



Fort Cavazos Region Veterans Inventory Initiative

Quarterly Report, October-December 2023

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 Cavazos, Texas.



Quarterly Report: 1st Quarter, FY 2024
(October-December 2023)

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 Cavazos 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 Cavazos regional “Quality of Place”:

- Fort Cavazos 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

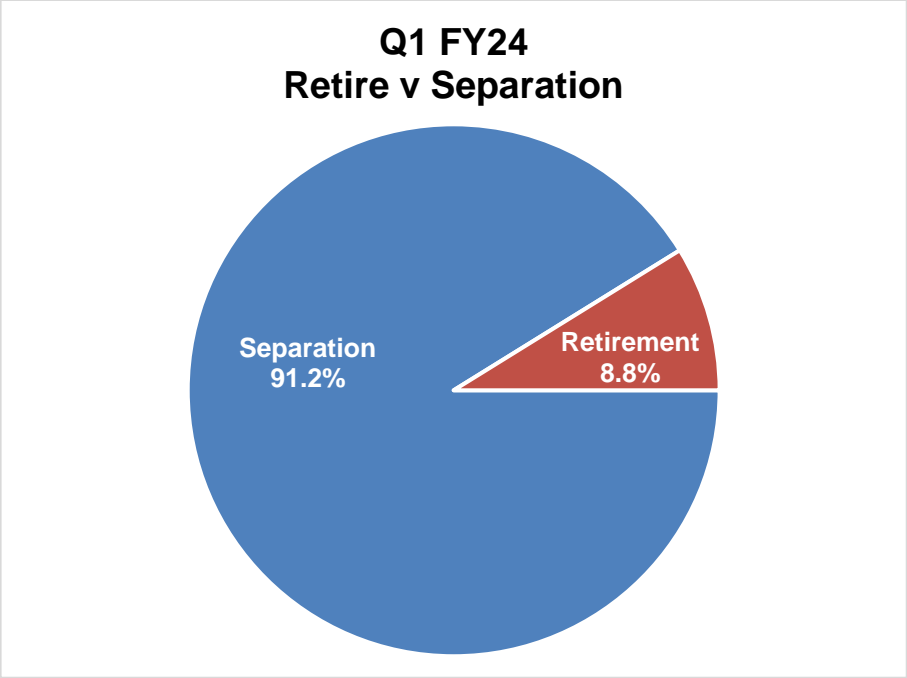
Data is collected via a voluntary digital ten-question survey administered during either the Soldier for Life - Transition Assistance Program (SFL-TAP) workshop or installation final clearance¹. The purpose for the collection and analysis of this data is threefold:

1. Develop and retain the region’s skilled and motivated Military Veteran Workforce;
2. Foster innovation and entrepreneurship; retain existing businesses, and attract new business to the region; and
3. Align the efforts of the participating agencies to enhance options for current and future/potential residents.

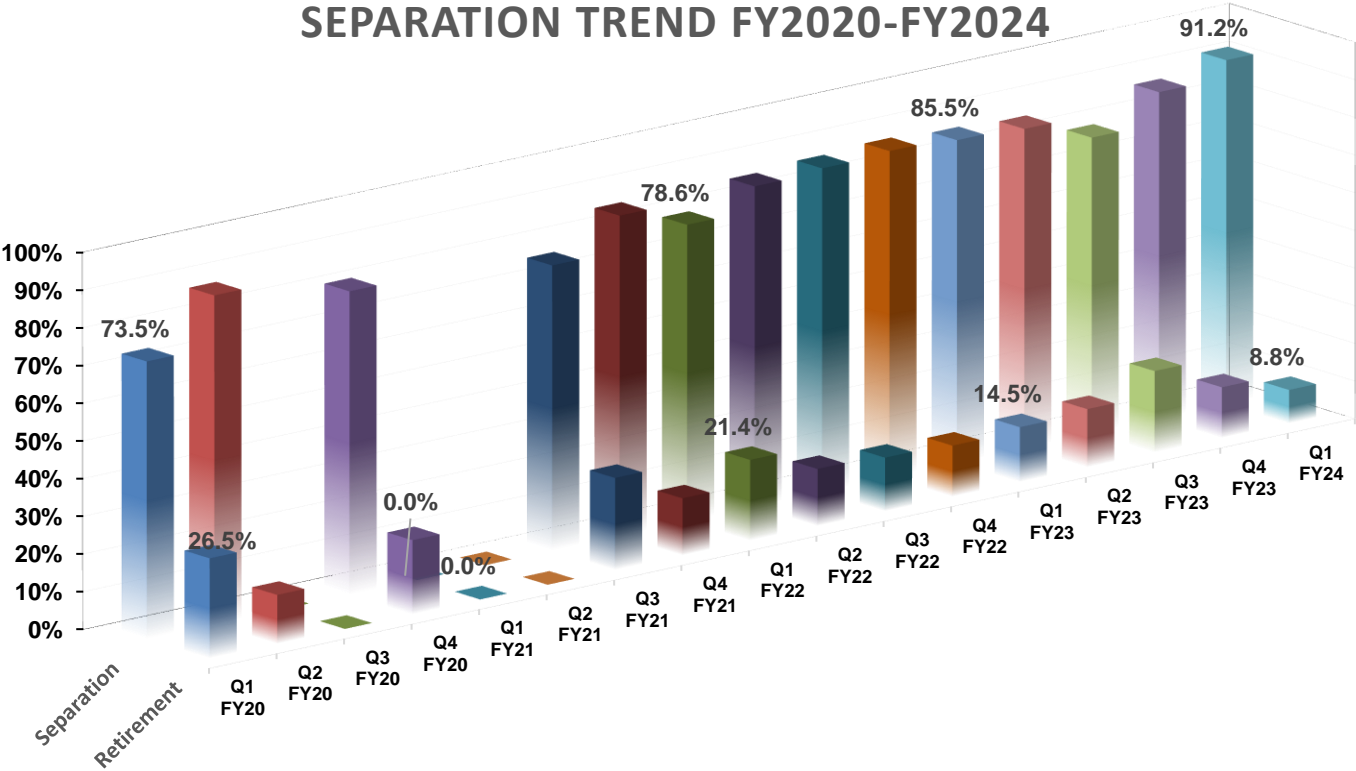
B. DEMOGRAPHICS

1. For the 1st Quarter FY 2024 (October-December 2023), 544 Soldiers completing their military service responded to the survey with the demographics graphed below. This number indicates a return to normal response rates comparable to pre-COVID Pandemic rates. This quarter, 48 of 544 (8.8%) transitioning soldiers are retiring with the remainder separating from service as seen in the chart below.

¹ 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.



