



# Yellow Ribbon Program

*For Those Who Serve, and Those Who Support!*

## THE YELLOW RIBBON REINTEGRATION PROGRAM COMBINED ANNUAL REPORT

May 2010



Yellow Ribbon Program

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## Message from the Chair

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As the Executive Agent for the Department of Defense Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program and Chair of its Advisory Board, I am pleased to present this first annual report to Congress, reporting on the requirements set forth in Section 582 of the National Defense Authorization Act for FY 2008, Public Law 110-181, and Section 597 of the National Defense Authorization Act for FY 2010 Public Law 111-84.

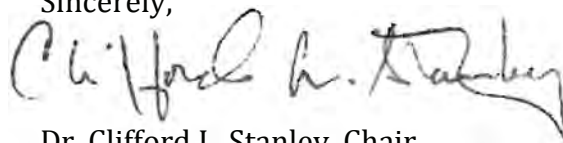
It is my duty to honor, protect, and improve the lives of our Guard and Reserve Service members. Most importantly, it is my duty to ensure that our Service members – and their families – are “ready.” The Yellow Ribbon Program is essential for military and family readiness, and it is my responsibility, and the responsibility of all those in Personnel & Readiness, that we meet this mission.

Meeting our mission is about winning. We win when our All Volunteer Force is confident in our ability to provide them and their loved ones with access to benefits and resources throughout the deployment cycle. We win when we help positively impact retention as we make the concerted effort to recruit families to take part in Yellow Ribbon. We win through the Yellow Ribbon Program by bringing a high touch approach to ensuring the readiness of our National Guard and Reserve Service members and families.

I am proud of what this report shares about the Yellow Ribbon Program’s accomplishments, challenges, and plans for the future. Our Guard and Reserve Force are *ready, valued, experienced, and relevant*. The Yellow Ribbon Program is committed to ensuring it stays that way.

I would like to thank Congress for their recognition of the need for the Yellow Ribbon Program and their continued support of and dedication to our Guard and Reserve and their families.

Sincerely,



Dr. Clifford L. Stanley, Chair,  
Under Secretary of Defense  
(Personnel and Readiness)

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## Executive Summary

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### **OBJECTIVE**

The objective of the Yellow Ribbon Program (YRP) is to ensure the readiness and well-being of Guard and Reserve Service members and their families by providing dynamic events, information, services, referrals, and proactive outreach opportunities throughout the entire deployment cycle. YRP seeks to meet these objectives by:

- Identifying and publishing, via the Yellow Ribbon Web site and newsletter, those best practices and “Golden Nuggets” as identified by the Guard and Reserve and Yellow Ribbon Program staff.
- Facilitating Joint events to provide greater access to Service members and their families while maximizing the use of fiscal and human resources.
- Creating a cadre of presenters whose facilitation skills impact our Service members and their families in a way that is meaningful, memorable, and makes a positive difference in their lives.

### **BACKGROUND**

As the demands on our troops have increased during the Overseas Contingency Operations, our Reserve members have served with valor during multiple deployments in support of our Nation’s efforts. In the past, Guard and Reserve Service members were provided minimal support or access to services to help them reintegrate into society after their deployments. In 2008, Congress created the Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program to address the needs of our Service members and their families.

The YRP helps our Guard and Reserve Service members ***and their families*** address issues and concerns throughout the deployment cycle. Since its inception, the YRP has provided help to over 270,000 Service members and their families.



Congress directed the Secretary of Defense to establish an advisory board to provide counsel for the YRP and report on areas of success and areas for necessary improvement. The YRP Advisory Board was established September 29, 2008 and has met three times.

## **PURPOSE**



The “Yellow Ribbon Program” is a Department of Defense-wide effort to provide Guard and Reserve Service members *and their families* with sufficient information, services, referrals, and proactive outreach opportunities throughout the deployment cycle. YRP provides prevention education (e.g. stress, suicide), resilience training, and access to services such as relationship or financial counseling. Referrals are also provided for additional relevant services through Military OneSource, VA Medical Centers, VA Vet Centers, TRICARE, Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR), and other

programs. The Yellow Ribbon Program Office (YRP Office) also works in conjunction with Federal partners, including the Department of Veterans Affairs, the Department of Labor, and the Small Business Administration, to provide up-to-date and relevant information to Service members *and their families*.

