



# Veterans Inventory Initiative

Quarterly Report, Fourth Quarter, FY 2008  
FY 2008 Summary

An assessment of the intentions, educational level, skills, employment desires, and suggestions to improve the Fort Hood region's "Quality of Place" for Soldiers leaving military service at Fort Hood, Texas.





**Quarterly Report: 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter, FY 2008**  
(July - September 2008)

**A. BACKGROUND:** *Operation Economic Transformation* is the Greater Killeen Chamber of Commerce plan to identify, measure, and capitalize on new and emerging economic development opportunities present in the Fort Hood region. A key recommendation from the report was to regularly administer a survey designed to capture insightful information regarding the skills and desired career fields of veterans separating from military service at Fort Hood. In July 2006, the following parties entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to routinely inventory the intentions, educational level, skills, employment desires, and suggestions of separating Soldiers in order to improve the Fort Hood regional “Quality of Place”:

- Fort Hood Adjutant General/Army Career and Alumni Program (ACAP)
- Workforce Solutions of Central Texas - Board
- Workforce Solutions of Central Texas - Service Centers
- Greater Killeen Chamber of Commerce
- Heart Of Texas Defense Alliance
- Texas Veterans Commission

Data is collected via a voluntary twelve-question survey administered during either the Transition Assistance Program (TAP) workshop or installation final clearance<sup>1</sup>. The purpose for the collection and analysis of this data is threefold:

1. Develop and retain the region’s skilled and motivated military Veteran workforce;
2. Foster innovation and entrepreneurship; retain existing businesses, and attract new business to the region; and
3. Align the efforts of the participating agencies to enhance options for current and future/potential residents.

**B. DEMOGRAPHICS**

For the 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter (July through September 2008):

1. 746 Soldiers completing their military service at Fort Hood responded to the survey.
2. 84 percent of respondents were leaving military service prior to becoming retirement-eligible (428 responses/57%), or were being medically discharged (199 responses/26.5%).
3. 15.9 percent (119 respondents) were retiring after 20 or more years of service.

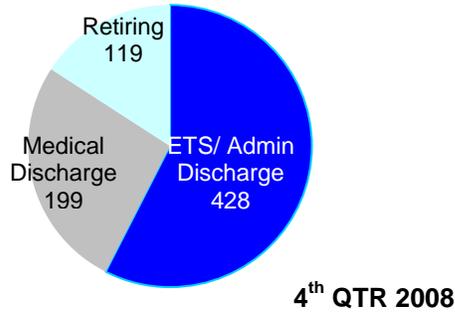
---

<sup>1</sup> Retiring Soldiers may participate in TAP up to two years prior to their retirement date, while non-retiring Soldiers may participate up to one year in advance. However, the Transition Services Manager reports the majority of soldiers attend the TAP workshop 6 months or less before separation. Approximately 65% of the soldiers attend the non-mandatory TAP workshop. 74% of those soldiers respond to the Veterans Inventory Initiative survey.

**FORT HOOD REGION VETERANS INVENTORY INITIATIVE**

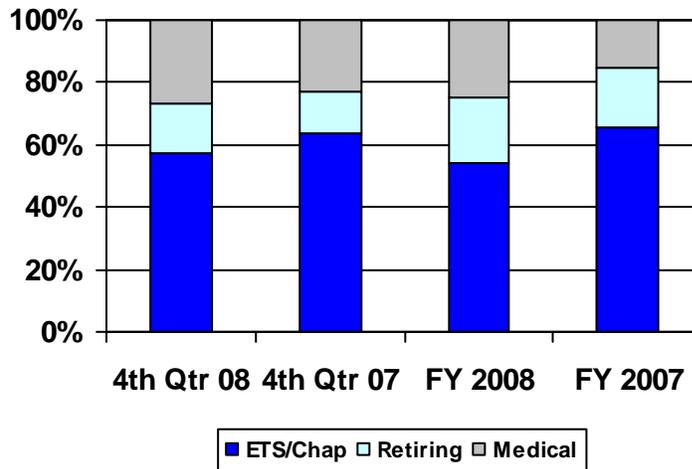


**DEMOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION**



4. For fiscal year 2008 (October 2007 – September 2008):
  - a. 3407 Soldiers completing their service have responded to the survey.
  - b. 1837 (53.9%) were in the category of ETS/Administrative discharge.
  - c. 845 (24.8%) were being medically discharged.
  - d. 720 (21%) indicated their intention to retire with 20-plus years of military service.
  
