



DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
WASHINGTON, DC

OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY

5 December 2024

MEMORANDUM FOR DACOWITS

FROM: SAF/MRF
1670 Air Force Pentagon
Washington DC 20330-1670

SUBJECT: DAF DACOWITS RFI Response #7

QUESTION #7

Impact on Military Mothers Reintegrating into Family/Home Life After Deployment

In accordance with DACOWITS' Terms of Reference, the Well-Being and Treatment (WB&T) Subcommittee will renew the 2019 DACOWITS' study which examined the impact of deployments on military mothers who reintegrate into family/home life after deployment. Determine whether additional policy development is required, or if the Department and Military Services have sufficiently addressed concerns.

In 2019, the Committee identified challenges, impacts, and issues military mothers experience returning from deployment as they reintegrate to family and work life, and subsequently recommended that the Secretary of Defense commission a foundational research study to identify and assess these potentially unique impacts on military mothers and identify measures to help ease their transition back to "normal" family and home life. The Committee seeks information on the progress of research and initiatives to address these reintegration concerns.

The Committee requests a **written response** from the USD(P&R) via **Military Personnel Policy (MPP) and Military Community and Family Policy (MC&FP) and both the Active and Reserve Components of the Military Services (Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Department of the Air Force (Air & Space)), Coast Guard, and the National Guard Bureau** on the following:

a. What research or studies have been undertaken or is ongoing to identify the issues unique to returning mothers and reintegration? Provide links to or copies to findings and reports. What actions have been taken to address issues identified by the research or studies, if applicable?

- No known studies from a Mental Health perspective

b. Section 555 of the FY21 NDAA directed the Secretary of Defense to develop policy that, among other issues, outlined “responses to the effects specific to covered members who reintegrate into home life after deployment.” What policy, initiatives, or resources have been developed to assist returning military mothers with the challenges they face on return from deployment. Provide copies of relevant policies, training, and other documents.

- No policies from a Mental Health perspective

c. What are the issues and challenges that have been identified, including the restoration of the parent-child bond, and resumption of prior family roles and responsibilities?

- No known efforts per Mental Health

d. What policies and procedures do each Service have to support reintegration. Are there any programs specific to mothers and being a woman?

- New Parent Support Program (NPSP) offers services to new parents with children up to age 3 IAW DoDI 6400.05; NPSP is intended to promote resilient families and health parenting attitudes and skills to prevent child abuse and neglect and domestic abuse within DoD

e. Are there any resources or programs geared to military mothers prior to deployment to help them plan for and more successfully reintegrate post-deployment? If so, describe these efforts and provide links to policies, programs, etc.

- No known programs within the Mental Health enterprise; Clinical Mental Health services are available in the Military Treatment Facility and non-medical programs such as Military Family Life Consultant, Chaplains, etc.

f. DACOWITS’ 2019 focus group participants expressed that post-deployment reintegration/assistance efforts were male-centric and lacked resources to assist the unique challenges returning military mothers faced. What efforts have been made to address this important subset of re-integration assistance?

- No known efforts per Mental Health

g. What kind of mentorship and support are specifically provided to deploying mothers?

- No known efforts for mentorship and support

h. What efforts have the Women’s Initiatives Teams (WITs) initiated, if any, and how are the Services supporting those recommendations?

- No known efforts initiated by the WIT

i. What type of mental health screening/care is provided?

- From a clinical perspective, members are checked through post-deployment health activities as a surveillance mechanism such as Deployment Related Health Assessments #2 and #3; these assessments ask questions pertaining to a variety of Mental Health topics, such as difficulty with home life re-integration, immediately upon return from the deployment and again 90 days post-deployment; these assessments are IAW DHA-PI 6490.03 Deployment Health Procedures, DoDI 6490.03, Deployment Health and DAFI 48-122 Deployment Health

j. What kind of follow up is provided and at what intervals?

- From a clinical perspective, members are checked through post-deployment health activities as a surveillance mechanism such as Deployment Related Health Assessments #2 and #3; these assessments ask questions pertaining to a variety of Mental Health topics, such as difficulty with home life re-integration, immediately upon return from the deployment and again 90 days post-deployment; these assessments are IAW DHA-PI 6490.03 Deployment Health Procedures, DoDI 6490.03, Deployment Health and DAFI 48-122 Deployment Health

k. Is leadership training provided to military leaders about the challenges and difficulties of reintegration that military mothers may encounter, the range of impacts of those challenges, in order to increase knowledge and understanding? Provide links to or copies of such training.

- No known training opportunities for leadership

l. What second and third order effects of reintegration difficulties have been identified (e.g., on military readiness, work productivity, psychological and physical health, attrition rates)?

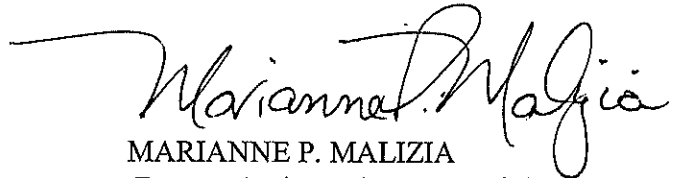
- There has been limited research, but common challenges noted have ranged from adjustments to pace of life, developmental changes in behavior among children, reestablishment of relationships, roles, and routines, many of which is compounded by psychological impacts (depression, anxiety, PTSD, etc.); much is yet unknown regarding the distinct experiences and support needs of military mothers as they negotiate separations and reunions, and better understanding is necessary to inform services that are responsive to their specific needs

m. Do exit surveys have questions related to whether reintegration/post-deployment challenges are a reason for separation?

- Yes, there are questions related to reintegration/post-deployment challenges on the DAF Exit Surveys. Questions are as follows:

“How do each of the following issues concerning deployments influence your decision regarding remaining in the Air Force or Space Force beyond your current enlistment or service commitment”

1. Deploy-to-dwell ratio (proportion of time deployed vs. at home)
2. Deployment locations
3. Length of deployments
4. Too many deployments
5. Too few deployments
6. Post-deployment rest and recuperation programs
7. Potential family separation during deployments
8. My experiences deployed with the Air Force or Space Force
9. My experiences deployed with other Service/Joint unit(s)



MARIANNE P. MALIZIA

Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Air Force
(Force Resilience)