

CHAPTER 11

RELIGIOUS SUPPORT OF REDEPLOYMENT AND DEMOBILIZATION

With the cessation of hostilities or the declaration of a truce, the deployed force in a theater of operations will transition through the last stages of Force Projection. This transition from the post-conflict stage through the redeployment and demobilization stages may begin even if residual combat operations are still underway.

While some forces are preparing for redeployment, other forces remain in support of Peace Building Operations. While soldiers restore order and reestablish the host nation infrastructure, UMTs provide religious support during the post-conflict stage.

As operations cease and forces are no longer required for Peace Building, units begin the redeployment stage. Forces and materiel not required for subsequent operations redeploy to CONUS or home theater to prepare for future missions. Redeploying forces may deploy to another theater or to an area other than home station on short notice.

Redeployment, like deployment, occurs in several phases:

- Reconstitution for strategic movement.
- Movement to redeployment assembly areas.
- Movement to the port of embarkation.
- Strategic lift.
- Reception at a port of debarkation.
- Onward movement from port of debarkation.

During demobilization the process of transferring units, individuals, and materiel

from an active posture to a premobilization or other approved posture begins. Demobilization coincides with the first three phases of redeployment, the phases before the units depart the theater of operations. During this stage, reserve component units return to premobilization status.

Demobilization requires careful planning which takes into account public relations and what the soldiers are thinking and saying to each other.

The phases of demobilization are:

- Planning.
- Area of operations demobilization actions.
- Port of embarkation to demobilization station operations.
- Demobilization station operations.
- Home station actions.

UNIT RELIGIOUS SUPPORT

Religious support during *redeployment* is similar to religious support during *deployment*. Some soldiers will be preparing equipment for strategic lift or waiting in holding areas for transportation, while others will be engaged in force projection operations.

Worship, pastoral care, and religious education help soldier begin the transition back to normal life.

UMTs providing religious support in assembly and holding areas during redeployment face challenges similar to those encountered during deployment. Worship, pastoral care, and religious education will help soldiers begin the transition back to normal life. Reunion sessions, an important part of the UMT's work, require early planning to be effective.

Reunion

Religious support during the reunion phase assists soldiers dealing with the stress of reunion. The UMTs help to restore and preserve the relationships couples and families knew

By assisting with the stress of reunion, the UMT helps to restore and preserve the relationships couples and families knew before deployment.

before deployment. During the reunion phase, UMTs join with the Installation Ministry Team, Army Community Services, STARCs, MUSARCs, family program coordinators, and mental health personnel to provide family

assistance.

Army research shows that family problems intensify when spouses return from deployments. Characteristics of the readjustment period, which lasts for about two months, include the emergence of physical symptoms, children's behavior problems, and marital tensions. For many couples, the first weeks of reunion are the most challenging part of the whole deployment experience. Tensions become most acute during the two weeks before and after the soldiers' return.

As married soldiers encounter reunion issues with spouses, single soldiers will experience reunion struggles with family and friends. Soldiers deployed as individuals or in small detachments also experience reunion problems upon return to their units. Reunion briefings and workshops help to minimize the problems for soldiers, families, and units. These events equip soldiers with coping skills to face the challenge of reintegration to families, peer groups, and units.

In Theater Before Redeployment

Before departing a theater of operations, UMTs coordinate with the S1/G1 for reunion briefings and workshops. These sessions help soldiers understand the changes which they and

UMTs coordinate with the S1/G1 for briefings and workshops for soldiers in order to prepare them for reunion.

their families have experienced. The workshops teach skills needed to reconnect with younger children or to bond with newborns. During the pre-reunion period soldiers and

families wonder, “What will it be like to be together again?” and “How has this experience changed us and our relationship?” While deployed UMTs conduct workshops in theater, IMTs conduct similar workshops for waiting families.



A Blessing for Soldiers.

Home Station After Redeployment

UMTs plan additional workshops at home station because soldiers and their families experience difficulties with reunion. Some workshops will be for soldiers and spouses, others for soldiers or spouses alone. UMTs coordinate workshops with the IMT, ACS, family support groups, and Chaplain Family Life Centers. The reunion process does not end after one or two workshops. The UMTs must be prepared to sustain the effort for several months, depending on the length of the separation and the severity of the mission. From time to time, UMTs conduct assessments of the effectiveness of the workshops and the need to continue them.

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occupied helping others is not a reason for neglecting one’s own family. Installation and Family Life Chaplains conduct workshops expressly for redeploying UMTs.

Topics:

Intimacy	Emotions
Sexuality	Communication
Parenting	Control
Single parenting	Single soldiers
War stories	Survivor guilt
Finances	

Reunion Program Objectives

Returning soldiers will be able to:

- Understand the “at home” spouse’s experience and homecoming “point of view.”
- Be alert to common pitfalls of the homecoming reunion experience.
- Be aware of their own anxiety and mixed feelings concerning reunion.
- Have more realistic expectations of self and others.

Family members at home will be able to:

- Understand the soldier’s experiences and homecoming “point of view.”
- Integrate returning soldier into their daily lives with minimal stress.
- Anticipate changes in decision-making and behavior.

- Complete unfinished personal business created by the separation.
- Retain a sense of accomplishment and self-esteem.

Crisis Intervention:

- Marital and family counseling.
- Financial counseling.
- Stress management.
- Support groups.
- Critical Event Debriefings.

Recovery/Refitting

The unit's need to reestablish its readiness level sometimes competes with the soldier's family for the soldier's time, energy, and attention. During the recovery and refitting

UMTs must balance reunion activities with refitting.

phase, soldiers need to clean, repair, and secure equipment; identify shortages; requisition supplies; and reestablish stock levels. Property accountability is reestablished with the installation property book officer. UMTs are not exempt from these concerns, even though they are busy helping soldiers and families to reintegrate.

**RELIGIOUS SUPPORT
DURING
DEMobilIZATION**

Planning Actions

Demobilization planning begins with mobilization and ends with the decision to release units and individuals from active duty.

This planning includes:

- Relocating units and individuals.
 - Incorporating annual training (AT) for nonmobilized RC units to support demobilization.
 - Mobilizing additional RC units.
- Using individual volunteers (by means of temporary tours of active duty) to support critical missions in the demobilization process.
- Basic maintenance of equipment.
 - Awards and decorations.
 - Evaluation reports.
 - After action reports/lessons learned.

In Theater Activities

Before a unit departs the theater, it initiates demobilization administrative and logistical actions. Units process awards, decorations and performance reports; initiate line-of-duty investigations; and update supply records and equipment accountability. Medical and dental actions are started in theater when resources are available. During this phase soldiers may be frustrated as they become anxious to return home. As always, UMTs adapt religious support based on an assessment of soldiers' needs.

Home Station Activities

The reintegration of soldiers who deployed with those who did not is an important consideration for UMTs. During mobilization, many soldiers may deploy at different times, or with other units as a result of cross-leveling. During demobilization, they may also return to home station at different times.

Feelings of resentment because some

soldiers have returned and others have not can cause feelings of resentment in the unit and in families. Reentry into the civilian work force is

of another concern of the soldiers of the RC.

INSTALLATION RELIGIOUS SUPPORT

Reintegration/Reunion

The Installation Ministry Team plans for:

- The reintegration of returning soldiers with their family members and with nondeployed soldiers in their units.
- Support to casualty survivors.
- Non-deploying UMTs to continue their coverage of units and family members

normally served by the returning UMTs so that they will be able to reintegrate without the pressure of immediate duty.

Chaplain Family Life Center will:

- Assist in preparing families for reunion with soldiers.
- Assist UMTs with training and technical guidance on reunions.