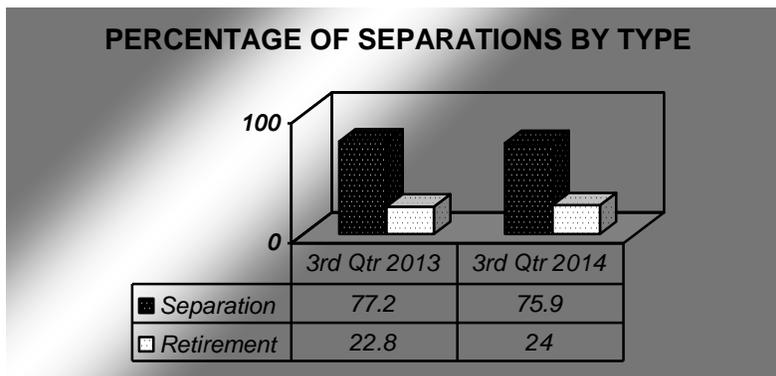
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2. The Veteran's Inventory Initiative has collected data on Soldiers separating from the service at Fort Hood since FY 2007, and reports have been based on a total of 25,306 separating Soldiers. With the implementation of Soldier-For-Life/Transition Assistance Program (replacing the Army Career and Alumni Program (ACAP)), contractors now administer the survey replacing the Texas Veterans Commission counselors. Data was not collected for 4th Quarter 2013 through 2nd Quarter 2014, and that shortfall has been corrected. The following graph compares reasons for separation from FY 2007 through 3rd Quarter 2014. The graph below shows the percent of separations by type, and due to the recent changes in the survey, the separation category includes both ETS and medical separations.



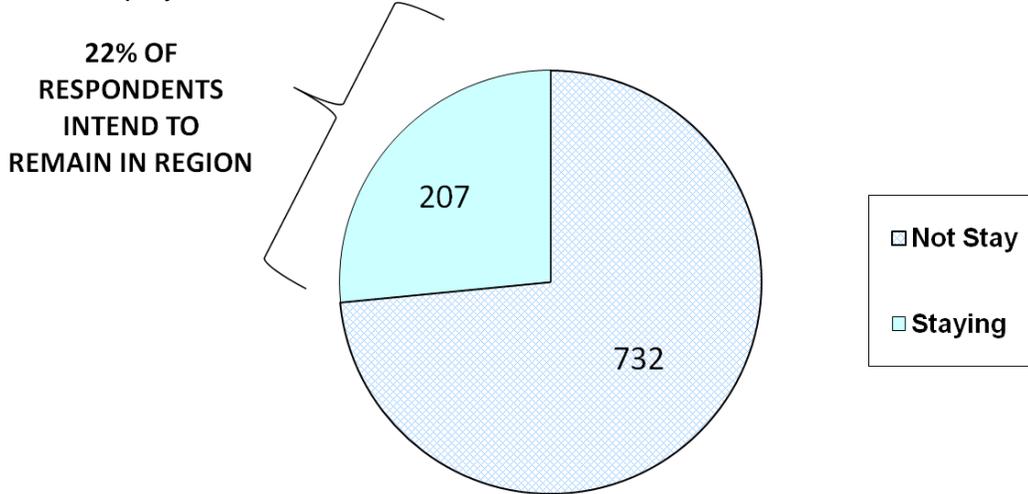
The graph below charts the results of those who responded to this new survey during the TAP seminar in 3rd quarter 2013 and 3rd quarter 2014. Due to the recent changes in the survey, the separation category includes both ETS and medical separations.



