



# Survivors Overseas

## *Navigating SOS Overseas*

The U.S. Army's Survivor Outreach Services (SOS) program has come a long way in its few short years of existence. There has been, thanks in large part to compassionate Army leadership, an increased focus on caring for Survivors of Fallen Warriors long after Casualty Assistance Officers have taken care of their business.

The renewed focus on caring for Survivors as they navigate through their new lives has impacted Survivors around the globe. Increased specialized staff and training all make the process of living without a loved one a little bit easier. SOS in Europe is a bit more difficult to define, since there are Survivors spread out over a large geographic area – which includes several countries, each of which has their own laws and procedures for addressing Survivor needs.

One of the best features about the SOS program is the linkages made between government agencies and private sector organizations and non-profit groups. While these linkages do exist in Europe, getting them going and finding enough participants to start up chapters has been more difficult in Europe than in the U.S. Fortunately, several caring professionals and Survivors have been working hard to establish chapters of some of the more popular Survivor groups.

Additionally, private organizations serving Survivors have extended many of their benefits and operations to those living outside the United States. As more and more professionals are hired and trained in the SOS field and program, these linkages will expand and will result in increased services and opportunities for Survivors living overseas. Stay tuned!

## Contents

European Survivors	1
LTG Lynch Letter	2
SOS Media Outlets	2
Identification Cards	3
Hero Miles	3
Agency Links	3
F&MWR SOS Discounts	4
Gold Star Wives Day	5
Operation Remembrance	5
Needs Assessment	6



*To honor the Fallen Soldier's service and sacrifice for our nation, we can do one last thing – offer support for the loved ones the Soldier left behind.*

*Lt. Gen. Rick Lynch, Command of Installation Management*

## Taking Care of Our Own

By Lt. Gen. Rick Lynch

I commanded the 3rd Infantry Division out of Fort Stewart as part of the surge in Iraq in 2007-8. During that time, 153 Soldiers died in combat, in a place on the battlefield where I put them. I pray for those Soldiers and their Families every day. Their loss is something I have to live with. For any leader, the loss of a Soldier hits hard. But the loss that Survivors experience is magnitudes deeper and wider, because they have lost not just a Soldier, but a friend, a son or daughter, a husband or wife, a father or mother.

When I visit installations, I meet with those who have lost loved ones on active duty. I make sure to talk with Survivors for two reasons. One reason is that now, as the commander of Installation Management Command, I need to know how we are doing with one of our newest programs, Survivor Outreach Services. The other reason is that Survivors need to know that the Army recognizes and honors their Soldier's service and sacrifice.

The best, most meaningful thing we can do to honor our Fallen Soldiers is to support and care for those they left behind. Survivor Outreach Services was established in April 2008 to do just that, in a more comprehensive manner than ever before.

The Army is fortunate to have a leader like Chief of Staff Gen. George W. Casey, Jr., who had the vision and compassion to propel the effort to support Survivors beyond casualty assistance alone. Casualty assistance officers work with Families during a very difficult time, a heart-rending time, when Families are notified of their Soldier's death and have to make funeral arrangements and decisions about entitlements and benefits.

But grief is very personal -- it cannot be standardized or resolved in a set time period. With the help of a panel of Survivors selected by Gen. Casey, SOS was developed to provide longer-term, expanded support and care, taking up where casualty assistance ends.

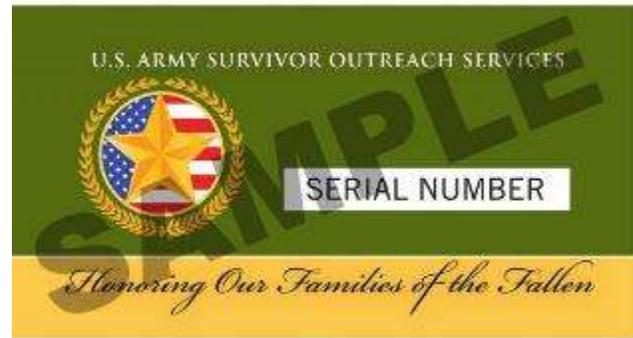
SOS offers support through benefits coordinators, who help Survivors understand and apply for local, state and federal benefits; financial counselors, who assist through investment and estate planning education; and support coordinators, who facilitate support groups, provide life skills education and connect Survivors with counseling resources.

