



DoD Task Force on the Prevention of Suicide by Members of the Armed Forces

Ms. Bonnie Carroll
MG Philip Volpe
Co-Chairpersons

Col Joanne P. McPherson
Executive Secretary



About the Task Force

- Concern about Rising **Number & Rate** of Service Member Suicides.
- Established by Law IAW **NDAA 2009**.
- Goal is to **Prevent** Future SM Suicides.
- Purpose is to recommend **DOD-wide Policy**.
- **REPORT** to Congress, through SECDEF, with “recommendations regarding a comprehensive policy designed to prevent suicide by members of the Armed Forces.”



Report Focus Areas

- **Assessment of current military department suicide education & prevention programs.**
- **Identification of trends and “causal factors” from completed suicides.**
- **Identification of high risk occupations.**
- **Recommendations on the Suicide Investigation process.**



Task Force Membership

- **14 Members;**
 - 7 Civilian
 - 7 Military
- Selected by Obama-Gates Team
- Representing all Services (Officer & Enlisted)
- Subject matter experts (DOD & non-DOD)
- One Family Member {of a member of the Armed Forces who has experience working with military families}



Task Force Membership

- **Dr. Alan Berman**
- **COL John Bradley**
- **Dr. Janet Kemp**
- **SgtMaj Ronald Green**
- **Dr. Robert Certain**
- **CMSgt Jeffory Gabrelcik**
- **Ms. Bonnie Carroll**
- **Dr. Marjan Holloway**
- **Dr. David Jobes**
- **CDR Aaron Werbel**
- **Dr. David Litts**
- **MGySgt Peter Proietto**
- **Dr. Richard McKeon**
- **MG Philip Volpe**



Task Force Membership

- **Persons who have experience in:**
 - National suicide prevention policy
 - Military personnel policy
 - Research in the field of suicide prevention
 - Clinical care in behavioral health
 - “Boots on the ground” troop experience

- Members are at this Conference presenting in their areas of expertise and gleaning helpful information WRT the purpose and goal of the Task Force.



Future Meetings

- **January, 15, 2010 – Hyatt Regency, Wash, DC**
- **February – site visits in NC, VA, SC, and FL and Task Force meeting in Norfolk, VA**
- **March – site visits in TX, KY, and CA and Task Force meeting in San Antonio, TX**
- **April – site visits in CO, KS and Task Force meeting in Colorado Springs, CO**



Contacts

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BACK-UP SLIDES



Questions to be addressed by the Task Force

- Methods to identify trends and common causal factors in suicides by members of the Armed Forces.
- Methods to establish or update suicide education and prevention programs conducted by each military department based on identified trends and causal factors.
- An assessment of current suicide education and prevention programs of each military department.
- An assessment of suicide incidence by military occupation to include identification of military occupations with a high incidence of suicide.
- The appropriate type and method of investigation to determine the causes and factors surrounding each suicide by a member of the Armed Forces.
- The qualifications of the individual appointed to conduct an investigation of a suicide by a member of the Armed Forces.



Questions to be addressed by the Task Force

- The required information to be determined by an investigation in order to determine the causes and factors surrounding suicides by members of the Armed Forces.
- The appropriate reporting requirements following an investigation conducted on a suicide by a member of the Armed Forces.
- The appropriate official or executive agent within the military department and DoD to receive and analyze reports on investigations of suicides by members of the Armed Forces.
- The appropriate use of the information gathered during investigations of suicides by members of the Armed Forces.
- Methods for protecting confidentiality of information contained in reports of investigations of suicides by members of the Armed Forces.



We Need Your Assistance

- **We will ask for your expert opinion**
 - surveillance & investigation processes
 - Research programs
 - Public Health and clinical policy
 - Service/leadership policies & programs
 - Counseling, Family Advocacy, Chaplain Programs
- **Please be candid in your recommendations**
 - What else should we look at
 - Whom should we meet/talk to?
 - What you think needs to be done now and for sustainable future programs