



USAG Kaiserslautern

2010 Army Family Action Plan Conference

**Steering Committee
16 November 2010**





USAG Kaiserslautern 2010 Army Family Action Plan Conference Top 5 Issues

- #1** OCONUS Childcare Availability
- #2** Housing Entitlements and Options On/Off Post
- #3** Vogelweh Pedestrian Safety and Accessibility
- #4** Saturday Sick Call for Army Clinics within KMCC
- #5** Army Shoppette Operating Hours in the KMC





Issue # 1

Title: Expediency of Furnishings Management Office (FMO) Routine Repairs

Scope: Members of the Kaiserslautern Military Community are inconvenienced due to the inadequate scheduling of routine appliance repairs provided by FMO. According to AFI 32-1001 par 8.2.3, FMO requires that all routine repairs be resolved within thirty (30) days. This turnaround time is too long and affects the mission, health and morale of the KMC.

Recommendation: Change AFI 32-1001 8.2.3, FMO to require all routine repairs be resolved within 15 calendar days after receiving the work order request from the customer. Material requirements must be processed within seven calendar days of receipt. When practical, group routine requirements into work packages and accomplish as a single undertaking.





Issue # 2:

Title: Army Shoppette Operating Hours in the Kaiserslautern Military Community (KMC)

Scope: The Army shoppette hours on KMC installations are too limited. The current shoppette hours do not correspond to the hours of operation of the mission essential facilities, such as Landstuhl Regional Medical Center and 230th Military Police Company on Sembach. Personnel should have AAFES access before and after duty hours, providing personnel with basic necessities such as personal hygiene, food, and other morale boosting items.

Recommendation:

1. A 24 hour Army shoppette at installations with 24 hour operations
2. Require KMC Garrison wide shoppettes to have minimal hours (0500-2400)





Issue # 3

Title: Merchandise Availability at the Kaiserslautern Military Community Center (KMCC) Base Exchange/Post Exchange (BX/PX)

Scope: The KMCC BX/PX is consistently out of stock with items peoples want or need. According to our Subject Matter Expert, Mr. Gross the Manager of the KMCC, low merchandise and supply at the BX/PX with preferred items is the result of the inadequate storage space/facilities/buildings around the Kaiserslautern Military Community (KMC). The largest BX/PX in the world not only serves the KMC but the military communities all around Europe. Therefore, the BX/PX should have more availability and an abundance of supply.

Recommendation: Provide additional storage facilities for AAFES merchandise





Issue # 4

Title: Saturday Sick Call for Army Clinics within the Kaiserslautern Military Community for Eligible ID Card Holders

Scope: The Landstuhl Regional Medical Center Emergency Department is overcrowded with routine health concerns due to no Saturday sick call. The Pediatric Clinic offered on Saturdays does not address the need for an adult sick call. If Saturday call is in place, this would positively impact the quality of care and proper utilization of the Emergency Department.

Recommendation: Implement a Saturday walk-in sick call clinic for Kleber and Landstuhl Regional Medical Center for eligible ID card holders.





Issue # 5

Title: Mandatory Mental Health Screenings for Deployed Soldiers before Rest and Recuperation

Scope: There are no current policies or standards in place that require screening for mental health concerns prior to Rest and Recuperation. Mental health symptoms are common in deployed Soldiers but are not being addressed in a timely manner. According to Subject Matter Expert, Dr. Brown, Chief of Behavioral Health at Landstuhl Regional Medical Center, symptoms occur before, during and after deployment. Having mental health screenings before Rest and Recuperation could drastically reduce issues such as domestic violence and assaults while Soldiers are on Rest and Recuperation.

Recommendation: A mandatory mental health screening should be given to deployed Soldiers prior to leaving on Rest and Recuperation.





Issue # 6

Title: Landstuhl Regional Medical Center wait Times for Out-Patient Prescriptions

Scope: The wait time to fill a prescription at Landstuhl Regional Medical Center can exceed 30-45 minutes. Landstuhl Regional Medical Center's current goal is wait time of five minutes or less, per the Subject Matter Expert, Elaine Williams, Landstuhl Regional Medical Center Patient Advocate.

Recommendations:

Have all Pharmacy lanes staffed 1000-1300 and 1500 - 1700





Issue # 7

Title: Initial Heating Oil Expenditures for Families Living off Post

Scope: Families must pay an initial, bulk oil expense when occupying off-post quarters, resulting in a short-term financial hardship.

Recommendations:

1. Require the landlord to fill the oil tank prior to moving in as part of the rental agreement. Also, require the landlord provide a summarized history of average consumption rates and associated costs. Require the Soldier sign a statement of understanding regarding the cost of heating oil when purchase in bulk.
2. Request each Garrison Command or USAREUR create a bidding process with local oil companies to establish a singular community oil provider that sells their product at a set price to military/ DoD families.