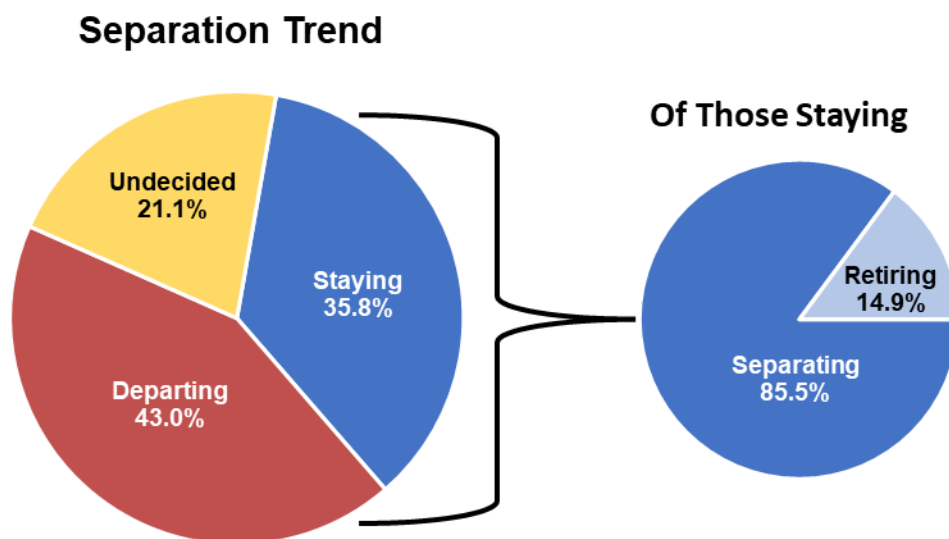
2. The Veterans Inventory Initiative has collected data on Soldiers separating from the service at Fort Cavazos since FY 2007 and reports have been based on responses from a total of 50,176 separating and retiring Soldiers. The amount of those separating from the service



during the timeframe of October 2020 through December 2023 has fluctuated between 74%-91%, while the amount retiring has fluctuated between 9%-26%. Due to the COVID 19 pandemic, data was not available for 3rd QTR FY20, 1st QTR FY21, and 2nd QTR FY21.

C. INTENTION TO STAY IN THE REGION: The respondents were surveyed regarding their intentions on remaining in the region (within 30 miles of Fort Cavazos – generally equating to the Killeen-Temple-Fort Cavazos Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) when their service ended. For this quarter, we received a total of 544 respondents in the following categories.

1. 115 of 544 respondents representing (18%) are listed as undecided.
2. 195 of 544 respondents representing (38.5%) indicated they intended to stay in the region. Of those staying in Central Texas, 29 of 195 (14.9%) of the respondents are Retirees.
3. 234 of 544 respondents representing (43.5%) indicated they would not stay in the region.



4. The 35.8% (195 out of 544) of those staying in the MSA represent two demographics: those retiring (14.9%) and those separating (85.1%). The second chart above represents the percentages of those separating and those retiring since each group represent a different demographic seeking employment in the MSA.

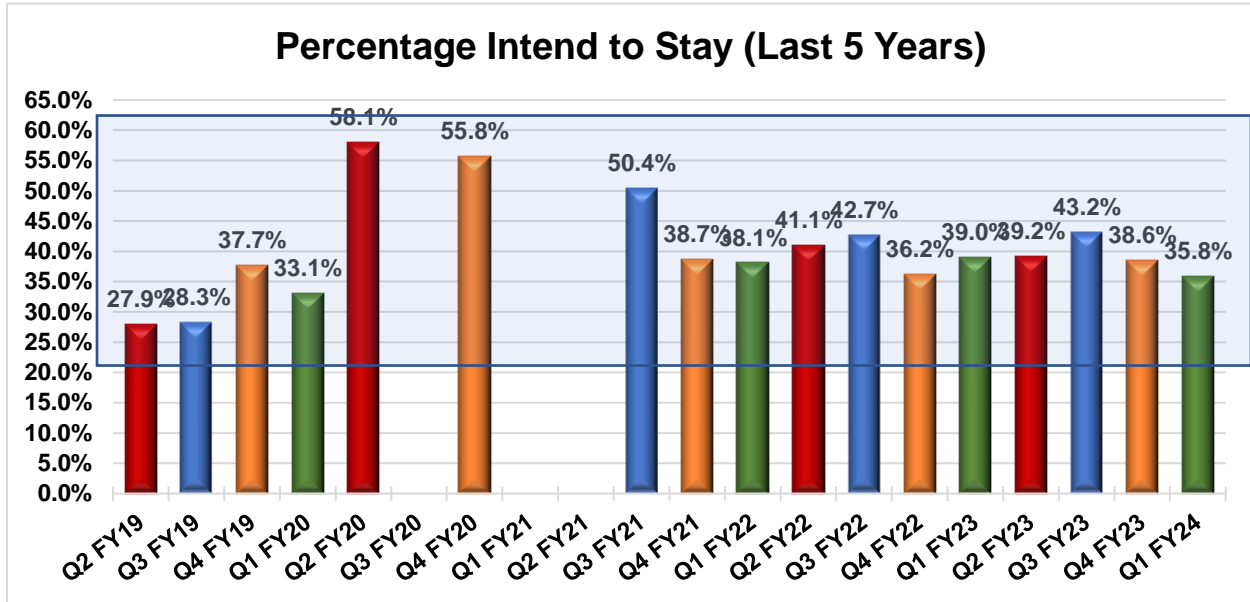
5. The survey also asks respondents that do not intend to remain and those undecided if a job available in the area would change their response. Of those two categories, 46.7% (163 of 349) indicated they would stay in the area if desirable employment were available. This represents an untapped source of talent.

D. DEMOGRAPHICS OF THOSE INTENDING TO STAY IN THE REGION:

1. When analyzing data of Soldiers' intentions on remaining in the Killeen-Temple-Fort Cavazos MSA over the last five years, the graph below indicates that the historical percentage of Soldiers intending to remain in the area averaged 40.2% ranging between 27.9% and 58.1%. With the onset of COVID we saw an increase in the percentage remaining in the MSA for 2nd QTR FY20 (58.1%) and 4th QTR FY20 (55.8%). These two spikes are likely a combination of impacts from the COVID 19 pandemic and a decreased number of surveys processed. However, the pre-COVID average is 30.1% and the post-COVID average is 42.8% for those remaining indicating an increase. Time will tell if this increase is an enduring change. It is also

important to note that the numbers, according to the Retired Army Personnel System, show a continual increase in **retirees** remaining in the region throughout the past five years.

2. This quarter (FY24 1st QTR) 35.8% (195 of 544) of our separating service members are deciding to call Central Texas home. Of the reasons for staying, the #1 reason this quarter was the Central Texas quality of life. The reasons for staying are detailed later in this report.



3. 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 Belton, Gatesville, Harker Heights, Nolanville, Salado, and Temple experienced retiree growth rates larger than the MSA overall growth of 91.6% for the period December 2007 to August 2023.