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## **Yellow Ribbon Highlights**

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The YRP reached major milestones during FY09 and the first two quarters of FY10, and intends to fully capitalize on these successes. The highlights of these accomplishments are described as follows:

### **1. *Yellow Ribbon Events***

As of April 13, 2010, **135,920** Service members and **141,473** family members have attended **2,288** events. As required by law, these events occur before, during, and after deployment. Several of the **2,288** events were Joint and resulted in a more efficient use of Federal, state, and local government resources while improving outreach services to Guard and Reserve Service members and their families in remote locations.



### **2. *Service Coordination***

In FY09, each of the Guard and Reserve Components, as well as the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), provided Liaison Officers (LNOs) to the Yellow Ribbon Office. These LNOs facilitate inter-service coordination and work directly with their Service Program Managers to:

- Develop the foundation for the YRP Office to include manning and funding requirements, concept of operations, and program framework for Outreach and the Center for Excellence.
- Consolidate information from the Guard and Reserve Family Readiness Programs, which contributed to the Yellow Ribbon Department of Defense Instruction (DoDI) that is in the final stages of coordination for publication.
- Develop the Yellow Ribbon Event Planning Tool in collaboration with the National Guard Bureau. This effort enhanced Service members' access to nationwide Yellow Ribbon event information close to their home.
- Initiate a change in the Joint Travel Regulation to allow Service members to designate the person best suited to support them during the deployment cycle.
- Increase the communication among Guard and Reserve Components resulting in increased efficiency of execution at all levels, higher quality programs, and more cost-effective Joint events for Service members and their families.
- Provide Service-specific information and quality assessment to develop a comprehensive Yellow Ribbon Web site.
- Establish two Working Groups that include Yellow Ribbon Guard and Reserve Program Managers:
  - After Action Report (AAR) Working Group – Has developed a simplified electronic AAR format and submission method that will help collect best practices and event statistics.
  - Funding Working Group – Has identified major issues facing YRP and provided recommended solutions. For example: a) establishing consistent interpretations of the Joint Force Travel Regulation policy to clarify if National Guard members are entitled to official travel regardless if they are in a Title 10 or Title 32 status; and b) establishing consistent interpretations for the use of appropriated funds to provide child care, meals, and the purchase of takeaway items for events.
- Establish a Suicide Prevention Working Group. The requirements set forth in Section 595 of NDAA FY10, Public Law 111-84 required the YRP Office take responsibility for this effort. The Working Group is consulting with the Defense Centers of Excellence for Psychological Health and Traumatic Brain Injury (DCoE), and the Suicide Prevention and Risk Reduction Committee (SPARRC) to collect and review all available Service programs, conduct a gap analysis, and develop a plan to

synchronize suicide prevention efforts across the Guard and Reserve, DCoE and the SPARRC.

- Remain actively involved in inter-departmental / agency Working Groups and Task Forces. This interaction is key to the development of Reserve-specific initiatives, resource development, and delivery systems to better meet the unique needs of the Guard and Reserve.
- Collect, analyze, develop, and maintain a database from each Guard and Reserve Component's Yellow Ribbon efforts enabling leadership to answer legislative and other inquiries.

In addition to the Guard and Reserve LNOs, the VA LNO provides technical expertise and guidance on VA benefits and services. The VA LNO also directs vital VA support at Yellow Ribbon events nationwide. In addition, the VA LNO is developing a toolkit containing standardized VA briefings, videos, *interactive* training tools, and information for use by VA personnel at Yellow Ribbon events.

A growing number of units are working directly with VA personnel to conduct the required 90-day post-deployment Yellow Ribbon events at VA Medical Centers (VAMCs) in various states. Conducting these events in VAMCs increases Service members' access to the broad range of health care related services across DoD and the VA. The focus of the 90-day event is the Service member's Post-Deployment Health Re-Assessment (PDHRA). The PDHRA is a vital tool for identifying deployment-related physical or emotional health issues. By conducting the PDHRA at the VAMC, the Service member is introduced directly to VA health care providers at no cost, resulting in greater efficiencies and the strengthening of VA-DoD partnership at the local level.

### **3. State-level Coordination**

During FY09, the YRP Office entered into a pilot program with ten State VA offices. The goal of the pilot is to enhance Yellow Ribbon visibility and assist Unit Commanders by providing information and resources on conducting Yellow Ribbon events as follows:

- Act as the outreach resource between the Guard and Reserve and State Director of Veterans Affairs offices.
- Identify local resources to develop and maintain a database of relevant organizations and contact information.
- Coordinate among the Guard and Reserve by leading or participating in joint forums to exchange information.
- Aggressively market the YRP and serve as a link between State Directors of Veterans Affairs offices and Yellow Ribbon efforts in those states to expand access to services for veterans and their families.