5. For fiscal year 2008 (October 2007 – September 2008): 7025 Soldiers ended their military service at Fort Hood. During FY 2007, there were 7750.

A comparison of the percentages corresponding with the reason cited for leaving the service by quarter and for fiscal years 2007 and 2008 is as follows:



6. Trends. In FY 2008, approximately 9 percent fewer Soldiers ended their service at Fort Hood compared to 2007. The numbers citing ETS or administrative discharge declined by almost 1000 Soldiers (a decrease of 14.2%); Soldiers being medically discharged rose 9.3%, reflecting the continuous deployments from Fort Hood as well as the Warrior Transition Brigade (WTB) continuing to reduce the backlog of

## FORT HOOD REGION VETERANS INVENTORY INITIATIVE



medically non-deployable Soldiers. One of several possible reasons for the decrease in non-retirement eligible Soldiers separating from the service is the general condition of the economy nationally. With rising unemployment rates and uncertainties in the civilian sector, there may be an appeal to the steady income and benefits afforded by military service. Additionally, selective retention bonuses (tax-free if re-enlistment occurs during a deployment) likely provided a strong incentive for many Soldiers.

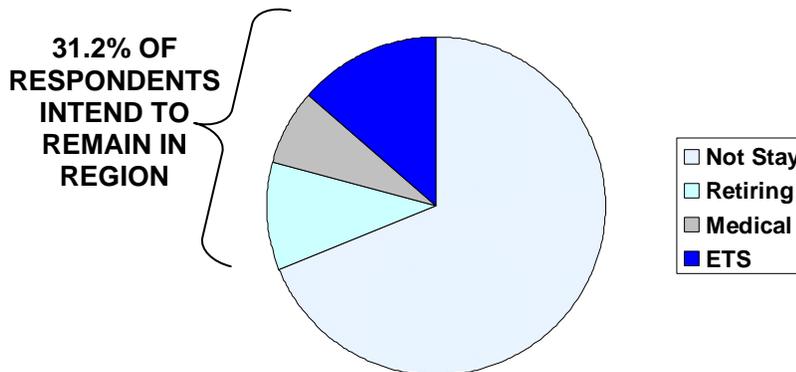
**C. INTENTIONS ON STAYING IN THE REGION:** The respondents were surveyed regarding their intentions about remaining in the region (within 30 miles of Fort Hood – generally equating to the Temple-Killeen-Fort Hood Metropolitan Statistical Area) when their service ended.

1. 233 respondents (representing 31% of all respondents) indicated they intended to stay in the region.

This data represents:

- a. 77 retirees (64.7% of all retirement eligible respondents)
- b. 156 (24.8%) non-retirement eligible respondents
- c. 191 (25.6%) responded they did not intend to stay in the region, but would do so if desirable employment were available.

### INTENDING TO STAY IN THE REGION WHEN SERVICE ENDS



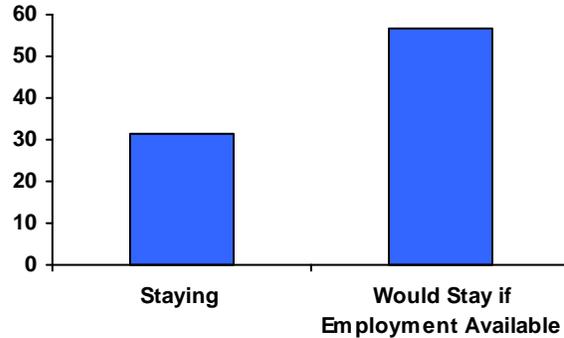
2. For fiscal year 2008 (October 2007 to September 2008) a total of 1200 Soldiers (35.2% of all respondents) leaving the service at Fort Hood indicated they intended to remain in the region once their service was completed.

3. Trends and Conclusions. The percentage of separating Soldiers indicating they intended to remain in the region rose slightly in FY 2008 compared to FY 2007 (35.2% versus 34%). More Soldiers completing the survey in the 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter (39.9%) and 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter (38.5%) stated they intended to remain in the region compared to 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter (31%). The number of respondents rose significantly in the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> quarters, likely because of the impact of the extension of deployments to 15 months that occurred in late 2007. In the 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter, 191 (25.6%) additional respondents would

**FORT HOOD REGION VETERANS INVENTORY INITIATIVE**



stay in the region if desirable employment were available. This number rose over four percent from the three previous quarters. Again, this may reflect the state of the national economy and the “enduring” nature of Fort Hood. Predictable/dependable employment in the region is an important factor in the decisions separating Soldiers are making. The data remains consistent in that an additional 20-25% of separating Soldiers would remain in Central Texas (well over half of all respondents) for desirable employment opportunities.



