



**DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY**  
HEADQUARTERS, UNITED STATES ARMY, EUROPE, AND SEVENTH ARMY  
THE ADJUTANT GENERAL  
UNIT 29058  
APO AE 09081

AEAAG

*23 Sep 04*

MEMORANDUM FOR SEE DISTRIBUTION

SUBJECT: Army in Europe Retiree Council Minutes

1. The minutes of the Army in Europe Retiree Council meeting on 4 August 2004 have been reviewed and approved.
2. The point of contact for this memorandum is the United States Army, Europe, Retirement Services Officer at DSN 379-6080 or email: [usareur-rso@hq.1perscom.army.mil](mailto:usareur-rso@hq.1perscom.army.mil).

PHILIP V. SMITH  
COL, AG  
Adjutant General

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EA ASG/BSB  
EA USAREUR ASG/BSB RSO  
EA Army in Europe Retiree Council Member



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AEAAG-AERC

2 SEP 2004

MEMORANDUM FOR Commanding General, United States Army, Europe, and Seventh Army,  
ATTN: AEACG, Unit 29351, APO AE 09014

SUBJECT: Minutes of the Army in Europe Retiree Council Meeting

1. The 92<sup>nd</sup> meeting of the Army in Europe Retiree Council (AERC) convened at 0900 hours on 4 August 2004 in the conference room of the DCofS, G1, USAREUR, at Campbell Barracks, Heidelberg.

2. The following persons were present:

a. Voting Members:

COL (Ret) Robert A. Mentell	President
COL (Ret) Alan B. Phillips	Vice President
CW3 (Ret) Sandra K. Simpson	Secretary
COL (Ret) Steven V. Boylan	Member
LTC (Ret) Sheldon Dick	Member
1SG (Ret) Donald Gwinn	Member
1SG (Ret) Warren G. Harris	Member
MAJ (Ret) Donald W. Struve	Member
CW3 (Ret) Mack C. West	Member

b. Nonvoting Members:

LTC David Fulton	DCofS, G1, Representative
Mr. Glen L. Snow	AG Representative
Mr. Donald Wade	IMA-E Representative
Mr. R. Wayne McEntire	USAREUR RSO

c. Guests:

Ms. Anne-Marie Murray	O/DCofS, G1 (Futures)
Mr. Paul Brown	O/DCofS, G1 (Survey Programs)
Ms. Rickcord B. Gibbons	O/IMA-E (Army Family Action Plan)
Ms. Christina Mizelle	RSO, 100 <sup>th</sup> Area Support Group (Grafenwöhr)

3. Opening Remarks.

a. The President welcomed the members and noted the excused absences of SGM Norris and SFC Blackwell. SGM Norris had provided a proxy to COL Boylan and SFC Blackwell to 1SG Gwinn. Both proxies were noted and accepted.

b. He welcomed LTC Fulton as the new DCofS, G1, Representative to the Council. He expressed the appreciation of the Council for the service LTC Bridget C. Niehus had provided as the DCofS, G1, Representative.

c. He also welcomed Ms. Mizelle as an observer.

d. Council reviewed and approved the proposed agenda adding several items to President's Report and deleting LTC Dick's presentation concerning the council constitution and by-laws.

4. Approval of Minutes. The Council approved the minutes as written although it noted that a substantive change had been made to the minutes without coordination with the Council after the minutes had been signed on behalf of the Council.

The President and the AG Representative reaffirmed the established procedures of making substantive change to the minutes only in coordination with the President. The AG would be the arbiter. Changes to correct grammar or typographical errors would not be considered substantive changes unless they change the meaning of the text.

The President and the AG Representative also reaffirmed the established procedures of the Council Secretary and the USAREUR RSO both signing the minutes.

5. President's Report.

a. The President had office calls with the following individuals:

LTG William E. Ward	Deputy Commanding General, USAREUR
COL Philip J. Smith	Adjutant General, USAREUR / Commander, 1 <sup>st</sup> Personnel Command
Mr. Russell Hall	Director, Europe Region, U.S. Army Installation Management Agency
COL Gwendolyn Bonéy-Harris	Commander, 6 <sup>th</sup> ASG (Stuttgart)
Mr. Curtis Clark	Deputy Commander, 100 <sup>th</sup> ASG (Grafenwöhr)

President presented to LTG Ward and to COL Smith, in separate sessions, a briefing on supporting retirees in Europe, which discussed demographics, retiree council organizations, issues of concern to retiree in theater, and upcoming events. Both were very supportive of the Council. COL Smith agreed to participate in the November meeting, schedule permitting.