The pilot program is undergoing a mid-year review to evaluate its effectiveness and determine future direction.

#### **4. Inter-departmental Coordination**

- Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)
  - A full-time VA employee has been assigned to the YRP Office. The VA LNO provides technical expertise and guidance on all VA benefits, services, and programs. The liaison is a direct link to VA personnel and provides information and assistance to VA staff supporting Yellow Ribbon events.
- Department of Treasury
  - Personal financial readiness of our Service members and their families equates to military readiness and is considered by DoD to be essential to mission success. As a result, Yellow Ribbon will be partnering with the Department of the Treasury to align personal financial readiness efforts.
- Federal Partners Group (FPG)
  - The FPG is a partnership of cross level agencies which coordinate and disseminate information, initiatives and Joint efforts on behalf of Service members, families and communities. The YRP Office actively participates in the FPG and provides input on all issues related to the Guard and Reserve as it relates to YRP. The Office also uses this working group to develop, coordinate and/or to collaborate with members on various YRP related programming such as: the suicide prevention program; employment projects; and Substance Abuse Mental Health Services Administration's Policy Academy.
- Department of Labor (DOL)
  - The YRP Office, working through the FPG, provides the DOL input on the needs and concerns of the Guard and Reserve with respect to employment initiatives. The Office is a conduit between the Guard, Reserve and DOL and keeps them informed of current and future projects as they relate to YRP. The YRP Office also has a link to the DOL Web site to promote services and programs provided by DOL.
- Small Business Administration (SBA)
  - The YRP Office, in conjunction with SBA is executing the American Corporate Partners program. The program matches employees from some of the largest corporations and universities in the country with Iraq and Afghanistan veterans to mentor, network and provide career counsel and entrepreneurial training through the Entrepreneurship Boot Camp for Veterans with Disabilities (EBV) program. SBA also participates in individual YRP events as requested.
- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)
  - The Yellow Ribbon Office is developing a comprehensive Suicide Prevention Program that includes community healing and response with help from SAMHSA and the DCoE. SAMHSA will provide subject matter expertise on building an







easy-to-access network of state and local resources for the Guard and Reserve.

## **5. Intra-departmental Coordination**

- **Military Community and Family Policy (MC&FP)**
  - Yellow Ribbon coordinates and collaborates with MC&FP to develop policy, coordinate resources and enhance services. In support of YRP efforts, MC&FP Joint Family Assistance Program staffs (JFSAP) have teams at National Guard Joint Force Headquarters in each of the 54 states and territories. The teams provide support to geographically dispersed members and families to enhance their readiness and ability to effectively cope with the challenges of the military lifestyle. Resources include: financial and personal life counseling; specialized briefings and trainings; and Military OneSource resources.
- **Defense Centers of Excellence for Psychological Health and Traumatic Brain Injury (DCoE)**
  - The YRP Office consults with DCoE to collaborate and coordinate on the issues of Suicide Prevention and Resilience. The Yellow Ribbon Office is an active participant with DCoE on the Suicide Prevention and Risk Reduction Committee (SPARRC) and the YRP Resilience Working Group. Representatives from the Guard and Reserve also participate in these meetings and working groups, resulting in a shared knowledge of available resources and commitment to support the military's suicide prevention and resilience efforts. As mentioned above, agencies from outside DoD, such as SAMSHA, are also involved in these efforts.
- **Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR)**
  - The YRP Office works in close collaboration with ESGR and the Guard and Reserve (through the YRP Service Liaisons) to ensure the ESGR message is presented at YRP events. ESGR informs by educating Service members of their rights and responsibilities under the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA) and conducts employer support programs, including informational briefings, mediation, and recognition of employer whose policies support or encourage participation in the Guard and Reserve.
- **TRICARE Management Activity (TMA)**
  - The YRP Office supports and assists the connection of TMA with the Guard and Reserve to ensure that the Service members and their families have information, resources, referrals, and outreach services during the deployment process.
- **Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Office (SAPRO)**
  - The YRP Office serves as a conduit between the Guard and Reserve and OSD/SAPRO Office on issues related to SAPRO when necessary. The YRP Office supports the Guard and Reserve on the continued development of materials, resources, referrals, and outreach services by its involvement in various working groups and inter-departmental connections.

