

SUMMARY OF MAJOR COMMAND VOLUNTEER ARMY REPORTS OF LESSONS LEARNED

1. The following significant items, including Staff comments where appropriate, were surfaced by commanders in their reports of lessons learned:

a. *Unit-of-choice, station-of-choice, and special unit enlistment programs.* Commanders who commented on these programs were unanimous in their support. A recent study by the General Research Corporation determined that the use of unit canvassers was cost effective in enlisting additional recruits. A study is being conducted to determine the optimum mix of unit canvassers and U.S. Army Recruiting Command recruiters. These programs will be funded at 625 canvassers per month during FY 74. The number of canvassers vary by unit and period, according to manpower needs.

b. *Adventure or dynamic training.* Commanders cite adventure or dynamic training as an excellent means of stimulating morale; fostering confidence and teamwork; enhancing esprit; and testing the leadership, courage, and ingenuity of participants.

c. *Officer, noncommissioned officer, and enlisted councils.* There is a mixed reaction from commanders concerning the value of councils. Supporters see the councils as complementing the chain of command and as a means for surfacing suggestions and problems which exist within the command. Opponents view councils as subverting the chain of command and as little more than complaint sessions. Army policy does not require establishment of either enlisted or officer councils; however, Army community service councils, human self-development planning units, and alcohol and drug dependency intervention councils are required. Additionally, race relations and equal opportunity councils are encouraged. The Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel (ODCSPER) is currently staffing a proposed Army regulation which would reduce the requirement for these councils to a single installation-level human development council. This council would provide the commander with a medium for surfacing recommended solutions to contemporary social and human problems.

d. *Open door policy.* Commanders who commented on this policy disagree concerning its value. Supporters feel that the policy aids the commander in his efforts to remain informed; brings to the soldiers' attention their commanders' concern for their welfare and desire to know about their problems, feelings, and ideas; and, when properly used, can be an important and

valuable adjunct to the chain of command. Commanders expressing reservations feel that it circumvents the chain of command and that commanders communicate better by taking themselves to their personnel.

e. *Job-related educational development.* Reporting commands unanimously support education programs designed to increase military occupational specialty proficiency as well as those leading to increased leadership ability. The Noncommissioned Officer (NCO) Education System is singled out as producing a more professional NCO. Further, the psychological impact of upgrading NCO education is considered by commanders to improve the NCO's relationship with more highly educated junior soldiers.

f. *General education development (GED).* Commanders support general educational programs and express the increasing interest in these programs on the part of their soldiers. In addition to the GED program, Predischarge Education Program, and Project TRANSITION, most commands have college-level programs underway. An ODCSPER study concerning the Army Education Program in the Volunteer Environment, which is currently being staffed, indicates that multiple educational programs have been developed in the past, often without regard to their relationship to the overall Army educational system. This study is designed to develop a single program based on the needs of Service members, availability of opportunity, and cost to the Army.

g. *MVA promises compared with program performance.* Several commanders expressed concern that the timelag between the announcement of Army improvement actions and their realization damages the credibility of the Army. They suggested that these announcements always be accompanied by a time frame for completion, a requirement which has been incorporated in the MVA information plan. The commanders' awareness of this problem and the decreasing number of improvement actions being announced should improve this situation.

h. *Civilianization of kitchen police (KP).* Of the four commands reporting on this item, only one felt that the quality of KP service had deteriorated as a result of civilianization. The other commands indicated that releasing soldiers from this task for return to their primary duties was perhaps the key morale improvement effort introduced in the soldiers' life and that the general quality of KP services had improved because of the stabilization of the work force.

i. *Barracks decor.* This item received both favorable and unfavorable comment by commanders. Some commanders encourage wide individualism in decorating enlisted rooms, while others require greater standardization. Proponents of individualism report that it increases reenlistments and encourages the voluntary return of personnel to barracks living. Opponents feel that personally decorated semiprivate rooms cause a deterioration in the standard of cleanliness and personnel control. Current policy reflects the following barracks life objectives:

(1) A pattern of soldier life which permits soldiers to express individual preferences (in decorating their rooms, for instance) within the limits of propriety and good taste.

(2) Barracks housing for bachelors that provides privacy, initially to the extent of two- to four-man rooms.

j. *Leader stabilization.* The few commands that reported on this item indicated that, more than any other single factor, leader stabilization has enabled officers to provide the best possible leadership and guidance to their subordinates. Current Army policy provides for stabilization of commanders, sergeants major, and first sergeants.

2. The Army Staff will reexamine existing policies and recommend changes where appropriate.