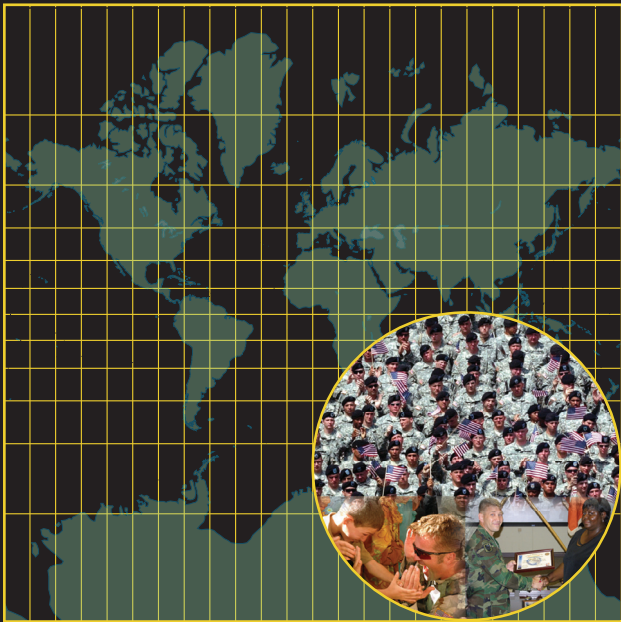


# U.S. Army Rear Detachment Commander's Handbook

ARMY COMMUNITY SERVICE  
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# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

## **Edition 3, Revised 2006.**

This handbook was prepared for the U.S. Army Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation Command (FMWRC) by Deborah Mancini, a consultant, under Texas A & M University's, Cooperative State Research Education Extension Service (CSREES), USDA Grant No. 2004-48211-03128. This handbook is a compilation of information from sources that include Army policy documents, rear detachment SOPs, and rear detachment training.

Cornell University, College of Human Ecology, Family Life Development Center had oversight of graphic reproduction and publication. Graphic design, Wells Communications, Ithaca, NY.

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REPLY TO  
ATTENTION OF

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
FAMILY AND MORALE, WELFARE AND RECREATION COMMAND  
US ARMY INSTALLATION MANAGEMENT COMMAND  
4700 KING STREET  
ALEXANDRIA VA 22302-4401

IMWR-FP

26 MAR 2007

MEMORANDUM FOR UNIT FAMILY READINESS TEAM

SUBJECT: Welcome Letter

1. Thank you for being a member of the Unit Family Readiness Team. Every member's role within this team is crucial to supporting families.
2. Families have been and will continue to be a cornerstone of support for our Soldiers and civilians. Leaders, such as you, who assist military families by providing the support and assistance they require, allow Soldiers to focus fully on their missions. Being a part of the Unit Family Readiness Team at times can be a daunting task, but also has many rewards and you can be proud of the assistance you provide. Your service to the Army is invaluable.
3. The Operation READY series is written to assist you in performing the duties of your role. In addition to the Operation READY series, I encourage you to take the comprehensive online courses located on [www.myarmylifetoo.com](http://www.myarmylifetoo.com). The online courses serve as an excellent desktop resource to get you acquainted with the full scope of your responsibilities.
4. I offer you my grateful appreciation for your dedication and support to Soldiers and families.

  
BELINDA PINCKNEY  
Brigadier General, USA  
Commanding

“Man has two supreme loyalties – to country and to family... So long as their families are safe, they will defend their country, believing that by their sacrifice they are safeguarding their families also. But even the bonds of patriotism, discipline and comradeship are loosened when the family itself is threatened.”

—CPT Sir Basil Liddell Hart  
King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry  
Thoughts on War, 1944

## II. REAR DETACHMENT COMMAND

### Rear Detachment Mission

One of the most important assignments during a unit's deployment is rear detachment duty, particularly as the rear detachment commander (RDC). Upon deployment, the RDC officially assumes the duties of the unit commander and maintains regular contact with the deployed unit commander at the mission site.

The rear detachment operations pick up the daily workload of the deployed unit and provide home-station support for the unit. The RDC is responsible for the administrative operations of the rear detachment, including maintaining command and control, accounting for unit property and equipment, and managing personnel. In short, the RDC and the rear detachment personnel keep the unit functional.

One of the most important rear detachment duties, however, is serving as a vital communications link between the deployed unit and family members.

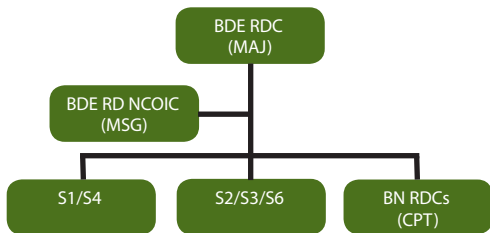
The deployed commander's goal is to accomplish the mission while keeping the Soldiers safe and then bringing them home to their families and communities. The RDC's goal works in tandem with that of the deployed commander to help families solve their problems at the lowest level so that the problems and resulting anxieties do not overflow to the deployed Soldier or require the attention of the deployed commander.

The RDC will face a multitude of duties and unique challenges, whether accomplishing motor pool maintenance, referring a family member to a service agency for assistance, or preparing for the unit's welcome home ceremony. A well-trained and prepared RDC is a successful RDC.

## Notional Rear Detachment (RD)—Structure and Command

To ensure units and families make a smooth transition to deployment, rear detachment teams need to be identified, trained and established BEFORE deployment. For deployment, rear detachments need to be established at two levels to perform the functions specified below.

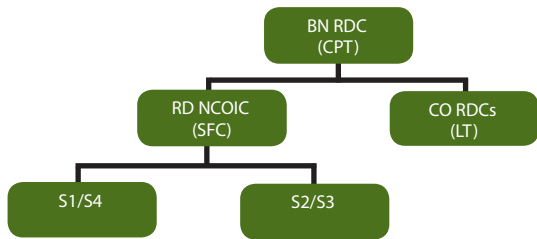
### Brigade (BDE) RDC



- The brigade commander appoints brigade and battalion rear detachment commanders (RDC), however, battalion appointments may be delegated to the battalion commander.
- Brigade level RDs command, control, and support several separate company and battalion-level RDs.

- The brigade RDC monitors family readiness systems in subordinate units and helps coordinate family assistance plans and family readiness plans (FRPs).
- The brigade RDC performs the duties of the unit commander during deployment (See RDC Responsibilities).

## Battalion and Squadron Level RDC



- The battalion commander appoints RDCs at company, troop, and battery level. RD leadership at company level may be one deep.
- Battalion-level RD leadership must be two-deep (RDC and RD NCOIC) with subordinate company RD NCOs.
- The battalion RD ensures subordinate units receive all resources and support required.
- The battalion RDC performs the duties of the unit commander during deployment (See RDC Responsibilities).
- BN RDC commands the company/battalion elements not deployed and maintains accountability of Soldiers, keeping the unit running administratively, operationally, and logistically.
- RDC's chain of command is defined prior to deployment by unit commander.



## Appointment of Rear Detachment Commander (RDC)

Being an RDC is an additional duty assignment. The RDC assumes the duties of a unit commander. The requirements and responsibilities of this position are such that the following criteria should be considered.