## 6. Communications and Marketing

During FY09, initial communications tools were developed to include:

<b>Logo</b>	The Yellow Ribbon symbolizes the loving relationship between the member and their family with a simple hug.	
<b>Slogan</b>	<b><i>“For Those Who Serve and Those Who Support”</i></b>	
<b>Web site</b>	<a href="http://www.yellowribbon.mil">www.yellowribbon.mil</a>	

Looking ahead, YRP is building a comprehensive strategic communications plan to include:

- Establishing the Yellow Ribbon Web site as a dynamic and interactive resource for information on the overall YRP. This site will also provide up to date information on the hundreds of Yellow Ribbon events conducted annually. This includes the type of event, Component sponsor, date, location, point of contact, and registration information for Service members and their families.
- Publishing *The Ribbon*, the YRP eNewsletter for Guard and Reserve Program Managers, Commanders, Event Planners, Service members, and their families. Additionally, each issue of *The Ribbon* will feature “Golden Nuggets” which are promising practices to help Event Planners keep event offerings innovative and effective.
- Incorporating the use of social media and social networking tools, such as Facebook and TroopTube, to take advantage of the various communication methods used by Guard and Reserve members and their families. These tools focus on online conversations around deployment, reintegration, and family readiness.
- Developing an outreach kit for program advocates in the field to use when communicating about the Program.
- Designing print and web-based public service announcements (PSAs). These PSAs are targeted at Guard and Reserve Service members and their families and will appear in military and veteran service organizations’ Web sites and publications, and at the local level on bulletin boards and other public spaces.

Engaging with the other intra and inter-Departmental agencies identified above to cross-promote program benefits and provide calls to action.

## FY10 Goals and Objectives

### 1. Joint Travel Regulation Change: “Family member” to “designated representative”



This was identified by Reserve Component Chiefs as *the number one issue* facing YRP. The December 2009 Yellow Ribbon Interim Report to Congress referenced the current Joint Travel Regulation that limits travel reimbursement to only spouses or dependent family members and does not provide travel funds for other individuals who may be best suited to provide support for the Service member during the deployment cycle. In today’s world where the “traditional family” is often not the norm, preventing the travel reimbursement of “designated representatives” is a significant deterrent to the

Service member attending events. For example, 67% of the Marine Corps Reservists who deploy are single. The Joint Travel Regulation only provides travel funds for spouses and dependent children, which means that those who do not fall into that category often choose not to attend or attend alone. This is the situation across the Guard and Reserve that needed to be resolved.

At the Advisory Board meeting held on August 7, 2009, it was agreed that the Joint Travel Regulation should be amended to include the person most likely or best able to attend and provide support to the Service member; be it a mother, father, fiancée, or other critical support person. The change from “family member” to “designated representative” has been submitted to Congress as part of NDAA-11

### 2. Yellow Ribbon Web site

The YRP was created to meet the unique needs of a geographically dispersed Guard and Reserve population. Part of meeting this challenge is creating and maintaining a dynamic and interactive online presence.

The YRP Office launched its public-facing Web site in September 2009, followed by a re-launch with the Web address [www.yellowribbon.mil](http://www.yellowribbon.mil) in November 2009. The Yellow Ribbon Web site



continues to undergo significant upgrades to better serve Guard and Reserve members and their families. This effort ensures a dynamic, interactive and collaborative online

environment for three distinct target audiences: Service members and families, Commanders, and Event Planners.

By offering public-facing content, which includes the “Event Finder” aspect of the Event Planning Tool, target audiences will be able to access a wide range of information about the Program. The site directly connects Event Planners, through the Event Planning Tool with the Yellow Ribbon Office to facilitate the transfer of essential information. Planned enhancements include automated After Action Reports (AARs), a library of vetted presentation materials, and a collection of video presentation materials.

The YRP Office is also conducting a usability study to assess the effectiveness of the beta site to ensure a continuously evolving, dynamic, and robust site.

### 3. *Event Planning Tool*

The Event Planning Tool was developed with the National Guard Bureau based on their Joint Services Support Portal. The use of this tool for the YRP was unanimously agreed to by the Guard and Reserve and offers a number of convenient features as follows:

- Allows Commanders and leaders to plan, schedule, and conduct Yellow Ribbon events.
- Gives Service members and their families a direct way to identify, register, and attend the Yellow Ribbon events closest to their home.
- Explains the kinds of information, workshops, and opportunities available at each event.
- Serves as the entry point for Event Planners to submit After Action Reports to inform the YRP Office about successes, challenges, and lessons learned.