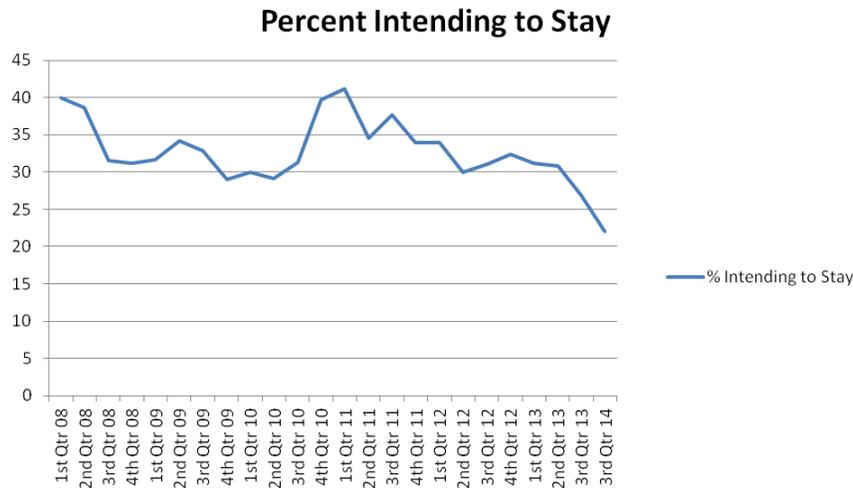


**C. INTENTIONS ON STAYING IN THE REGION:** The respondents were surveyed regarding their intentions on remaining in the region (within 30 miles of Fort Hood – generally equating to the Killeen-Temple-Fort Hood Metropolitan Statistical Area) when their service ended.

1. 207 respondents (representing 22 % of all respondents) indicated they intended to stay in the region. In addition, 321 (34.2%) of the total who responded to the survey, would do so if desirable employment were available.



2. When analyzing data of Soldiers' intentions on remaining in the Temple-Killeen-Fort Hood MSA from October 2007 to June 2014, the graph below indicates that the percent of Soldiers intending to remain in the area has consistently averaged between 29 and 41 percent. Data for this quarter fell slightly below this range, but we will continue to monitor this information.



3. Military retirees residing in the MSA: 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 nineteenth quarter in a

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row, the rate of growth for retirees in the Killeen-Temple-Fort Hood MSA increased from 12.7% 3rd quarter 2013 to 19.4% this 3rd quarter 2014. According to the Retired Army Personnel System data below, Killeen, Harker Heights, Belton, and Nolanville experienced growth rates exceeding the MSA average of 19.4% for the five year period of 2009-2014. Lampasas has had a slow steady increase in retirees in its area over the past couple of years, and the numbers now show a positive growth compared to June 2009. In an economic impact study released in Dec 2012, Texas comptroller Susan Combs reported that more than 250,000 retirees and their families remained within traveling distance of the post.

	<b>JUNE 2009</b>	<b>JUNE 2014</b>	<b>% GROWTH 2009 - 2014</b>
<b>KILLEEN</b>	8120	9993	+23.1
<b>COPPERAS COVE</b>	3028	3318	+9.6
<b>HARKER HEIGHTS</b>	1843	2358	+27.9
<b>TEMPLE</b>	1150	1304	+13.4
<b>KEMPNER</b>	884	999	+13.0
<b>BELTON</b>	826	1010	+22.3
<b>LAMPASAS</b>	356	380	+6.7
<b>GATESVILLE</b>	350	397	+13.4
<b>NOLANVILLE</b>	266	337	+26.7
<b>SALADO</b>	206	244	+18.4
<b>MSA</b>	17029	20340	+19.4

Additionally, while the national economy was continuing to experience the effects of the slowly recovering economy as a result of the recession this reporting period, the Killeen-Temple-Fort Hood MSA:

- a. The Killeen-Temple-Fort Hood MSA holds 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> 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.
- b. According to the June 2014 Texas Labor Market Review, the Killeen-Temple-Fort Hood MSA increased employment over the year by 10.3 percent, <http://killeenchamber.com/index.php/news/article/area-development-ranks-the-killeen-temple-fort-hood-msa-12th-nationally-7th>, July 2014.
- c. The Killeen-Temple-Fort Hood MSA ranked ninth in Texas, and 51st in the nation, as the best performing MSA, Milken Institute, <http://www.best-cities.org/bestcities.taf>, December 2013.
- d. The Killeen-Temple-Fort Hood MSA ranked third out of 200 large cities for five-year wages and salaries growth, and eighth in the nation for five-year job growth, Milken Institute, <http://www.best-cities.org/bestcities.taf>, December 2013.
- e. Killeen ranked 36th out of 380 MSAs (Metropolitan Statistical Areas) for Recession-Busting Cities, Area Development Magazine, May 2013.
- f. CNN Cost of Living Index confirms that the overall cost of living at Ft Hood (Killeen) provides a Soldier 6% - 14% additional purchasing power, CNN Money, April 2013.

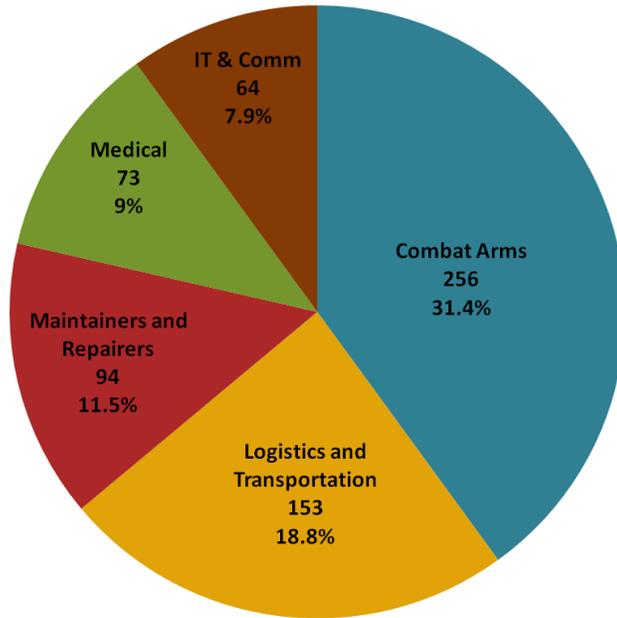
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g. The Killeen-Temple-Fort Hood MSA economy ranked fourth strongest in the state, and 13th strongest in the nation - just behind Houston, San Antonio, and Austin - according to Policom Corporation, <http://www.policom.com/2014%20MetroRank.htm>, June 2014.

In addition to these indicators of economic stability for the Killeen-Temple-Fort Hood MSA, the Texas comptroller stated in the 2012 economic report that Fort Hood's economic impact climbed to \$25.3 billion statewide which was a 150% increase in comparison to the 2008 report. Comptroller Susan Combs stated "Fort Hood is an economic engine that helps growth in Texas." The report states that Fort Hood was also indirectly responsible for 214,344 jobs throughout Texas in addition to the 68,942 jobs in the Fort Hood MSA.

**D. MILITARY OCCUPATIONAL SPECIALITIES:** Departing Soldiers represented 142 different Military Occupational Specialities. However, 78.6% (640/814 respondents) can be grouped into five general areas: Combat Arms, Maintainers/Repairers, Logistics/Transportation, Information Technology/Communications, and Medical.



**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 that far surpass those of their civilian peers.

Soldiers in combat arms comprise 31.4% of the separating population.

<b>Infantry (134)</b>	Member or leader who individually employs small arms/heavy anti-armor weapons in support of combat operations
<b>Field Artillery (57)</b>	Operate or supervise high technology cannon artillery weapons, automated tactical data systems, intelligence activities, target processing, radar operations, artillery surveying operations, or

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	meteorological observation.
<b>Armor (51)</b>	Member or leader who employs main battle tanks or cavalry fighting vehicles in combat operations, and performs reconnaissance and security.
<b>Air Defense Artillery (14)</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 18.8% of the separating population.