Criteria for selecting RDCs (at battalion & company level):

- ✓ Commissioned officer (captain or higher at battalion level, lieutenant or higher at company level)
- ✓ Must have at least six months retainability in unit
- ✓ Good leadership
- ✓ Good communication skills
- ✓ Genuine concern for families
- ✓ Caring and experienced in dealing with family support issues
- ✓ Knowledgeable about garrison support and community resources (including those for the National Guard and Reserve) as well as personnel, finance and supply matters
- ✓ Understands the relationships between the Rear Detachment, FRG and family members, and garrison support services
- ✓ Given role in casualty operations, other desirable characteristics include: maturity, six or more years of service, competence, dependability, and compassion.

### III. RDC RESPONSIBILITIES

During a deployment, the Rear Detachment Commander performs the duties of the unit commander. These responsibilities are listed below by command function. To address expectations of how the RDC will support families, an emphasis is placed on family matters. For a comprehensive listing of responsibilities, review the unit RDC SOP.

#### Command and Control

- Establish and maintain two-way communication with forward deployed units to ensure timely and accurate information, resolve issues, and maintain communication.
- Serve as the official information source for families and as a conduit between the deployed unit and their families. This includes conducting information briefings, preparing postings for vFRG web site, and reviewing FRG newsletters. Also ensure deployment-related information and FRG newsletters are published on regular basis.
- Maintain regular connection with families and family readiness groups (FRGs).
- Assist with Family Assistance Center (FAC) operations as requested by garrison or Army National Guard.
- Coordinate with the FRG steering committee in conjunction with FRG leaders, the chain of command, and garrison and community resources to support families.
- Oversee unit administrative functions.
- Carry out personnel actions (e.g., SRP, UCMJ, leave).
- Submit required reports.
- Handle casualty notification when appointed by the Commander.
- Control rumors.

## Operations and Training

- Attend RDC and FRG courses.
- Develop staffing plan.
- Develop battle rhythm plan for rear detachment operations.
- Conduct or coordinate mandatory training events with garrison/ Reserve Component agencies.
- Ensure RD and staff duty personnel are trained and sensitive to family member calls and understand how to refer families to the appropriate agency for assistance.
- Coordinate and support training for FRG volunteers and families.

## Logistics and Supply

- Maintain physical security and operations security.
- Maintain property and equipment. Conduct inventories.
- Ensure family members have opportunities to maintain contact with deployed Soldiers (includes establishing or providing information on mail operations, video teleconference (VTC), and internet connection).
- Provide FRGs with access to facilities, equipment, and government vehicles for official FRG mission activities.

## Family Support

- Maintain contact with families in the command. This includes keeping in touch with families that return to their home of record or otherwise leave the area during their sponsor's deployment.
- Maintain regular contact with FRG leaders and furnish important information to them. Ensure that communication between FRG leaders and unit family members occurs regularly.

- Attend and support FRG meetings and activities. Update FRG phone trees. Coordinate plans with FRG leader for FRG social or recreational activities to build and sustain morale and camaraderie.
- Answer questions and concerns from FRG leaders and families.
- Resolve family issues by referring families to appropriate military or community agencies.

## Administrative

- Validate and maintain a copy of family care plans (FCP) for deployed personnel and personnel preparing to deploy.
- Conduct FCP counseling as required.
- Maintain unit roster including augmentees during deployments. This roster will be provided to the FRG for their key callers to ensure these families receive communications and support.
- Coordinate with American Red Cross regarding emergency information on unit Soldiers and family members. Log, track and process Red Cross emergency messages and notify forward unit of impending Red Cross messages.
- Review RDC and FRG SOPs. Develop/revise FRG SOPs as necessary. *(See AR 608-1, Appendix J which is provided in the Operation READY Smart Book.)*
- Oversee FRG informal fund, per AR 608-1, Appendix J which is provided in the Operation READY Smart Book.
- Approve FRG requests for appropriated funds (APF) and supplemental mission funds intended for FRG use. *(See AR 608-1, Appendix J which is provided in the Operation READY Smart Book.)*
- After consultation with the unit's ethics counselor, approve donations and FRG fundraising requests.
- Maintain record of contacts, actions taken, and follow-up with families.
- Request an FRGDA to provide FRG leaders with administrative and logistical support.

## IV. KEYS TO SUCCESS

- ★ **Work as a team with the deployed commander, FRG leaders, garrison, FRGDAs, Reserve Component, and others.** *(For information on with whom and how to work with others, see Section VIII entitled Working with Family Support Network, page 32.)*
- ★ **Know DoD and Army policies.** Understand regulatory guidance to effectively manage and/or implement responsibilities. *(The RDC training provides this information. See also Operation READY Smart Book.)*
- ★ **Set boundaries for personal and family time.**
- ★ **Know community resources and how to make referrals.** *(A list of community agencies is provided in Operation READY Smart Book.)*
- ★ **Have strong skills in:**
  - Communication
  - Listening
  - Crisis management *(For further guidance, see Crisis Management, Section X, page 43.)*
  - People skills (including how to deal with difficult people).
- ★ **Identify shortcomings and train early.** *(For information on training opportunities, see Section V, Training, page 12.)*
- ★ **Assign responsibilities.**
- ★ **Cross-train personnel.**
- ★ **Utilize checklists.** *(See checklist in RDC Tasks in Deployment Cycle, Section VI, pages 17-23.)*
- ★ **Maintain and foster genuine care and concern for family needs.**

## V. TRAINING AND RESOURCES FOR RDC

### Training

It is essential to be trained before unit deploys. The following training is available for rear detachment commanders:

- **RDC Online Course** – a comprehensive web-based training in which a series of modules are completed to demonstrate knowledge of policies and abilities to handle different RDC matters such as finance, supply and logistics, security, FRGs, redeployment activities, and casualty notification. This training also provides skill-building exercises to enhance requisite skills needed, such as interpersonal skills. A certificate is awarded upon completion. The RDC online course is located on [www.MyArmyLifeToo.com](http://www.MyArmyLifeToo.com).
- **Local Rear Detachment Course** – This rear detachment training course, provided by Army Community Service (ACS), focuses on family readiness. The training provides an overview of the RDC role, overview of family readiness systems, and reviews military and civilian community resources. In addition, the training identifies family issues and RDC tasks during each phase of the deployment cycle and discusses how to address different family issues as well as crisis intervention. A certificate is awarded upon completion.
- **Command Rear Detachment Commander's Resident Course** – face-to-face training that addresses all areas of responsibility of the RDC as well as special issues (such as dealing with the media) and incorporates scenario exercises.
- **Stand-up actual rear detachments during National Training Center (NTC) and Combat Training Center (CTC) rotations and train-up** – an opportunity to gain experience performing the actual RDC duties and handling a variety of Soldier and family issues.