For fiscal year 2008, 22 percent of Soldiers leaving Central Texas would stay if the type of employment the respondent’s desire was available. Retiring Soldiers represent 477 of the number remaining in the region – an average of 40 per month.

4. While the Veterans Inventory Initiative only surveys the intent of Soldiers departing the service, it is possible to more accurately track the disposition of the retiring population, using annual data from the Retired Army Personnel System, which provides the actual numbers of retired Soldiers to zip code level. Comparing February 2008 to October 2008, there were 16,673 retirees living in the Killeen-Temple-Ft. Hood MSA, an increase of 214. Several cities experienced growth rates exceeding the MSA average.

	FEBRUARY 2008	OCTOBER 2008	DIFFERENCE	% CHANGE
<b>KILLEEN</b>	7798	7968	170	2
<b>COPPERAS COVE</b>	2991	3005	14	0
<b>HARKER HEIGHTS</b>	1770	1816	46	2.5
<b>TEMPLE</b>	1097	1120	23	2
<b>KEMPNER</b>	880	890	10	1
<b>BELTON</b>	806	808	2	0
<b>LAMPASAS</b>	340	339	-1	0
<b>GATESVILLE</b>	339	341	2	0
<b>NOLANVILLE</b>	239	254	15	5.9
<b>SALADO</b>	199	205	6	2.9
<b>MSA</b>	16459	16673	214	1

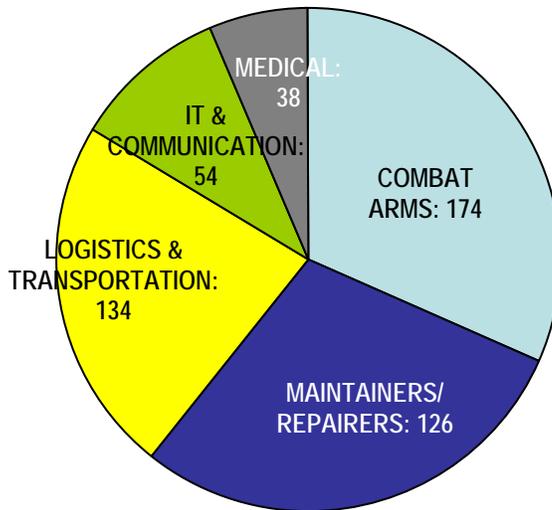
The military retiree rate of growth for north Texas (174 counties less the Killeen-Temple-Fort Hood MSA) was 2 percent for the same period.

**FORT HOOD REGION VETERANS INVENTORY INITIATIVE**



The data for rates of growth remains relatively consistent this quarter with 6 communities meeting or exceeding the MSA growth rate. In FY 2007, a total of 521 retiring Soldiers indicated they intended on remaining in the region. While the chart above reflects net increases or decreases, further analysis is needed to determine if there is an identifiable trend.

**D. MILITARY OCCUPATIONAL SPECIALTY (MOS) ANALYSIS:** Departing Soldiers represent 138 different Military Occupational Specialties. However, 72.3 percent (526 respondents) can be grouped into five general areas: Combat Arms, Maintainers/Repairers, Logistics/ Transportation, Info Technology/ Communications and Medical.



**COMBAT ARMS**

Given the types of units at Fort Hood (seven Brigade Combat Teams and one Fires Brigade) and deployment cycles, the number of Combat Arms Soldiers leaving the service is predictable. Most, if not all, will be combat veterans of the Iraq/Afghanistan campaigns, which have a distinctive small-unit focus by their nature. Therefore, in addition to the skills listed below, these Soldiers would likely have extensive leadership and staff planning skills that far surpass those of their civilian peers.

Soldiers in combat arms comprise 24 percent of the reported fields.

<b>Infantry (75)</b>	Member or leader who individually employs small arms/heavy anti-armor weapons in support of combat operations
<b>Armor (47)</b>	Member or leader who employs main battle tanks or cavalry fighting vehicles in combat operations, and performs reconnaissance and security.

