



USSOUTHCOM Quality of Life Newsletter FALL 2003

This edition represents the inaugural version of a revised news and information newsletter designed especially to assist USSOUTHCOM personnel assigned “downrange” in the command area of responsibility (AOR). We have adopted a condensed newsletter version containing topical information with hyperlinks to more robust articles enabling the reader to quickly scan, select and digest information. Also, information will be grouped categorically rather than by service. The categories are: **DEPENDENT EDUCATION; HEALTHCARE; HOUSING; PAY / ENTITLEMENTS; or MISCELLANEOUS.** Each edition will display a **SUGGESTED LINKS** listing to add to your Internet browser favorites

Your suggestions to improve the content are invited. To email [click here](#) 
Or send to <mailto:tricarim@hq.southcom.mil>? **Subject=newsletter suggestion**

Address of suggested links

www.aflo.org

www.odedodea.edu/schools/nonDoD

www.state.gov/m/a/os/

www.state.gov/m/a/os/1253.htm

www.state.gov/m/a/os/c1702.htm

www.odedodea.edu/schools/nonDoD/select.htm

www.odedodea.edu/schools/nonDoD/pdf/adminHndbkDec.pdf

www.militaryonesource.com

Narrative

The Army Family Liason Office
(AFLO) family information resources

DODEA: Non-DoD schools

U.S. State Department Office of
Overseas Schools with an explanation
of the mission of the Office of Overseas
Schools.

U.S. State Department: American-
Sponsored Elementary and Secondary
Schools Overseas. Explanation of the
schools, their purpose and statistics

U.S. State Department Western
Hemisphere “Base Schools”

DoD Educational Activity explanation
of the U.S. State Department Base
Schools

The DoDEA Administrative Handbook
which explains “step by step” the Non
DoD schools program.

Military One Source On the Web and
24 hour 7 day/week assistance on
almost ANY topic
USER: southern
PASSWORD: command

DEPENDENT
EDUCATION

Information regarding eligible DoD dependent students enrolled in non-DoD schools located in Central and South America, Mexico, and the Caribbean are explained at www.odedodea.edu/schools/nonDoD. There can be found the policies and procedures of the Department of Defense Dependent Schools (DoDDS) "Non-DoD Schools Program (NDSP)". The information includes current Department of Defense (DoD), Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA), and U.S. State Department regulatory guidance including directives, instructions, regulations, manuals, and public laws. Topics addressed will include the full spectrum of student eligibility, approval of student enrollment, payment of tuition fees, and other authorized costs related to the education of eligible DoD dependent students enrolled in non-DoD schools located in Central and South America, Mexico, and the Caribbean.

The Administrative Handbook which explains "step by step" the schools program and processes is included at: www.odedodea.edu/schools/nonDoD/pdf/adminHndbkDec.pdf

The contents of the handbook is encouraged for those assigned as local Non - DoD Schools Program (NDSP) liaisons (i.e., Sending Organization's points of contact), DoD sponsors, and Commanders/Supervisors assigned to organizations and activities located in the countries serviced by the NDSP/Americas.

For more: www.odedodea.edu/schools/nonDoD

DEPENDENT
EDUCATION

Base Schools: In each of the Americas locations, the U.S. State Department has identified a "base school." These schools provide programs of education that are most in line with U.S. curriculum standards. A frequently asked question(FAQ):

Can I send my child to a local private school?

Although base schools have been identified to assist parents in selecting a school with an educational curriculum similar to that offered in a U.S. public school, parents have the freedom to choose any school they feel most appropriately fits their child's educational needs. However, authorized funding limits are established based on the rates charged at the base school. For a better understanding of Base Schools and their use or more information go to: www.odedodea.edu/schools/nonDoD/select.htm

DEPENDENT
EDUCATION

An explanation of the mission of the U.S. State Department Office of Overseas Schools is to promote quality educational opportunities at the elementary and secondary level for dependents of American citizens carrying out programs and interests of the U.S. Government abroad. For more go to www.state.gov/m/a/os/

For an explanation of the U.S. State Department American-Sponsored Elementary and Secondary Schools Overseas their purpose and statistics go to www.state.gov/m/a/os/1253.htm

To find a U.S. State Department Western Hemisphere "Base School" go to www.state.gov/m/a/os/c1702.htm

HEALTHCARE

TRICARE Formulary (Authorized Medication) Information

The Core Formulary listed on the web is a list of medications that ARE reimbursable:

http://www.pec.ha.osd.mil/BCF/BCF_genr_pf.htm. Some medications have quantity limits:

<http://www.pec.ha.osd.mil/qtylimit.htm>. Other medications require pre-authorization:

http://www.pec.ha.osd.mil/PA_Criteria_and_forms.htm. If a medication is NOT listed on the formulary – you will not be reimbursed!