Entity	December 2007	August 2023	% GROWTH 2007 – 2023
KILLEEN	7,569	14,244	88.2%
COPPERAS COVE	3,001	4,455	48.5%
HARKER HEIGHTS	1,699	3,630	113.7%
TEMPLE	1,058	2,520	138.2%
KEMPNER	845	1,474	74.4%
BELTON	792	2,010	153.8%
LAMPASAS	342	559	63.5%
GATESVILLE	327	681	108.3%
NOLANVILLE	224	680	203.6%
SALADO	202	543	168.8%
FLORENCE	62	95	53.2%
MSA Total	16,121	30,891	91.6%
Other	66,734	126,480	89.5%

4. In an economic impact study released in June of 2022, Texas Comptroller Glenn Hegar reported that more than 421,286 retirees, survivors, and their families remained within traveling distance of Fort Cavazos. While this number usually continues to grow each quarter with 70-90% of all local retirees remaining in the region and many others moving into the region due to Quality-of-Life factors, this quarter the number was 60.4% of all retirees who completed the voluntary survey stated they planned to remain in the local area. Current estimates now show over 421,286 people are supported by Fort Cavazos locally and outside the MSA. Below are some key data points to provide additional insights into the growth rates locally:

a. In February 2024, a SmartAsset study ranked Killeen #4 out of the 345 largest cities based on proportional high-income growth for the period 2021-2022 with high-income defined as household earnings of \$200,000 or more. <https://austin.culturemap.com/news/city-life/high-income-killeen-round-rock/>

b. In January 2024, a GoBankingRates.com study ranked Killeen as the most affordable city in the nation analyzing affordability and growth rates of the 200 largest cities in the US. The study considered one-year and five-year population changes, median household incomes, average rent, average home values, and overall cost of living. <https://www.gobankingrates.com/investing/real-estate/the-most-affordable-fastest-growing-cities-in-america/>

c. In November 2023, Smart Asset found that Killeen was a big draw for millennials. According to a new survey, by percentage Killeen was the eighth-most-moved-to city in the nation in 2022 among millennials according to a Smart Asset study that defined millennials as adults ages 24 to 44. The rankings are by percentage of the city's population and not to gross numbers. Smart Asset - <https://smartasset.com/data-studies/where-millennials-moved-2023> SANEWS - <https://www.expressnews.com/news/article/millennials-moving-killeen-austin-18508891.php>

d. In August 2023, SmartAsset ranked Killeen as the #1 location for first-time homebuyers out of 185 metropolitan areas across the US. Killeen offered the best combination of affordability, available inventory, growth potential, and relaxed competition. https://kdhnews.com/business/study-ranks-killeen-market-as-the-best-place-for-first-time-homebuyers/article_58f1039c-37df-11ee-8830-8b76cf38ab45.html in 11 August 2023 KDH Edition.

e. In January 2023, GoBankingRates ranked Killeen #1 in the US when comparing affordability and growth rates of the 200 largest cities in the US. The study considered one-year and five-year population changes, median household incomes, average rent, average home values, and overall cost of living. https://kdhnews.com/news/local/study-killeen-ranks-as-the-most-affordable-fast-growing-city-in-nation/article_d6eb32ee-b64d-11ee-ab4d-ef333f3dec63.html

f. In July 2023, the City of Killeen was ranked #2 for the lowest cost of living in Texas according to a study by Texas Real Estate Source. Ranking is based on several factors including city annual property tax, utilities, home price, transportation, clothing, groceries, and leisure costs. https://kdhnews.com/news/killeen-ranks-second-in-state-for-lowest-cost-of-living/article_7b6cf888-1dd4-11ee-8470-e36489b84a80.html in 8 July 2023 KDH edition.

g. Texas A&M-Central Texas is in the Top 100 of Online Masters Programs according to the Killeen Daily Herald. Texas A&M University-Central Texas received five awards for its online graduate programs from the U.S. News and World Report rankings for the best online

programs. https://kdhnews.com/news/education/a-m-central-texas-recognized-for-masters-programs/article_16ecbf5a-37d8-11ea-ae48-8f18eb44f4aa.html in January 2019

h. Central Texas College designated a Top 10 Military Friendly School by Victory based on a survey of academic results of over 1800 schools which ranked CTC as the #6 Community College in the nation. https://kdhnews.com/copperas_cove_herald/ctc-named-a-top-military-friendly-school/article_21231d28-a0c4-11ec-8074-2355915fcb92.html in May 2022.

i. Killeen ranked number #101 out of the top 125 metro areas to live based on the U.S. News and World Reports study, “125 Best Places to Live in the USA.” The study compared 125 metro areas in the U.S. based on quality of life and the job markets of each area, as well as value and desire to live in the area, <https://patch.com/texas/across-tx/u-s-news-where-killeen-ranks-best-places-live> in April 2019.

j. According to Military Times, Killeen ranked 21 out of 234 medium-sized cities as “Best for Vets: Places to Live 2019. Three categories were used to compare all of the locations: 1) Veteran and military culture and services; 2) economic indicators; and 3) livability factors such as crime, health, school quality, and traffic, <https://www.militarytimes.com/transition/news/2018/09/10/best-for-vets-places-to-live-2019/> in September 2018.

k. According to CNN Money, the City of Killeen has nearly closed the home ownership gap between black and white resident homeowners with only a 14.5% difference. This makes Killeen the lowest racial homeownership gap in the country, and the area supports integration that many of the larger cities lack https://money.cnn.com/2018/04/17/news/economy/killeen-texas-homeownership/index.html?section=money_news_economy&utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=feed&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+rss%2Fmoney_news_economy+%28CNMoney%3A+Economy+News%29 in April 2018.

l. According to the Texas Association of Realtors, Bell County ranked eighth out of ten for the total number of residents coming from out of state. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, this is the fourth straight year for an increase in residents moving to Texas from out of state, https://kdhnews.com/news/local/report-bell-county-among-top-destinations-for-new-texas-residents/article_7d7b52b2-0fa9-11e8-823c-67e0a141d1d4.html in February 2018.

m. The Killeen unemployment rate was 4.6% compared with the Texas unemployment rate of 4.0%, <https://www.deptofnumbers.com/unemployment/texas/killeen/> in May 2023.

n. Killeen ranked 7 out of 10 in the Value Index according to the U.S. News and World Report Best Places to Live study. Killeen’s cost of living is lower than the national average of other large Texas metro areas with median home values and median monthly rental expenses. Because of this, Killeen residents are able to stretch their dollar further than residents of other major metro areas, and have easy access to the larger more expensive areas like Dallas-Fort Worth, Austin, and Houston, <https://realestate.usnews.com/places/texas/killeen> in February 2017.

