



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
UNITED STATES ARMY EUROPE AND SEVENTH ARMY
UNIT 29351
APO AE 09014-9351

AEAGA-M

FEB 13 2012

MEMORANDUM FOR SEE DISTRIBUTION

SUBJECT: Minutes of the Army in Europe Retiree Council Meeting

1. The minutes of the Army in Europe Retiree Council meeting of 1 February 2012 have been reviewed and approved.
2. The point of contact for this memorandum is COL (R) Robert Mentell, President, Army in Europe Retiree Council at [+49] (171) 786-1669 or robert.a.mentell.vol@mail.mil.

Encl


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EA Garrison RSO
EA Co-Chair, Chief of Staff, Army, Retiree Council
EA Member, European Tri-Component Retiree Council
EA Member, Army in Europe Retiree Council



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AEAGA-AERC

1 February 2012

MEMORANDUM FOR Commanding General, United States Army, Europe, and Seventh Army,
ATTN: AEACG, Unit 29351, APO AE 09014

SUBJECT: Minutes of the Army in Europe Retiree Council Meeting

1. The 122nd meeting of the Army in Europe Retiree Council (AERC) convened at 0918 hours on 1 February 2012 in the USAREUR G1 at Campbell Barracks, Heidelberg.

2. The following persons were present:

a. Voting Members:

COL (Ret) Robert Mentell	President
COL (Ret) Charles Westpheling	Vice President
CW3 (Ret) Sandra K. Simpson	Secretary
LTC (Ret) Sheldon Dick	Member
LTC (Ret) Jenny Dietrich	Member
LTC (Ret) David Fulton	Member
SGM (Ret) Donald Norris	Member
SGM (Ret) David Stewart	Member
1SG (Ret) Donald Gwinn	Member

b. Advisory Members:

COL Theodore Fox	Deputy Chief of Staff, G1, Representative to the Council
Mr. Michael Malone	IMCOM-Europe Retirement Services Officer

c. Visitors:

Mr. Ed Francis	Policy Branch, Military Programs and Policy Division, DCofS, G1, USAREUR
Mr. Art Veseth	Director, Theater Army Postal Operations, Military Programs and Policy Division, DCofS, G1, USAREUR
Mr. Fred W. Evans	Director, Customer Services, Customs Executive Agency, Office of the Provost Marshal, USAREUR
Ms. Rula Strumpen	SOFA Customs Advisor, NATO/SOFA Office, Office of the Provost Marshal, USAREUR
Ms. Sandra Schnoeller	Customs Specialist, NATO/SOFA Office, Office of the Provost Marshal, USAREUR

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3. Opening Remarks. President welcomed the members of the Council and re-introduced Mr. Ed Francis, who will be a regular participant in Council meetings. The President provided the Council with an overview of the guests anticipated to join after lunch.

4. Agenda and Minutes.

a. The USAF/USAFE Retiree Council Report was removed from the agenda due to the anticipated absence of CMSgt Lippert.

b. The DA RSO provided clarification of paragraph 5d(2) of the minutes of the 2 November Council meeting regarding publication of Army Echoes: "We do have authority for 3 issues per year; all will include hardcopy, and the hardcopy will still be in color. We are on a big push to increase the number of retirees who elect "E-Echoes" and sign up to not be sent hardcopy editions any longer. We have had about 8k say "yes" since we gave this big push about 6 months ago. Still will publish about 950K hard copy editions of Echoes."

5. President's Report.

a. Extensions of Membership and Office: None

b. Review of the Quarter: President and COL Fox represented the Army in Europe at the European Tri-Component Retiree Council (ETRC) meeting. In addition, President spoke telephonically with Col (USAF) Nancy G. Hight, the Deputy Executive Director, TRICARE Area Office Eurasia Africa. The in-bound Senior Enlisted Leader will update the Council at the May meeting.

c. Office Calls with Army in Europe Leadership: President had office calls with the following leaders:

(1) Deputy Commanding General, USAREUR: President updated MG Boozer on Retired Soldiers matters by presenting the briefing Supporting Retired Soldiers in the Army in Europe. The DCG is no stranger to USAREUR having been the Deputy Chief of Staff from February 2006 to January 2007 and is no stranger to supporting Retired Soldiers having been the Director of Operations, Office of the Assistance Chief of Staff, Installation Management, from March 2009 to June 2011.