## FORT HOOD REGION VETERANS INVENTORY INITIATIVE



<b>Field Artillery (33)</b>	Operate or supervise high technology cannon artillery weapons, automated tactical data systems, intelligence activities, target processing, radar operations, artillery surveying operations, or meteorological observation
<b>Air Defense Artillery (19)</b>	Operate command/control/communications/computer information systems or the lightweight, highly mobile Avenger or medium weight Patriot Air Defense Missile systems.

### MAINTAINERS/ REPAIRERS

Soldiers that work in the field of maintenance and repair comprise 17.4 percent of the population.

<b>Aviation repairers (46)</b>	13 different enlisted specialties (less pilots and air traffic controllers) ranging from aircraft structural repairers to airframe-specific armament/electrical/avionics system repairers.
<b>Tracked Vehicle Mechanics (30)</b>	Perform or supervise unit maintenance, diagnose, and troubleshoot malfunctions on gas turbine and diesel power plants; the suspension, steering, hydraulics, auxiliary power units, and the armament/fire control systems on tracked vehicles including the M1 Abrams main battle tank and Bradley Fighting Vehicle.
<b>Special purpose (27)</b>	8 different low-density fields that require a degree of technical skills that would support the repair and maintenance of Army vehicles and equipment. These skills include metal workers (welders), machinists, small arms and fire control repair, power generation and special purpose equipment (such as HVAC and refrigeration systems).
<b>Wheeled Vehicle Mechanics (23)</b>	Supervise and perform unit, direct support and general support level maintenance and recovery operations on light and heavy wheeled vehicles, their associated trailers and material handling equipment.

### LOGISTICS AND TRANSPORTATION

Soldiers serving in the logistics and transportation fields comprise 18.5 percent of reported fields.

<b>Motor Transport Operator (33)</b>	Supervise (truck master/dispatcher) or operate wheel vehicles ranging from sedans/High-Mobility Multipurpose Wheel Vehicles (i.e. Humvee) to the Heavy Equipment Transporter (capable of line hauling a main battle tank) to transport personnel and cargo. Many respondents indicated they possess a Commercial Driver's License (CDL).
<b>Automated Logistical Specialists (32)</b>	Supervise and perform management or stock record/warehouse functions pertaining to receipt, storage, distribution and issue, and maintain equipment records and parts.
<b>Petroleum Supply Specialists (24)</b>	Supervise the receipt, storage, accountability, and cares for dispensing, issuing and shipping bulk or packaged petroleum, oils, and lubricants.
<b>Unit Supply</b>	Supervise or perform duties involving the request, receipt, storage,

## FORT HOOD REGION VETERANS INVENTORY INITIATIVE



<b>Specialists (18)</b>	issue, accountability, and preservation of individual, organizational, installation, and expendable supplies and equipment.
<b>Food Service Specialists (18)</b>	Supervise or prepares, cooks and serves food in field or garrison food service operations.
<b>Transportation Management Coordinators (3)</b>	Monitor, control, and supervise the movement of personnel, equipment, and cargo by rail, highway, and water.
<b>Shower/Laundry and Clothing Repair Specialists (2)</b>	Supervise or performs personnel laundry and shower operations and repairs personnel clothing and light textiles.
<b>Water Treatment Specialists (2)</b>	Supervise or performs installation, operation of water purification equipment, water storage and distribution operations and activities.

### INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AND COMMUNICATIONS

The information technology and communications field makes up 7.4% of the fields reported.

<b>Signal Support Systems Specialist (17)</b>	Supervise, install, employ, maintain, troubleshoot and assist users with battlefield signal support systems, terminal devices, satellite communications equipment and automated telecommunications computer systems, to include local area networks, wide area networks and routers. Integrate signal systems and networks; performs unit level maintenance on authorized signal equipment and associated electronic devices; train and provide technical assistance to users of signal equipment.
<b>Information Technology Specialist (13)</b>	Supervise, install, operate and perform unit level maintenance on multi-functional/multi-user information processing systems, peripheral equipment, and associated devices. Perform analyst and information assurance functions and conducts data system studies. Perform Information Services Support Office (ISSO) duties of printing, publications, records management and Communication Security (COMSEC) custodian functions and certification authority duties in support of the Defense Message System (DMS).
<b>Network Switching Systems Operator (9)</b>	Supervises, installs, operates, and performs systems maintenance on large and small electronic switches; system control centers; node management facilities; associated multiplexing and combat net radio interface (CNRI) equipment; short range line of sight radio systems; communications security (COMSEC) devices; and other equipment associated with network switching operations.
<b>Multi-channel Transmission Systems Operator-Maintainer (6)</b>	Supervise, install, operate and perform unit level maintenance on multi-channel line-of-site and tropospheric scatter communications systems, communications security (COMSEC) devices, and associated equipment

**FORT HOOD REGION VETERANS INVENTORY INITIATIVE**



**MEDICAL**

Personnel in the medical field make up 5% of the reported fields.