- **Soldier/Family Readiness Database training (Guard only)**
  - training on the use of this database for record keeping provided by the National Guard State Program Offices.
- **FRG training** – RDCs should attend FRG training or a training given to both FRG leaders and RDCs to establish teamwork and coordination of efforts.
- **FRG leader Online Course** – this online FRG leader training accessed via the web at [www.MyArmyLifeToo.com](http://www.MyArmyLifeToo.com) focuses on the management of FRG operations and addresses how to assist families on a wide range of family issues.
- **FRGDA training** – assistants should take the RDC and FRG online courses to facilitate their understanding of roles and responsibilities.

## Resources

- **Operation READY Smart Book** – provides resources for RDC use as well as information on an array of topics related to taking care of Soldiers and families during deployment cycle.
- **Operation READY Family Readiness Group Leader's Handbook** – provides information on how to set up FRGs and guidance on the implementation of FRG activities; also specifies the company level FRG leader's responsibilities and has a checklist of FRG's tasks during deployment cycle.
- **Phone lists** – collect, update, and use community resource directories available to identify phone numbers of agencies that can assist Soldiers and families. (ACS and the Reserve Component Family Programs Office maintain a comprehensive resource file on military and community agencies which RDCs may access.)
- **Center for Army Lessons Learned Web site** – review reports and other products containing important information on lessons learned (<http://call.army.mil>).

- **Virtual Family Readiness Group (vFRG) Web System** – provides the functionality of an FRG in an ad hoc and on-line setting to meet the needs of geographically dispersed units and families across all components of the Army. The vFRG ([www.armyfrg.org](http://www.armyfrg.org)) links the deployed Soldier, family, FRG leader, unit commander, rear detachment, and other family readiness personnel on their own controlled access web portal to facilitate the exchange of information and provide a sense of community, using technology to automate manual processes and provide enhanced services and communications.



## Part II: Family Readiness System

*The second part of this handbook focuses on the battalion RDC's role and coordination with other components in the family readiness system. This part talks about activities at both the unit level and at the Army level to ensure an effective system is in place for family assistance.*

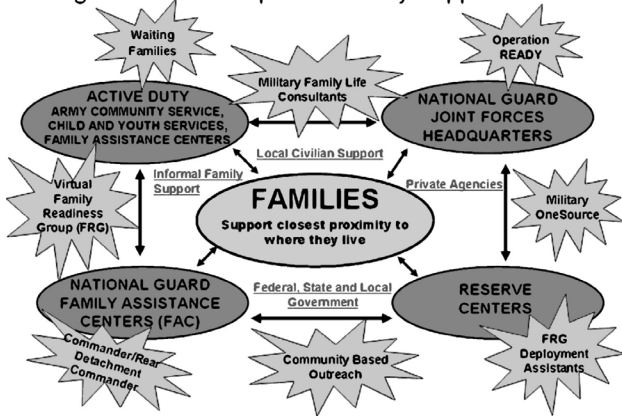
### **Unit Level**

At the unit level, commanders develop a family readiness plan (FRP). This plan specifies the activities and programs designed to support families during deployment, casualty notification procedures, support to be provided to FRGs, and other operational procedures. During deployment, the RDC carries out the RDC's responsibilities as well as works in partnership with the FRG and garrison elements to maintain unit family readiness. To assist the RDC and the FRG in its efforts, both the RDC and FRG access the Integrated Multi-Component Family Support Network (IMCFSN). *(For further details on IMCFSN, see the next page.)*

## Army Level

With Expeditionary Army missions involving all components (i.e., Active, National Guard and Reserve), the Army has established an integrated system which allows equal access to active duty, Guard and Reserve family support networks. Components of these networks can be utilized to conduct trainings for unit families and to refer families for assistance. Further, increased collaborative arrangements between the military and civilian community have been (and continue to be) made to serve geographically dispersed families better. In addition, the Army has created a variety of tools and resources for FRGs and families to support family readiness efforts.

### Integrated Multi-Component Family Support Network

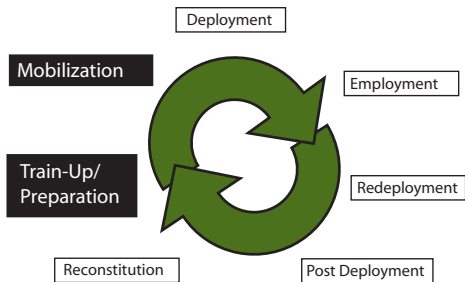


## VI. RDC TASKS IN DEPLOYMENT CYCLE

The RDC is expected to support Soldiers and families in the different phases of the deployment cycle. The checklist, appearing on the following pages, identifies the specific actions the RDC needs to perform to take care of families.

### Train-Up/Preparation and Mobilization Phases

The focus of these phases is on unit and Soldier preparations for military mission and family readiness.



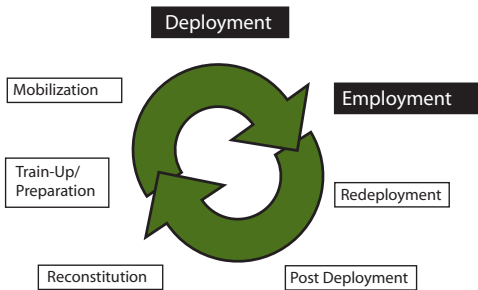
- Maintain alert rosters for all companies and detachments prepared by S1 Noncommissioned officer in charge.
- Network. Make contact with military and civilian community agencies to identify referral points of contact and to enhance knowledge of services and support available to unit leadership and families. (For a list of agencies, see Operation READY Smart Book.)
- Appoint FRG leaders and RDC. Ensure RDC and FRG leaders receive online and local training from Army Community Service or Reserve Component Family Programs Office.

- ❑ Review FRG SOPs.
- ❑ Request and establish a vFRG web site for the battalion ([www.armyfrg.org](http://www.armyfrg.org)).
- ❑ Collect family assistance data during the unit Soldier Readiness Processing (SRP) and Pre-deployment Processing (PDP). (Note: ACS can assist units in ensuring Family Assistance Information Sheets are completed by Soldiers mobilizing or deploying from an active duty installation.) It is important to identify all family members and next of kin as well as to assess family issues before deployment. This includes knowing child care arrangements and children's schools. (For sample Family Assistance Information Sheet, see Operation READY Smart Book.)
- ❑ Assist FRGs with maintaining current family member telephone rosters.
- ❑ Plan and schedule a pre-deployment briefing for all Soldiers and family members. Work with ACS or the Reserve Component Family Programs to set up the briefing. Inform FRG leaders so that families can be notified. Publish agenda for family members in advance.
- ❑ Provide mailing addresses for deployed Soldiers to family members.
- ❑ Publish and provide family members with a "family assistance handbook" that contains basic phone numbers and information (See Operation READY Soldier/Family Deployment Handbook).
- ❑ Collect contact information for all FRG leaders.
- ❑ Meet with FRG leaders in conjunction with commanders to discuss how families will be supported, FRG activities, communication between RDC and FRG, and to identify at-risk families.
- ❑ Ensure phone numbers for Rear Detachment, FRG leaders, and Family Assistance Centers are widely distributed.

- Provide families with checklists to help them prepare for deployment (See Operation READY Soldier/Family Deployment Handbook).
- Develop unit instructions on what to do when a family member has a problem.