<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>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 (22)</b>	Supervise the receipt, storage, accountability, and cares for dispensing, issuing and shipping bulk or packaged petroleum, oils, and lubricants.
<b>Food Service Specialists (21)</b>	Supervise or prepares, cooks and serves food in field or garrison food service operations.
<b>Unit Supply Specialists (12)</b>	Supervise or perform duties involving the request, receipt, storage, issue, accountability, and preservation of individual, organizational, installation, and expendable supplies and equipment.

### MAINTAINERS/ REPAIRERS

Soldiers that work in the field of maintenance and repair comprise 11.5% of the separating population.

<b>Tracked Vehicle Mechanics (30)</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>Wheeled Vehicle Mechanics (29)</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 (16)</b>	15 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>Aviation repairers (7)</b>	5 different enlisted specialties (less pilots and air traffic controllers)

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	ranging from aircraft structural repairers to airframe-specific armament/electrical/avionics system repairers.
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### MEDICAL

Personnel in the medical field make up 9.0% of the separating population.

<b>Health Care Specialist (48)</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 (23)</b>	4 Medical Logistics Specialists, 2 Perioperative Nurses, 2 Medical Surgical Nurses, and 15 other Soldiers with various medical specialty MOSs.

### INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AND COMMUNICATIONS

The information technology and communications field makes up 7.9% of the separating population.

<b>Information Technology Specialist (15)</b>	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).
<b>Multichannel Transmission System Operator-Maintainer (13)</b>	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.
<b>Cable Systems Installer-Maintainer (5)</b>	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.
<b>Nodal Network System Operator-Maintainer (9)</b>	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.
<b>Signal Support Systems Specialist (7)</b>	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.
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**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. 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). For this 3rd Quarter report, the top five desired categories of post-military service employment were<sup>2</sup>:

**SOLDIER**

**SPOUSE**

1. Other:	76	1. Medical/Health Field:	124
2. Medical/Health:	74	2. Other:	106
3. Law Enforcement/Security:	68	3. Administrative/Office	43
4. Management/Business:	45	4. Education/Teaching:	29
5. Computers/Software:	35	5. Management/Business:	20

The anomalies in Military Occupational Specialty (MOS) data may have been carried over to the types of post-service employment desired. Soldiers with a medical-related specialty are usually considered "low density," however, 10% of respondents came from that field; it is likely that most, if not all, would desire post-service employment in the medical field. Law Enforcement/Security has always ranked as one of the top five desired career choices for post-service employment, which continues to be as well this quarter and is most likely attributed to the large number of Soldiers separating with a Combat Arms MOS. While Management/Business has been one of the top desired careers for post-service employment since 2007, it was the fourth highest desired career for this quarter. Since October 2007, the top desired careers for spouses have always included Administrative/Office, Education/Teaching, and Management/Business, and this trend continued this quarter. The Medical/Health Field has been reported as one of the top five desired careers for spouses since July 2008, and it remained the number one choice for spouses again for this quarter.

The top categories of desired post-service employment for those intending to retire from military service are:

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<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 Workplace Solutions of Central Texas (WFST) (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.

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1. Management/Business:	68 responses
2. Law Enforcement/Security:	54 responses
3. Other:	45 responses
4. Transportation/Warehouse	40 responses
5. Admin/Office:	37 responses

Management and Business, once again, remained the top desired area of employment for this 3rd quarter 2014. Law Enforcement/Security continued to remain one of the top five desired careers after retirement from the service; this may be a function of the Military Occupational Specialty data being carried over to the types of post-service employment desired.

According to a new study by Payscale.com, management consultation is at the top the list for best jobs for veterans. The following is a list of the 16 most common and well-paid occupations that veterans 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

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 and many major corporations offer "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. Orion's goal is 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. 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. The survey asks respondents if they do not intend to remain in the MSA upon leaving the service, would a job available in the



area change their response. Typically, another 26%-35% would remain in the area if a job was available which is an increase from the 18%-26% in the past years.