HEALTHCARE

TRICARE ADFM Orthodontic Benefits.("braces") The TRICARE Family Member Dental Program offers coverage for orthodontic treatment up to a lifetime maximum of \$1,500 per family member. Family members who are eligible are spouses up to age 23 and children up to age 21 (age 23 if full-time students). There are some steps that you need to follow prior to the beneficiary initiating orthodontic treatment. This process is done to protect the beneficiary and ensure that the proposed treatment plan is appropriate. The steps necessary to obtain pre-authorization for orthodontic treatment will be reviewed and other facts will be presented that should make you a better dental consumer.

The Pre-Authorization "Orthodontic Package"

In order to evaluate a request for AD orthodontic care, a complete orthodontic package needs to be submitted in English and mailed to the TRICARE Support Office (TSO). The package must include the following information:

The United Concordia Non-Availability and Referral Form

The sponsor must complete blocks 1-9, 11, 15 and sign the form. All information requested is important for pre-authorization of treatment. A TLAC Authorized Orthodontist from the approved Lead Agent list must provide the treatment.

Proposed Orthodontic Treatment Plan and Estimated Length of Treatment

Your orthodontist should provide this information to you. This detailed plan must include a problem list and objectives, sequence and length of treatment. The orthodontist must indicate the type of appliances to be used to achieve the proposed plan.

Orthodontic Diagnostic Records

The orthodontist will obtain orthodontic study records prior to initiating treatment. You must submit the original or a copy of the complete diagnostic records. The records must include: 1) properly trimmed or articulated stone models of the patient's teeth, 2) photos of the patient's face (front and profile views), 3) photos of the patient's teeth (front, left and right sides, and each arch) and 4) panoramic and cephalometric (facial profile) X-rays. All records need to be submitted for review in order to establish the best course of treatment and to evaluate the proposed treatment plan by your orthodontist. These records will be returned to you once they are reviewed. Please use adequate packaging materials since the stone models are very fragile.

Timing of Orthodontic Treatment

One of the most difficult decisions you are faced with is deciding when to start orthodontic treatment, since TRICARE provides \$1,500 lifetime limited coverage per beneficiary. The American Association of Orthodontists recommends that all children have an orthodontic screening no later than age 7. This does not mean that every child age 7 requires braces. The importance of this screening exam is to determine any potential problems that may be able to be addressed early during the child's growth and development. In general, active orthodontic treatment ranges from 1 to 3 years depending on the severity of the problem and the cooperation of the patient. In certain situations, which require some type of growth modification, treatment may be done in multiple phases and may require a longer period of time to be completed. Treatment timing is important to the orthodontist, and it is also very important to you in order to be a wise dental consumer. The reason we request the sponsor's rotation date and the estimated length of treatment is to try to protect your money. You must understand that if the treatment is not completed at one location, the orthodontist that continues the care may charge a transfer fee or full fee and you may have already spent your lifetime coverage. In some situations, it is best to wait until you are able to complete the treatment at the same location. Other situations require starting treatment early in order to intercept some potential problems.

Continuation of CONUS Orthodontic Treatment

If orthodontic treatment was initiated in CONUS and the OCONUS orthodontist plans to continue the original treatment plan, then you must submit a completed Non-Availability and Referral Form, a copy of the original treatment plan, and a signed statement from the OCONUS orthodontist that the original treatment plan will be continued. If the OCONUS orthodontist wants to change the treatment plan, pre-authorization is required the same as if for a new case.

Submit AD pre-authorization requests to: Commander DDEAMC, LASE – B38801, Fort Gordon GA 30905-5650

Or call us toll free at: 888-777-8343, Option #3, commercial 706-787-2424, or DSN 773-2424.

HEALTHCARE

Air Force Virtual Record of Emergency Data (vRED). The vRED replaced the paper "DD Form 93, Record of Emergency Data," effective 27 Jan 03 as the only means available for airmen to provide personal emergency information. The new form provides the Air Force with information needed to contact family members if an airman suffers a serious illness, injury, or dies while on active duty. Accurate and current family contact information can prevent delays of medical, casualty, and death benefits for airmen and family members. It also avoids hours or even days of uncertainty during which casualty teams are sometimes left to track down next of kin. If you have not yet completed your vRED via the virtual MPF, it's imperative you do so immediately, as the suspense is 6 Oct 03. For more information about the vMPF or vRED call the Air Force Contact Center toll-free at 1 (866) 229-7074.