## Deployment and Employment Phases

In the deployment and employment phases, units have left the home station and are in the theatre of operations performing their assigned mission. Individual Soldiers, who are assigned to augment the unit or replace Soldiers in theatre, also deploy during this time. The focus of concern is assisting families with the stresses of the separation and deployment.

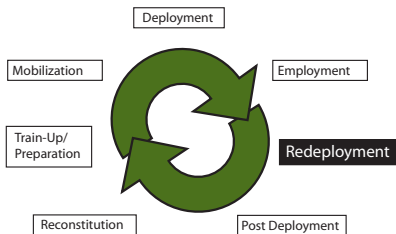


- Maintain communication with FRG leaders.
- Coordinate with unit FRG leaders to provide support and assistance for FRG activities during deployment.
- Provide command information from forward deployed commander to FRG leaders (and FRGs) via command information briefings, postings for vFRG web site and FRG newsletters, and messages for FRG telephone tree.

- ❑ Establish communication systems and/or provide FRG leaders with information so families can keep in touch with deployed Soldiers. Establish an internet connection so family members can send email messages. Provide information on where and when video teleconferences are scheduled with deployed unit.
- ❑ Promote activities and efforts that specifically support children of deployed Soldiers and civilians or include children.
- ❑ Maintain a record of all family member requests for assistance and follow-up actions.
- ❑ Assist and refer families who are experiencing problems to appropriate agencies. Follow up with families and notify deployed commander, as appropriate.
- ❑ Establish a plan to welcome new families, provide pre-deployment assistance if needed, and connect them with the FRG.
- ❑ Help sustain the FRG by determining how to use different FRG activities (i.e., meetings, phone, newsletter, and educational briefings) to support unit families effectively. The information, skill development, and resources needed are expected to be diverse across unit families.
- ❑ Support families of killed and wounded Soldiers, referring them to military and community counseling and assistance programs as required.
- ❑ Be alert for signs of compassion fatigue.

## Redeployment

Soldiers begin post-conflict/mobilization processing in-theatre, either individually or with a unit, in the redeployment phase. This redeployment is for Rest and Relaxation (R & R) or return to home station (Active) or demobilization station (Reserve). In this phase, the focus of unit and support efforts is on preparing Soldiers and families for the Soldiers' return.

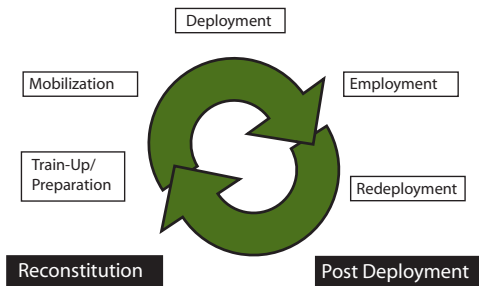


- Get list of returning Soldiers from unit leadership in theatre.
- Notify FRGs of redeployment dates once authorized for release.
- Coordinate with ACS, Reserve Component Family Programs or Chaplain to provide reunion and reintegration training that includes changes in relationships education/briefing for family members (including children) before redeployment.
- Provide families of deployed Soldiers and civilians, as well as designated care providers, with reintegration information before redeployment.
- Provide opportunity for families and children to receive information materials, briefings, and/or classes on important issues and available services (related to and including TRICARE, benefits, returning to work, health symptoms and distress, and taxes). Provide Deployment Contingency Support (DCS) information to family members prior to return of Soldiers.
- Coordinate Military Family Life Consultants and Military One Source support programs for the unit with ACS or the Reserve Component Family Programs Coordinator.
- Identify and refer families who have experienced problems during deployment to appropriate military and civilian agencies.

- ❑ Plan and coordinate reunion and homecoming ceremony and activities with FRG leaders and home station. Involve employers of redeploying Guard and Reserve Soldiers in homecoming ceremonies and reunion activities.
- ❑ Advise unit commander on potential family issues of returning Soldiers.
- ❑ Reestablish case continuity with Family Advocacy and State Family Program Directors (SFPD).

## Post Deployment and Reconstitution

In these phases, Soldiers return home and readjust to work and family life (i.e., reintegration and reconstitution). The focus of unit and support efforts is on helping Soldiers and families with reunion and transition issues and providing reunion assistance.



- ❑ Coordinate with unit FRG leaders to provide support and assistance for FRG homecoming events.
- ❑ Schedule block leave (liberal leave for civilians).
- ❑ Ensure Soldiers, who are released from medical treatment facilities or depart theatre via emergency leave, complete redeployment and post deployment tasks of the Deployment Cycle Support (DCS) process.



- ❑ Provide updated manifests to appropriate military agencies.
- ❑ Ensure media coverage is scheduled for reunion and appreciation events and brief Soldiers, civilians, and families on how to handle media inquiries.
- ❑ Conduct welcoming receptions for returning Soldiers. Execute homecoming ceremony/activities.
- ❑ Identify and advise unit commander of at-risk families, families with issues during deployment, or potential family issues awaiting returning Soldiers and refer to appropriate agencies.
- ❑ Work out plan and coordinate service delivery. Coordinate with ACS, Reserve Component Family Programs, Chaplain, medical and other agencies to provide required and vital reunion-related training.
- ❑ Encourage Soldiers to seek help as a sign of strength.
- ❑ Provide families with information on screening and resources available to address reunion and reintegration issues such as deployment-related health concerns, post deployment stress, Soldier distress, suicide awareness, changes in relationships, marital relationships, communication with children and children's reactions, and substance abuse.
- ❑ Refer Soldiers and families to ACS, Reserve Component Family Programs, Chaplains, Military Family Life Consultants, Military One Source and other military and civilians for additional support.
- ❑ Ensure families of fallen or wounded warriors are aware of and connected to support networks.
- ❑ Address combat operational stress reaction and post traumatic stress disorder. (For information about these issues, see Operation READY Smart Book.)

## VII. FAMILY READINESS GROUPS (FRGs)

The Family Readiness Group (FRG) is an official Army organization sponsored by command. FRG membership comprises Soldiers, civilian employees, family members (immediate and extended) and volunteers assigned to the unit. Its purpose is to provide social and emotional support and to keep unit families informed via a structured communication network between command and families. This support is designed to sustain families and ease the stress associated with family separations and deployments. Typically, FRGs are established at the company level with guidance and support from the battalion commander and his/her staff. (For guidance on FRG operations for commanders, consult AR 608-1, Appendix J which is provided in the Operation READY Smart Book. For information on implementation of FRG activities at the company level, consult the Operation READY Family Readiness Group Leader's Handbook.)

### **FRG Mission and Activities**

The FRG serves as a conduit for information, mutual support, and concern. The type and scope of activities conducted by an FRG depends on the commander's budget for FRG activities; identified needs; command interest and emphasis; number of FRG members, time, energy and creativity of FRG membership; make up of the FRG (i.e., Soldier and family demographics); unit's training and deployment schedule; and geographical dispersion of families. The following chart represents primary FRG activities.

