OFFICE OF
WOUNDED WARRIOR
CARE & TRANSITION POLICY

SERVE › SUPPORT › EMPOWER

JOINT SERVICES ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION ON THE TRANSITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (TAP) TRIP REPORT

SITE VISIT: Navy Submarine Base, Kings Bay, GA
DATES: 21-22 January 2010

HOST ORGANIZATION POINTS OF CONTACT:
(b)(6) – Navy Region Southeast Work and Family Life Coordinator
Ms. Debra Lucas, Director – Navy Fleet & Family Support Program, Kings Bay, GA

VISIT OVERVIEW:
Engage in dialog and briefings by representatives of military installations to:

- Determine the degree of engagement and collaboration with joint service providers;
- Obtain a ground assessment of partner agency or VSO initiatives;
- Integration of TAP services with WII and family members;
- Integration of TAP services for demobilizing National Guard, Reserves, and family members;
- Local initiatives to advance hiring of veterans in federal sector employment
- Determine challenges in delivering TAP services

PARTICIPATION:
Staffs from TAP service delivery locations representing the following military installations were present:

- Army ACAP Ft. Stewart, GA
- MCB Camp Lejeune, NC
- NS Mayport, FL
- NAS Jacksonville, FL
- NSB Kings Bay, GA
- Moody AFB, GA

INTERFACE WITH LOCAL LEADERSHIP

- Office call on RADL Tim Alexander, Commander, Navy Region Southeast
- Office call on (b)(6), CO, NSB Kings Bay, GA
- Office call on (b)(6) CO, NAS Jacksonville, FL
- Membership of NSB Kings Bay Ombudsman Advisory Council
  - Consists of CO/XO, senior NCO and Ombudsmen of all commands in Kings Bay, GA (approximately 65 members)

COMMAND BRIEFS

Ft. Stewart, GA

Provided by (b)(6) – ACAP Transition Services Manager

- Troop Strength = 26,010 (includes Division, Non-Division and Tennant Units)
- Classroom interaction for entire TAP process last 3 days.
- Loss classroom space (Club) due to funding reduction; now in temporary space
- Impacted by lack of senior NCO understanding of ACAP eligibility
- Soldiers not afforded adequate opportunities to utilize all available services
- Limited to no interface with WII; extremely limited opportunity for service delivery to demobilizing Guard/Reserve
- Limited interface with Recovery Care Program; did not know assigned RCP staff
- Unanticipated losses (chapters) not referred early enough or permitted to participate beyond pre-separation counseling
- Timeline for transition processing reduced from 90 to 60 days and limits Soldier's ability to receive requested ACAP services while still on active duty

MCB Camp Lejeune, NC

Provided by (b)(6) – Employment Assistance Manager

- Troop Strength = 45,000 – 50,000 (includes Division, Non-Division and Tennant Units)
- Classroom interaction for entire TAP lasts 5 days; consists of 3 core days plus 2 service specific days
- VA Benefits Briefing not consistently delivered IAW National MOU
- DTAP Briefing done by VA at Navy Hospital in conjunction with PEBLO briefings
- Insufficient time allotted for TAP assistance to demobilizing Reserves; service beyond pre-separation extremely rare
- Exporting of TAP workshops to Wounded Warrior Battalion begins Feb 2010
- Collaboration with RCC's established; formulating processes and procedures
- Class size for TAP exceeds classroom capacity
- Limited 1-on-1 assistance provided; lack of childcare cited as primary inhibitor for spouse participation

Moody AFB, GA
Provided by Mr. Eric Pedersen - Airmen and Family Readiness Center Chief

- Troop Strength = 27,000 (includes Division, Non-Division and Tennant Units); average 156 Reservists assigned
- Approximately 400 Airmen separate/retire annually
- Classroom interaction for entire TAP lasts 3.5 days; additional stand-alone workshops on resume writing and interviewing techniques routinely provided
- Limited to no interaction with WII population; no interaction with Recovery Care Program
- Challenged to identify anticipated TAP customers earlier in career cycle
- Expressed challenges in following up with clients after initial TAP interface