(2) Deputy Commander for Nursing Services, US Army Europe Regional Medical Command (ERMC): President discussed with COL Lena Gaudreau the impacts on retired beneficiaries as the result of the following: the current and anticipated problems with the TRICARE Home Delivery Pharmacy Program in Germany; the transformation of military health care in the Army in Europe; the increases in TRICARE costs proposed in the President Budget, and the best forum to update retired beneficiaries on healthcare issues at the Army in Europe Retiree Appreciation Day hosted by the US Army Garrison Baden-Wuerttemberg.

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d. Impact of Enterprise Email Migration: The new organizational email address for the Army in Europe Retiree Council is: usarmy.badenwur.usareur.mbx.aerc-pres@mail.mil. This email address should be used for all Council matters to preserve a complete historical record of correspondence.

6. DCofS, G1 Report (COL Fox).

a. USAREUR Transformation Update: No major changes from last meeting. The USAREUR CG and some staff are still scheduled to move to Wiesbaden in October 2012 with the last of the staff moving by summer 2013. Wiesbaden Army Airfield will be renamed Clay Kaserne. The Mission Control Center exterior construction is complete but there is still major interior work to be done. The President added that the AERC will meet in whatever garrison city the Deputy Chief of Staff, G1, is located.

b. Status of Army in Europe Supplement to AR 600-8-7 (Draft): In October 2011, the supplement was sent to IMCOM-Europe for staffing. It was returned with 11 elements of non-concurrence. The G1 drafted considerations of non-concurrence for those elements and will, in the next few weeks, continue the coordination process.

c. Patriot Express: The Patriot Express is a Department of Defense chartered method of air travel, which transits between the Baltimore-Washington International Airport and Ramstein Air Base. Eventually, it will be the primary airlift for Soldiers, family members and DoD civilians on permanent change of station and temporary duty orders between Germany and the United States. Initially, there will be one flight operating per week (inbound and outbound on Tuesdays). By the end of February 2012, a second flight on Thursdays will begin. More flights will be added as demand builds. A new in-processing center has been established at Ramstein and the existing center at Frankfurt International Airport will be closed. The number Space-Available seats will of course depend on the demand.

7. IMCOM-Europe Report (Mr. Malone).

a. Change in Region Leadership: No update

b. IMCOM-Europe Transformation: No update

8. Retirement Services Officer Report (Mr. Malone).

a. Garrison Retiree Appreciation Days (RADs):

(1) Feedback on 2011 RADs: No update

(2) Schedule for 2012 RADs: There are 12 RADs or Retiree Events currently scheduled:

10 or 17 May: Wiesbaden

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tbd Jul:	Schinnen
tbd Sep:	Bamberg
12 Oct:	Benelux
13 Oct:	Heidelberg
17 Oct:	Vicenza
19 Oct:	Grafenwoehr
20 Oct:	Schweinfurt
24 Oct:	Ansbach
25 Oct:	Stuttgart
26 Oct:	Kaiserslautern
tbd Nov:	Baumholder

b. DFAS Visits: It is anticipated that DFAS will make a representative available to participate in the RADS listed above plus the visits listed below to perform mini-audits of finance records and to provide individual assistance.

15 Oct:	Bamberg
18 Oct:	Garmisch
23 Oct:	Wiesbaden

c. Update on Garrison RSOs: No update

d. Retired Soldier Spouse Guide: No update.

e. VA Briefing Schedule: Mr. Malone had previously published the schedule. President recommended council members attend a briefing in their area.

f. IMCOM-Europe Retiree Bulletin for the Army in Europe: The next edition of the bulletin will be published in June. The June issue will continue to be distributed in hard copy and available on-line and via email. The December issue will be available only on-line and via email.

g. RSO Generic Email Addresses: Mr. Malone is working the issue with his IT section. Due to the email migration to a @mail.mil account, this is a more cumbersome process that it once was.

h. Office of the IMCOM-Europe RSO: Mr. Malone's office has moved to Sembach Kaserne. His telephone number is [+49] (6302) 67-5806 and his new email address is michael.l.malone16.civ@mail.mil.

9. 2012 Chief of Staff, Army Retiree Council (CSARC).

a. Army in Europe Issues (COL Mentell): All three issues the Army in Europe submitted for consideration by the CSARC were accepted and will go before the CSARC. Those issues are:

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(1) Reduced rates at Army Lodging for Retiree Appreciation Day Participants: Provide reduced rates in Army Lodging Facilities for Retired Soldiers participating in Retiree Appreciation Days in recognition of their contributions - past, present and future.