FRG Activities	
Mission Essential	Additional Mission Essential
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• FRG member meetings</li> <li>• FRG staff and committee meetings</li> <li>• Publication and distribution of FRG newsletters</li> <li>• Maintenance of updated family rosters and family readiness information</li> <li>• FRG member telephone trees and email distribution lists</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pre-deployment and reunion briefings for family members through ACS, Reserve Component Family Programs or Chaplain</li> <li>• Classes and workshops</li> <li>• Volunteer recognition</li> <li>• Newcomer orientations</li> <li>• Frequent telephone contact with family members</li> </ul>
Nonessential Mission Activities	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social activities</li> <li>• Fundraising Activities</li> </ul>	

## Army Support of FRGs

### Appropriated Funds (APF)

Because FRGs are an official Army program, commanders are authorized to use appropriated funds (APFs) to support FRG mission activities. APFs are to be used to support both the FRG's volunteers and activities. (For detailed guidance, refer to AR 608-1, Appendix J.) The support that is actually provided is dependent upon command discretion and budget. However, commanders are authorized to provide the following to FRGs:

- Government office space and equipment (e.g., office/meeting

- space, telephone, fax, computer, email, scanner, copier, equipment, and administrative supplies for official FRG business)
- Telephonic communications for FRG personnel to use for official calls only
  - Government paper and printing supplies for official FRG newsletters relaying information from command and to support FRG mission activities
  - Official mail for official, mission-related purposes and as approved by the commander (e.g., FRG newsletters containing official information)
  - Access to government vehicles for official FRG activities
  - Travel expenses of official statutory volunteers. Authorized FRG volunteer travel to geographically dispersed members of the FRG where commander approved and directly in support of the FRG mission
  - Training expenses of statutory FRG volunteers (i.e., enrollment, travel, per diem and other expenses) depending upon command preapproval and availability of funds
  - Reimbursement of official volunteer incidental expenses (out-of-pocket expenses such as child care, telephone bills, mileage, and other expenses in accordance with chapter 5 of AR 608-1, Army Community Service Center, and Commander's FRG Budget SOP) for FRG volunteers with prior approval of the responsible commander (Note: reimbursement is limited and the commander should inform the FRG leader on reimbursement so that the FRG leader can manage FRG volunteers' expectations)
  - Official certificates of recognition for volunteers or volunteer incentive awards
  - Child care for command-sponsored training
  - Child care, education and other youth services for FRG activities or for family support for FRGs whose Armed Forces members are assigned to or activated in support of contingency operation.

## Virtual Family Readiness Group (vFRG)

The Army has established a Virtual FRG (vFRG) web site (<http://www.armyfrg.org>) to allow units to conduct certain FRG activities online. Having such a web site enables units to reach families where they live as well as assist geographically dispersed families. The vFRG can be used to: post FRG newsletters, provide information on the unit and issues of concern, update telephone tree and email lists, provide two-way instant messaging, post pictures and articles for download, and maintain communication with families and between families and deployed Soldiers. The unit commander (the RDC during deployment) controls and approves all content and users, who must be registered to access the web site. In sum, the RDC is in charge of the vFRG established at battalion level (with web pages for companies) and must monitor this web site for operational security. Further, the RDC serves as the official source for any unit news posted and approves all FRG content posted.

## Family Readiness Group Deployment Support Assistant (FRGDA)

The Family Readiness Group Deployment Support Assistant (FRGDA) is a component of the Army's official FRG program. The FRGDA is a paid position supervised by the unit commander. In the Active Component, the number of FRGDAs varies across divisions/corps. They are typically assigned to support brigade (or battalion) units with a high number of deployments. In the Guard, there is one FRGDA assigned at the state level. In the Reserves, the number of FRGDAs assigned to the Reserve Regional Readiness Commands varies.

The role of the FRGDA is to provide administrative support to both commanders and FRG leaders in support of family readiness programs and activities. (Note: The FRGDA is not to impinge on the role and responsibilities of the FRG leader, but to contribute to the FRG's efforts to assist families.) This administrative support is particularly helpful in lightening the burden on FRG leaders. The actual tasks performed are dependent upon unit needs, command direction (i.e., RDC during deployment), FRGDA's position description, and number of FRGs, but may include:

- Assisting with preparation of unit pre-deployment and reunion activities
- Scheduling and coordinating family readiness training or unit sponsored training for Soldiers and families
- Working with RDCs to provide FRG leaders with timely and accurate information
- Helping develop and distribute unit newsletters, announcements, and flyers
- Coordinating video teleconferences between deployed Soldiers and families
- Maintaining a list of FRG leaders
- Assisting in establishing and updating FRG rosters
- Identifying POCs and obtaining information on community resources
- Providing referrals to community agencies
- Helping FRGs with producing newsletters, flyers, and activity calendars; submission of volunteer forms; scheduling and coordinating FRG meetings and events; arranging guest speakers for FRG meetings or events; and FRG mailings.
- Work collaboratively with ACS to ensure broad range of classes and support are offered to FRG members.

## How RDC Works with FRGs

### FRG Leaders

A battalion RDC oversees and supports all company FRGs directly and indirectly through company level RDC and the battalion FRG steering committee. When there is a battalion FRG, the battalion RDC works with the battalion FRG leader in the same manner as described below.

### ***Responsibilities of the Company FRG leader***

The FRG leader role is held by a family member approved by the unit commander. The responsibilities of the FRG leader are to:

- Support commander's family readiness goals
- Provide overall leadership of the FRG (which includes planning, running and supervising FRG activities)
- Ensure the FRG's communication systems effectively keep families informed
- Provide timely, accurate information from command to families
- Recruit the volunteers needed to conduct required FRG activities as well as those activities requested by command
- Ensure families are referred to appropriate military and community organizations for needed assistance
- Identify important FRG and family issues and inform command
- Assist command in maintaining contact information for families, especially family members that leave area during deployment.

### ***RDC Responsibilities to FRGs***

- Serve as unit commander's representative at home station while unit is deployed
- Handle legal and administrative responsibilities of unit commander for FRG operations (e.g., oversight of FRG's informal fund, approve volunteer agreements for FRG volunteers, develop necessary SOPs, authorize resources)

- Serve as FRG leader's link to deployed unit and ensure FRG leader has access to RDC
- Select FRG leaders, when necessary, and ensure FRG leaders (and volunteers) receive required training
- Coordinate with FRG leader on information to be disseminated to families
- Support FRGs (e.g., attend FRG meetings and events, maintain roster used for FRG telephone tree, approve content of vFRG postings and FRG newsletters)
- Discuss FRG and family issues and help FRGs deal with these issues
- Identify appropriate agencies for FRGs to refer families for assistance and take other actions as needed to help resolve family issues
- Plan and notify FRG leader on all unit briefings, welcome home activities, and other unit activities
- Notify Care Team Coordinator and/or FRG leader when a Care Team is needed for a casualty or trauma in a unit
- Be clear about the FRG and Care Team's role in casualty support. FRGs and Care Teams are not involved in casualty notification; they are only involved in family assistance after notification, if requested.



## Keys to successful working relationship

- ★ Understand each other's roles and responsibilities
- ★ Define commander/military issues vs FRG issues
- ★ Begin communication prior to deployment to develop relationship and to discuss important issues (including tough topics such as casualty notification)
- ★ Establish communication methods and maintain two-way communication
- ★ Know organizational structure (i.e., identify chain of command within RD for FRG and have FRG identify key FRG volunteers) and ensure each has appropriate contact information
- ★ Aim to speak with one voice
- ★ Demonstrate mutual respect.