<b>Health Care Specialist</b> (22)	Provide emergency medical treatment, limited primary care, force health protection, evacuation in a variety of operational and clinical settings from point of injury or illness through the continuum of military health care under the supervision of a physician, nurse or physician’s assistant. As a field combat medic, provides emergency medical care/treatment at point of wounding on the battlefield or to battle and non-battle casualties during wartime.
<b>Other</b> (16)	3 Medical Laboratory Specialists, 2 Biomedical Equipment Specialists, 2 Radiology Specialists and 2 Officers whose specialty was Health Service Administration

**E. DESIRED POST- MILITARY SERVICE EMPLOYMENT:** Respondents are asked to indicate the type (or types) of post-military employment they desire. In order to standardize input for ease of analysis, the survey provides 12 broad categories conforming to industry categories found in the North American Industrial Classification System (NAICS), but respondents may write in and/or amplify any area not listed. The data indicates, for all respondents, the top four categories of post-service employment desired are<sup>2</sup>:

**SOLDIER**

- 1. Law Enforcement: 238
- 2. Management: 195
- 3. Administrative: 177
- 4. Computers: 165

**SPOUSE**

- 1. Medical 125
- 2. Administration 92
- 3. Management 74
- 4. Education 68

For only retirement eligible respondents, the top four categories of desired post-service employment are:

- 1. Administrative: 80 responses
- 2. Communications: 35 responses
- 3. Education: 33 responses
- 4. Management: 29 responses

<sup>2</sup> Employers desiring to hire Fort Hood veterans may post their job announcement on the ACAP website ([www.acap.army.mil](http://www.acap.army.mil)). Large employers with an employment website can post the URL on the ACAP website which will directly link to their employment website. Employers can also coordinate with the Fort Hood Transition Services Manager (Linda Christ at (254)288-6735) to arrange to recruit potential Veteran employees in person Tuesday through Thursday, and briefly address the TAP workshop (industry they represent, skills they are seeking, availability to discuss job opportunities.)

Employers can place a job posting via “Work In Texas” ([www.workintexas.com](http://www.workintexas.com)) – a statewide, internet-based job matching system through the Central Texas Workforce Center (254) 200-2020.

The Texas Veterans Services staff work closely with the Central Texas Workforce Business Services including job development, direct referrals, and military skills-civilian occupations matching. Contact Jerry Butts (Killeen: (254)200-2026) or Eugene Hall (Temple: (254)773-1607, ext. 4032) for more information.

## FORT HOOD REGION VETERANS INVENTORY INITIATIVE



Officers and Non-Commissioned Officers eligible to retire have spent many years leading increasingly larger and more complex organizations, are graduates of an Army Professional Education system that focuses on developing their leadership skills, and have demonstrated success as a result of their longevity of service. In most cases, their skills would include human resource development, supervision of large numbers of subordinates, fiscal planning, etc. Therefore, Management and Administration are areas of post-service employment that are consistent with their training and experience.