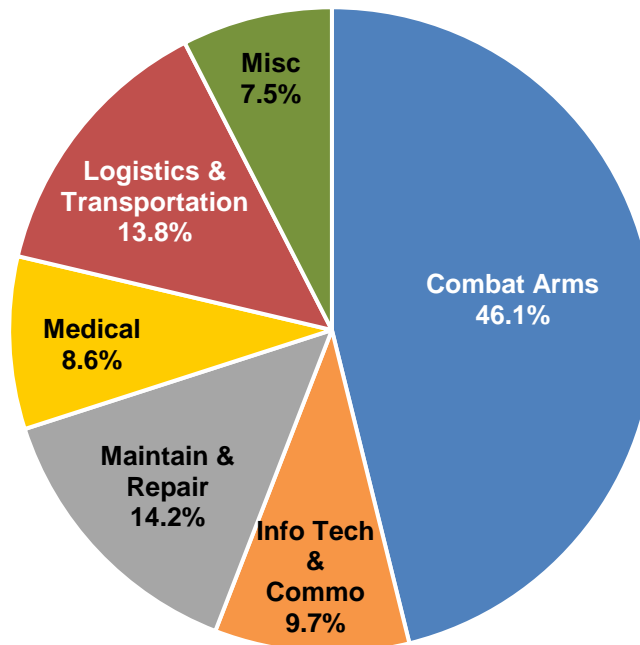
o. The American Defense Communities (ADC) designated Killeen/Fort Cavazos as one of the eight “Great American Defense Communities” across the United States for providing continuous support to its service members and their military families,

<http://www.hrmffa.org/images/Hampton-Roads-VA-GADC-2017-press-release.pdf> in January 2017.

p. In addition to these indicators of economic stability for the Killeen-Temple-Fort Cavazos MSA, the Texas Comptroller also stated in the 2022 economic report that Fort Cavazos's economic impact was \$28.9 billion statewide. Comptroller Glenn Hegar stated "Fort Cavazos is an economic engine that helps growth in Texas." The report states that Fort Cavazos is responsible for 55,374 direct jobs and total employment of 160,933 jobs throughout Texas.

E. MILITARY OCCUPATIONAL SPECIALITIES: Departing Soldiers represent over 100 different Military Occupational Specialties (MOS). 100% of the 544 responses to MOS question recorded) can be grouped into six (6) general areas: Combat Arms (46.1%), Medical (8.6%), Logistics and Transportation (13.8%), Maintainers/Repairers (14.2%), Information Technology and Communication (9.7%). The other represented series of job classifications are quantified within the 'Miscellaneous' category representing 7.5% of Transitioning soldiers.

FY24 Q1 MOS Categories



COMBAT ARMS

1. Traditionally, Combat Arms has been the largest group. As operations have ended in Afghanistan and forces reduced in Iraq-Syria, we have seen an increase in operational deployments to Europe and other locations in response to world events. Many transitioning Soldiers will not be combat veterans of the Iraq/Afghanistan campaigns but will have deployed for non-combat operations. Therefore, in addition to the skills listed below, these Soldiers will likely have a broad leadership skillset and staff planning skills (soft skills) that would be a tremendous asset to any organization.

2. Soldiers in combat arms comprise 46.1% (251/544) of the 1st QTR FY24 transitioning population. The top seven categories are shown below along with officers and warrant officer transitions.

Infantry (89)	Member or leader who employs small arms/heavy anti-armor weapons in support of combat operations. Operates both mounted and dismounted to close with and destroy the enemy. Employs, operates, and maintains assigned weapons, equipment, and personnel.
Combat Engineer (30)	Member or leader who supervises or assists traveling over rough terrain in combat situations. The combat engineer needs to be an expert in mobility, counter-mobility, survival, and general engineering. Employs, operates, and maintains assigned weapons, equipment, and personnel. Duties may include construction or repair to build bridges, roads, airfields or other facilities.
Field Artillery (24)	Member or leader who employs indirect fire artillery and rocket systems. Loads and fires artillery and rocket systems to include setting fuses and charges on a variety of munitions, including high explosive artillery rounds, laser-guided projectiles, mines, and rocket assisted projectiles. Employs, operates, and maintains assigned weapons, equipment, and personnel.
Aviation (36)	Member or leader who operates, employs, and maintains Army manned/unmanned aircraft to support operations. Includes a range of positions from flight operations, aircraft maintenance, air traffic control, and others. Employs, operates, and maintains assigned weapons, equipment, and personnel.
Cavalry Scout (27)	Member or leader who performs reconnaissance, security, and other combat operations to gather information about enemy positions, equipment, personnel, and activities. Employs, operates, and maintains assigned weapons, equipment, and personnel.
Air Defense (14)	Member or leader who operates and employs surface-to-air weapons and detection systems to defeat threats including manned/unmanned aircraft, rockets, missiles, and other threats while protecting friendly personnel, equipment, and critical assets. Employs, operates, and maintains assigned weapons, equipment, and personnel.
Armored Crewmember (18)	Member or leader who operates and employs armored tanks and assault vehicles to rapidly overwhelm and destroy enemy personnel, equipment, and positions. Employs, operates, and maintains assigned weapons, equipment, and personnel.
Warrant Officers (6)	Warrant Officers are the technical and subject matter experts in their respective field. Warrant Officers this quarter included: UH-60M Pilot (3), AH-64 Pilot (2), and Field Artillery Targeting Technician (1).
Officers (7)	Leaders who plan, organize, and lead troops and activities in military operations. Manages enlisted personnel and equipment. Commands units to accomplish assigned objectives. Officers this quarter included: Engineer (1), Field Artillery (2), Aviation (2), and Armor (2).

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AND COMMUNICATIONS

1. This group includes not only traditional information technology and communications skills but also includes Soldiers in the military intelligence field because of their data collection, analysis, and dissemination skills.

2. Soldiers that work in the Information Technology and Communications field comprise 9.7% (53/544) of the 1st QTR FY24 transitioning population. The top seven categories are shown below along with officer and warrant officer transitions.

Information Technology Specialist (10)	Member or leader who is responsible for maintaining, processing, and troubleshooting military computer systems and operations. Responsible for highly sensitive information and possesses technical skills and aptitude for programming and computer languages.
Multichannel Transmission Communications (5)	Member or leader who installs repairs, and operates radio, satellite, and multichannel transmissions, security devices, and power generators to ensure reliable and timely communications. Analyzes systems and diagnostics to isolate faults and ensure continuous communications.
Signal Support System Specialist (6)	Signal support systems specialists are responsible for battlefield signal support systems and terminal devices. Signal support specialists are part of the Army Signal Corps (USASC), which handles communications and information systems support for the combined armed forces.
Nodal Network Communications (4)	Member or leader responsible for supervising, installing, operating, and performing maintenance on Internet Protocol-based high-speed electronic communication systems; working with integrated network control centers; performing network management functions; and maintaining communications security with network communication operations.
Intelligence Analyst (8)	Member or leader who uses information derived from all intelligence disciplines to determine changes in enemy capabilities, vulnerabilities, and probable courses of action. Analyzes, assesses, processes, and distributes intelligence information.
Signal Intelligence Analyst (3)	Member or leader who examines and analyzes foreign communications and activity to find intelligence. Produces strategic and tactical reports based on analysis. Utilizes surveillance equipment to identify, track, and analyze a target's operational patterns to determine adversary plans and intentions.
Human Intelligence Collector (3)	Member or leader responsible for the collection of pertinent enemy and battle information from people. Trained to debrief and interrogate human intelligence sources, analyze and prepare intelligence reports, and screen human intelligence sources and documents to provide better understanding of adversaries.