- b. The President has office calls scheduled with the following individuals:

COL (P) Carla Hawley-Bowland	Commander, U.S. Army Europe Regional Medical Command
COL Rhonda Cornum	Commander, Landstuhl Regional Medical Center
COL Michael Cuenin	Commander, U.S. Army Europe Regional Dental Command
COL (USAF) James Rundell	Director, TRICARE Europe Office

c. Army G1 has opened its web page ([www.armyg1.army.mil/retire](http://www.armyg1.army.mil/retire)) to permit access even from computers not operating on a military domain. If this works, all retirees should be able to obtain Army Echoes and other information even from their home computers. President requested all Council members test the system and provide feedback to him.

d. TRICARE Management Agency has released information that prior to the end of the calendar year all retirees and annuitants who are currently eligible for Medicare Part B but who are not currently enrolled in Medicare Part B will be automatically enrolled. Subsequently, they will receive a letter offering them the opportunity to change the effective date for the enrollment in Medicare Part B or to cancel the enrollment outright. Because of the unreliability of mailings to overseas addresses, both APO and civilian, this information needs to be passed to individuals who are subject to this action.

In parallel, all individuals who enrolled in Medicare Part B in order to be eligible for TRICARE-for-Life when it first was made available and are paying a late enrollment penalty will have their penalty cancelled and receive reimbursement for all penalties paid since 1 January 2004.

e. President cautioned individuals to consider the potential impact when writing senior administration officials seeking relief from issues of a common nature. He pointed out that there are ongoing actions both within the Department of Defense and by external organizations, such as retiree associations, that are working to change policy and legislation. Initiatives by individuals do not usually help the greater efforts.

#### 6. DCofS, G1, Report.

a. LTC Fulton assured the Council that actions which have an impact on retirees or their family members will be brought to it for review and comment. He mentioned that, in a significant change in the Joint Federal Travel Regulation, the command is now permitted to fund emergency travel to CONUS for civilian employees and family members. This change could impact the availability of seats on AMC aircraft for retirees and their family members.

b. Ms. Murray reported that recommendations to realign the retirement services function within theater are still being staffed. The goal of 1 October 2004 will not be met. All retirement services functions remain with USAREUR until a decision otherwise is made.

c. Mr. Brown presented an overview of the survey program which is being configured to query several segments of the population in theater, including retirees. Surveys of approximately 250 company-size units will be undertaken every quarter. It has not yet been determined how they will obtain addresses for retirees or their family members.

7. IMA-E Report.

a. Mr. Wade confirmed the status of the transfer of retirements services function as presented by Ms. Murray.

b. Ms. Gibbons reported on the status of the Army Family Action Plan (AFAP) process in theater. Four issues with retiree components are being considered. These are: Establishing permanent VA counselors overseas; expanding eligibility for eyewear benefits; extending the retiree dental insurance program to retirees residing overseas, and reducing tuition in DODDS OCONUS schools for family members of non-command sponsored individuals.

The President pointed out that every year since 2000, the Chief of Staff, Army, Retiree Council has recommended extension of the retiree dental insurance program to retirees residing overseas and asked, if the timing permits, that that fact be included in the decision packet sent to the Commanding General asking for his support of certain issues.

Ms. Gibbons agreed to present to the Council for review and comment all AFAP issues that have retiree components and to include a representative of the Council as a subject matter expert at the major USAREUR meetings.

