



8A Inspector General

“Strength through Standards and Discipline”



DAIG Special Inspection Report

New Soldier Experience

Background

In late 2021, the Secretary of the Army directed the Department of the Army Inspector General to conduct an all-encompassing special inspection of the process of transforming civilian volunteers into professional Soldiers with basic common core values, ethical reasoning, motivation, and discipline through initial duty assignment in support of Army Readiness.

From October 2021 to September 2022, Inspectors from the Department of the Army Inspector General, and 18 subject-matter experts from various commands and each component, assessed the Army’s ability to transform civilian volunteers into professional Soldiers with common core values, ethical reasoning, motivation, and discipline through initial duty assignment in support of Army Readiness.

During this inspection, the inspection team visited 42 locations; interviewed and sensed 4,546 new Soldiers; surveyed 16,106 new Soldiers (E1-E4); and evaluated and observed programs, policies, and systems that serve new Soldiers at various stages of their first term.

Results

From discussions with and surveys from new Soldiers, Army Inspectors found that Soldiers enter the Army with a set of expectations related to their Army service, including:

- Financial stability: ability to take care of self and loved ones (dependents).
- Engaged leadership: genuine interactions with and mentorship from drill sergeants, first-line leaders, and commanders.
- Continuous training: small-group, open discussion; training that enhances what they learned in IET environment.
- Safe and secure housing: Housing that supports their desire for privacy and is free from crime.
- Comprehensive and accessible medical/wellness care: Quality care throughout first-term, specialty care accessible at MTFs.
- Quality and accessible dining options: DFACs that provide healthy food options and are accessible (location/hours)/innovative food options (food trucks, kiosks, outposts, etc.).
- The trust that their peers and leaders will treat them with dignity and respect.

New Soldiers leave the Army during or at the end of their initial enlistment for the top three reasons: (1) unengaged leadership, (2) lack of satisfaction in the desire to serve in their MOS, and (3) perceived opportunities in the civilian job market.

Way Ahead

DAIG provided leaders with more than 40 replicable practices used at various installations across the Army to positively impact the new Soldier’s experience during their first term of enlistment. These replicable practices address the systems and processes that impact the new Soldiers’ experiences from MEPS to their first unit of assignment.

In conclusion, new Soldiers want engaged leaders, a cohesive and caring group of peers, safe and secure housing, pay that helps them care for their Family, and a career that enables them to be contribute more to the Army.

References/Resources

DAIG Special Inspection of the New Soldier Experience Report

8th Army

Commanding General
LTG Willard M. Burleson III

Command Sergeant Major
CSM Robert H. Cobb

Command Inspector General
COL Warren R. Wood

Inspector General SGM
SGM Jeffrey L. Kirk

IG Points of Contact

8th Army IG Office
Building 12400
Camp Humphreys
APO AP 96251

<https://8tharmy.korea.army.mil/site/resource/inspector-general.asp>

Email: usarmy.humphreys.8-army.list.igasst@army.mil

DSN 315-755-2000
Comm 050-3355-2000

