Military Service and the Psychological Effects on Our Veterans

Jared E. Ebert
What this talk won’t be

§4321. Congressional declaration of purpose

The purposes of this chapter are: To declare a national policy which will encourage productive and enjoyable harmony between man and his environment; to promote efforts which will prevent or eliminate damage to the environment and biosphere and stimulate the health and welfare of man; to enrich the understanding of the ecological systems and natural resources important to the Nation; and to establish a Council on Environmental Quality.


Short Title

Section 1 Pub. L. 91–190 provided: "That this Act [enacting this chapter] may be cited as the 'National Environmental Policy Act of 1969'."

Transfer of Functions

Enforcement functions of Secretary or other official in Department of the Interior related to compliance with system activities requiring coordination and approval under this chapter, and enforcement functions of Secretary or other official in Department of Agriculture, as far as they involve lands and programs under jurisdiction of that Department, related to compliance with this chapter with respect to pre-construction, construction, and initial operation of transportation system for Canadian and Alaskan natural gas transferred to Federal Inspector, Office of Federal Inspector for Alaska Natural Gas Transportation System, until first anniversary of date of initial operation of Alaska Natural Gas Transportation System, see Reorg. Plan No. 1 of 1979, §§102(e), (f), 203(a), 44 F.R. 33663, 33666, 91 Stat. 1373, 1376, effective July 1, 1979, set out in the Appendix to Title 5, Government Organization and Employees.

Office of Federal Inspector for the Alaska Natural Gas Transportation System abolished and functions and authority vested in Inspector transferred to Secretary of Energy by section 3012(b) of Pub. L. 102–486, set out as an Abolition of Office of Federal Inspector note under section 719e of Title 15, Commerce and Trade. Functions and authority vested in Secretary of Energy subsequently transferred to Federal Coordinator for Alaska Natural Gas Transportation Projects by section 720d(f) of Title 15.

Emergency Preparedness Functions

For assignment of certain emergency preparedness functions to Administrator of Environmental Protection Agency, see Parts 1, 2, and 16 of Ex. Ord. No. 12656, Nov. 18, 1988, 53 F.R. 47491, set out as a note under section 5195 of this title.

Environmental Protection Agency Headquarters


"(a) Redesignation.—The Environmental Protection Agency Headquarters located at 1200 Pennsylvania Avenue N.W. in Washington, D.C., known as the Ariel Rion Building, shall be known and redesignated as the 'William Jefferson Clinton Federal Building'."

"(b) Reference.—Any reference in a law, map, regulation, document, paper, or other record of the United States to the Environmental Protection Agency Headquarters referred to in subsection (a) shall be deemed to be a reference to the 'William Jefferson Clinton Federal Building'.''

Modification or Replacement of Executive Order No. 13421

Pub. L. 111–117, div. C, title VB, §742(b), Dec. 16, 2009, 123 Stat. 3216, provided that: "Hereafter, the President may modify or replace Executive Order No. 13423 [formerly set out below] if the President determines that a revised or new executive order will achieve equal or better environmental or energy efficiency results."

[Pursuant to section 742(b) of Pub. L. 111–117, set out above, Ex. Ord. No. 13423 was replaced by Ex. Ord. No. 11691, Mar. 19, 2015, 80 F.R. 15871, set out below.]


Necessity of Military Low-Level Flight Training To Protect National Security and Enhance Military Readiness

Pub. L. 106–398, §1 [div. A, title III, §3171, Oct. 30, 2000, 114 Stat. 1654, 1654A–57], provided that: "Nothing in the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.) or the regulations implementing such law shall require the Secretary of Defense or the Secretary of a military department to prepare a programmatic, nation-wide environmental impact statement for low-level flight training as a precondition to the use by the Armed Forces of an airspace for the performance of low-level training flights."

Pollution Prosecution


"SEC. 201. SHORT TITLE.

"This title may be cited as the 'Pollution Prosecution Act of 1990'."

"SEC. 202. EPA OFFICE OF CRIMINAL INVESTIGATION.

"(a) The Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency (hereinafter referred to as the 'Administrator') shall increase the number of criminal investigators assigned to the Office of Criminal Investigations by such numbers as may be necessary to assure that the number of criminal investigators assigned to the office—"

...
What it will be

- Introduction
  - Military experience
  - Medical experience
- Suicide Numbers
- Goals of Talk
  - Understand some of the emotions soldiers experience coming home
  - Attempt to demonstrate what PTSD looks like
  - Stress reaction outside of PTSD
- Barriers to Health Care
Military

- Enlistment
- Deployment
- OCS
- MC

EXCUSE ME, DO YOU HAVE A MOMENT TO TALK ABOUT FREEDOM?
Enlistment
Deployment
OCS
Medicine

- Premed
- Med School
- Residency
- Post-residency
What are you studying?

