



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
UNITED STATES ARMY EUROPE AND AFRICA
UNIT 29351
APO AE 09096-9351

AEPE

29 April 2024

MEMORANDUM FOR SEE DISTRIBUTION

SUBJECT: Minutes of the Army Europe and Africa Retired Soldier Council Meeting

1. The report of the Army Europe and Africa Retired Soldier Council on the subject, on 27 October 2023, has been reviewed and approved.
2. The point of contact for this memorandum is Mr. David V. Fulton, President, Army Europe and Africa Retired Soldier Council at +49 (611) 143-537-9001 or email david.v.fulton.civ@army.mil.

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Encl

DWAYNE L. WADE
COL, GS
Deputy Chief of Staff, G1

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AEPE

SUBJECT: Minutes of the Army in Europe-Africa Retired Soldier Council Meeting

EA Deputy Garrison Manager / Senior Enlisted Leader

EA Garrison RSO

EA Co-Chair, Chief of Staff, Army, Retired Soldier Council

EA Board Member, European Tri-Component Retiree Council

EA Member, Army in Europe and Africa Retired Soldier Council



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AEPE-RSC

13 March 2024

MEMORANDUM FOR Commanding General, United States Army Europe and Africa,
ATTN: AECG, Unit 29351, APO AE 09096

SUBJECT: Minutes of the Army Europe and Africa Retired Soldier Council Meeting

1. The 168th meeting of the Army Europe and Africa Retired Soldier Council (AEA RSC) convened at 0900 on 27 October 2023 in the G1 Conference Room. The first meeting of the Council was 29 August 1980.

2. The following persons were present in person or via Webex:

a. Members:

LTC (Retired (Ret)) David V. Fulton	President
CW3 (Ret) Sandra K. Simpson	Secretary
COL (Ret) Karl M. Goetzke	Member
COL (Ret) Robert A. Mentell	Member
COL (Ret) Mark A. Rado	Member
LTC (Ret) William Bergman	Member
LTC (Ret) David E. Ott	Member
SGM (Ret) Michael D. Richter	Member
SGM (Ret) David B. Stewart	Member
SFC (Ret) Filberto H. Clarke	Member

b. Advisory Members:

COL Dwayne L. Wade	Deputy Chief of Staff, G1, USAREUR-AF
Ms. Laura R. Waid	Staff Representative, ODCoS, G1, USAREUR-AF
Ms. Kimikka M. Davis	IMCOM-E Retirement Services Officer

c. Associate Members

CDR (USN, Ret) Christopher Bowen	Senior Retired Sailor Rep, USNAVEUR-AF
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d. Visitors:

COL(P) Eero R. Keravuori	DCG M&RA, USAREUR-AF
COL David W. Mayfield	Commander, USAG Wiesbaden
Ms. Julie Burandt-Partin	Director, Retired and Annuity Pay, DFAS
CSM Yves Pamphil	CSM, USAG Wiesbaden
SGM Francine Chapman	SGM, ODCoS, G1, USAREUR-AF
Mr. Doug Stanger	Office of Retired and Annuity Pay, DFAS

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SUBJECT: Minutes of the Army Europe and Africa Retired Soldier Council Meeting

Ms. Lisa M. Hicks

Retirement Services Officer, USAG
Wiesbaden

Mr. James Niba

Manager, Andrews Federal Credit Union,
Clay Kaserne, Wiesbaden

3. Opening Remarks (LTC (Ret) Fulton): Since We Last Met:

a. MPSA continues to review the authority for providing Military Postal Service support to Retired Services Members residing overseas. The US Army Adjutant General / MPSA Executive Director visited USAREUR-AF and provided an update. No new information is available at this time.

b. USAREUR-AF support to Ukraine continues.

c. Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP) Open Season is ongoing, ending 1 January 2024.

d. Staffing of AEA Supplement 1 to AR 600-8-7, Retirement Services Program, continues.

e. The Deputy Chief of Staff, G1, USAREUR-AF, discussed with the Director, Manpower, Personnel & Administration Directorate (ECJ1), USEUCOM, revitalization of European Tri-Component Retiree Council (ETRC).

f. U.S. Army Retired Soldier Handbook 2024 was released.

g. U.S. Army Retirement Planning Guide 2024 was released.