(2) Smartcards to Retiring Soldiers: Issue Smartcards to Retiring Soldiers during transition into retirement to ease their transition.

(3) Postal Support to Retired Soldiers thru overseas MPOs: Support the revision of the DoD Manual to implement revised procedures for the payment of second destination transportation costs by Box-R patrons and to raise the weight limit to five-pounds.

b. IMCOM-Europe Issues (Mr. Malone): The three issues IMCOM-Europe submitted to IMCOM for forwarding for consideration by the CSARC were:

- (1) Continue outside support of the RADs
- (2) Support reduced rates for retired Soldiers at Army Lodging
- (3) Medical rates for retired Soldiers receiving care in host nation facilities.

None of the three issues are included in the group of issues that will go before the CSARC.

c. Army Issues (SGM Stewart): No update could be provided as the issues are still being staffed and therefore embargoed for discussion.

10. European Tri-Component Retiree Council (ETRC) (COL Mentell).

a. 2011 Fall Meeting Briefback: The ETRC reconfirmed the priority issues:

(1) TRICARE Pharmacy Home Delivery Program: The German government is continuing to confiscate in MPOs in Germany medications shipped under this program. This is a total force issue as it affects not only military retiree beneficiaries but Members of the Force, as well. EUCOM J1 will work through the EUCOM Surgeon with the component surgeons and the TRICARE Area Office Eurasia-Africa to develop a solution which would permit PHDP beneficiaries, including retired beneficiaries, to continue to receive the medication.

(2) DFAS Support for Retirees and Annuitants Overseas: USAREUR will continue to work with Retired and Annuity Pay Directorate, DFAS, to preserve the toll-free number and to encourage the continuation of the visit by a DFAS technical expert to Europe.

(3) Military Postal Support for Retirees and Annuitants Overseas: The Air Force continues to be concerned with potential increased volume in theater mail rooms. Given the realities of the current and anticipated budgetary constraints, this issue will be retained as a priority issue but no action will be taken at this time. The council will review the situation at future meetings.

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b. 2012 Spring Meeting Preview/Preparations: Meeting will be on 13 June via VTC. Purpose will be to get the back-briefs from the service council meetings. DCG, USAREUR, has indicated his desired to participate.

11. 2012 Army in Europe Retiree Appreciation Day Hosted by USAG Baden-Wuerttemberg-Speakers' Program (AE RAD) (COL Mentell).

a. Keynote Speaker: DCG, USAREUR, has extended an invitation to SMA (R) Preston, former Sergeant Major of the Army and incoming CSARC co-chair, to be the keynote speaker.

b. Commander's Comments: G1, USAREUR, has extended an invitation to LTG Hertling, CG, USAREUR, to give Commander's Comments. Should the CG have a scheduling conflict, MG Boozer said he would be available. Subsequent to the meeting, the DCofS, G1, we received notification that the CG had accepted the invitation.

c. Healthcare Roundtable: As there are some significant developments in the healthcare support for retired beneficiaries for which the experts may have some answers at this time, there appears to be a need to reconsider the AE RAD forum at which to disseminate that information. The top issues were included in paragraph 5b(2) above.

12. Special Report - Retiree Demographics.

a. Theater Retiree Demographics (COL Mentell): He presented demographic data obtained from Defense Manpower Data Center on Retired Service Members and Annuitants with DFAS corresponding address in the USAREUR area of responsibility, i.e., Europe, Africa and the Middle-East, as of the end of FY 11. Annuitants are surviving spouses of retired Service Members receiving monies from DFAS.

(1) Overview: There were 15,189 Retired Service Members in 72 countries in the USAREUR AOR. In addition, there were 2,535 annuitants in 37 countries of the USAREUR AOR. Approximately 29% of the retired Service Members and approximately 82% of the annuitants were 65 years of age or older. While the number of retired Service Members and the number of annuitants have increased since the end of Fiscal Year 2010, the percentages of retired Service Members and annuitants 65 years of age or older remain virtually unchanged.

(2) Populations: Of the Service Members, 7,186 (47%) were Retired Soldiers, 2,034 (14%) Retired Sailors and Marines, and 5,969 (39%) were Retired Airmen. Of the annuitants, 1,480 (58%) were surviving spouses of Retired Soldiers, 224 (9%) were surviving spouses of Retired Sailors or Marines, and 831 (33%) were surviving spouses of Retired Airmen. All of these percentages are virtually unchanged from those for the end of Fiscal Year 2010.