NS MAYPORT, FL
Presented by (b)(6) – Work and Family Life Professional

- Troop Strength = Over 18,000 active duty; 3,900 retirees; 12,254 family members (includes Division, Non-Division and Tennant Units); 3rd largest Navy facility in continental United States
- Classroom interaction for entire TAP lasts 4 days; consists of 3 core days plus 1 service specific day
- Additional stand-alone workshops on resume writing and interviewing techniques routinely provided
- Limited to no interaction with WII population; no interaction with Recovery Care Program (none assigned)
- No ownership of TAP classroom facility
- Requirement for constant mission readiness impacts their ability to support transition needs of their Sailors; competing interests – mission win; Sailors lose
- Ships send Sailors to TAP workshops after standing overnight watches; fatigue and inability to remain awake impacts ability to learn

NAS JACKSONVILLE, FL
Presented by (b)(6) – Work and Family Life Professional

- Troop Strength = Over 10,683 active duty; over 31,000 family members (includes Division, Non-Division and Tennant Units)
- CY-09 TAP attendees totaled 1,132
- Classroom interaction for entire TAP lasts 4 days; consists of 3 core days plus 1 service specific day
- Additional stand-alone workshops on resume writing and interviewing techniques routinely provided
- Provides targeted audience TAP workshops (E6 and below; retiree; E7-O7)
- Challenges include:
  - Commands not allowing participation until last 30 days prior to separation
  - Commands require personnel to work normal shifts or stand watches in addition to attending workshops during the day
  - External appointments during TAP workshops requires frequent absences
- Engagement with WII population not defined
- Routinely provides career development and career change strategies workshops throughout the entire military lifecycle; workshops well attended

NSB KINGS BAY, GA
Presented by (b)(6) **– Supervisory Work and Family Life Professional**

- Troop Strength = Over 5,200 Active duty; 4,194 military retirees. In excess of 48,689 DoD personnel, families, civilians, contractors, and visiting NATO forces
- Classroom interaction for entire TAP lasts 4 days; consists of 3 core days plus 1 service specific day
- Additional stand-alone workshops on resume writing, interviewing techniques, personal financial management provided routinely throughout each month
- Limited to no interaction with WII population; no interaction with Recovery Care Program (none assigned)
- Major challenges with ageing DoL TAP facilitators; many are physically not capable of long-term standing for facilitation. Readdress to Regional DoL staff in Atlanta, GA producing minimal results
- Limited assistance from installation HR staff on federal hiring initiative
- Spouse participation in TAP workshops very minimal despite providing childcare

NAVY SAFE HARBOR PROGRAM – NAVAL HOSPITAL, JACKSONVILLE, FL
HMCS (b)(6) – Non-Medical Care Manager

- Extremely low population of hospitalized wounded, ill, or injured
- Majority of case load is out-patient status assigned in limited duty status at various shore duty commands on the installation
- Staff not familiar with the content or processes associated with TAP, although referrals routinely made
- Not familiar with requirements of pre-separation counseling or documentation procedures
- Thrust of their efforts centrally focused on advocacy for benefits
- VA staff member and PEBLO jointly delivery DTAP briefing and MEB/PEB processing familiarization brief
- Typical process waits for PEB decision on fitness for retention before engaging TAP; unfit findings leaves little time for TAP prior to release from active duty
- Pre-Separation counseling not an element of PEBLO or medical processing for separation/discharge; risks of violations of federal statute high

TAKE AWAYS:

- Installations have limited marketing resources to promote TAP services; marketing strategy not consistently inclusive of family members
- Marketing skills beyond traditional print media not generally available or utilized with TAP site
- Ability of TAP sites maintain enduring connection with National Guard or Reserve community questionable; extent of proactive engagement could not be determined
- TAP does not appear to be involved in local Yellow Ribbon events
- Primary focus of local TAP effort centered on post-military employment; statutory requirements to provide financial counseling, relocation assistance, education assistance, and coaching on the effects of career change being overlooked
- Communication flow to local TAP service delivery team level remains a struggle
    - Participants had no information on TAP Off-Site, partner agency initiatives, The Square Deal e-Newsletter, or federal hiring initiatives led by OPM
- TAP service delivery staff are not well-versed in the Recovery Care Program; local connectivity with WII personnel and families not readily apparent
- Collaboration on VSO initiatives supporting TAP is not robust. Heroes to Hometown Program unknown.
- All locations have established networking relationships with community leaders, organizations, and employers

- Navy policy on pre-separation counseling and data collection not standardized practice at local installation level
- Local staff need familiarization on Service established procedures to readdress TAP facilitator performance related issues

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- (b)(5)
-
-
-
-
-

WWCTP STAFF AND GUESTS ATTENDING:

- David DuBois, Operations Director, Office of Wounded Warrior Care and Transition Policy