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

(<http://www.dol.gov/vets/vrap/Syracuse%20Business%20Case%20to%20Hire%20a%20Vet.pdf>)

It 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. The 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.

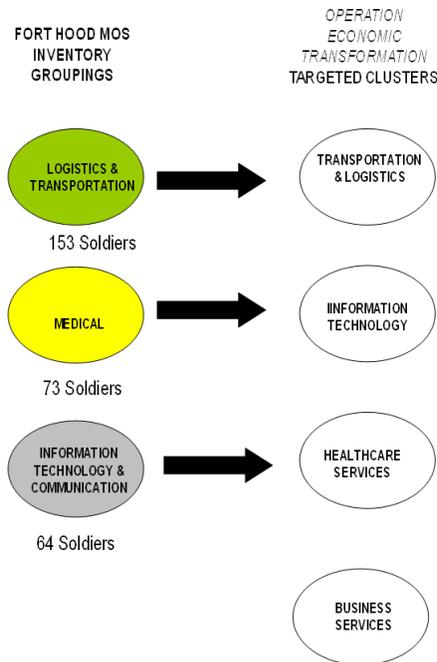
While it is understandable that jobs readily available within the area would retain many more Soldiers within the MSA upon leaving the service, the Census Bureau has confirmed that 2.4 million businesses are owned by military veterans. Veterans have many years of military experience preparing them for the rigors of running a small business. Their discipline, drive, and motivation are characteristics that make them desirable employees. The combination of self-driven veterans and an inexpensive cost of living makes the Killeen-Temple-Fort Hood MSA a desirable place to retire.

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.

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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. EDUCATION LEVEL OF THOSE REMAINING IN THE REGION:** Respondents provide their highest level of educational attainment. For this quarter, 79.2% percent of the respondents who intend to remain in the region have some level of post-secondary education:

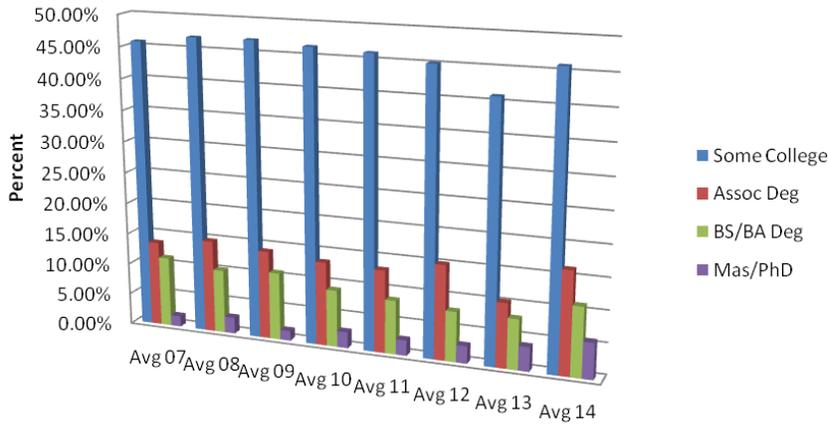
1. Some College - 45.9%
2. Associates Degree - 16.4%
3. Baccalaureate Degree - 11.1%
4. Masters Degree - 5.8%

The data from over 25,000 Soldiers separating during the last seven 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 has increased steadily from 2007 to present. It appears when comparing these results to previous reports that although the number of those with some college and an associate's degree is decreasing, the numbers of Soldiers with a bachelor's or a master's degree as their highest level of educational attainment is increasing. This indicates that many Soldiers are completing their degrees before leaving the service. This is further affirmation that those Soldiers leaving the service provide a large



amount of highly educated potential employees for the area. Many of these Soldiers have stated that they would remain in the Central Texas area if a job was available to them once the separation from the service was complete.

**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 is becoming a more favorable career choice. However, with the downsizing of troop levels, the standards of recruiting has become more stringent. Today, 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 area 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.

