

ARMY FAMILY ACTION PLAN (AFAP) GETS RESULTS

AFAP is a process of improving the quality of life in our Tri-Border community. The Commander's AFAP Steering Committee Meeting was held 16 March 2011 at USAG Schinnen. Eleven new AFAP issues and four outstanding issues from 2010 were briefed to the Garrison Commander by local agencies. The committee will continue to work to resolve local issues prioritized from the AFAP Conferences.

Here is an update on completed and in progress issue status.

NEW AFAP ISSUES:

DA Summer Hire Program wages for eligible Family members: Active. Department of Defense regulation sets the wages for summer hire program. Work group requested summer hire wages be increased and become more in line with current minimum wage or General Schedule (GS) pay scales. Recommendation is to forward issue to IMCOM-Europe AFAP for consideration at the May 2011 conference.

Weekend Fitness Center hours on Joint Forces Command (JFC) Brunssum: Closed/Completed. Recommendation was for the JFC Fitness Center to offer limited weekend operating hours. Sometime in April, hours will be extended on weekdays, Monday through Thursday until 2100. Weekend hours will initially be offered on Saturdays from 0800-1600. This issue is successfully completed by JFC Community Activities Branch.

TRICARE Europe's International SOS providers for Active Duty Service members and their Family members: Active. The Rotterdam community members reported difficulties finding medical providers in their remote location. Additionally, there are delays in claims and lengthy period of time receiving referrals. Already, Rotterdam has increased TRICARE network providers from 1 to 3. GK and SHAPE TRICARE representatives are working with TRICARE International SOS to resolve the processing problems and streamline procedures for the Rotterdam community.

After-hours child care availability Single Parent and Dual Military Families. Active. The JFC Brunssum Child Development Center (CDC) and School Age Center (SAC) operate from 0700 until 1800, Monday through Friday. The delegates requested pre-screening occur before initiating Soldier permanent change of station orders to ensure child care options exist at potential assignments. The CDC and SAC will conduct surveys to see if patrons support extended hours during the week. If enough interested parents support this request, they would have to contract for the extended hours.

NATO Air Base Geilenkirchen (GK) West Gate hours of operation. Active. Recommendation was to open the AB GK West Gate during standard work week duty hours. Due to funding and limited resources, the gate hours have been reduced to Monday through Friday from 0530-0830 and 1430-1730. The GK NATO Base Commander is considering implementing panel recommendations when resources are available.

Drop-off and Pick-up procedures for AFNORTH International School (AIS). Currently AIS does not have designated drop off and pick up area within the AIS campus from 0835-0900 and 1510 and 1545, due to bus loading and unloading. USAG Schinnen Military Police (MPs) will

work with the Provost Marshall, Marechaussee, and local police to see what can be done to improve the situation.

Nutritional Breakfast at AFNORTH International School (AIS). Active. This teen AFAP issue is being addressed by AIS and the School Liaison Officer (SLO). The SLO is researching options of starting a breakfast program either through The Exchange or private organizations.

AFNORTH International School (AIS) Friday Activity Buses for the Netherlands.

Closed/Unattainable. This teen issue was closed due to lack of funding. The SLO researched the issue and activity buses don't run on Fridays in the Netherlands due to lack of funding. Buses are offered the first two weeks of each sporting season because students must have 10 days of practice to play. Coaches will not penalize students living in the Netherlands from not attending Friday practices. The activity buses offered on Fridays to Germany and Belgium are a result of a national decision on the part of the American and Canadian sections, not an AIS decision.

Functional Academic Skills Training (FAST) Course for Tri-Border community Soldiers.

Active. The Single Soldier delegates requested USAG Schinnen Army Education Center provide a FAST course. The FAST course has not been offered at USAG Schinnen since 2005 due to lack of funding and participation. In order for a class to be offered, at least 10 Soldiers need to attend for a total of 60 hours. The education center is researching the number of Soldiers needing/wanting to improve their General Technical (GT) scores. Based on this number, if enough students need and want this course, they will request funding in October 2011 and try to offer the class.

USAG Schinnen Defense Commissary Agency (DeCA) and The Exchange operating hours.

Closed/Unattainable. The recommendation was for The Exchange and DeCA to shift and offer late night evening operating hours during the work week. Both DeCA and The Exchange have reported considerable drops in sales and profit losses. Due to the current economic conditions and decreased sales and profits they cannot support the request to extend the hours.

Dual Military Parent Simultaneous Deployments. Closed/Unattainable. The work group recommended that DA change current policy to ensure dual military parents do not deploy concurrently. DA has been aware of this issue for several years and already has the requirement of a Family Care Plan. Due to the current mission requirements, the revision of this policy is not attainable.

Recycling at AFNORTH International School: Closed Completed. This 2010 teen issue has resulted in the school adding a paper recycling bin in the cafeteria and a promotional campaign to increase awareness of environmentalism. Additionally, an Environmental Studies course was added to the US curriculum.

AFN Satellite Dishes in Government-Leased single Soldier's Quarters: Active. The DPW housing office is researching the rules for each municipality for the 35 single Soldier quarters and reporting on which quarters will be authorized the placement of satellite dishes. Housing has purchased 10 sets of satellite dishes. Once housing has received all the permissions from the building owners and municipalities, they will move forward and individual dishes will be issued to occupants residing in the government leased Single Soldier Quarters. Occupants will be required to pay for the installation of the dishes and purchase the UPH and decoders.

USAG Schinnen Housing Customer Service Support for Department of Defense (DOD) Personnel. Closed Completed. The housing office has now hired a new director in January 2011. Coverage of phones during duty hours has been increased. Stand alone computers with information on available houses and crime prevention have been installed in the DPW reception area. Employees have attended Operations Excellence (OPEX) customer service training. Procedures have been restructured to improve customer service as the work flow processes have been streamlined for optimum efficiency.

Student Discounts for AFNORTH School ID card holders: Closed Completed. Currently, Subway Restaurant in Brunssum is willing to offer a 20 percent discount for AFNORTH students. MacDonald's has provided coupons to students for discounts. The school liaison officer (SLO) will continue to work with local vendors and merchants to obtain further student discounts for AIS students.

Age-Specific Programs for 14-18 year old teens: Closed Completed. The Youth Center (YC) has completed a survey of the high school youth this fall and are implementing programs and services targeting the interests and needs identified by teens. Working closely with the SLO, CYSS is offering special events and trips at the YC. The Teen Center now offers computers with commercial internet access to offer Tweeter and Facebook. All YC trips are advertised on school marquees and promoted during the student council meetings.

Community Service Program for Teens: Closed Completed. The Army Volunteer Corps (AVC) has partnered with the SLO to create an awareness of local youth volunteering opportunities on and off the installation. The AVC has written a letter, accompanied by a flyer and brochure, with information on community service and volunteer registration targeted to parents/guidance counselors/teachers.

TRICARE Patient Liaison Host-Nation Hospital Visits: This Rotterdam issue has resulted in revisions of the TRICARE Global Remote Overseas program information sheets for accessing medical care. This information is included in the Newcomer's Welcome Packets and on the Rotterdam Now community website.

Results of the conference and AFAP meetings can be found on the USAG Schinnen website at: <http://www.usagschinnen.eur.army.mil/sites/services/afap.asp> Continuous progress updates will be provided to the community. Call 046-443-7482 or DSN: 360-7482 for more information or email acs-schinnen@eur.army.mil.