(3) Trends: The trend for Retired Service Members residing in the USAREUR AOR over the period from the end of FY 01 thru FY 11 remained "flat", ranging between 14,226 (FY02) and 15,276 (FY10). The trend for annuitants over the period FY01 thru FY11 has showed a continuing increase from 1,877 (FY01) to a current population of 2,535 (FY11).

b. Garrison Retiree Demographics (Mr. Malone): There is an increasing number of younger annuitants who are receiving SBP. Mr. Malone presented a three-year breakout of statistics by garrison.

13. Special Report - Issue Updates.

a. Customs Procedures for Military Retirees in Germany (Ms. Rula Strumpen): No changes.

b. Postal Support for Retired Soldiers (Mr. Art Veseth): The USAREUR proposal to allow retirees to pay second destination charges is under review at the Military Postal Service Agency. There is a meeting on 2 February for USAREUR postal and the Provost Marshal and legal offices concerning medical mailings.

14. Special Report - Electronic Residence Permit in Germany (COL Mentell). This credit card-like document replaces the current adhesive label in passports for all persons requiring residence permits. A non-citizen resident must request an electronic residence permit when one of the following occurs: the passport expires, the passport label expires or when changing jurisdictions. This document does not substitute for having a passport on your person when crossing international borders.

15. Progress Report - Liaison Responsibilities (SGM Norris).

a. Council members continue to do well in meeting their liaison responsibilities which serve a dual purpose – to maintain the awareness of the Retired Soldier community to those who provide services and to identify potential vital issues and concerns.

b. During the last quarter, the nine members of the Council have made timely contact with 89% of the 147 assigned contacts.

c. COL Mentell provided information concerning the current regional leadership of the Defense Commissary Agency, the Red Cross and the Exchange in Europe.

16. Special Report - Volunteer Statistics (COL Mentell). During calendar year 2011, the nine members of the Army in Europe Retiree Council contributed almost 12 work-months - just under a full year - in volunteer time.

a. The Council is registered as an organization in the Volunteer Management Information System. Each of the Council members is registered as volunteers.

b. By recording volunteer hours in an established Army system, Retired Soldiers can document that they are indeed Retired, Still Serving.

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17. Progress Report - AERC Website (COL Westpheling).

a. Website links to CSARC, ETRC and AERC reports or minutes have been updated. He encouraged Council members to bring to his attention any information that needs to be updated.

b. The AERC Website is at: <http://www.eur.army.mil/g1/content/misc/AERC/index.html>.

18. Progress Report - RetireeInfo List Server (LTC Dick). Problems are still being experienced in trying to get the list services working again now that enterprise transformation has taken place. He is investigating the possibility of installing the server on new servers being installed in Wiesbaden.

19. Liaison Discussions. No major changes.

20. Update on Local Retiree Councils (1SG Gwinn). No updates to report. LTC Dietrich will assume liaison responsibilities for local councils effective 1 July 2012.

21. Update on Local Retiree Associations (1SG Gwinn). No updates to report. LTC Dietrich will assume liaison responsibilities for the local associations 1 July 2012.

22. Council Administration (COL Mentell).

a. Existing Member Vacancies: There are three existing vacancies on the council: Vice Harris, vice Grunell, and vice Campbell. Council President will look at retired population density and determine where we need to target to fill vacancy.

b. Projected Membership Vacancies (thru 4th Qtr Qtr, CY 12): LTC (Ret) Dietrich: 30 Jun 12

c. Unprojected Member Vacancies: None

d. Existing Officer Vacancies: None

e. Projected Officer Vacancies (thru 4th Qtr, CY 12): Secretary: 30 Dec 12

f. Unprojected Officer Vacancies: None

23. Timeline for AERC Administrative Actions: Timeline for the next meeting was distributed.

24. Selection of Next Meeting Date and Adjournment.

a. The next meeting will be on 9 May 2012. The meeting was adjourned at 1555 hours.

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b. Subsequent to adjournment, the DCofS, G1, approved the recommendation of the AERC Executive Committee for the Council to continue to meet quarterly but to reduce the number of in-person meetings to twice a year in order to accommodate budget realities. Accordingly, the 9 May 2012 meeting will be the last quarterly in-person meeting of the Council. The August Council meeting will be conducted by conference call.



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DCofS, G1, Representative

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President