One of the great benefits of the site is that it offers a solution for many Guard and Reserve Service members who may live in one state, but drill in a different state or across the country, to find and attend an event close to their home. As of April 26, 2010, the Event Planning Tool lists **618 events**, scheduled through October 2010, in all 54 states and territories, covering all phases of the deployment cycle.

### 4. *Center for Excellence (CfE)*

The Yellow Ribbon Center for Excellence in Reintegration is the analytical element of the Program office. The CfE collects event AARs to gain information to continuously improve

the YRP. The collection of event AARs allow the Guard and Reserve Event Planners to better capture successes and identify the areas for continuous improvement.

The current submission method for AARs has proven to be difficult for the Event Planners to complete in a timely fashion. The YRP Office engaged the Guard and Reserve YRP Managers in a working group to develop a new AAR format and has created the ability to submit the AAR electronically through the Event Planning Tool. This new streamlined approach will help the YRP track attendance, make recommendations for Program improvement, and identify best practices that will enhance Yellow Ribbon events.



Additionally, the CfE will maintain a repository of programs and services that provide consistently excellent, results-oriented, programs and information. The Center for Excellence will also perform an operational function by assisting, as required, in the development of training aids, briefing material, required reports, and training field representatives.

#### ***5. Yellow Ribbon Program Training Conference***

The Yellow Ribbon Office will hold a National YRP Training Conference in September of 2010. The conference will host all YRP personnel: Event Planners; Program Managers; representatives from service providers; as well as Yellow Ribbon staff in each YRP Office throughout the Guard and Reserve. The goal of the conference is to ensure that each Yellow Ribbon event is offering the very best, most interactive and dynamic experience. It will also serve as an opportunity to collaborate and communicate best practices from each Component of the Guard and Reserve and develop new engaging and innovative ways of presenting information (no death by PowerPoint) and marketing YRP.

#### ***6. Yellow Ribbon 30-60-90 Day Post-Deployment Schedule***

Based upon unanimous feedback from YRP Managers, mental health providers, and others in the field it is recognized that significant physical and emotional health issues often arise beyond the 90 day post-deployment mark. The Yellow Ribbon Advisory Board directed the YRP Office to review the 30-, 60-, 90- day post-deployment schedule and be prepared to make recommendations to take into consideration Service member and family needs that extend beyond the 90 day point.

#### ***7. Department of Defense Instruction (DoDI)***

The DoDI is currently out for formal coordination. When approved, the DoDI will create uniformity of Program delivery through the core curriculum and will formalize policy for all organizational entities within DoD. It will also enable supporting agencies to more readily tailor their information to support Service members and their families.

## Implementation Status

### 1. Attendance at Events

Attendance at Yellow Ribbon events continues to increase (*see Figure 1*). The YRP Office and the Guard and Reserve continue to identify and implement ways to make Yellow Ribbon events more interactive and desirable to Service members and their families. In addition, the forthcoming changes to the Joint Travel Regulation will help the Guard and Reserve to encourage the attendance of non-traditional family members to provide the Service member the support they need before, during, and after deployment.

The Guard and Reserve are collaborating to host Joint events and share expenses through the use of Military Interdepartmental Purchase Requests (MIPR). However, impediments to fully implement the Program still exist due to varying interpretations of both the use of Appropriated Funds (e.g. child care, meals, takeaway items, etc.) at Yellow Ribbon events and the rules against funding travel for Guardsmen in Title 10 or Title 32 status. The YRP Office, in coordination with the Guard and Reserve, is developing and implementing a comprehensive outreach strategy to better publicize YRP and create more awareness of its purpose and the value it provides to Service members and their families.