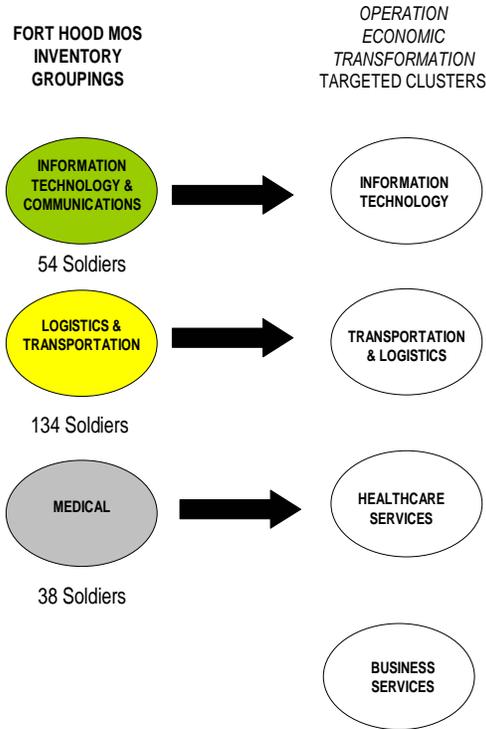
Soldiers leaving the military prior to becoming eligible for retirement have consistently rated Law Enforcement within the top two categories for post-service employment. Given the skills of the predominant Military Occupational Specialties (Combat Arms), a high rate of recent combat experience, and advanced educational attainment of the respondents, a wide range of possibilities available in the Law Enforcement area is apparently appealing. For the first time in eight reports, the number of separating non-retirement eligible Soldiers listed “Computers” as an area of employment interest. The high level of automation/digitization Soldiers are exposed to results in a technologically savvy workforce. The number of retirement eligible soldiers expressing an interest in education as a post military career is higher than in previous quarters.

The *Operation Economic Transformation* Report identified four “target industries” or clusters that present the Greater Fort Hood Region with immediate opportunities for economic growth:

- Information Technology
- Transportation and Logistics
- Healthcare Services
- Business Services

Clusters are geographic concentrations of interconnected firms and institutions utilizing related applications and serving similar markets. When fully developed, clusters can act as the principal drivers of economic growth and innovation in a region. The report recommended pursuing the development of these four clusters through a coordinated strategy of business retention, recruitment and entrepreneurship.

**FORT HOOD REGION VETERANS INVENTORY INITIATIVE**



**F. EDUCATION LEVEL OF THOSE REMAINING IN THE REGION:** Respondents were asked to indicate their highest level of educational attainment. Forty two percent of all respondents indicated they had “Some College” or greater. 9.7% have an Associates degree and 9% have a Baccalaureate degree.

The data depicted below represents only the 233 respondents who indicated they intended to stay in the region upon completion of their service, and is separated by those eligible for retirement and those Soldiers leaving the service that are not retirement eligible.<sup>3</sup>

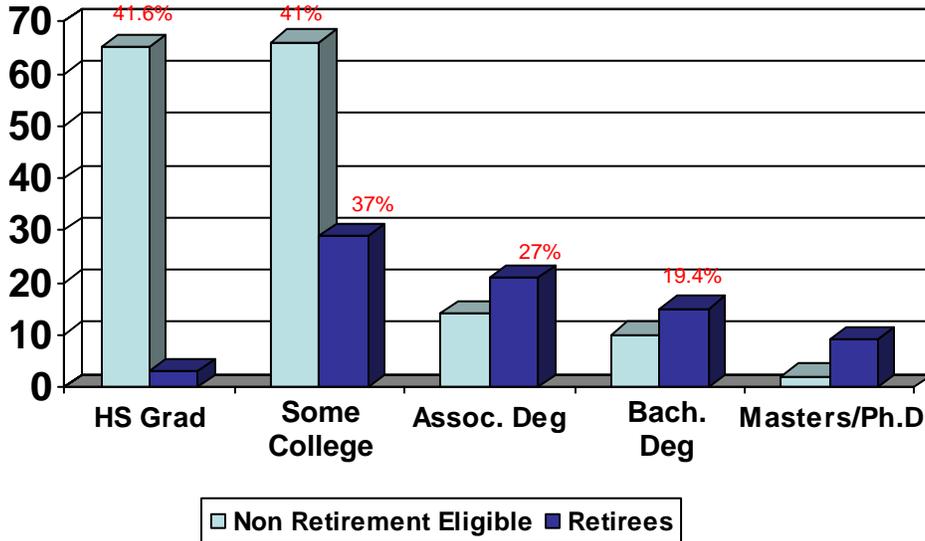
The data indicates that an overwhelming majority (96%) of retirement-eligible respondents who intend on remaining in the region have some post-secondary education. 37 percent list their highest education level as “Some College” and 27 percent have received their Associates degree. 58 percent of non retirement-eligible Soldiers have post-secondary education, with 41 percent indicating they have “Some College.”