8. Adjutant General Report. Mr. Snow reported on the USAREUR Retiree Actions Implementation Plan:

a. Coordinate with USAREUR Retiree Council (Priority 1): [Use the Council for coordinating actions affecting the retirees, their family members and annuitants; reinforce within the staff the use of the Council in this role.] Mr. Snow reaffirmed the commitment of the AG to this principle.

b. Update USAREUR Regulation 608-25, Retirement Services Program (Priority 1): [Publish an update to USAREUR Regulation 608-25, dated 31 October 1991. (The document, now the Army in Europe Supplement 1 to AR 600-8-7, was published on 17 September 2003. A number of limited changes were made by Change 1 published in January 2004.)] No update was necessary.

c. HQDA DCSPER Letter "Support for the Retired Community" (Priority 1): [Endorse to ASG and BSB commander the annual HQDA letter "Support for the Retired Community."] BG Frutiger signed the supporting memorandum and sent it to Mr. Hall, with the anticipation that Mr. Hall would endorse it to the ASG/BSB commanders. Mr. Wade agreed to follow up to verify this step.

d. USAREUR Retirement Services Web Site (Priority 1): [Update and maintain a USAREUR Retirement Services Web Page.] CPT Sohn is in the process of updating the website.

e. USAREUR Retiree Bulletin (Priority 2): [Continue to publish a semiannual USAREUR Retiree Bulletin targeted to the retiree/annuitant population in the USAREUR geographical area of responsibility.] Bulletin has been published and mailed to the retired community in theater.

f. Tri-Service Coordination Meeting (Priority 2): [Support and participate in the Semi-Annual Meetings of the Tri-Service Coordinating Meeting of Military Retiree Councils in Europe.] The President reported that J1, USEUCOM, has expressed continuing support for this effort. President is working with USEUCOM action officer and his counterparts in the other components to have a meeting in the fall. Continuing support and participation of USAREUR will be essential.

g. USAREUR Guidance to Casualty Assistance Officers on Death Certificates: (Priority 2): [Publish Army in Europe-unique guidance to supplement the HQDA Casualty Assistant Officer's Guide.] This subject is on hold as no specific issues are known at this time.

h. Breakout by BSBs of German Postal Code/Army Post Offices (Priority 2): [Provide periodically to Army in Europe RSOs a list of retirees and annuitants in their areas of responsibility.] Council has produced a template that is available for use and would like to have it made available to ASGs and BSBs. IMA-E has expressed interest in taking advantage of the Council's work by using it to provide information to ASG and BSB commanders, if and when IMA-E assumes responsibility for retirement services functions.

i. Local Retiree Council (LRC) Presidents/Retirement Service Officers (RSO) Standardized Email Accounts. (Priority 3): [Provide guidance to promote the creation of generic email address for RSOs and LRC presidents.] Generic email address format vary by ASG. The Council recommended IMA-E consider establishing a consistent system.

j. Local Retiree Council (LRC) Minutes/Appointment (Priority 3): [Maintain current LRC minutes and appointment documents IAW AinE Supl 1 to UR 608-25.] Not all ASGs and BSBs are complying with the supplement, which requires the local RSOs provide to the USAREUR RSO appointment documents and minutes. Council requested the RSO inform it of the status of both the LRC appointing documents and the LRC minutes at the next Council meeting. This information would permit Council members to discuss the subject during the normal course of liaison visits with ASG and BSB commanders and RSOs and with LRC presidents.

Mr. Snow also mentioned that the Director of Postal Operations, 1<sup>st</sup> PERSCOM, will participate in a meeting of military postal officials in Washington where he will recommend eliminating the current 16-ounce limit on retiree use of APOs/FPOs.

9. After-Action Report: USAREUR Retiree Appreciation Day 2003 (Mr. Snow). The Council was informed that, since the last meeting of the Council, the report had been signed. The Council was not provided an opportunity to review the report prior to finalization and had not received a copy of the report. The President again requested a copy of the report.

10. Progress Report: USAREUR Retiree Appreciation Day 2004 (Mr. Snow): Mr. Snow reported:

a. Five individuals have been invited to speak. They are: Deputy Commanding General, USAREUR; Army Retirement Services Officer, HQDA; Commander, U.S. Army Europe Regional Medical Command; Commander, U.S. Army Europe Regional Dental Command; and President, Army in Europe Retiree Council.

b. Patrick Henry Village Dental Clinic is being renovated and will not be available for use during the RAD. Consideration is being given to providing dental services either at the Heidelberg Hospital Dental Clinic or at the Mannheim Dental Clinic. An option also being discussed is to not offer dental services on the day of the RAD, but to schedule a separate retiree dental fair at a different time. The Council cautioned that a great percentage of the participants in the RAD do so in anticipation of receiving dental care, many coming with that as the primary reason. The participants in the RAD need to be informed immediately upon arrival, if not beforehand, of the procedures to be followed. An announcement from the stage after the RAD has begun will be too late.