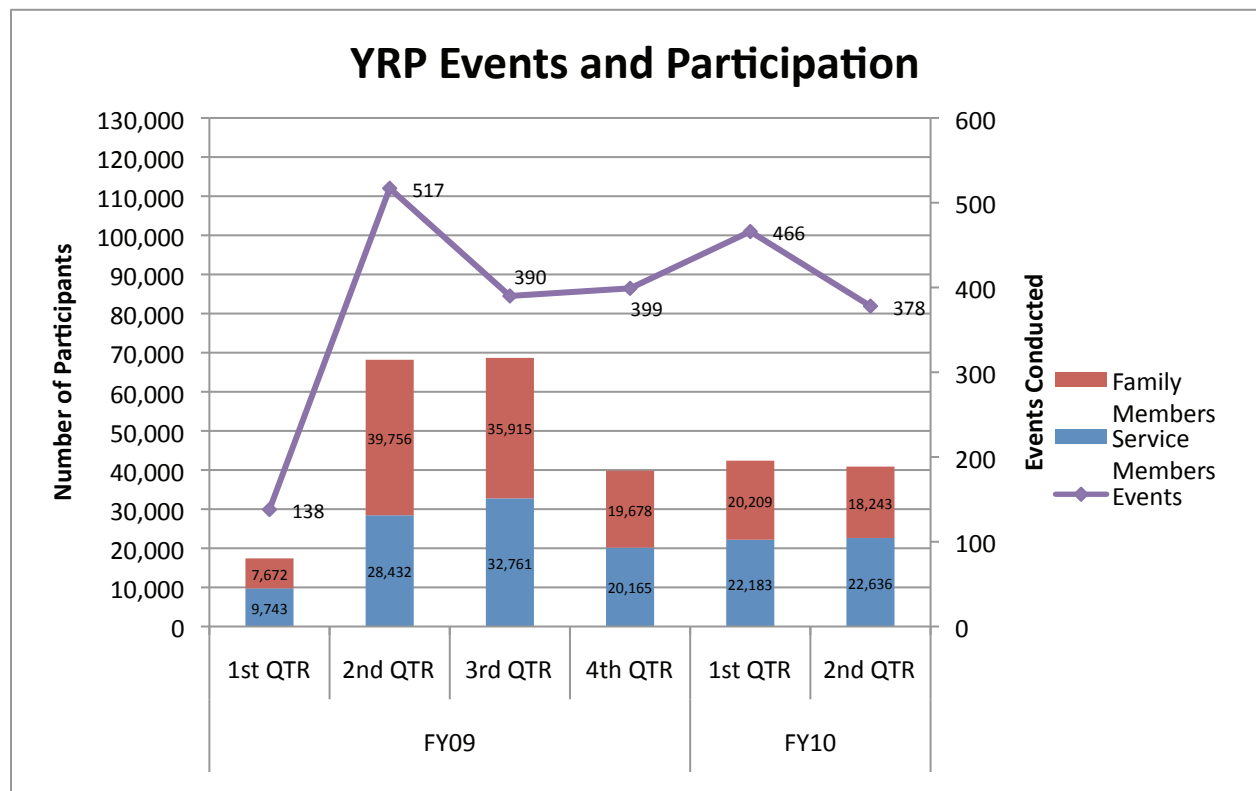


Figure 1

## 2. Best Practices



Best practices are important in establishing and sustaining any new program. Yellow Ribbon events need to be engaging, interactive, and innovative. Making events more exciting and having Service members and their families *want* to attend will greatly increase the likelihood the information will be received and retained.

There is an ongoing effort within the Guard and Reserve to document best practices. Contributing to this effort is the modification of the current AAR template and submission method. The new AAR format will help the YRP Office to better consolidate and distribute best practices across the Program.

In order to help facilitate this effort, the YRP Office has begun identifying “Golden Nuggets” from the field. A Golden Nugget is a creative and proven technique or strategy that has received positive feedback from attendees and had a noticeable impact. Golden Nuggets are made available on the Yellow Ribbon Web site for the Guard and Reserve to use at their own discretion. They are another way to continually improve the Program and encourage collaboration and communication across the Guard and Reserve.

YRP acknowledges the nuances among the Guard and Reserve regarding mobilization and deployment procedures. The Guard and Reserve have the discretion and ability to implement and tailor any best practice to best benefit their members and families to improve the impact of Yellow Ribbon events.

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## Suicide Prevention

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In Section 595 of Public Law 111-84, Congress placed the responsibility for establishing a program to provide Guard and Reserve members and their families training in suicide prevention, community healing and response to suicide within the Yellow Ribbon Office. Currently, every Service offers suicide prevention programs for Guard and Reserve members and family members during the deployment cycle. The Yellow Ribbon Office established the Suicide Prevention Working Group to address the unique needs of Guard and Reserve Service members. In addition, the Yellow Ribbon Office is contracting a subject matter expert to lead the Office and Services in aligning current efforts, avoiding redundancy and improving efficiency.