MEDICINE
Law School Changed Me

When people who don't go to law school complain about being stressed.
Why I’m really here
Numbers

- Suicide Rate (per 100,000)
  - National Total
    - 17.5
  - National Veteran
    - 30.1

- MO Total
  - 23.4
- MO Veteran
  - 34.1
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<th>Midwestern Region Veteran Suicides</th>
<th>National Veteran Suicides</th>
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What causes soldiers to commit suicide?

- Adjustment disorder
- Acute stress disorder
- PTSD
- Barriers to health care
I’m home!
And then...

- Insomnia
- Angry
- Relationships
- Catching up a year’s worth of missed experiences in a matter of weeks
- School. Work. Bills
Adjustment

- Less structured vs very structured
  - No mission
  - No clear chain of command
  - Self vs team
- Open vs closed society
- Wives, husbands, kids, parents
What is PTSD?

- Intrusive Symptoms
- Negative Mood
- Avoidance Symptoms
- Hyperarousal
Acute Stress Disorder

- Symptoms same as PTSD
- Less than one month duration
Barrier’s To Health Care

- Military Mindset
- No health insurance
- Lost to follow up
- VA is complicated

**Image:**

THIS IS WHAT I FEEL LIKE

WHEN I FIND THE PERSON WHO CAN HELP ME IN THE VA
Redeployment

- I just want to get home!

- Honeymoon period
Real Soldiers
ER Patient

- ER doctor: “There is a piece of crap in Green 10. He’s homeless and drunk again. He probably wants a hot meal and a bed. His blood alcohol is 0.2 and he says he’s suicidal. He was here yesterday and was discharged. I need to get this guy admitted.”
• Says he’s hungry and cold.
• Admits he’s suicidal. Feels hopeless.
• He is homeless because he has no family in the area. He came to the area for work and lost his job. He had already used shelters in the area but couldn’t find housing. He lives in a tent on the west side of town. He begs for money at the intersections. A passing motorist called 911 when they saw him passed out on the sidewalk.
Where did you get those dog tags?

- Joined Marines after 9/11
- Involved in invasion of Iraq and Fallujah
- Served as a rifleman
- Lost many friends
- Came back and worked construction after leaving the Marines
- Feels alienated from his family
- Doesn’t trust the VA system
Homeless

Then

Now
Zach

- Aviation pilot with several deployments over 15 years in the Army
- Deployments ultimately took a toll
  - Developed PTSD
- Attempted Suicide by crashing his car into a tree
- Sought help, started meeting with a psychologist
  - Grieving process over loss of his identity
  - Years of therapy and hard work → able to take control of his triggers and symptoms
- Able to retire from the army
- Started a business with friends
- Started spending less time alone and more time with his family and friends
- Most likely never to be back to “normal” but able to live a healthy and full life
Recovery
Mark

- Young Army National Guard soldier recently home from deployment
- Struggling with PTSD
- Primary symptoms of dissociating
  - Horrible fights with his wife that he wouldn’t remember
- Met with a psychologist at drill weekend and made plans
  - Plans to see a psychologist
  - Go to the VA for psychiatry
  - See a Case Manager for other resources
- Called the psychologist on Monday to tell him he had completed all his assignments
- Got into a fight with his wife the next day
  - Went into the garage and killed himself
Suicide

22 VETERANS
VETERANS
COMMIT SUICIDE EVERYDAY

222
22
VETERANS
22
PER DAY

22 VETERANS DIE BY SUICIDE EACH DAY

30% of active duty and reserve military personnel deployed in Iraq and Afghanistan have a mental health problem requiring treatment.

Of the 30%, less than half of returning veterans in need receive any mental health treatment.

Source: Mental Health First Aid USA @MHFirstAidUSA
If you have ever been to the funeral of a soldier, don't tell me you have sacrificed everything. If you have ever watched an American flag being folded with dedication and care, don't tell me you have sacrificed everything. If you have ever witnessed a folded flag being presented to a spouse, a child, or a parent of a fallen soldier, don't tell me you have sacrificed everything. If you have ever heard the shots of a 21 gun salute and watched family members jump with each shot, don't tell me you have sacrificed everything.

***Posted by my aunt after my uncle’s funeral
Rates of Suicide per day

- Veterans not receiving VA services
- Veterans receiving VA services
Questions?