Miscellaneous (11)	Other military skills in this area transitioning this quarter are: Electronic Spectrum Manager (1), Satellite Communications Operator (2), Telecommunications Chief (2), Geospatial Intelligence Analyst (2), Counter Intelligence Agent (1), Cryptologic Linguist (1), and Military Intelligence Integrator (2).
Warrant Officers (1)	Warrant Officers are the technical and subject matter experts in their respective field. Warrant Officers this quarter included: Information Protection Technician (1).
Officers (2)	Leaders who plan, organize, and lead troops and activities in military operations. Manages enlisted personnel and equipment. Commands units to accomplish assigned objectives. Officers this quarter included: All Source Military Intelligence Officers (2).

MAINTAINERS/ REPAIRERS

1. This group is comprised of Soldiers who maintain a variety of military equipment including weapons systems, vehicles, generators, specialty equipment, communications, and other types to ensure the operational capability of the equipment.

2. Soldiers that work in the field of Maintenance/Repair comprise 14.2% (77/544) of 1st QTR FY24 transitioning population. The top six categories are shown below along with officers and warrant officer transitions.

Wheeled Vehicle Mechanics (29)	Member or leader responsible to supervise and perform maintenance and recovery operations on light and heavy wheeled vehicles, associated trailers, material handling equipment, and select armored vehicles. Inspects, services, maintains, repairs, and replaces automotive systems subsystems including electrical systems.
Power-Generation Specialist (7)	Member or leader responsible to supervise and perform maintenance and repairs on power generation equipment, internal combustion engines, and associated equipment in mobile and stationary power plants.
M1 Abrams Tank System Maintainer (5)	Member or leader responsible for maintenance on the suspension, steering, hydraulic, auxiliary power, fire suppression, and gas systems of M1 Abrams tanks. Will diagnose and troubleshoot any malfunctions.
Small Arms/Artillery Weapons Repairer (6)	Member or leader responsible for maintenance and repairs to keep a wide array of weapons systems from small arms to field artillery to large ballistic missiles operational.
Bradley Fighting Vehicle System Maintainer (6)	Member or leader responsible for maintenance and repairs on the range of Bradley fighting vehicles including anti-aircraft and similar systems. Maintains the fire control system, engines, suspension, steering, and controls.

Utilities Equipment Repairer (6)	Member or leader responsible to supervise and perform maintenance on vital utilities equipment and special purpose support systems including air conditioners and refrigeration units,
Senior Maintenance Supervisor (6)	Leader who supervises, plans, coordinates, and directs the maintenance of all wheeled, tracked, armament, power generation, and utility equipment.
Miscellaneous (11)	Soldiers with various maintenance MOS including: Allied Trade Specialist (3), Track Vehicle Repair (1), Quartermaster & Chemical Equipment Repair (1), Construction Equipment Repair (1), Artillery Mechanic (2), Stryker Systems Maintainer, (2), and Computer & Detection Systems Repairer (1).
Officers (1)	Leaders who plan, organize, and lead troops and activities in military maintenance operations. Manages enlisted personnel and equipment. Commands units to accomplish assigned objectives. Officers this quarter included: Maintenance & Munitions Materiel Officer (1).

MEDICAL

1. This group provides preventive, routine, and emergency medical treatment, limited primary care & health protection & evacuation from a point of injury or illness. Includes select types of specialty care.

2. Personnel in this group make up 8.6% (47/544) of 1st QTR FY24 transitioning population. The top five categories are shown below along with officers and warrant officer transitions.

Combat Medic (29)	Member or leader who provides 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. Serves as a first responder and triages illnesses and injuries. Trains other Soldiers in lifesaver/first responder courses and provides care on base while not deployed.
Practical Nursing Specialist (3)	Member or leader responsible for performing preventive, therapeutic, and emergency nursing care under the supervision of a physician, registered nurse, or non-commissioned officer.
Medical Logistical Specialist (3)	Member or leader responsible for receiving, storing, and issuing medical supplies and equipment. Budgets for, orders, and inventories new supplies and equipment. Performs quality control checks.
Radiology Specialist (2)	Member or leader who operates X-rays and other medical imaging equipment to diagnose and treat injuries and diseases. Responsible for administering tests for all different types of imaging, such as digestive respiratory, vascular, nervous system, and prenatal.

Miscellaneous (4)	Soldiers with various medical specialty MOS including: Dental Specialist (1), Patient Admin Specialist (1), Medical Laboratory Specialist (1), and Eye Specialist (1).
Officers (6)	Leaders who plan, organize, and lead troops and activities in military operations. May provide general and specialty medical care. Medical Officers this quarter included: Dermatologist (1), Pharmacist (1), Optometrist (1), Health Services Administrator (2), and Health Services Plans, Operations, & Training (1).

LOGISTICS AND TRANSPORTATION

1. Logistics & Transportation is frequently the second largest transitioning group. This group plans, coordinates, and sustains military units and operations with equipment, supplies, ordnance, while providing Soldiers with food, water, ammunition, petroleum, repair parts and other services.

2. Personnel in this group, make up 13.8% (75/544) of 1st QTR FY24 transitioning population. The top five categories are shown below along with officers and warrant officer transitions.

Motor Transport Operators (20)	Member or leader who supervise and operate wheeled vehicles over all types of terrain to safely transport cargo, troops, and provide advanced mobility on all missions. Manages loading, unloading, and distribution.
Petroleum Supply Specialist (14)	Member or leader who supervise and manage the reception, storage, and shipping of bulk or packaged petroleum-based products. Performs quality assurance, dispenses and distributes petroleum products for vehicles, aircraft, and ancillary equipment.
Automated Logistical Specialist (12)	Member or leader responsible for supervising and performing accountability management or warehouse functions to maintain equipment records and parts. perform maintenance management and warehouse functions in order to maintain equipment records. Responsible for the quality and accuracy of performance, cost, and parts data through improved data management.
Unit Supply Specialist (8)	Member or leader primarily responsible for supervising or performing tasks involving the general upkeep and maintenance of all Army supplies and equipment. Receives, inspects, inventories, loads and unloads, stores, issues, and delivers all supplies and equipment. Secures and controls weapons and ammunition in security areas.
Food Service Specialist (8)	Member or leader primarily responsible for preparing and serving food in field or garrison operations as well as ordering, inspecting food supplies, and keeping kitchen facilities & equipment safe and sanitary.
Miscellaneous (12)	Soldiers with various Transportation or Logistics fields including: Cargo Specialist (1), Transportation Management Coordinator (2), Ammunition Specialist (3), Explosive Ordnance Disposal Specialist (2), Shower, Laundry, & Clothing Specialist (2), and Water Treatment Specialist (2).