## FRG Steering Committee

A FRG steering committee (sometimes called advisory committee) is typically established at the battalion level by the battalion commander. The purpose of the FRG steering committee is to provide information and advise company FRG leaders on the battalion commander's family readiness plans and policies, FRG activities needed, and emerging FRG and family issues. The RDC is responsible for meeting with the committee to discuss FRG issues as well as to provide guidance to the committee in its efforts to support company level FRGs.

## VIII. WORKING WITH FAMILY SUPPORT NETWORK

A battalion RDC is responsible for taking care of 500 to 900 Soldiers' families including extended family members (especially parents) and caregivers of children of deployed personnel. To support a large number of families effectively, working with other individuals and agencies is essential. Listed below are key groups that provide assistance to families. Tying in to this family support network reduces the burden on the RDC and enhances RDC's credibility with families. Efforts that promote families' positive perceptions of leadership will help to gain families' support of the unit and reduce deployed Soldiers' distractions in theatre.

### ACS and Family Program Offices

Army Community Service and the Reserve Component Family Program are the primary sources of personal and family readiness services and resources for commanders, FRGs, Soldiers and families. These agencies can assist in a variety of ways:

- Pre-deployment and reunion briefings
- Trainings on various topics for unit leadership, Soldiers, families, and FRGs
- Services focusing on military and family life issues (e.g., deployment support, family advocacy, relocation assistance, financial assistance, employment assistance, new parent support)
- Educational/informational materials
- Involvement in Soldier Readiness Processing (SRP)
- Family Assistance Center (FAC)
- Coordination with other services and/or referrals
- FRG statutory volunteer support
- Military Family Life Consultants and Military One Source support.

Although a garrison level program, ACS reaches out to and serves National Guard and Reserve units as well. The delivery of family services for National Guard families is coordinated through both Family Assistance Centers as well as the Family Program Office of the Joint Force Headquarters for each state. (For information on Guard family programs and contact information, visit the web site [www.GuardFamily.org](http://www.GuardFamily.org).) Family services for Reserve families are coordinated through the Family Program Office at Regional Readiness Commands. (For information on Reserve family programs and contact information, visit the web site [www.arfp.org](http://www.arfp.org).) However, the unit (specifically the Rear Detachment and FRG) are the organizations with key responsibility for assisting families. Thus ACS and Reserve Component Family Program offices are valuable resources for the RDC and FRG.

## Chaplain and Unit Ministry Team

Chaplains and the unit ministry team (UMT) support units, Soldiers and families with the deployment cycle by:

- Providing religious support
- Serving as part of crisis response team (e.g., serve as referral contact for individuals experiencing suicidal ideation; serve on casualty notification team)
- Serving as a counseling point of contact; pastoral counseling
- Attending and participating in unit pre-deployment briefings
- Conducting training and workshop activities for Soldiers and families to address reintegration and relationship issues (e.g., suicide awareness and prevention training, marriage enrichment programs, and marital assessment instrument)
- Conducting the Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST) for unit leadership to identify at-risk individuals
- Supporting the RDC and FRG.

In addition, Chaplains are involved in casualty operations. They accompany the Casualty Notification Officer (CNO) and provide solace and comfort to next of kin (NOK). Chaplains also support the community by providing information and guidance on how to respond to someone experiencing grief or trauma.

Chaplains are also a vital member of the family support network. The RDC should work with Chaplains in the following ways:

- Exchange contact information
- Ensure volunteers, who will serve on Battalion Care Team, receive training from Chaplain or ACS before deployment
- Request Chaplain accompany and assist Battalion Care Team and FRG members when needed
- Refer Soldiers and families when appropriate
- Identify and address Soldier and family concerns
- Identify families with high levels of stress/separation issues for follow-up after unit return
- Coordinate and schedule briefings for families and FRGs.

## Child and Youth Services (CYS)

The Army's Child and Youth Services (CYS) program offers child care on military installations as well as an array of child care arrangements in communities throughout the nation to address the child care needs of deployed Soldiers. In addition, CYS offers youth programs on post and in communities through partnerships with Boys and Girls Club and 4-H. CYS has designed a number of child and youth programs that focus on deployment support as well as has prepared resources for children and youth. CYS also conducts outreach efforts such as school liaison services which focus on educating schools about children's reactions to deployment. CYS is a valuable resource for assistance in locating child care and youth services and working with schools and community agencies to support military children and youth.

**Operation Military Child Care** – A Department of Defense initiative to help families/child care guardians of geographically dispersed active duty personnel and mobilized National Guard and Reserve service members find affordable child care options in their local communities. Under this initiative, reduced child care fees are offered at licensed child care providers. To locate child care options, contact the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies (NACCRRA) at 1-800-424-2246 or on the internet at [www.ChildCareAware.org](http://www.ChildCareAware.org).

**Operation Military Kids** – Army CYS partnerships with youth serving organizations in targeted states with high deployment rates establishes local support networks that connect and support the youth of mobilized National Guard and Reserve service members. Through these community support networks, military youth receive a wide range of recreational, social and educational programs in communities where they live. For further information, visit the web site [www.operationmilitarykids.org](http://www.operationmilitarykids.org).

**Military One Source (MOS)** – MOS (available 24/7) is also an excellent resource to help Soldiers and families find quality child care in their communities.

### **Family Assistance Center (FAC)**

In the initial months of a large-scale deployment or mass casualty event, a Family Assistance Center (FAC) is temporarily set up at installations (by Active Component) or regionally in each state (by National Guard). Regardless of which component sets up a FAC, the intent is to service the Total Army Force (i.e., all families). The purpose of the FAC is to provide information, assistance, guidance, and referrals to units and families at one location. In other words,

the FAC is a one stop resource. This is primarily done by having representatives from a diverse range of agencies available to assist families.

The RDC can assist the FAC by:

- Identifying the number of unit families
- Identifying family needs
- Promoting the FAC to families and FRGs
- Coordinating briefings for families through the FAC.

## **Garrison Commander**

For RDCs in the active component, as the unit commander's representative, it is important to maintain contact with the garrison commander. Debrief the garrison commander periodically to keep the garrison commander informed of important family issues of concern and issues which need to be addressed at the garrison level. Also since the garrison will fund homecoming events, be aware of these events to guide planning of the unit homecoming events and to keep families informed of all events.

## **Military Community Agencies**

In addition to Army Community Service, Reserve Component Family Programs, and Chaplains there are a number of other military agencies that can offer specific help to military families. These agencies can provide valuable information at briefings conducted before, during and after a deployment. Agencies that the RDC will want to coordinate with as well as refer families, to include:

- Judge Advocate General (JAG)
- Finance

- Social Work Service (SWS)
- Army Substance Abuse Program (ASAP)
- Medical Treatment Facility (MTF)
- Mental Health Services.

## Civilian Community Agencies

There is a vast array of agencies that can help identify local services or can provide services to military families. A list of commonly used agencies appears below. A more extensive list is provided in the Operation READY Smart Book.