<sup>3</sup> Data is for 77 retirees and 156 non-retirement eligibles;



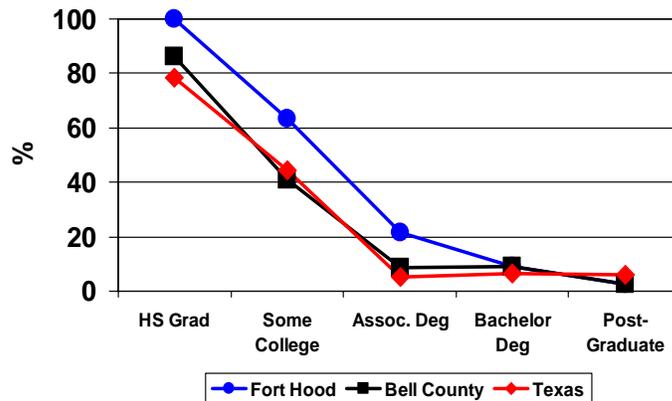
## HIGHEST LEVEL OF EDUCATION ATTAINED

Soldiers REMAINING in the region.



When the highest level of educational attained by Soldiers leaving the service at Fort Hood is expressed as a percentage of all respondents (rate of educational attainment) and compared to educational attainment for Bell County Texas and the state of Texas as a whole, the following comparison can be made<sup>4</sup>:

### EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT COMPARISON



<sup>4</sup> Source: Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board; also cited on the Texas A&M University Real Estate Center – Market Overview 2008.



The data indicates Soldiers are better-educated than their civilian counterparts, both in the region and statewide. This is reflective of a high degree of self initiative and demonstrates that Soldiers willingly embrace the notion of lifelong learning. Continuing education is an important component to retention, and it is routine for Soldiers to perform in an increasingly sophisticated and technical operating environment in the execution of their duties.

**G. DESIRED “QUALITY OF PLACE” IMPROVEMENTS:** An important consideration in retaining a talented military Veteran workforce in the Central Texas region upon their separation is how they perceive “Quality of Place.” Whereas the more traditional quality of life tends to measure those community factors assuming everyone is attracted by those amenities, “Quality of Place” considers what might be attractive to new residents that accommodates growth and recognizes the benefits of change.

1. Respondents were asked to indicate the improvements they would desire (their perception of the Central Texas Quality of Place) in the general areas of higher education, retail shopping, health care, entertainment, child care, or “other” that would positively affect their decision to remain in the region. Housing and Higher Education tied at 22 percent of respondents. Entertainment (13.6%) and Health Care (10.7%) followed. Less than 10 percent of respondents listed retail shopping and child care as Quality of Place factors they perceived needed improvement.

2. The most frequently recurring response was “other.” The survey affords respondents the opportunity to provide additional written comments, and the most often-noted areas respondents perceive needing improvement are:

- a. more pay/better jobs (49 comments)
- b. crime rate/ traffic/congestion (10 comments)
- c. family/ community activities (10 comments, mostly citing a lack of children and family-oriented recreation and entertainment)

Note: Entertainment and higher education are general survey categories, but respondents have consistently provided amplifying comments on both of those areas. There were at least eleven specific comments from respondents that indicated the upper-level/ graduate educational opportunities were insufficient. Apparently other states are offering free community college tuition to separating Veterans.

3. Perceptions versus reality. Specific comments separating Soldiers cite as desired improvements to the Central Texas “Quality of Place” remain consistent from previous reports. As 75 to 80 percent of Fort Hood Soldiers reside in the communities of Central Texas (98% within 10 miles of the Fort Hood main gate), the comments reflect their perceptions of areas where improvements might further influence their decision to remain in the region when their military service ends. As *Operation Economic Transformation* points out, “Economic development planning that is responsive to new

## FORT HOOD REGION VETERANS INVENTORY INITIATIVE



opportunities...recognizes the increasing importance of quality of place in the attraction and retention of business and workers. Quality of place is about providing options, not just for current residents, but for those who will be residents in the future.” Veterans ending their service at Fort Hood are clearly a talented and educated workforce worth retaining in the Central Texas region, and their perceptions of Quality of Place improvements are important feedback to be considered in future planning. We will continue to monitor the responses for any significant changes in subsequent reports.

*Additional information not addressed in this quarterly report may be available for release to eligible entities. Requests for specific information should be addressed **in writing** to Executive Director, Heart Of Texas Defense Alliance at 2916 Illinois Avenue, Killeen TX 76543.*

***Special thanks to Ms. Linda Angel for the design of the report cover and logo; and to Mr. Gerry Fluharty, Workforce Solutions of Central Texas, who compiles the data for these reports.***