Officers (1)	Leaders who plan, organize, and lead troops and activities in military operations. Manages enlisted personnel and equipment. Commands units to accomplish assigned objectives. Officers this quarter included: Quartermaster.
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MISCELLANEOUS

1. The Miscellaneous group includes others not in one of the broader categories above or a few who failed to indicate their specialty. They are traditionally lower density military occupation specialties Personnel in this category provide unique functions and represent 7.5% (41/544) of the 1st QTR FY24 transitioning population.

Chemical, Biological, Radiological, & Nuclear Specialist (9)	Member or leader who protects against the threat of CBRN weapons of mass destruction and decontaminates hazardous material spills or accidents. Employs advanced equipment and coordinates defense systems against CBRN weapons.
Military Police (8)	Member or leader who protects lives and property on Army installations by enforcing military laws and regulations, traffic control, crime preventing, and emergency response. Conducts force protection, anti-terrorism, area security, police intelligence, corrections, and includes Military Working Dog handlers.
Human Resources Specialist (5)	Member or leader who performs and supervises specific human resources functions in a personnel office at various organizational levels.
Financial Management Specialist (1)	Member or leader who is responsible for financial management duties such as budgeting, disbursing and accounting for government funds.
Miscellaneous (18)	Soldiers with various specialty MOSs including Equal Opportunity Specialist (1), Paralegal Specialist (1), Internment/Resettlement Specialist (1), Religious Affairs Specialist (1), Recruiter (2), Career Counselor (2) and No MOS provided (10).
Warrant Officers (0)	Warrant Officers are the technical and subject matter experts in their respective field. Warrant Officers this quarter included: none.
Officers (0)	Leaders who plan, organize, and lead troops and activities in military operations. Manages enlisted personnel and equipment. Commands units to accomplish assigned objectives. Officers this quarter included: none.

F. DESIRED POST- MILITARY SERVICE EMPLOYMENT:

1. 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. 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 1st QTR FY24 report, of those who did respond to this question (544 Soldiers), the top five desired categories of post-military service employment were²: For spouse, 246 responded to the question with their top six desired categories.

SOLDIER

1. Skilled Trade: 149
2. Information Technology: 118
3. Business/Professional Services: 95
4. Transports/Distribution/Logistics: 94
5. Medical/Healthcare: 87
6. Construction & Engineering: 83

SPOUSE

1. Medical/Healthcare: 84
2. Other: 64
3. Management/Business: 39
4. Education/Training: 37
5. Public Safety: 24
6. Information Technology: 22

2. Employment: The Labor Market & Career Information Department (LMCI) of the Texas Workforce Commission provides a monthly snapshot of the area economy within the Texas labor market using statistics from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. This is broken down by industry profiles, and graphs the top ten groups consisting of seventeen different industries.

a. This list can be compared to the Veteran's Inventory Initiative list of top desired employment after the service. The following list indicates the top ten industry profiles for the Killeen-Temple MSA according to the monthly Texas Labor Market Information - <https://texaslmi.com/EconomicProfiles/MSAProfiles> for more info.

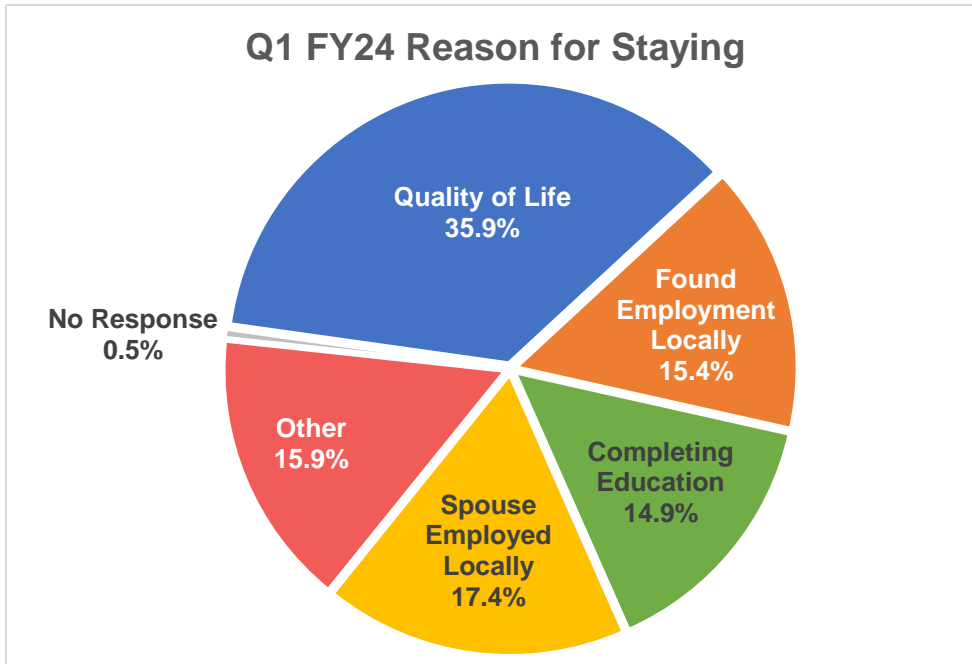
b. For comparison, the similar Veteran's Inventory Initiative categories are placed in parentheses. This list can be compared to the responses above for Soldiers' top desires for employment when retiring from their service in the military. We will continue to monitor and compare these reports in the future.

G. REASONS FOR REMAINING IN THE MSA:

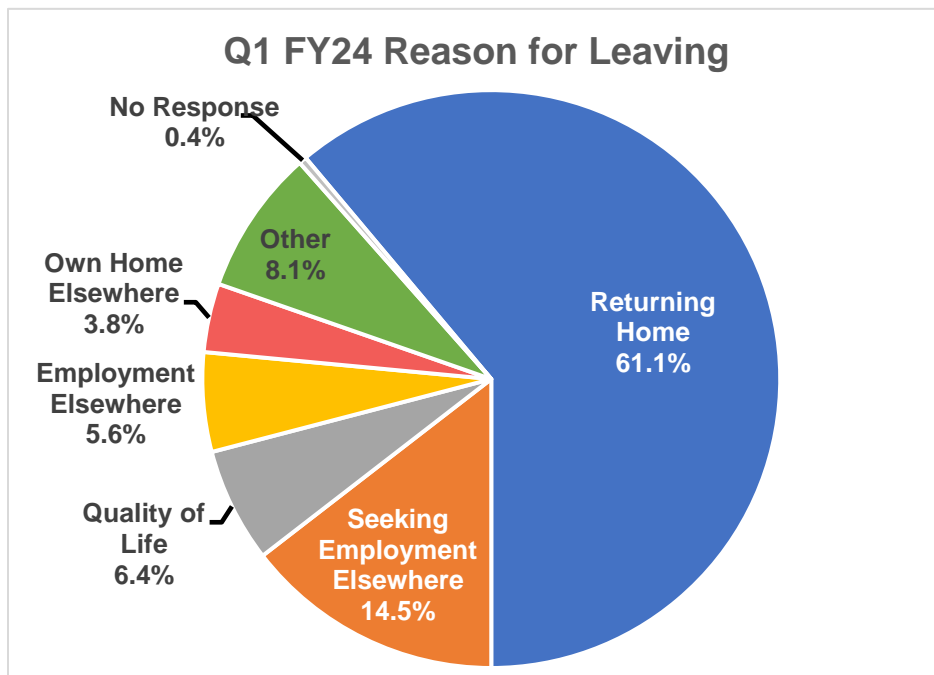
1. In 2013, the survey was revised to gain more clarity on the Quality-of-Life factors cited by separating Soldiers that impact their decision to remain in Central Texas or go elsewhere after their service ends. The majority of those completing the survey that identified they were staying in the area said it was due to Quality of life. The second largest group staying was due to their spouse finding employment locally. The next largest groups staying have found employment locally, or completing 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 Bachelors or Master's degree while remaining in an area with a lower cost of living compared to other areas with universities. We will continue to monitor this response for future quarters. The chart below depicts the respondent's reasons for remaining in Central Texas.