4. G-1 Update (COL Wade):

a. USAREUR-AF is waiting to see when Congress will pass an appropriations bill / a continuing resolution.

b. The Chief of Staff Army GEN George is focused on four major areas: warfighting, delivering combat ready formations, continuous transformation, and strengthening the profession.

c. USAREUR-AF is holding several exercises including a major CPX validation of V Corps.

d. The headquarters is also facing real world issues such as a potential NEO evacuation of Lebanon or Israel.

e. He confirmed that he had spoken with the EUCOM J1 concerning the revitalization of the ETRC and will continue to pursue the issue.

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f. The Council raised a question concerning Retired Service Members who are waiting out their 180-day window to be hired into a Civil Service position but who have to get a German visa to remain in country which implies they may work on the German economy. According to USAREUR-AF personnel policy, once an individual gets such a visa, they are ineligible to be hired by the Force.

5. IMCOM-E Update (Ms. Davis):

a. Ms. Davis confirmed that all garrisons have finished conducting their Retiree Appreciation Days (RADs) in October except for the USAREUR-AF RAD hosted by USAG Wiesbaden which is on 28 October 2023. RADs were held on the following dates in 2023:

13 Oct	USAG Benelux-Brunssum
14 Oct	USAG Benelux-SHAPE
16 Oct	USAG Italy
18 Oct	USAG Ansbach
19 Oct	USAG Rheinland-Pfalz / Ramstein
24 Oct	USAG Bavaria
26 Oct	USAG Stuttgart

b. Representatives from the DA Retirement Services Office (RSO) and DFAS were at all the RADs. The presence of the Frankfurt Federal Benefit Unit (FBU) at RADs in Germany was sporadic. IMCOM-E will continue to address this issue.

c. Ms. Davis confirmed that none of the IMCOM-E garrisons has any issues to submit for consideration by the Chief of Staff of the Army (CSA) RSC.

d. She announced that a Retirement Services Officer has been selected for USAG Poland. She will be working with him to bring him up to speed.

6. DCG M&RA Introduction (COL Keravuori):

a. COL Keravuori announced that he will be the keynote speaker at the USAREUR-AF RAD hosted by USAG Wiesbaden representing the USAREUR-AF leadership.

b. He shared with the Council his background that includes Soldiers First of which the Soldier for Life Program is part.

c. The Council reminded COL Keravuori that the three major issues for Retired Soldiers in theater are their pay, their ability to use the military postal system, and access to medical care.

7. USAG Wiesbaden Update (COL Mayfield):

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a. COL Mayfield reviewed with the Council details of the preparations that have been made for the AEA RAD hosted by USAG Wiesbaden.

b. LTC (Ret) Fulton and the Council shared with COL Mayfield some proposed talking points for his presentation at the AEA RAD that the garrison is hosting. These included military postal support to Retired Service Members - DOD is continuing a review of fiscal law and Host Nation Agreement provisions for Overseas Military Postal Service support. A policy decision is expected in 3rd quarter FY24. There will be no change in support until the policy decision is announced.

c. COL Mayfield concluded with the following topics:

(1) Non-Combatant Operation Support to Retired Soldiers: He encouraged individuals not covered by SOFA status, including Retired Service Members and their Families and Survivors, to register in the Department of State's Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP) at <https://de.usembassy.gov/smart-traveler-enrollment-program-step/>. It is a free service to allow U.S. citizens and nationals traveling and living abroad to enroll with the nearest U.S. Embassy or Consulate. European residents should create an account and then identify the nearest consulate to their residence.

(2) Communicating with Retired Soldiers: The garrison is working to improve the communications with Retired Soldiers and their Families and Survivors either through the Garrison Retired Soldier Council (GRSC) or directly with the RSO.

(3) Volunteering: The garrison wants and welcomes volunteers. Retired Soldiers who would like to volunteer should register online at the Volunteer Management Information System (VMIS) website. <https://vmis.armyfamilywebportal.com/>.

(4) The new location for Garrison Headquarters will be in Building 3340, North Clay Kaserne. The new access road should be open 1 November 2023.