The Suicide Prevention Working Group works in coordination with DCoE and SPARRC to build an enduring team that supports the Services’ evolving programs. The working group has collected and reviewed all available Service programs, conducted a gap analysis and





developed a plan to synchronize the efforts across the Guard and Reserve, DCoE and the SPARRC. The Working Group continues to develop and execute a comprehensive suicide prevention and community healing (post-vention) program.

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## Partnership with the Department of Veterans Affairs

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The Yellow Ribbon Office and the Guard and Reserve have developed a strong partnership with the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). Most Yellow Ribbon events include personnel from VA who provide briefings, information, consultations, and referrals to Guard and Reserve Service members and their families.

VA personnel from the Veterans Benefits Administration, VA Medical Centers (VAMCs), and VA Vet Centers attend Yellow Ribbon events to inform Service members on all VA benefits, services, and programs including: compensation, education, vocational rehabilitation, insurance, loan guaranty, and VA health care to include mental health programs. VA personnel are also available to provide one-on-one consultations to answer questions, provide local VA contact information, and assist with the completion of VA forms.

A growing number of units are working directly with VA personnel to conduct the required 90-day post-deployment Yellow Ribbon events at VAMCs in various states. Conducting these events in VAMCs increases Service members' access to the broad range of health care related services across DoD and the VA. The focus of the 90-day event is the Service member's Post Deployment Health Re-Assessment (PDHRA) and is a vital tool for identifying deployment related physical or emotional health issues. By conducting the PDHRA at the VAMC, the Service member is introduced directly to VA health care providers at no cost, resulting in greater efficiencies and the strengthening of VA-DoD partnership at the local level.

The VA has provided a LNO who provides technical expertise and guidance on VA benefits and services. The VA LNO also directs vital VA support at Yellow Ribbon events nationwide. In addition, the VA LNO is developing a toolkit containing standardized VA briefings, videos, *interactive* training tools, and information for use by VA personnel at Yellow Ribbon events.

The relationship with the VA has been identified by the Guard and Reserve to be an invaluable asset and resource to YRP. This relationship will continue to grow and have a positive impact on our Service members.

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## Funding

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### *1. Assessment of Resource Requirements*

Currently, YRP is adequately resourced to carry out the mission as mandated per law. The YRP Office works with the Service YRP Managers, Liaisons, and OSD Comptroller to identify and resolve issues that impact each Reserve Component's ability to execute funds.

YRP has areas of opportunity to improve funds execution:

- Policies governing expenses for Yellow Ribbon events are subject to various interpretations within each Service. This directly impacts the Services' ability to fully execute funds in support of Yellow Ribbon events. The current solution is to develop an OSD-level policy that will provide guidance and authority to expend funds specifically for Yellow Ribbon events. This policy will outline the proper use of appropriated funds for meals and promotional/informational material.



Drafting this policy will require collaboration and support among several OSD entities including Reserve Affairs, Personnel & Readiness, Comptroller, and General Counsel.

- Use of YRP funds to support Army National Guard and Air National Guard Service members on Title 10 status is often subjected to interpretation. YRP calls for a policy regarding the appropriate use of program funds to clarify that National Guard members are entitled to official travel, regardless if they are in a Title 10 or Title 32 status.

## ***2. Assessment of Spending***

The Guard and Reserve expended funds on pay and allowances and travel costs for Reservists and their families to attend Yellow Ribbon events. The focal point of spending was to stabilize and continually improve the Program and to provide relevant information and services to the Service members and their families. The experiences and lessons learned from FY 08 prompted YRP Managers to share funding execution ideas and to initiate Joint events. In addition, the YRP Office was created in FY 09 to support existing Guard and Reserve level YRPs. The YRP Office is currently introducing formal methods to collect data, ensure wider information sharing, create standardization, and improve on program efficiencies.

Several factors influenced low funds execution in FY 09. Two were of particular significance:

- In FY 09, YRP was a new program. YRP Managers and YRP Office personnel did not have the benefit of historical data to form baseline program funding execution estimates. Expenditures increased toward the end of FY09 as Guard and Reserve unit Commanders began hosting events more frequently. Attendance by Service members and their families also increased substantially.



- As previously identified, the Program continues to face challenges regarding interpretation and use of appropriated funds to provide meals, promotional material, and travel for non-family members that are necessary for successful day-long or multi-day Yellow Ribbon events.

In FY 10, the Program’s event participation and Service level spending will be positively impacted once OSD-level policy is implemented to allow the Program to be executed per the law. Funding will enable specific provisions needed for suicide training, prevention, and response needed to address long-term Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) that may emerge months or even years later.

