

APPENDIX D

THE UNIT MINISTRY TEAM'S ROLE IN COMBAT STRESS CONTROL AND BATTLE FATIGUE MINISTRY**D-1. Introduction**

This appendix addresses the general role of the unit ministry team in the commander's program of combat stress control and in battle fatigue ministry. The unit ministry team consists of a chaplain and chaplain assistant assigned to units as far forward as the brigade, forward support battalion, each maneuver battalion, and some combat support battalions. This team provides immediate support to leaders in fulfilling their battle fatigue identification and intervention responsibilities. The team also assists in training leaders to recognize battle fatigue symptoms. Unit ministry teams provide training in basic counseling skills for enabling soldiers to talk about their stress.

D-2. Effects of Stress

Negative effects of stress can be lessened when the soldier is prepared physically, emotionally, and spiritually prior to combat. The unit ministry teams prepare soldiers to manage combat stress with training before and during deployment. This training helps the soldier to draw upon spiritual strength and share strength and confidence during intensive combat.

D-3. Team Relationship

The unit ministry team's relationship with the unit promotes trust with the soldiers. Embedding the team in maneuver battalions enables it to respond readily to the needs of soldiers experiencing combat stress and battle fatigue. A person-oriented resource, the team gives religious support to battle fatigue casualties, especially soldiers having less severe difficulties who have rapid replenishment potential.

D-4. Spiritual Values

Soldiers' inner resources are often based on their religious and spiritual values. In combat, soldiers show more interest in their religious beliefs. When religious and spiritual values are challenged during the chaos of combat, soldiers may lose sight of inner resources that sustain them. The soldiers then become targets of fear, despair, hopelessness, and eventually, battle fatigue casualties. They are also at risk for committing misconduct stress behaviors. The unit ministry team is the primary resource available to soldiers experiencing these dilemmas and seeking to refocus their spiritual values.

D-5. Team Support

Unit ministry teams provide preventive, immediate, and replenishing spiritual and emotional support and care to soldiers experiencing battle fatigue.

a. *Preventive.* The religious support mission of the unit ministry team assists in preventing battle fatigue and misconduct stress behaviors through establishment of a presence within the unit. It is important for the unit ministry team to be present with soldiers when the unit trains and when it deploys. The unit ministry team can be a calming influence on soldiers; the team can help soldiers strengthen or regain values important to them. Some of the things the unit ministry team does to prevent battle fatigue and misconduct include the following:

- Being present with the soldiers and deploying with the unit.
- Providing opportunities for private and group prayer and worship.

- Providing personal religious articles and materials.
- Reading the scriptures with soldiers.
- Providing sacraments as the situation allows.
- Communicating with soldiers, allowing them to work through stress, fear, anxiety, anger, and frustration.
- Visiting soldiers in work and living areas.
- Assisting soldiers and families prior to deployment with preparation for geographical separation and an uncertain future through programs which emphasize family strengths. This helps soldiers to know that their families are cared for during deployment.

b. Immediate. The unit ministry team assists commanders in the identification of soldiers experiencing battle fatigue. They work closely with the unit leadership and the medical personnel in battle fatigue care. Chaplains and chaplain assistants are trained to recognize the signs of battle fatigue and provide religious support to soldiers experiencing battle fatigue. The unit ministry team establishes rapport with the soldier and assesses his religious needs. The team then performs or offers the type of religious support designed to provide the most comfort. This includes such things as the following:

- Presence with the soldier.
- Conversation and an opportunity to share fears, hopes, and other feelings.
- Prayers: general prayers, prayers for the individual, or prayers for fallen comrades.

- Rites, sacraments, and ordinances as appropriate.
- Reading from sacred scriptures.

c. Replenishing. Following an engagement, the unit may require reconstitution through the addition of new personnel. The unit ministry team will find the surviving soldiers may require a rebuilding of the emotional, psychological, and spiritual strength. During this time, the unit ministry team may require assistance from a chaplain support team (TOE 16500LA/B) or other available rear area unit ministry team assets. The team will maintain its ongoing direct religious support functions which include the following:

- Coordinating the availability of worship services, sacraments, rites, and services/ ceremonies honoring the dead.
- Facilitating the integration of personnel replacements.
- Facilitating the grief process through personal counseling and memorial services.
- Reinforcing the soldier's sense of self-worth and hope.
- Structuring opportunities for soldiers to talk about what they have experienced in combat and facilitating integration of the combat experience into their lives.
- Preparing for the next stage of battle.
- Providing personal religious articles and materials.

- Securing or providing denominational religious coverage in the unit or for other units.
- Participating in rebuilding the physical, emotional, and spiritual resources of the unit.

The unit ministry team operates with a soldier-focused approach to religious support. The spiritual dimension the team brings to the soldier's situation is an essential element in the replenishment process. Religious support assists the soldier in achieving emotional and spiritual wholeness.

D-6. Reintegration

Following the end of hostilities, the unit ministry team facilitates reintegration of the individual

soldier into family relationships and society at large. Many religious support functions remain the same. Expanded religious support functions may also include the following:

- Providing worship events for the entire unit.
- Providing worship events for varied religious denominations.
- Providing briefings which help soldiers recognize, prepare for, and master the stressors of reunion with family.
- Providing structured events to assist soldiers returning to family and civilian life.
- Providing opportunities for soldiers to experience and understand the forgiving and unchanging love of God.