

BULLET BACKGROUND
PAPER ON
THE DEPLOYMENT TRANSITION CENTER

PURPOSE

Provide historical background on the Air Force Deployment Transition Center (DTC), curriculum, scope, impact on service members, and growth/expansion of the program.

BACKGROUND

- In early 2010, CSAF directed the creation of the DTC to address increasing negative personal and family impacts attributed to continued deployment operations and repeated combat exposures
 - Attendance was restricted to line remarked deployment orders based on outside the wire and/or high-risk mission sets (e.g., EOD, SF, and Convoy Ops)
 - Expansions have occurred to include TACP (2011), Joint Service: USMC & Personnel Recovery (2011); Navy EOD (2012); Medics (2012); Air Advisors (2014); OSI (2017) & Pararescue (2018)
 - Attendance is open to any AFSC at any location when the downrange commander (G-Series or first O-6 in the chain of command) wishes to nominate
 - The DTC is a “third location” (removed from the AOR and CONUS) program
 - Ramstein was selected for its support services and location for inter-theater airlift
 - AF/A1S has responsibility and oversight for DTC curriculum, policy, and funding

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

- The DTC provides post-deployment decompression and reintegration education to redeployers en-route to their home stations
- Consists of strength-based approach and peak performance mentality to assist redeployers; provides tools and skills needed for successful bridge from deployment to the home-front based on researched/proven methodologies
- Attendees identified via: 1) line-remarked on deployment order based on mission set, tasking or career field; 2) commander-nominated during deployment based on change in mission, significant event, exposure to trauma, or home-front stressors
- Program is four total days based around facilitator-guided, participant-focused small group discussions; days one and four are dedicated to arrival and departure respectively

- Attendees have the opportunity to relax and talk about their deployment experience in an informal small group environment (not therapy or a medical/mental health program)
- The DTC also supports a “Deployed-in-Place” program, a virtual program for personnel unable to attend in person, and provides a variety of resilience classes for Ramstein AB

STAFF

- DTC staffing has flexed since inception due to mission needs and throughput
 - Current permanent party includes a Commander, Program Director, Superintendent, two Mental Health Technicians, and a Knowledge Operator
 - Additional staff support is provided by 197-day deployment taskings, 65-day deployed support for AEF pivot surges (when warranted), and 86 AW augmentees
- Support facilitators are intended to come from the same career field as the redeployers they are working with and are expected to have deployment experience

RESULTS

- The DTC supports approximately 2-3K redeployers annually with a maximum of 15 per class
- As of 4 Jan 2022, 18,627 redeployers have transitioned through the DTC, including AD and Guard/Reserve component Airmen, Marines, Sailors and civilians
 - A 2016 study which utilized DTC deployment data from 2010-2011 was released in Military Psychology. Key findings indicate DTC participants reported lower levels of depression, relationship conflicts, and post-traumatic stress symptoms, following return from deployment, as compared to weighted control groups
 - 93% of 2020-2021 attendees (n = 1,572) indicated the DTC was a worthwhile experience. 74% of participants noted they are more likely to access helping resources based on program attendance. 88% felt they received helpful guidance to facilitate a smooth transition/reintegration with family/friends.
 - 89% indicated they were able to sleep, rest, and restore their energies while at the Center

RECOMMENDATION:

None – For information only