



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY CHIEF OF STAFF, G-1
300 ARMY PENTAGON
WASHINGTON DC 20310-0300



MEMORANDUM FOR SEE DISTRIBUTION

17 MAR 2004

SUBJECT: Support of the Retired Community

1. Army retirees and their families are highly valued partners with our active duty and reserve components. Their rich legacy of sacrifice and service inspires today's Soldiers. Many continue to serve America in a wide variety of positions, both in and out of government, and are a strong bridge between the Army and their communities. It is our duty to maintain the bond between the Army and retirees and their families.
2. Over the past decade, downsizing initiatives and base closures have had a dramatic effect on the personnel organizations that serve the retired community. Unfortunately, at some locations, Installation Retirement Services Officer (RSO) positions have been eliminated, privatized, or consolidated with other positions. As bases closed, remaining RSOs found themselves responsible for greater geographic areas and populations. The upcoming 2005 Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) study could result in more challenges for RSOs. The Installation RSO is the only one who counsels active duty Soldiers and their families before retirement and serves Soldiers and their families after retirement. We must not again compromise such a vital position.
3. In order to ensure that the Army continues to demonstrate its commitment to retirees, I urge your support in the following areas: (a.) ensure that installations have a full-time RSO to implement the retirement services program and Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP) policies, according to AR 600-8-7, and ensure this position is identified in your budget plan by submitting it in your Program Objective Memorandum (POM) each year; (b.) provide local RSOs with adequate resources to accomplish their two primary missions of pre-retirement counseling and post-retirement assistance; (c.) establish and support installation retiree councils that meet regularly with installation commanders and other senior leaders to address issues affecting retirees and their families; and (d.) support annual Retiree Appreciation Days that bring together many facets of the Army community to update retirees with current information, provide services such as health/dental screenings, and organize a series of open forums to exchange ideas for the benefit of all.
4. We cannot ignore or abandon those who served before us. Retirees will always be a distinctive, valued part of our family. This simple truth is integral to our Army values and traditions and can never be allowed to fade away.

F. L. HAGENBECK
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