**PAY /
ENTITLEMENTS**

Imminent Danger Pay and Family Separation Allowance.

Hostile Fire/Imminent Danger Pay was increased to \$225 per month effective 1 Oct 02. USSOUTHCOM has two countries authorized Imminent Danger Pay (Colombia and Haiti).

Family Separation Allowance was increased to \$250 from 1 Oct 02 through 30 Sep 03.

DFAS should have made the appropriate rate changes to the pay system
For more info contact LT Jean Carrillo <mailto:carrillj@hq.southcom.mil> ;
Phone:(305) 437-1107, DSN 567-1107

MISCELLANEOUS

Career Field Merger Plan for USAF Manpower, Personnel, and Education & Training Specialties.

New guidance is pending from CSAF concerning the merger of USAF Manpower, Personnel, and Education & Training career fields in 2004. At the conclusion of HQ USAF's transition plan, all Manpower and Personnel officers will be integrated into a single AFS (36P). The three enlisted specialties will initially retain separate career tracks, but receive mid-career training designed to broaden their human resource management skills and prepare them for a single AFS (3S0) at the E-9 level. The overall impact to USSOUTHCOM should be minimal. In the short-term, officers and E-9s may come from either career track, thus retaining a strong tendency toward that specialty. The short-term effect on Manpower and Personnel specialists at E-8 and below will be transparent. Over the long-haul, USSOUTHCOM should realize the benefits of a better-trained, well-rounded USAF human resource management force. (SMSgt Hannon, SCJ1-M, ext 2010)

MISCELLANEOUS

Combined Federal Campaign-Overseas. The CFC-Overseas Campaign begins 1 October and runs through 10 December. All commands should have received their CFC-O materials, including information outlining report dates and requirements. Questions can be directed to the Community/Project Manager for USSOUTHCOM CFC-Overseas LT Carrillo, <mailto:carrillj@hq.southcom.mil> ; Phone: DSN 567-1107; (305) 437-1107

MISCELLANEOUS

US Airways introduced "Salute Savings," a discount program for U.S. military, with special fares as low as \$79 each way, based on roundtrip purchase. US Airways "Salute Savings" rates are available to active and reserve military and their immediate families through government-contracted commercial travel offices throughout the U.S. The fares are valid for tickets purchased through Dec. 31, 2003, for travel completed by Feb. 12, 2004. For more information go to:
www.usairways.com/about/press/nw_03_0421.htm

MISCELLANEOUS

Military One Source. Think of Military One Source as a virtual family support/services center, which may be accessed via the internet or via telephone (includes a toll free international number and Hispanic line). It provides information and answers to questions on health and well-being, personal issues, transition issues, and everyday issues. Consolidated information into one location and has a call center manned 24/7 to field questions and conduct research to assist you with your questions. You can access Military One Source (a 24/7 call center with internet access as well, Spanish language line also available) as follows:
Toll free number from US: 877-510-0320
Toll free number from outside US: 800-237-42374
Collect number from outside US (for those locations where 800 numbers don't work): 484-530-5888
Toll-free Hispanic call center: 888-732-9020
Hearing Impaired/TDD line: 800-346-9188
Internet access: www.militaryonesource.com
User ID: southern Password: command

MISCELLANEOUS

Army Activates Army Family Assistance Hotline

Alexandria, Va. -- The U.S. Army Community and Family Support Center, in conjunction with the Army Family Liaison Office, has established a toll-free Family Assistance Hotline. The number is (800) 833-6622. "The mission of our Family Assistance Hotline is to provide Army families caring support in the form of accurate information, useful resources, and helpful referrals related to family issues," said Brig.