8. DFAS Update (Ms. Burandt-Partin): She pointed out that "DFAS Has Listened."

a. Last year, many Retired Soldiers complained that they had not received their Form 1099R in the mail and that they had no electronic access. Upon checking, she found that many Retired Service Members had changed to electronic only receipt of documents but had not provided a valid email or had no email address in the system. DFAS flipped over 6,000 accounts back to mailed 1099Rs so they would again receive the form.

b. Another complaint was that while there was a tool for Retired Service Member Notification of Death, but there was not a similar tool for Annuitant Notification of Death.

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She said that development is underway for such a tool. More information will be available in 2024.

c. The DFAS webpages have been upgraded so that there is a URL for when a Retired Service Member passes away and a URL for when an SBP Annuitant passes away. There are also a series of checklists to make the process easier.

d. There will soon be a DD Form 2656-6 in the Form Wizard toolbox (SBP Election Change Certificate).

e. An upgrade of the “askDFAS” landing page is ongoing.

f. Available now: <https://www.dfas.mil.raquicktools>. It finds the most requested tools.

g. A new form of Report of Existence will send out to only DFAS customers receiving a hard copy check at a foreign address. In the future, it will be once a year instead of twice a year as currently.

9. Andrews Federal Credit Union (Mr. Niba):

a. LTC (Ret) Fulton prefaced Mr. Niba’s presentation by pointing out that two credit unions - Andrews Federal Credit Union and Service Credit Union – service military customers in Germany. Each has their own operating procedures. This is the first of the two presentations.

b. Mr. Niba advised that accounts at Andrews must be established while the member is under SOFA status.

(1) The spouse must have an IRS Individual Taxpayer Identification Number or a Social Security number to be on a joint account or to have their own account. The Service Member can also make the spouse a beneficiary on the joint account.

(2) When the Service Member passes away, the account is frozen until the estate is settled. It is extremely important that the spouse has his/her own account as that is the only way that access to the monies can be made.

10. Potential Chief of Staff, Army, Retired Soldier Council Issues (All):

a. Lack of responsive Social Security and VA support services for Retired Soldiers residing overseas.

b. Allowing annuitants to maintain access to overseas U.S. Credit Union accounts after the death of the sponsor.

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- c. Improvement of DS Login Registration for Overseas Users.
- d. Improvement of means of communicating with Retired Soldiers and their Survivors.
- e. Simplification of multiple logins to benefit sites—perhaps a single log in would be better.
- f. Impacts of Defense Health Agency transformation / reorganization on Retired Soldiers and their Families.
- g. Reconciliation of the 180-day rule for 1) employment of Retired Service Members in a Civil Service position with 2) the authorization to remain in Germany which could prohibit such employment.

11. Other Discussion Topics (LTC (Ret) Fulton):

- a. He requested that IMCOM-E clarify what restrictions, if any, are put on the \$2,000 that IMCOM-E provided to their USAGs for support of the several RADs.
- b. He asked IMCOM-E to ensure that the scheduling of 2024 RADs are fully coordinated before any announcement is made.
- c. He emphasized how critical support by the three FBUs (Frankfurt, Dublin, and Rome) are to Retired Soldier and especially the FBU participation in all of the RADs.
- d. He committed to facilitating the improvement of information available to Retiring Soldiers on retiring in theater.

12. Closing Remarks: (LTC (Ret) Fulton):

- a. The next quarterly Council meeting is tentatively scheduled for Thursday, 7 March 2024.
- b. Approval of AEA Supplement 1 to AR 600-8-7, Retirement Services Program, is anticipated before the end of this calendar year.
- c. The President and our CSA RSC member will work with the USAREUR-AF leadership to finalize the issues to be submitted for CSA RSC consideration.
- d. He will continue to work with the G1 to schedule an ETRC meeting.
- e. He adjourned the meeting at 1300.

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13. For The Record: The President reviewed the following documents:

a. Volunteer Report: Through the end of September, AEA RSC members contributed 1,080.5 volunteer hours during the calendar year in support of the Council and of on-going services to Retired Soldier and Family. These hours are documented in VMIS.

b. Liaison Report: Of the 131 prescribed liaison contacts with community leaders, Council Members reported 82 timely contacts since our last council meeting.

David V. Fulton

DAVID V. FULTON
LTC, USA (Retired)
President