Issue # 8

Title: Employment Benefits

Scope: Veterans, retirees and spouses are uninformed of benefits and preferences available to them when looking for employment. The financial stability and way of life for military veterans, spouses, and retirees is in jeopardy because of a lack of information. All parties should know their status as potential employees in order to maximize their benefits.

Recommendation: If a spouse wants a job, require them to visit the Civilian Personnel Advisory Center to fully educate them on their Military Spouse Preference option when applying for Government Service positions. As a mandatory part of separation of service, require a Veterans Affairs representative to give an in depth, one-on-one briefing to veterans and retirees on veterans preference when applying for DoD/DA positions.





Issue # 9

Title: Local National Military Spouses

Scope: In the Kaiserslautern Military Community. Local National Military Spouses are lumped in the same hiring category as Local Nationals with no military affiliation. A hierarchy has been established by Non-Appropriated Funds hiring sources (American citizen with American Passport, Local National, Tourist) for filling positions. Additionally, an agreement exists between the Non-Appropriated Funds businesses and the German Works Council regarding Local National hiring practices. Local National military spouses should be extended hiring preference over other Local Nationals.

Recommendation: In cases of hiring Local Nationals only, an official subcategory should be established for Local Nationals married to Service Members granting them higher preference over non-military affiliated Local Nationals. If a subcategory cannot be established due to German Works Council agreements, Non-Appropriated Funds hiring sources should be encouraged to place more weight in applications provided by Local National Military Spouses.





Issue # 10

Title: English Speaking Bus Monitor

Scope: There is no designated individual on the bus who is responsible to monitor student's behavior, ensure correct drop off locations, and communicate in English with the students when issues arise. Inappropriate behavior distracts the bus driver, effects student safety, and parent's peace of mind. Student's mental, physical, and emotional wellbeing is effected by bullying and inhibits their ability to focus on school. Students are entitled to a safe environment while on the bus.

Recommendation: Employ a fluent English speaking bus monitor to ensure the well being and safety of children, enforce appropriate student behavior, report incidents, and ensure correct drop off locations.





Issue # 11

Title: OCONUS Childcare Availability

Scope: There is insufficient childcare availability for ages six weeks to twelve years at childcare facilities (full time, part time, hourly, preschool services, school age, inbound/outbound PCS, and extended duty care). The waitlist for childcare options range from two months to one year due to lack of childcare facilities. This forces parents to find potentially more expensive childcare. Not all Armed Forces Child Development Centers support Army unit schedules and extended hours. Insufficient childcare negatively impacts the mission resulting in missed workdays, financial hardships, and undue stress on the Military Community.

Recommendation: Increase childcare facilities based on a continuous and accurate calculation of childcare requirements to eliminate wait time and standardize hours to accommodate joint forces' schedules.





Issue # 12

Title: School Transportation Notification System

Scope: Parents whose children ride the school bus are not receiving notification of transportation delays or urgent circumstances. The transportation notification system is not a standardized process. There are insufficient personnel in the Bus Transportation Office to reliably facilitate notification and provide parents ample time to respond. The inability to deliver timely notification to parents compromises children's safety.

Recommendation: Implement an automated notification system that will provide confirmed digital and telephonic notification of transportation issues within fifteen minutes from the time the Bus Transportation Office is notified.





Issue # 13

Title: Accountability and Tracking of Command Sponsorship for New or Un-sponsored Family Members

Scope: There is not a standardized process for requesting Command Sponsorship of newly acquired or un-sponsored Family members while already stationed OCONUS. This results in a lack of tracking and timely accountability of new Command Sponsorship requests. Soldiers and Family members endure hardship through Family separation and undue marital/Family stress, which adversely impacts Soldier morale.

Recommendation: Implement a time-sensitive accountability and tracking process from the command through to the final approving authority. Require a block of instruction at the In-processing Training Center for all Soldiers dedicated to Command Sponsorship.





Issue # 14

Title: Military Life Issues Support Groups

Scope: Soldiers and Family members need anonymous support groups to address military life issues. Anonymity releases individuals from the stigma of seeking mental health assistance. Support groups will empower individuals during the problem solving process, increase family competency and confidence in handling the stressors of military life and aid readiness.

Recommendation: Establish regular anonymous support groups on installations facilitated by qualified professionals . Ensure widest dissemination of information through all available outlets and public affairs channels.





Issue # 15

Title: Community Shuttle Service for Soldiers and Family Members Assigned to Installations without Key Live Support Services

Scope: Shuttle transportation is only provided for Soldiers and Family members to conduct official business. The current shuttle schedule is extremely limited in frequency and routes, while providing no service at all to some installations. Motor Transportation-General Management, Acquisition, and Use of Motor Vehicles AR 58-1, Chapter 5-2 c states, "Shuttle bus service may be provided in isolated areas, with limited support facilities where affects health, morale and welfare of the family. Such an isolated area must not be adequately served by remote areas within the KMC are isolated from key life support services, which negatively impacts Soldier and Family morale and welfare.