More than 200 SOS personnel are now working on installations throughout the United States and overseas, to include National Guard and Reserve locations. The three components work and train together very closely on this One Army program, to provide SOS services closest to where Survivors live.

### For More Information

More information on SOS services and Survivor resources are available on the Army SOS Facebook page, Army OneSource website (<http://www.myarmyonesource.com>) and USAG Schinnen garrison webpage ([www.usagschinnen.eur.army.mil](http://www.usagschinnen.eur.army.mil)). There are also links to partner organizations whose support is critical to connecting with and providing for Survivors.





## Survivor Identification

January 27, 2011

Excerpted from article By William Bradner  
(Family and MWR Command)

SAN ANTONIO -- During a Survivor Outreach Services working group meeting last year, several participants expressed difficulty in gaining access to military installations to take part in SOS programs and support services. Survivors, including parents of fallen Soldiers, do not always have a DoD identification card, and are frequently required to obtain a visitor or temporary vehicle pass to enter garrisons.

Soon stateside Survivors will be able apply for a Survivor Decal, much like the standard installation access decal-for their vehicle, greatly improving their ability to access the programs designed to support them.

"My intent is to implement access control procedures making it easier for Survivors to enter Army garrisons," said Lt. Gen. Rick D. Lynch, commander of the Army Installation Management Command and Assistant Chief of Staff for Installation Management.

"I want all security personnel manning our entrance gates to recognize these very special Army families and welcome them with special respect for their sacrifice and service," he continued.

IMCOM Protection Services Division, along with the Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation Command SOS and Marketing Offices, created the decal and application, usage and implementation guidance for Army garrisons.

European Survivors will not be able to utilize these decals, unfortunately, due to force protection issues. Survivors should contact their SOS Coordinators for more information on how to ensure access to European installations. SOS staff will work directly with Survivors to assist them and serve as liaisons with installation access personnel.

### *Survivor-Related Agencies*

- ◆ **TAPS WEBSITE**
- ◆ **ARMY SURVIVOR  
CASE MANAGEMENT**
- ◆ **VETERANS ADMINISTRATION SITE**
- ◆ **SNOWBALL EXPRESS**
- ◆ **MILITARY CHILDREN  
EDUCATION COALITION**
- ◆ **AMERICAN WIDOW PROJECT**
- ◆ **WWW.AUSA.ORG**
- ◆ **Trevor Romain Foundation**
- ◆ **ARMY ONE SOURCE SOS**
- ◆ **F.I.N.E. YOUNG WIDOWS**
- ◆ **ARMY WELL-BEING  
SURVIVORS PAGE**



## Survivor Discounts at F&MWR Facilities

*Survivors Receive Excellent Discounts at all  
Family & Morale, Welfare & Recreation Facilities*

Fallen Warriors have paid the ultimate sacrifice and their Families deserve the utmost respect, gratitude and the very best Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation (MWR) Command can provide. The Survivor Support Package is designed to embrace and reassure our Survivors that our Nation will always be there for them.

The Family & MWR Command is proud to offer discounts at the Armed Forces Recreation Center Resorts honoring Survivors from all services. Survivors will save 50% off room rates and this rate also extends to Family members and sponsored guests accompanying authorized users.

Whether Survivors are planning trips to Hawaii, Germany or anywhere else in the world where Family & MWR has resorts, they can take advantage of this great offer – and know that the military community supports them and appreciates the sacrifice that their service member and their Families have made. For more information about this and other Survivor benefits, please contact Survivor Outreach Services DSN 360-7218 or commercial +31(0) 46-443-7218.



## “Hero Miles” Program Supports Families of Fallen & Wounded

Hero Miles, a program administered by the Fisher House Foundation, plans to offer tickets so grieving Families needing assistance can fly to Washington D.C. this Memorial Day weekend to participate in the Tragedy Assistance Program (TAP) Seminar for Survivors. Hero Miles is a program that provides a way for passengers of participating airlines to donate unused frequent flier miles to help Families of Fallen or wounded Warriors. For more information about this program, visit their website at: [www.fisherhouse.org/programs/heromiles.html](http://www.fisherhouse.org/programs/heromiles.html).