²Employers desiring to hire Fort Cavazos veterans should contact Fort Cavazos Soldier for Life -Transition Assistance Program (formerly known as ACAP) directly through TAP Mr. Adrian B Thompson: at (254)288-0827; adrian.b.thompson.civ@army.mil; or by posting their opportunity and company website URL on the TAP website (<https://www.armytap.army.mil>).

Employers may place a job posting via "Work in Texas" (www.workintexas.com) - a statewide, internet-based job-matching system through Workforce Solutions of Central Texas (WFSC) (254) 200-2020. The Texas Veterans Commission (TVC) staff work closely with the Central Texas Workforce Business Services including job development, direct referrals, and military skills-civilian occupations matching. tvcemployment@tvc.texas.gov (512) 463-2333



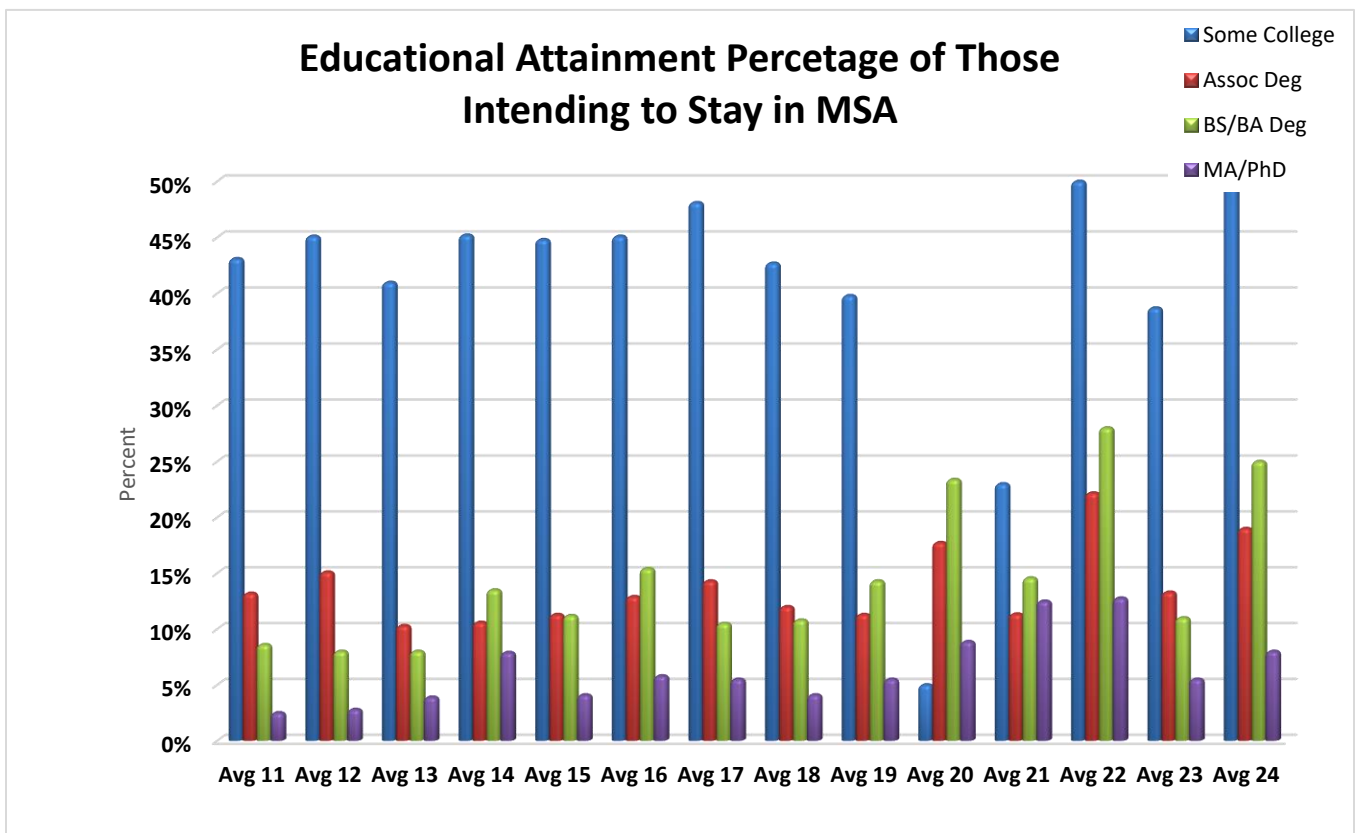
2. For those service members not staying in the MSA after separation, the graph below addresses the reasons. The majority of those choosing to live outside of the MSA after separation wanted to return to their home of record, while the second largest group stated that they are seeking employment elsewhere. Returning home has been the primary reason for leaving the MSA since the inception of this survey. 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.



3 There is an untapped resource in the pool of 544 service members who are leaving (234) or undecided (115) about remaining in Central Texas. Of these two categories, 46.7% (163) service members would stay in Central Texas for meaningful employment. This 46.7% represents a missed opportunity for the Central Texas labor market and a potential pool to recruit new industries seeking talent.

H. EDUCATION LEVEL OF THOSE REMAINING IN THE REGION: Respondents are asked to provide their highest level of educational attainment. All soldiers have a High School Diploma/GED.

