

## Annex E – TECHNICAL ACTIVITY PROPOSAL SHEET (TAPS)

<b>ACTIVITY</b>	Task Group											TBA
<b>Activity REF. Number</b>	HFM-107/RTG034	<b>Recruiting and Retention of Military Personnel</b>										05/2003
<b>PRINCIPAL MILITARY REQUIREMENTS</b>	1	2	3	5							NATO Unclassified	12/2005
<b>MILITARY FUNCTIONS</b>	1	4	10	11	12	13	14					
<b>PANEL AND COORDINATION</b>	Human Factors and Medicine – HFM											
<b>LOCATION AND DATES</b>	05/03 TU; 09/03 GE; 05/04 UK; 09/04 CA; 05/05 NL; 10/05 US										P I	
<b>PUBLICATION DATA</b>	TR					03/2006			200	NU		
<b>KEYWORDS</b>	Recruiting		Retention			Turnover			Manpower			
	Selection		Classification			Job-satisfaction						

### E.1 BACKGROUND AND JUSTIFICATION (RELEVANCE FOR NATO)

In many countries, achieving recruitment goals becomes increasingly challenging. At the same time, the military is facing an important loss of often highly qualified personnel who choose to leave. This has become a major concern to military commanders as is illustrated by ADM Vern Clark, U.S. Chief of Naval Operations: “My top #1 priority is recruiting Sailors, Retaining Sailors and fighting the attrition of Sailors (sic)” (Assuming the Watch, July 2000). The recruiting and retention (R&R) problem can be related to a variety of causes including:

- The situation on the labour market (demographics, economics, ...).
- The correlation between prevailing values in society and in the Military organizational culture.
- The content of the jobs (job content, wages, organizational climate, operations, geographical mobility, promotion system, ...).
- The management of the major processes of recruitment, selection and classification, turnover and retention.

The difficulty in recruiting sufficient numbers is aggravated by the fact that many military personnel leave voluntarily. Nowadays it is not unusual that 30% or more of the enlisted recruits do not complete their first term. In addition, many military personnel choose to return to civilian life later in their careers, attracted by more appealing opportunities. This happens frequently in specific trades (pilots, ICT personnel, ...) that are hard and expensive to recruit and train. Forces lacking the appropriate personnel because of R&R problems are no longer fully operational. In addition, many nations throughout Europe are in transition from a conscript to an all volunteer military force. These issues have consequences for R&R policies. This not only has an obvious quantitative dimension but also an important qualitative one. In order to meet recruitment goals, the pressure to lower entry standards will increase because retention problems do not affect different trades (Military Occupational Specialties) in the same way. Another reason to counter early turnover and retention

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problems is that they are extremely expensive for the Military. Furthermore, serving personnel frequently have to work harder to cover gaps potentially leading to discontent and disruption, thus increasing the turnover rate. R&R is a very complex issue. This complexity has to be recognised for there are no single and obvious solutions. It is important to understand the mechanisms underlying the problems in order to take appropriate actions. For that purpose, analysing the research data from different countries facing distinct as well as convergent R&R problems is paramount.

### **E.2 OBJECTIVE(S)**

The main goal of the TG is to foster a true understanding of the mechanisms that influence recruitment, selection and classification, retention and turnover outcomes. In order to achieve this goal, a generic military model will be developed. It will be based on the empirical evidence acquired within the framework of the resources available to the TG.

### **E.3 TOPICS TO BE COVERED**

This TG will focus on the questions: “Why do people join the Military? Why do they decide to stay in or leave the Military?”. Likely topics include: the psychological contract, the influence of information on turnover, management of selection and classification (S&C) (management of the selection process, management of selection standards, management of classification issues), values research, individual needs, transition (cultural shock on joining, changes in needs and wants during service, the effects of significant organizational change), PERSTEMPO/OPSTEMPO and Quality of life, pay and benefits, gender & minority issues.

### **E.4 DELIVERABLES**

The TG will deliver a final report of its activities which will include current information about the R&R strategies of the member countries and the generic model. It will also create a database of recruitment/retention research by country. Thirdly, the TG will propose to organize a workshop or symposium as an RTO activity to disseminate its results.

### **E.5 TECHNICAL TEAM LEADER AND LEAD NATION**

Referee: LtCol Psych F. Lescreve (BEL). The Chairperson and lead nation will be elected at the first meeting of the TG.

### **E.6 NATIONS WILLING TO PARTICIPATE**

BEL, CAN, DEN, DEU, NLD, ESP, TUR, GBR, USA.

### **E.7 NATIONAL AND/OR NATO RESOURCES NEEDED**

The appointed persons will be funded by their respective nations to attend TG meetings and to host meetings.

### **E.8 RTA RESOURCES NEEDED**

In order to organize a symposium in 2005, the usual RTA support will be requested by the TG.