Gen. Robert L. Decker, commander of the USACFSC, the Army agency responsible for Morale, Welfare, and Recreation. This Family Assistance Hotline is a 'safety net' for those who have exhausted all other resources," said Decker. "We will do everything we can to help each and every caller." The hotline is intended for use only by family members of soldiers on active duty as well as those in the Army National Guard and the Army Reserve called to active duty. After hearing a short, recorded message, callers will be able to speak to hotline staff members who have access to extensive reference materials. Staff will be unable to answer questions about casualties or soldiers wounded or missing in action. Because of the sensitivity of this information, the Army's Casualty Assistance Office will first contact the soldier's immediate family. Once the Army is certain that the soldier's next of kin have been notified, information about soldiers' deaths will then be released to the public through news releases and other means such as the media and Department of Defense Web sites. Due to operational security and force protection concerns, CFSC hotline staff cannot provide locator services (addresses) for soldiers or units, or information about operational matters. The hotline is toll free when called from the continental United States, Hawaii, Alaska, Puerto Rico, Guam and the Virgin Islands. Hotline staff will answer calls from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. daily Eastern Standard Time to answer family support-related questions. Emergency assistance will be provided between the hours of 8 p.m. and 8 a.m. EST. "Our staff will assist all callers by listening, explaining, and directing them to the most helpful resources we can," said Gail Lovisone, manager of CFSC's Family Assistance Hotline call center. Lovisone emphasized that the first place families of active duty soldiers should contact is Army Community Service or the unit rear detachment at the installation from which the soldiers deployed. The Army National Guard and the Army Reserve state and regional support commands also operate assistance lines, though they may not always be toll free. Information is also available at www.guardfamily.org and www.army.mil/usar. "We may often refer callers to the installation because installation ACS staff have local resource telephone numbers, and more detailed information," explained Lovisone. In addition to local and Army level assistance via telephone, family members can find answers to many routine questions about family readiness, Army Community Service, and deployment support resources online at the ACS Web site, www.goacs.org, and at the Army Family Liaison Office website, www.aflo.org. "We anticipate a high volume of calls, so we strongly urge people to use those Web sites as a first stop," noted Lovisone. Recognizing that not all households have Internet connectivity, Lovisone suggested families use computers at installation ACS centers or at on-post or local civilian libraries.

Web Site Updates Emergency Info for Civilian Employees by Staff Sgt. Marcia Triggs WASHINGTON (Army News Service, June 5, 2003) - The Army's Civilian Personnel office has designed a Web site to prevent the woeful scenario of not knowing whom to contact if one of its employees is injured or dies while on duty. The site was operational March 2002. However, more than two-thirds of the 230,000 Army appropriated and non-appropriated-fund civilians have not updated their emergency contact data at the site, www.cpol.army.mil. "I'm sure if more people knew what we saw after 9-11, when we started going through the process of providing data to the Casualty Assistance Office, they would make sure that their information was correct," said Patricia Nabinett, a personnel management specialist at the U.S. Total Army Personnel Command. The information provided to the site would be used to notify family or friends in the case of an emergency or death. Nabinett designed the site, to provide an automated method of accessing employees' emergency contact information. After Sept. 11, 2001, Nabinett said they discovered that the data for many employees was missing or outdated. There was not one system that held everyone's personal information, she said. Some managers had hard copies, and there was not a standard way to extract that type of information, she added. This Web site has been an innovative process for the Army, said Taiwana Smith, a personnel management specialist with PERSCOM. "The Air Force is interested in duplicating our system, and is looking to us for help on trying to improve its notification system," Smith said. "We've tried to make the process of updating the required information as simple as possible," Nabinett said. "We're not asking for data that we already have such as Social Security numbers and birthdays." After accessing the CPOL site, individuals can click on the "emergency contact data" tab to register and set up a password. Once a password is established, employees can go to the form and fill out the name, relationship, address and phone number of their appointed contact person. "It's crucial that we have the information," Smith said. "Before we can determine what benefits or entitlements the spouse or designated beneficiary gets, we have to notify that designated person." It can take up to several weeks to find family members or friends after a tragedy, and that increases the chances that the victims' loved ones could find out about the death through other channels, Nabinett said. The emergency contact person does not have to be a relative for civilians, Nabinett said. However, it's different for soldiers.

Soldiers are also required to keep Department of Defense Form 93, Record of Emergency Data, updated in their personnel files. Before any major deployment, part of the outgoing process is to have soldiers review their DD93 and their Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance form. Most Personnel Support Battalion's proactively get soldiers to review their forms during peacetime. But on one occasion, a PERSCOM official said, a soldier died in Germany, and the address for his next of kin was a post office box. For anyone who isn't sure about who's listed on his SGLI or on DD Form 93, just walk into any PSB

-- it's a simple process that can be done on a walk-in basis, said Sgt. Ricardo Rodriguez, a records noncommissioned officer for the Military Personnel Center in Arlington, Va. Most people have the wrong perception of who their next of kin is, and another misperception is when changes can be made to the SGLI, Rodriguez said. "The name on the emergency data form has to be someone of relationship to you, not a fiancé," Rodriguez said. "Also at any time changes can be made to the SGLI. The process for getting a divorce may take up to several months, but soldiers don't have to wait until it's final to change the name of their beneficiary."

