

Training specialist named 'hero of the day'

Did you know that Installation Management Command has established a hero of the day program?

The program is recognized by the IMCOM commander during the commander's update briefing Friday mornings.

James Denekas, Fort Sill Regional Training Support Center, was named hero of the day for June 8.

Denekas is a training support specialist that requires

him to advise, issue and receive training aids, devices, simulators and simulations, or TADSS, and graphic training aids to Fort Sill Soldiers and the area of responsibility. Thanks to his extensive knowledge of TADSS and an untiring willingness to go the extra mile, Denekas helped the RTSC issue and receive more than 800,000 parts during the first seven months of fiscal 2012. This has the RTSC on pace



Did you know?

By Col. Paul Hossenlopp
Fort Sill Garrison commander

to issue and receive more than 1 million parts for the fiscal year, an overall increase of 47 percent from fiscal 2011.

RTSC is in Building 2327 Hunt Road. It houses two 10-

lane Engagement Skills Trainer 2000 ranges for all crew-served and low density weapons, a fabrication shop and a 30,000-square-foot warehouse containing more than 27,500 separate train-

ing devices. A 10-lane, mine sweeper training mine field is located on the south end of the building. Additional training devices not located in the RTSC include the Humvee Egress Assistance Trainer and three additional EST 2000 suites.

To schedule an EST 2000 or HEAT system, contact battalion range facility management scheduling system representatives. Training aids and GTAs can be

reserved 15 days in advance by contacting the RTSC staff at 442-5309.

With a full complement of live virtual and constructive training devices, it's no wonder the RTSC is your one-stop shop for all of your training needs. Come see their new facility at 2327 Hunt Road.

Stop by and congratulate James Denekas for his hero of the day recognition.

Army expands early separation program

By C. Todd Lopez

WASHINGTON — To enhance readiness for deploying units, the Army will expand its Enlisted Involuntary Early Separation Program for some Soldiers.

Under the program, enlisted Soldiers who elect to not re-enlist or extend in order to deploy with their unit, could be subject to involuntary early separation. Officers are not affected.

"This is a readiness program, not a force reduction program," said Jim Bragg, chief of the retention and reclassification branch at Army Human Resources Command. "It is all about unit readiness as a unit deploys. That's what it comes down to."

By identifying Soldiers who will not deploy with their unit, and having those Soldiers leave the Army

early, a unit can bring more Soldiers into the unit. Those new Soldiers will deploy, and will be able to train alongside the other Soldiers they will deploy with.

"From a readiness point of view this is the decision that has to be made," Bragg said.

In the past, Soldiers who would be affected by this program might have been kept involuntarily past their expiration term of service in order to deploy with their unit, through the implementation of "stop loss." That is no longer the case.

"Now we are asking for volunteers to meet the deployment, and we are not forcing them to go," Bragg said.

The program affects Soldiers who have more than three years active duty service, but less than six years total of service. Who is affected is determined by a unit's

"latest arrival date" in theater, or LAD.

During Phase 1 of the program, Soldiers in units with a LAD before Dec. 31, and who have an expiration term of service, known as an ETS, that falls between their unit's LAD and 179 days after the LAD, are subject to the current 90-day involuntary separation program.

Phase 2 of the program applies to Soldiers in units with a LAD between Jan. 1, 2013 and April 30, 2013. Soldiers in those units who have an ETS that is between the LAD and 179 days after the LAD, are subject to involuntary early separation up to nine months before their ETS.

In Phase 3 of the program, Soldiers in units with a LAD that comes May 1, 2013 or later and who have an ETS that falls between 180 days before deploy-

ment to 179 days after deployment, will be subject to involuntary early separation up to 365 days before their ETS.

Soldiers who could be affected by this program will first be offered the opportunity to re-enlist in the Army, or to extend their enlistment so they can deploy with their unit.

Additionally, Soldiers who are separated involuntarily from the Army will retain Veterans Affairs benefits. They may also opt to join one of the Reserve components, including the Army Reserve, the Army National Guard, or the Individual Ready Reserve. Soldiers with time remaining under their eight-year military service obligation will be required to complete their time in one of the Reserve components.

It's expected the program will affect about 2,000-2,500 annually,

and the program currently has no projected end date.

Bragg said that the best way for Soldiers and commanders to learn more about the Enlisted Involuntary Early Separation Program is to talk to their unit's career counselor. The career counselor, Bragg said, is the subject matter expert within battalions and brigades, and will be who does extensions for Soldiers who opt to extend, and who additionally identifies the population subject to the program. Two documents online that explain more about the Enlisted Involuntary Early Separation Program are the 142/2012 ALARACT, available at <https://www.us.army.mil/suite/doc/36616926>; and MILPER 12-165 available at <https://www.hrc.army.mil/Milper/12-165>.

the Cannoneer

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