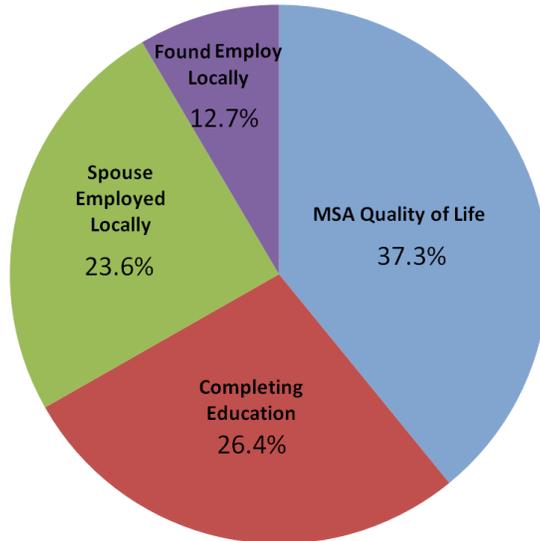
**G. REASONS FOR REMAINING IN THE MSA:**

1. In 2013, the survey was revised to gain more clarity on the Quality of Place factors cited by separating Soldiers that impact their decision to remain in Central Texas or not after their service ends. The majority of those completing the survey were staying due to the MSA quality of life, while two other large groups were staying due to completion of their education, or that a spouse was employed locally.

<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.

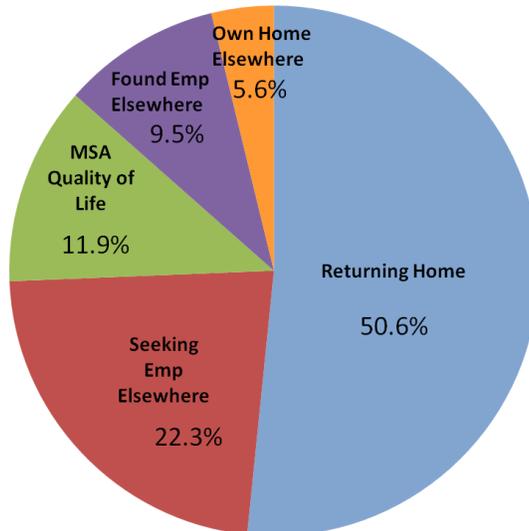


### Reasons for Remaining Inside the MSA 3rd Quarter 2014



2. The graph below addresses the reasons for those service members not staying in the MSA after separation. The majority of those living outside of the MSA after separation was mainly due to wanting to return to their home of record, and the second largest group stated that seeking employment elsewhere was their primary reason.

### Reasons for Living Outside of the MSA 3rd Quarter 2014





Perceptions versus reality. As 75 to 80 percent of Fort Hood Soldiers reside on-post or 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." Quality of place within the MSA is important to retaining Soldiers in the area after separating, and as seen in the previous graph, acquiring a desired job locally is just as important as well. 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. We will continue to monitor the responses for any significant changes in subsequent reports.

With the recent change in the survey, the data indicates that employment for the spouse, completing education for Soldier or spouse, and the quality of life in Central Texas are the main reasons that Soldiers and their families remain in the Central Texas area at the end of their service. 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. For those not staying in the Central Texas MSA at the end of their service, the top three reasons were that Soldiers were returning to their home of record, seeking employment elsewhere, or the perception of an unfavorable quality of life in the area. 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. As stated before, desirable employment in the MSA will be a strong point to retain the Soldier and their family in the MSA. And while the quality of life is affected greatly by perception, bringing in larger industry and providing those employment opportunities is one strong way to make the quality of life in the MSA more desirable.

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, Workforce Solutions of Central Texas, for the design of the report cover and logo; and to Mr. Gerry Fluharty, Workforce Solutions of Central Texas, who compiles the data for these reports.***