Stabilization for Soldiers - High School Seniors MILPER Message Number 03-158: The Army has announced an update to this program which stabilizes soldiers who are parents of high school seniors. These procedures apply only to active Army personnel. Reserve component AGR personnel (USAR/ARNG) should contact their PMO/PMNCO at the appropriate personnel activity.

*Army personnel should apply NLT the start of the student's junior year, and not earlier than March 1 of the student's sophomore year (apply between March 1 and September 1). This application window also applies to students in year round schooling programs.

*Soldiers are still eligible to PCS before the start of the student's junior year.

*Specifically:

Graduation Date	Apply Not Earlier Than	Apply Not Later Than
2005	Mar-03	Sep-03
2006	Mar-04	Sep-04
2007	Mar-05	Sep-05
2008	Mar-06	Sep-06

Soldier's Action. The soldier should initiate a DA Form 4187 requesting stabilization through their Director to SCJ1. The DA Form 4187 will include:

(1) High School Student's Name and SSN (must be enrolled in DEERS).
 (2) Letter/Memo (attached to the DA Form 4187) from the school with projected graduation date of high school student.

(3) Soldiers must indicate any scheduled training during the high school academic year (e.g. TDY Enroute) on the DA Form 4187. EPMD PERSCOM will manage training on a case-by-case basis. For more details see MILPER Message Number 03-158 on the PERSCOM website at:

<http://www.perscomonline.army.mil/>

Internet Training Plan Partially Scrapped By Lara Jakes Jordan Associated Press

The Defense Department has canceled part of an Internet training plan that would have drastically cut classroom time at eight military schools nationwide. The military still offers optional Internet training — known as Advanced Distributed Learning — to personnel seeking promotions, Pentagon officials said. But a controversial part of the program, widely described as a cost-savings measure, would have standardized seven months of online studies during the total 10-month schooling.

The plan to require Internet training was scrapped in mid-March “at the discretion of senior leadership,” said Dr. Robert Wisher, the civilian ADL program director who works for Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld. “Among other factors, considerations were given to the development of interpersonal skills, networking opportunities, personal relationships, and other intangible benefits that a residence program affords,” Wisher said. Spearheaded during the Clinton administration, ADL allows personnel from all four branches of the military to complete coursework through online courses instead of at the eight schools. The Internet courses are especially valued by National Guard and reserves troops, many of whom have civilian jobs and are unable to take 10 months off work to attend classroom seminars. The schooling is a “necessary or important step” to qualify for promotions, a Pentagon spokeswoman said. Currently, 5,780 personnel are enrolled at the service schools. The spokeswoman did not immediately know the cost of the classroom training, but said it was part of 7 percent — or \$1.19 billion — set aside from the \$17 billion that the Defense Department budgets annually for all military schools. “It provides flexibility,” said retired Army National Guard Col. Dick O’Connor, a courseware development consultant for the Washington state National Guard. “There will still be requirements for hands-on, in-the-dirt resident training. But since that is the most expensive type of training, this is a strategy to provide a cost-effective way to bring the learning to the individual, rather than the individual to the learning.” The Defense Department dropped the plan to substitute the bulk of classroom time for online studies at the eight schools after a Feb. 11 letter to the General Accounting Office, from Rep. Ike Skelton, D-Mo., charged that doing so could have consequences “for the development of our military’s leaders.” Skelton is the leading Democrat on the House Armed Service Committee. “The essence of the War College is to prepare strategic leaders,” said retired Army Col. Zane Finkelstein, a former professor at the Army War College at Carlisle Barracks, Pa., and adviser to two former chairmen of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. “You cannot do that simply by transferring facts. What is required is thinking outside the box.” Nearly all Army generals, for example, have attended the Carlisle Barracks at one point in their careers, said Finkelstein,

who counts among his former students Air Force Gen. Richard B. Myers, the current Joint Chiefs of Staff chairman. Personnel from all four military branches are eligible to study at Carlisle. Army War College spokeswoman Carol Kerr said Monday that Carlisle faculty are examining curriculum as part of a routine review but now have no plans to cut back on classroom training. There are currently 339 students enrolled at the Army War College, Kerr said. The other seven schools that would have been impacted are by the Defense plan are located in Montgomery, Ala.; in Newport, R.I.; in Quantico, Va.; and at Fort Leavenworth, Kan.