Recommendation: Provide shuttle service to isolated areas "with limited support facilities [within the KMC] where DOD personnel and dependents need additional life support (medical, commissary, and religious)" in accordance with Army Regulation 58-1, Chapter 5-2 c. Ensure widest dissemination of information through all available secure outlets and public affairs channels.





Issue # 16

Title: Vogelweh Pedestrian Safety and Accessibility

Scope: Pedestrian safety and accessibility are substandard and are in dire need of upgrades at two key high traffic Vogelweh locations. The newly constructed traffic circle and the expansion of the road between the elementary school and the youth center have made it hazardous for over 100 pedestrians to include school age children. The bridge connecting both sides of Vogelweh is not wheel chair, stroller, or bike accessible. Vogelweh housing has Americans with Disabilities Act accessible homes, which are 100% occupied and are all located on the Vogelweh housing side.

Recommendations:

1. Paint a cross walk and install appropriate signs and lighting between the elementary school and the youth center.
2. Renovate existing bridge to provide accessibility for wheel chairs, strollers, and bikes from one side of Vogelweh to another.





Issue # 17

Title: Transportation for In-Processing Kaiserslautern Military Community (KMC)

Scope: Transportation support is inadequate to assist the in-processing of Army personnel and families within the KMC. AR 58-1, Management Acquisition and Use of Motor Vehicle and AER 58-1, Management Acquisition and Use of Motor Vehicle in Europe prevents Garrison controlled transportation for in processing Army personnel. The current bus schedule does not support the Army in-processing personnel time line. The schedule does not allow Soldiers who are in processing to utilize the bus system because pick up and drop off times do not match the in processing agenda. Unit mission within the KMC is stressed by attempting to accommodate the transportation support of in-processing personnel in this uniquely scattered footprint.

Recommendation:

1. Modify AR 58-1 to allow Garrison control over the transportation support for in processing Soldiers and Families in Europe.
2. As a temporary solution, modify current shuttle bus schedule to support in processing personnel and families by adding buses for more frequent stops.
3. Modify S-GATE, the Sponsorship Gateway to Europe, to increase the emphasis and broaden advertisement of the use of systems available for Soldiers to complete the USAREUR driver's license test prior to their arrival in country.





Issue # 18

Title: Housing Entitlements and Options On/Off Post

Scope: The lack of on post housing options forces Army Families onto the more expensive economy and the current overseas housing entitlements scale fails to provide adequate compensation. The restructuring of USAREUR has increased the number of Army Families inhabiting the Kaiserslautern Military Community (KMC). The focus of building townhouses in lieu of multi-family quarters reduces the land potential by at least half and limits the amount of available on post-housing. The current off base housing allowance rates do not cover the off base expenses for families with multiple dependents. Failure to resolve this issue will continue to negatively impact our Army Family by not meeting the increasing housing demand and providing compensation according to family size.

Recommendations:

1. Maximize available on post space by focusing on construction and renovation of multifamily dwellings and provide government leased housing as an immediate solution.
2. Establish transient housing to alleviate lengthy wait times for permanent on post housing.
3. Scale OHA rate and utility stipend based on the number of command sponsored dependents regardless of rank.





Issue # 19

Title: Teen Center High School Hang-out

Scope: High school students have no place to “hang out” that is not shared with middle school and elementary students. According to the Subject Matter Expert at the Vogelweh Teen Center, Air Force regulations state “13-18 year old students share space and times at the Teen Center.” If high school students have a place to call their own with adult supervision, it could positively impact their behavior.

Recommendation:

1. Provide a space for only high school students
2. Authorize designated time for only high school students to utilize the Teen Center.





Issue # 20

Title: Overseas Restaurant Options

Scope: Families stationed overseas have a limited variety of family-friendly restaurants with healthy food options when dining on an installation. Although the franchising, transportation and supply expenses are costly as stated by our Subject Matter Expert, more consumers are making healthier food choices as indicated by the April 2005 Food Technology Magazine. Additional restaurant options would give military families more opportunities for quality time with their families while providing healthier alternatives.

Recommendation: Provide healthy, family-friendly restaurants for families stationed overseas.





Issue # 21

Title: Nutrition and Quality of School Lunches

Scope: Students are concerned with the quality of United States Department of Agriculture prescribed school lunches. Food is packaged and stored frozen up to 12 months. Nothing is fried and there is no “home cooking”. Milk and produce are supplied by local sources. Many students do not eat school lunches because, with nutrition as the sole or primary guiding focus, the food is seldom appealing.

Recommendations:

1. Create a more appealing look and taste for the food while retaining the nutritional value.
2. Provide more “on site” preparation