YRP is an enduring program that will continue to support the Guard and Reserve’s need for reintegration help as they deploy on a rotational basis. The YRP Office and the Guard and Reserve Leadership are committed to excellence and will continue to provide a dynamic and stable YRP for Service members and their families.

### 3. List of accounts

Table 1 below details the FY 09 expenditures and FY 10 enacted for Guard and Reserve YRPs as resourced with OCO funds in the Reserve Component Military Personnel and Operations and Maintenance accounts. The YRP Office, at the headquarters level, is resourced with baseline Operations and Maintenance, Defense-Wide funding.

Department of Defense		
<b>Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program (\$ Millions)</b>		
	FY2009 Actual	FY2010 Enacted
MILPERS - Army National Guard	\$53.641	\$61.600
MILPERS - Army Reserve	\$9.955	\$23.382
MILPERS - Air National Guard	\$0.000	\$11.018
MILPERS - Air Force Reserve	\$3.641	\$11.950
MILPERS - Navy Reserve	\$1.457	\$6.400
MILPERS - Marine Corps Reserve	\$8.662	\$8.922
Total MILPERS Support -- funding for pay costs, travel for military members to attend the pre and post deployment sessions	\$77.356	\$123.272
O&M, Army National Guard	\$47.000	\$22.536
O&M, Army Reserve	\$19.363	\$25.200
O&M, Air National Guard	\$14.144	\$38.500
O&M, Air Force Reserve	\$1.100	\$5.000
O&M, Navy Reserve	\$2.919	\$3.100
O&M, Marine Corps Reserve	\$0.283	\$4.478
Total O&M, Guard and Reserve Support - funding for conference space, facility rentals, advertising/communication, military spouse/dependent travel	\$84.809	\$98.814
Total O&M, Defense-wide support - funding to support state coordination, mobile transition teams for family services, outreach through deployment cycle and the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs, and reintegration events at 30-60-90 days. Regional and National Guard State Support teams. (1)	\$15.885	\$24.235
<b>TOTAL SUPPORT</b>	<b>\$178.050</b>	<b>\$246.321</b>
MILPERS = Military Personnel Appropriation		
O&M = Operation and Maintenance Appropriation		
(1) Does not include Joint Family Assistance Support Program funding.		

Table 1

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## Closer Coordination

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Coordination is essential for the YRP to meet its mission. This report calls attention to the ways the YRP is working with the Services, the states, DoD, and Federal partners. Coordination between these entities will continue to strengthen as we:

- Convene the YRP Working Groups to address the issues that the Services face.
- Build on the intra- and inter-departmental relationships to identify emerging service offerings that will benefit the Guard and Reserve.
- Encourage use of the Event Planning Tool and YRP Web site so that YRP shares information at all levels.
- Bring all YRP personnel across the Guard and Reserve together at a first-of-its-kind conference in FY 10.

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## Conclusion

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YRP continues to make a difference in the lives of thousands of our Soldiers, Sailors, Marines, Airmen, and their families. Continued support from Congress, the Military Departments, the Guard and Reserve, federal agencies, non-governmental agencies, and state and local partners will ensure our Guard and Reserve Service members and their families will remain strong and ready!



*For Those Who Serve, and Those Who Support!*



### **DoD YRRP Advisory Board Composition**

The USD(P&R) serves as the Chair of the Board and according to Section 582 (e) of the National Defense Authorization Act, FY 2008 Public Law 110-181, the membership includes the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs (ASD(RA)), the Director of the Army National Guard, the Director of the Air National Guard, Chief of the Army Reserve, Chief of the Navy Reserve, Commander, Marine Forces Reserve, Chief of the Air Force Reserve, an Adjutant General (Under Title 10 of USC) on a rotational basis as determined by the Chief of the National Guard Bureau, and the Senior Enlisted Advisor to the ASD(RA). Additional members are the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs; the Chief, National Guard Bureau; the Assistant Secretary for Policy and Planning, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; the Assistant Secretary for Veterans' Employment and Training Service, U.S. Department of Labor; the Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Military and Community Family Policy; Assistant Secretaries of the Military Departments for Manpower and Reserve Affairs; Assistant to the Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff for Guard and Reserve Matters; the Executive Director, Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve; and the Associate Administrator for Veterans Business Development, U.S. Small Business Administration.

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*Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program Advisory Board*

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