c. Council requested that the AG register participants as had been done in previous years. The Council suggested that the list of retirees and annuitants maintained by the RSO could be used for registration. Further, Council suggested that during the registration process personal email address and supporting BSB be gathered for each participant. Using the RSO's list would not only allow the registrants to verify the on-hand information, but would provide a space for them to enter the two additional elements of information, as well.

d. All Council members present indicated they would participate in the RAD.

11. Backbriefing: Meeting with the Secretary of Veterans Affairs (COL Phillips/MAJ Struve)

a. At the invitation of the USAREUR Command Group, four retirees participated in a visit to USAREUR of Mr. Principe, Secretary of Veterans Affairs. The individuals were: COL Phillips, Vice President, Army in Europe Retiree Council; COL Penhallegon, President, 22<sup>nd</sup> ASG (Vicenza) Retiree Council, LTC Torbett, President, 6<sup>th</sup> ASG (Stuttgart) Retiree Council; and MAJ Struve, member, Army in Europe Retiree Council.

b. The retirees raised two issues:

(1) They asked whether VA would pay allotments previously paid by DFAS in the case of 100% disabled veterans who no longer receive pay from DFAS. There is some limited ability for VA to process an allotment but it seems to be handled on a case by case basis. Mr. Principe said he thought DVA should be able to do that and took the question back with him.

(2) They asked if there was any action to station full-time VA representatives in Europe. They were told that DVA has counselors who are available nine months of the year in Europe to advise on the preparation and submission of disability claims and that there were not plans to give those individuals a broader mission or to station additional individuals in theater.

c. Secretary Principe asked if anyone had the ability to account for non-retired veterans. He was told that currently there is no method of tracking these individuals. On another subject, he said that DVA are willing to put retiree information in their communications to the field.

12. Preparations for the 2005 Meeting of the Chief of Staff, Army, Retiree Council (COL Mentell)

a. The next meeting of the Chief of Staff, Army, Retiree Council will be held 18-22 April 2005 in Washington, DC. It is anticipated that the letter from HQDA to the field requesting issues for consideration will be sent out, as usual, in September with a suspense date of 31 December.

b. President requested the AG send out the annual letters requesting input from the ASG and BSB commanders in the very near future with a suspense date in mid-October so the Council may consider submitted issues at its November meeting.

c. President requested the AG send similar letters requesting input from Director, TRICARE Europe Office; Commander, ERMIC; Commander, ERDC; and Commander, 266<sup>th</sup> Finance Command.

d. The President and the USAREUR representative will discuss with representatives of the other USEUCOM components at the Tri-Service Coordination Meeting of Military Retiree Councils in Europe to be hosted tentatively by USEUCOM in the November time frame issues the Council might consider recommending USAREUR forward to HQDA. (See paragraph 8f above.)

13. Progress Report: RetireeInfo List Server (COL Mentell)

a. The President, with the assistance of representatives of DCofS, G1, USAREUR, and 5<sup>th</sup> Signal Command, arranged to have a list server created, named RetireeInfo, which will allow the Council to "push" information electronically to all individuals who register their email addresses. The initiative, a long standing goal of the Council, will supplement and in some cases permit the elimination of hardcopy information currently being mailed out through the postal system. It is envisioned that, by using the list server, information, such as Army Echoes and the USAREUR Retiree Bulletin, as well as news releases from agencies such as TRICARE

Management Agency, could be sent to registered retirees and annuitants in a more cost-efficient and less time-consuming manner than currently being used.

b. The procedures an individual needs to follow to become registered on the list server were presented to the Council members, with the request that they try to add themselves to the list as soon as possible. They are to report their success in registering and all problems encountered during registration to the President.

c. Once the registration procedures are clarified, they will be disseminated to the field and all interested individuals will be encouraged to register.

d. Council envisions the list server as a supplement and not a replacement for other electronic sources, such as the websites of HQDA Retirement Services, USAREUR Retirement Services and TRICARE, from which interested individuals can “pull” information.

e. Council intends to turn the responsibility for the list server over to the Army in Europe Retirement Services Officer once the list server is up and running and the command is willing to accept it.

