

**Joint Force Headquarters -Arizona
98th Troop Command
5424 E. McDowell Road
Phoenix, Arizona 85008-3495**

AZVA-ZX

1 October 2003

MEMORANDUM FOR all Unit Retention NCO's, 98th Troop Command

SUBJECT: Training Year 2004 Challenge for Additional Duty Retention NCO's

1. 1 October 2003 begins the new training year (TY) for 2004. Despite all the life changing events of last year, the statistics show a huge improvement in our ability to retain qualified soldiers. Mobilizations have challenged our ability to stay on top of the issues at hand and maintain the programs already in place. Create another successful year and focus on the challenges for TY 2004:

a. *Manage the workload.* Follow the guidance in STARC REG 601-2, of 50 soldiers per Retention NCO, if you have three or more Retention NCO's in your command, one Retention NCO needs to function as quality control and oversee the whole program. Avoid burn out.

b. *Believe in the Retention Program.* Soldiers can sense sincerity. Police yourself. Ask yourself the following questions: "Do I maintain good eye contact and provide a good firm handshake?" "Have I established a good rapport with this soldier?" Always consider the basic needs of every the soldier you interview. Soldiers need to have a sense of belonging, and feel they are important and respected. Always record interviews, even if they are in passing and informal. You are the person that truly completes the picture of why a soldier leaves the National Guard and why they stay.

c. *Remain focused.* What are your duties? (1) Schedule and ensure all required interviews are conducted and recorded by maintaining the Retention Binders. (2) Conduct the 90 day out Interviews (3) Maintain the Retention Bulletin Board and publications. (4) Participate in the Unit Strength Maintenance Enhancement meeting. (5) Advise your commander and 1SG on issues affecting strength maintenance. (6) Assist your 1SG in the management of the Sponsorship Program. (7) Prepare First Line Leader's on how to conduct career counseling.

d. *Time to do your Additional Duty Retention NCO job.* Four hours per drill should be an adequate amount of time for a Retention NCO (with 50 soldiers) to complete their job. This is only true, if the program is set up and maintained. Attend a "refresher" Unit Retention NCO Course once a year to update your binders and keep yourself current on changes.

AZVA-ZX

SUBJECT: Training Year 2004 Challenge for Additional Duty Retention NCO's

e. *Manage Losses.* Keep interview sheets of discharged or transferred soldiers in an archive file in your binder. This data will begin to show trends of why soldiers are leaving your unit. Attend Strength Maintenance Enhancement Team (SMET) meetings conducted by your unit. If SMET meetings are not being conducted talk to your commander and first sergeant and do what you can, to get these going. Reference STARC Reg 601-2 for the details on what needs to be covered and who should attend.

2. Dates for Command Inspections and assistance visits will be published at a later time. If you require assistance before the list is published contact me anytime you have questions or need assistance.

3. The new "Selected Reserve Incentive Program (SRIP) Memorandum" is published twice a training year, 1 October and 1 April. It is rarely received prior to the effective date and can create a real dilemma for Retention NCOs. Use caution when extending soldiers for a bonus the first 10 days of these months. The soldier may not be eligible under the new criteria. Shortly after the new SRIP Memorandum is received, I will be sending you a "Cheat Sheet" that will take the guess work out of determining whether someone is eligible for an incentive.

4. During October/November a new retention newsletter will be published for the 98 Troop Command. It will contain information about the features and benefits of the Army National Guard and related items. If you have suggestions, your input is always welcome. The objective of the newsletter is to provide updated information about the benefits of the Guard reaching soldiers down to the lowest level. It will be sent to all Readiness NCO's, CSM's, 1SG's and Unit Retention NCO's for distribution.

5. If you require assistance on any retention issue, I can be reached at (602) 770-9271 or leave a message at (602) 267-2697 on IDT weekends / weekdays or email diane.byrd@az.ngb.army.mil

**DIANE M. BYRD
SFC, AZARNG
Brigade Retention NCO**

DISTRIBUTION:

As

CF:

**CSM Elifritz
CSM Schneider
CSM Marsden
CSM Tatum**