- American Red Cross
- Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW)
- U. S. Department of Veterans Affairs
- Chambers of Commerce
- United Way
- National Committee for Employer Support for Guard and Reserve (ESGR)
- The local *First Call for Help* organization
- Salvation Army
- USDA Extension offices
- County services.

Knowing what military and community support services are available and how to access these services is important to being able to refer families to appropriate agencies for assistance. Sharing this knowledge with the Rear Detachment and FRGs is essential to assisting families, especially geographically dispersed and geographically isolated families. Further, networking with these agencies ensures smooth coordination of service delivery for families and facilitates resolving issues.

## IX. MILITARY RESOURCES FOR FAMILIES

***MyArmyLifeToo.com*** – Official Army Family web site that provides families with access to information about programs and services and serves as a “one-stop” knowledge center

***Military One Source (MOS) (www.militaryonesource.com)*** – A toll free telephone number with 24/7 capability and web site are available for confidential counseling at any time, to either speak or email a masters level consultant

***Virtual Family Readiness Group*** – The Virtual Family Readiness Group (vFRG) web system provides the functionality of a traditional FRG in an ad hoc and on-line setting to meet the needs of geographically dispersed units and families across all components of the Army. The vFRG links deployed Soldiers, families, FRG leaders, unit commanders, rear detachments, and other family readiness personnel on their own controlled access web portal to facilitate the exchange of information and provide a sense of community, using technology to automate manual processes and provide enhanced services and communications.

***Military Family Life Consultants*** – Experienced consultants available to Soldiers and families for emotional guidance and support to assist with all phases of deployment and as support for staff and leaders

***Army Family Team Building (AFTB)/Guard Family Team Building (GFTB)*** – Both online and classroom-based training are available to help families learn about Army culture and adjust to military life



**Operation READY** – A series of reference materials developed by the Army to assist Soldiers, families, and unit leadership with family readiness and deployments. Operation READY materials include the requirements and lessons learned from Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom. Operation READY materials are available from ACS and the Reserve Component Family Programs. They can also be downloaded from [www.myarmylifetoo.com](http://www.myarmylifetoo.com), under Managing Deployment.

**Operation Military Child Care** – A Department of Defense initiative to help families/child care guardians of geographically dispersed active duty personnel and mobilized National Guard and Reserve service members find affordable child care options in their local communities. Under this initiative, reduced child care fees are offered at licensed child care providers. To locate child care options, contact the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies (NACCRRA) at 1-800-424-2246 or on the internet at [www.childcareaware.org](http://www.childcareaware.org).

**Operation Military Kids** – Army CYS partnerships with youth serving organizations in targeted states with high deployment rates establishes local support networks that connect and support the youth of mobilized National Guard and Reserve service members. Through these community support networks, military youth receive a wide range of recreational, social and educational programs in communities where they live. For further information, visit the web site [www.operationmilitarykids.org](http://www.operationmilitarykids.org).

## X. PREPAREDNESS FOR RDC CHALLENGES

This section provides guidance for different situations the RDC will encounter. While certain issues typically emerge during deployments, each deployment is unique. Thus, the RDC needs to be prepared to handle both the expected and unexpected. Having established procedures and guidelines can help the RDC to respond effectively.

### Family Assistance Protocol

The RDC (and FRG) will face a wide range of family issues. Addressing family issues before they become a crisis is very important. For this reason, the RDC is responsible for having a plan of how family issues will be addressed. Being knowledgeable about military and community services is essential to refer families to appropriate agencies; however this is not enough. Operational procedures are needed. The following five-step procedure is offered as an effective way to respond to family calls/contacts:

- 1) Identify issues. Listen to family. Bear in mind, it is not uncommon for families to present with multiple issues.
- 2) Probe with questions to assess the nature of the problem. Be on the lookout for warning signs for conditions such as stress, depression, abuse, and post-traumatic stress disorder. The table on the following page provides examples of how issues can be defined in different ways and why asking follow-up questions is necessary. (See table on page 42).
- 3) Determine type of assistance needed (i.e., information, referral or other) and who can provide the assistance (i.e., RDC, FRG, or other). Provide referrals and/or assistance that are the RDC's responsibility.

- 4) Record action. Both the RDC and FRG should maintain a contact log.
- 5) Follow-up.

Learning the appropriate course of action requires information and experience. The Army has provided tools to assist RDCs in this effort. First, to gain experience in handling issues, the training offered to RDCs includes scenario exercises and discussions. Second, a problem-solving guide in the Operation READY Smart Book identifies the Q&A procedures and referrals for different issues.

<b>Presenting Issue</b>	<b>Potential problems/needs</b>
<b><i>Financial problem</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of money</li> <li>• Mismanaged family monies; no money management skills</li> <li>• Problem paying bills</li> <li>• Spouse does not have access to Soldier's checking or savings account</li> <li>• Leave and Earnings Statement (LES) issues</li> </ul>
<b><i>Isolated</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Live far from military installation or other military families</li> <li>• Don't leave home</li> </ul>
<b><i>Difficulty coping</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Young and inexperienced</li> <li>• Unprepared for deployment</li> <li>• Deployment-related stress</li> <li>• Child neglect and abuse</li> </ul>
<b><i>Marital problems</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Infidelity or suspicion of infidelity</li> <li>• Emotional or physical abuse</li> <li>• Poor relationship</li> </ul>

## Rumor Control

It is inevitable that at some point(s) during a deployment, rumors will surface. In some cases, news media coverage of military operations will provoke families to seek information related to what they may have seen or heard. When families do not receive timely information, this can create panic or lead to gossip or rumors running rampant. It is essential that families receive timely and accurate information from the RDC to curtail rumors. The RDC (in conjunction with FRGs) need to convey to families that the RDC serves as the official source of information.

### Tips for getting timely and accurate information to families

- ★ Use FRGs as the conduit for information. Provide FRGs with the specific information to disseminate to families. Ensure information is passed on using multiple communication systems (e.g., FRG telephone tree, email, vFRG).
- ★ Visit FRG meetings to share information.
- ★ Conduct information briefings as often as needed.
- ★ Participate in media interviews.
- ★ Make sure FRGs do not take on too many responsibilities.

## Crisis Management

A RDC can expect to handle families that contact the RDC or FRG in a “crisis.” Information on what can create a crisis for families and ways to deal with individuals in a crisis is listed on the following page.

## Individuals in Crisis

An individual is in crisis when he/she experiences an event or series of events that temporarily cause the individual to feel unable to cope. There is a diverse range of events that can create a crisis for Soldiers and families. These events include:

- unexpected and unplanned events (e.g., accident, natural disaster)
- life or development events (e.g., death of an elderly parent, illness, and birth of a child). A deployment can be considered in this category because deployments are a part of military life.
- functional crisis occurs in families that are not coping or experiencing individual or family problems such as financial problems, substance abuse, family violence, and infidelity
- caregiver crisis occurs when something happens to the caregiver, such as an injury, illness or death, or for some other reason, the caregiver can no longer care for children of deployed personnel. In essence, the Family Care Plan is no longer valid.