For more information, contact Survivor Outreach Services (SOS) at DSN 360-7218 or commercial +31(0) 46-443-7218.





## Operation Remembrance

Operation Remembrance, a non-profit volunteer organization run by Army Spouses, provides memory boxes to the Families of fallen Soldiers. Operation Remembrance was founded by Kristen T. Pirog, an author, teach, mother and military spouse. This grassroots organization has been recognized nationally and continues to grow, with the help of donors and volunteers.

An Operation Remembrance fundraising event was recently held in the Tri-Border community — to help offset costs associated with making and distributing the memory boxes and to provide exposure for this great grassroots organization. If you are interested in learning more about Operation

Check out their website at [www.operationremembrance.org](http://www.operationremembrance.org) and learn how military Families are taking care of each other and helping to ensure that fallen Soldiers are remembered. As one Chaplain noted during the funeral of a fallen Soldier, "Our memories help fill the void that is left by the loss of a loved one."

For more information about services for Families of fallen Soldiers, contact Schinnen SOS at DSN 360-7218 or commercial +31(0) 46-443-7218.



## Gold Star Wives Day Celebrated

For the first time, America officially recognizes the contributions and dedication of military widows with "Gold Star Wives Day." A Senate resolution designated Dec. 18, 2010, as a day to honor and recognize the contributions of the members of the Gold Star Wives of America Inc.

The group, with about 10,000 members, provides service, support and friendship to the widows and widowers of military personnel who died on active duty or as the result of a service-connected cause.

"This is the first year we've had a Gold Star Wives day. It's something that our government relations committee has been working on," said Kit Frazer, president, Gold Star Wives of America Inc. "It's national recognition for the organization, which is wonderful. It's something very special to us."

Frazer's husband was an Army helicopter pilot who was killed in Thailand during the Vietnam War. She said the organization represents military widows from every war since World War II.



## USAG Schinnen

Army Community Service  
Survivor Outreach Services  
DSN 360-7500  
[acs-schinnen@eur.army.mil](mailto:acs-schinnen@eur.army.mil)

### **Find us on the Web:**

[www.usagschinnen.eur.army.mil](http://www.usagschinnen.eur.army.mil)





## USAG Schinnen SOS Needs Assessment

Please take a moment and fill out this confidential needs assessment. Mail or email to:  
**acs-schinnen@eur.army.mil** or Army Community Service USAG Schinnen Unit 21602 APO AE 09703

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Local (or APO) Address \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail Address \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Preferred method of contact:  E-mail  Phone  Mail

Please select the services you are in need of:

- SOS Financial Counseling:** Provides assistance and education in investments, insurance, credit repair, debt management, checking and savings, estate planning, mortgages, garnishments, and foreclosures repair.
- SOS Support Coordination:** Provides supportive counseling, life skills education, and coordinates free counseling services from agencies such as Military Family Life Consultants, VA Grief and Bereavement Counseling, Military OneSource, Army Family Life Chaplains, Social Work Services, Army Substance Abuse Program, and other community agencies.
- U.S. Army Benefits:** Death Gratuity, Survivor Benefit Plan, DEERS, TRICARE and Legal Assistance (SJA).
- VA Benefits:** Dependency and Indemnity Compensation, Servicemen's Group Life Insurance, Veterans Group Life Insurance, National Servicemen Life Insurance, Improved Pension for Non-Service Connected Death, Burial Expense and Education benefits.
- Long Term Family Case Management:** Provides assistance in obtaining Service Records and Reports (such as awards, citations, CID, LOD, etc.)
- Child and Youth Programming:** Counseling, free respite care, lower childcare rates, SKIES *Unlimited* instructional classes, New Parent Support Program, School Liaison Services, playgroups, grief camps and other surviving child activities.
- Army Community Service:** Army Volunteer Corp, Army Emergency Relief, Family Advocacy, Relocation & EFMP

Thank you for letting us know how we can best serve you.