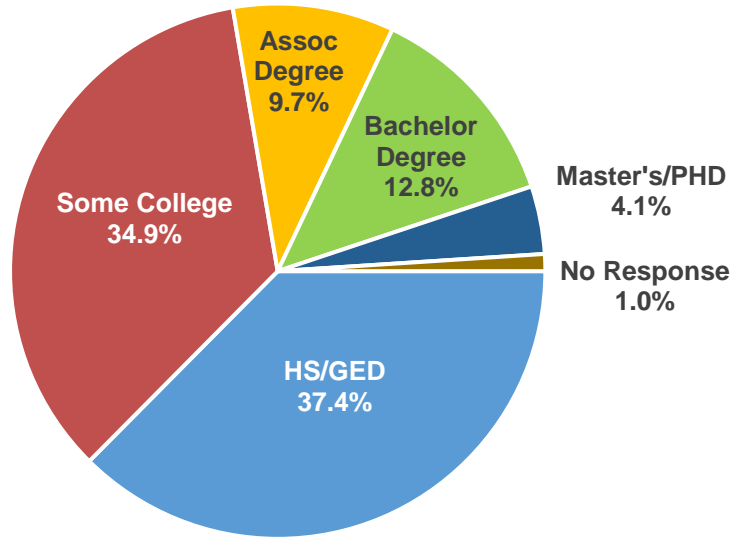
1. The data from over 50,000 Soldiers separating over the last decade plus indicates that for those Soldiers who intend to remain in the Killeen-Temple-Fort Cavazos MSA (both retirement eligible and non-retirement eligible), educational attainment for those completing the survey remains high for post-secondary education. Due to COVID 19 pandemic, there were less surveys processed in 2020 thru 2022. The chart below depicts average yearly education levels for those remaining in Central Texas. We will continue to monitor these results quarterly from those separating from the service. Traditionally with the availability of Texas A&M Central Texas as an area university of distinction, the numbers of those Soldiers pursuing post-secondary degrees has been higher than in the past before the opening of this area upper-level university. This data is further affirmation that those Soldiers leaving the service provide a solid foundation of education as well as real-world experience as future employees for the area.



2. For this quarter, 120 of 195 (61.5%) of the respondents who intend to remain in the region have some level of post-secondary education: The chart below depicts the educational levels for those 195 service members remaining in the MSA. The remaining 38.5% all have a high school diploma or GED certification.

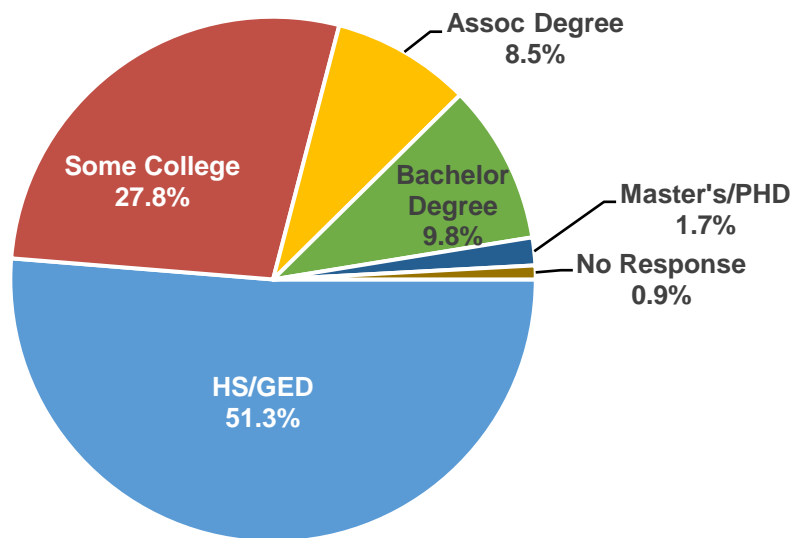
- ❖ Some College – 68 (34.9%)
- ❖ Associates Degree – 19 (9.7%)
- ❖ Bachelor’s Degree – 25 (12.8%)
- ❖ Masters/PhD Degree – 8 (4.1%)

**Q1 FY24
Education Level - Staying**



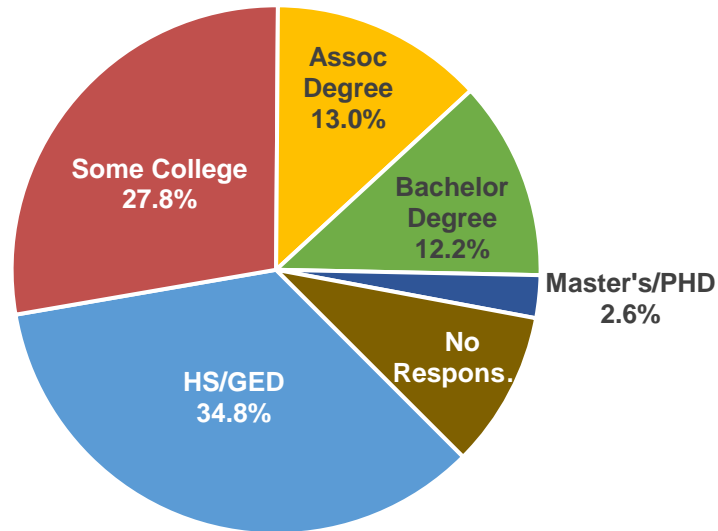
2. The graph below depicts the educational attainment levels for the 234 Soldiers who are not staying in the MSA and reflects lost opportunity for our area.

**Q1 FY24
Education Level - Leaving**



3. A third dynamic includes the Soldiers who are unsure if they will stay in the MSA or depart. This quarter of 104 of 115 (95.6%) of transitioning Soldiers indicated they were unsure if they would remain in the MSA or depart with 11 (4.4%) providing no response. This group represents both workforce and economic potential that may be influenced to remain in the MSA. Their educational attainment level depicted below is slightly higher than the group that will not remain. Their chart below depicts this group's education level.

**Q1 FY24
Education Level - Undecided**



4. The survey also asks respondents who are leaving and those undecided if a job available in the area would change their response. Of those two categories, 46.7% (163 of 349) indicated they would stay in the area if desirable employment were available. This represents an untapped source of talent that could be enticed to stay for employment.

5. Anecdotally, businesses indicate they want to hire veterans. Educational attainment is a key variable in that process depending on the type of job and given the current national unemployment rate. Due to extra benefits of health care, tuition assistance, housing and food allowances while in the service, the military remains a favorable career choice. However, the standards of recruiting continue to be more stringent, so candidates applying to the military with a GED are accepted on an exception to policy basis. When taking into account that Central Texas offers a low cost of living, has several post-secondary educational institutions within the Killeen-Temple-Fort Cavazos MSA where Soldiers are able to complete their degrees, and the fact that a large percentage of Soldiers separating from the service desire to remain in the area, the Killeen-Temple-Fort Cavazos MSA is a very desirable region for potential business partners to relocate to the area. This opportunity would also likely 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 satisfying employment in the area after leaving the service.

6. Perceptions versus reality: As 94% percent of Fort Cavazos Soldiers either reside on-post or within 10 miles of Fort Cavazos 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. Quality of Life within the MSA is important to retaining Soldiers in the area after separating, as seen in the graph on page sixteen. In addition, Veterans ending their service at Fort Cavazos 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.

6. 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 Dr. Linda Angel, Workforce Solutions of Central Texas, for the design of the report cover and logo; to Mr. Jared Porritt, Workforce Solutions of Central Texas, who compiles the data for these reports; and to Mr. Mark Phillips for administering the surveys at the SFL-TAP workshops.