### Tips for dealing with individuals in crisis

- ★ Recognize that an individual will be experiencing a range of emotions. An individual will most likely be expecting to get information or assistance that will solve the problem.
- ★ Treat the individual with care. Listen carefully and speak calmly.
- ★ Do not make promises that can't be kept. Assist when able and refer when a situation or issue is not your area of expertise. For example, do not handle individuals who are suicidal—refer them to the local suicide hotline, Mental Health Services, Social Work Service, or immediately call the military police.

- ★ Address the presenting problem(s). If an individual rambles when talking, try to identify a major issue of concern that can be solved easily. Solving an “easy” problem first can help to calm the individual and win trust.
- ★ Follow up to ensure the individual is getting the assistance needed and the issue is being addressed appropriately.

## Trauma and Casualty Procedures

It is essential that the RDC be familiar with trauma and casualty procedures in accordance with Army Regulation 600-8-1, Army Casualty Program. A copy of this regulation and other pertinent information can be found in the Operation READY Smart Book. In addition, this topic is addressed in the training available to RDCs and on the Army casualty web site (<https://www.hrc.army.mil/site/active/TAGD/CMAOC/cmaoc.htm>).

To prepare, RDCs are required BEFORE deployment to:

- Review casualty notification procedures for the brigade and Casualty Assistance Center
- Ensure all rear detachments are trained on casualty notification and assistance procedures
- Learn appropriate responses to questions about casualties; review casualty query response guide
- Be able to identify points of contact (e.g., installation Casualty Assistance Officer, Casualty Assistance Center, Casualty and Memorial Affairs Operations Center, and Medical Treatment Facilities)
- Discuss casualty notification procedures with FRG leaders and members. Clarify for them that they are not in the casualty notification chain.

- Help establish Battalion Care Team. [A Care Team is a group of pre-assigned volunteers who offer short term care and support (such as comfort, meals, child care, and home care assistance) to families. These FRG volunteers are identified and trained BEFORE deployment.]

## Wounded

In the event a Soldier is wounded, the RDC will be tasked to:

- Follow the guidance provided in the unit SOP on casualty assistance
- Track wounded Soldiers. [Note: Soldiers classified as Severely Disabled (i.e., categorized as Special Category or SPECAT) will receive assistance and support under the U.S. Army Wounded Warrior Program (AW2).]
- Notify Care Team coordinator and FRG leader after next of kin (NOK) have been officially notified.
- Communicate with family.
- Provide support to families as needed.
- Coordinate trauma counseling for Soldiers and families.
- Coordinate follow-on care as appropriate. [Note: Severely disabled Soldiers will be assigned a military unit in geographic proximity to Soldier after medical treatment to serve as a sponsor to aid in transition and access to military facility support.]

## Casualty

In the event a Soldier is killed, the RDC will be tasked to:

- Follow the procedures listed in the unit Casualty Assistance SOP.
- Notify primary and secondary next of kin, if appointed as CNO.
- Handle the calls and families seeking reassurance and information. [Note: Be prepared for a large volume of calls, especially when mass casualty.]

- Notify Care Team coordinator; however, the name cannot be provided until after the NOK has been officially notified.
- Deal with the media (e.g., handling release of injury or casualty information prior to official notification; giving media guidance to affected families). Seek guidance from Public Affairs Office and set up media center if necessary.
- Hold emergency notification meeting for families.
- Track Soldier remains through contacts with DA Casualty Assistance Center or the supporting Casualty Assistance Officer.
- Coordinate funeral honors team and memorial service (includes finding out final destination sight for remains, verifying transportation arrangements for family, ensuring volunteers for child care, ensuring FRG is notified of time and date, checking speeches, having photo of Soldier with frame, preparing letter of condolence).
- Coordinate grief counseling and other support from Army Community Service/Reserve Component Family Programs Office, Chaplain, FRG, and Battalion Care Team. [Note: The family will be receiving assistance with burial arrangements and access to entitlements from Casualty Assistance Officer. A Care Team is only sent if the family requests this assistance. (Refer to Operation READY Trauma in the Unit materials for more detailed information.)]

## Media Guidance

With round the clock news on television, radio and the internet, families are made aware very quickly. The media, in its effort to tell its story will want to interview military leadership and families. The media may also release information before it is officially released by the Army/Department of Defense. As a result, the RDC needs to be prepared to respond to the media's announcements. RDC can respond directly by agreeing to interviews to communicate



the Army's story. RDC can respond indirectly by providing timely information to families. In addition, the RDC is advised to provide media guidance to families. (Note: Consider having the PAO brief families on how to handle the media. Families can also be referred to AFTB Level III training which contains a chapter on public relations and current events.)

### **Tips for dealing with the media**

- ★ Notify PAO.
- ★ Prepare for interview. This includes developing 3-5 key points that express the Army message, determining the reporter's slant, reviewing ground rules, gathering facts and information, and rehearsing.
- ★ Know what not to discuss or say. Know how to respond to specific types of questions. Formulate answers in advance of interview to anticipated questions.
- ★ Maintain composure.
- ★ Use simple language. Keep answers brief and answer only the question that is asked.
- ★ If you don't know the answer, don't speculate. Instead say, "I don't know."
- ★ Be in charge of interview. End interview when appropriate.

## XI. SUMMARY HIGHLIGHTS

Here are the key points for RDCs to take away from this handbook.

- ★ The RDC serves as the unit commander during deployment. The RDC manages the command and control, administrative, logistical, operational, and training responsibilities of the unit. The RDC also supports the deployed unit by handling the in-and out-processing of Soldiers for deployments.
- ★ The RDC plays a critical role in deployment cycle support and family readiness. The RDC has an extensive list of tasks to support families and FRGs. A significant part of this effort is ensuring that families receive timely and accurate information. As the official source of information, the RDC must provide the FRG with information to be disseminated to families. The RDC is also responsible for reviewing and approving the content of vFRG web site postings and FRG newsletters.
- ★ The RDC does not work alone in supporting families, but serves as team player in the family support network. Coordinate with the FRG, ACS, Reserve Component Family Programs, Family Assistance Center, Chaplain and other organizations who are prepared and have the capability to support families. Maintain communication with and support these organizations.
- ★ Keeping in touch with families and ensuring families are referred to appropriate agencies for assistance are vitally important. When families feel supported, there are two positive outcomes. In the short-term, Soldiers in theatre will be less distracted by family issues. In the long-term, families will have more positive perceptions of unit leadership and Soldier retention decisions.

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## Web sites

### Military

Army Casualty Web site (also referred to as Casualty and Memorial Affairs Center or CMAOC )

([www.hrc.army.mil/site/active/TAGD/CMAOC/cmaoc.htm](http://www.hrc.army.mil/site/active/TAGD/CMAOC/cmaoc.htm))

Army Wounded Warrior Program

([www.aw2.army.mil](http://www.aw2.army.mil))

Child and Youth Services (CYS) Programs

(<http://www.armymwr.com/portal/family/childandyouth>)

## Notes



*Getting prepared — Staying prepared*

OPERATION  
**READY**

Resources for Educating About Deployment and You