14. Special Report: Local Retiree Association Update (CW4 Gambert). No report.

15. Retiree Council Liaison Matrix and Individual Liaison Report (COL Boylan). [Although Council recognizes that its members do not directly “represent” the communities in which they may reside, the matrix identifies leaders with whom Council members should maintain liaison regarding retiree services and issues.] COL Boylan briefed the quarterly results. This quarter, the emphasis was on refining the locations of and liaison responsibilities for medical and dental facilities. COL Boylan will send the update a month in advance on the next Council meeting, with a return input from Council members due at least fourteen days prior to the meeting.

16. Liaison Discussion:

a. Access to Medical and Dental Care: Access to medical care remains good, varying by location. No major changes were reported. Access to dental care remains unchanged. The 100<sup>th</sup> ASG (Grafenwöhr) will have a health fair in September in Vilseck. The 415<sup>th</sup> BSB (Kaiserlautern) is working to set up a health fair.

b. Update on Local Retire Councils: CW3 West provided an update on the local retiree councils. Email addresses were added where available.

c. Input for the DOD SBP Board: The DARSO asked for input on problems for consideration by the DOD SBP Board. MAJ Struve raised the issue of the offset of the SBP pay a surviving spouse may be getting by the amount of Dependency and Indemnity Compensation benefits. Other SBP open issues, i.e., the Social Security offset and earlier implementation of the paid-up provision, were also discussed. Council recommends that all three issues go forward.

President requested MAJ Struve redraft his proposed text to list the three issues in priority order and to send it to the RSO for forwarding.

17. Council Administration:

a. Review of Procedures: President recommended that the Council establish procedures to consider membership and officer vacancies two quarters prior to expiration to permit the Council time to respond should the AG not be able to approve the Council initial recommendations. Council accepted the procedure.

b. Existing Member Vacancies: There was one existing vacancy. USAREUR RSO reported that a new letter will be sent to Commander, 22<sup>nd</sup> ASG (Vicenza), requesting a nomination.

c. Projected Member Vacancies: There were two projected vacancies - CW4 Gambert as of 31 December 2004 and COL Boylan as of 31 March 2005.

(1) President informed the Council that CW4 Gambert had submitted a letter of resignation to be effective at the end of his term of membership. Council accepted the resignation of CW4 Gambert. USAREUR RSO reported a letter will be sent to Commander, 6<sup>th</sup> ASG (Stuttgart), requesting a nomination.

(2) COL Boylan indicated he would accept re-appointment. By secret ballot, the Council decided to recommend to the Adjutant General that COL Boylan be reappointed noncompetitively to another four-year term of membership, which would expire on 31 March 2009.

d. Unprojected Member Vacancies: None

e. Projected Officer Vacancies: There was one projected vacancy - for Secretary as of 31 December 2004. CW3 Simpson indicated she would accept re-appointment. By secret ballot, the Council decided to recommend to the Adjutant General that CW3 Simpson be reappointed to another two-year term as Secretary, which would expire on 31 December 2006.

f. In light of CW4 Gambert's resignation, President recommended Council select an individual to assume responsibility from CW4 Gambert for liaison with local retiree associations. This will permit CW4 Gambert to transfer in an orderly fashion all of the documentation and points of contact he has accumulated in his execution of this function, culminating at the Council meeting in November, which will be his last. 1SG Harris volunteered to accept the responsibility. President requested Council members to provide 1SG Harris with information on retiree associations in their geographical areas.

18. Timeline for AERC Administrative Actions. Timeline will be adjusted to coincide with the date for the next meeting.

AEAAG-AERC

SUBJECT: Minutes of the Army in Europe Retiree Council Meeting

19. Selection of Next Meeting Date and Adjournment. Council agreed to hold its next meeting on 3 November. President adjourned Council at 1530 hours.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "for M. Simpson".

SANDRA SIMPSON  
CW3, USA (Retired)  
Secretary

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "R. Wayne McEntire".

R. WAYNE MCENTIRE  
USAREUR Retirement Services  
Officer